

The Early Years...



The years between birth and school-age are an important time in your child's life. The experiences that children have in the early years influence their future health, well-being, and life-long learning. Children will be more likely to have success in school if they have:

- ◆ opportunities to develop their language skills;
- ◆ time to play; and,
- ◆ the support of loving and responsive relationships.

Play is a child's work. Studies show children learn best through play-based environments. Play is important to young children's daily lives and promotes their healthy physical and intellectual development in ways that cannot be achieved by focusing only on skills, such as counting to 10 or learning the alphabet. When playing, children express, explore, combine, and extend what they have learned.

The overall goal of **StrongStart Early Learning Centres** is to support the development of young children by providing opportunities for their parents and/or caregivers to be involved in and learn about effective strategies that support early learning. The Centres have many materials and stimulating activities for children and their parents/caregivers to interact with.

You and your child will be able to:

- ◆ explore with sand, water, and other materials children can touch and hold;
- ◆ play with natural and real materials;
- ◆ explore art through a variety of activities;
- ◆ play dress-up;
- ◆ build with blocks and other materials; and,
- ◆ the Strong Start Facilitators will introduce songs, finger plays, and stories.



The Benefits of Participating

With the Support of the StrongStart Facilitator and the child's parent and/or caregiver, children will ...

Be encouraged to explore and be creative by:

- ◆ Using their bodies and all their senses
- ◆ Actively thinking and reasoning
- ◆ Identifying and trying possible solutions to problems as they play
- ◆ Developing a sense of wonder for natural environments
- ◆ Expressing a zest for living and learning
- ◆ Building, creating, and designing using different materials and techniques

Use language and improve their literacy through:

- ◆ Sound and word play
- ◆ Using numbers, measurement, and form as they play
- ◆ Communicating thoughts and experiences using many different forms of expression
- ◆ Developing an ability to communicate with others in many ways
- ◆ Being curious about vocabulary, concepts, and written language
- ◆ Expressing their own points of view and reflecting on the views of others

Learn about responsibility and diversity by:

- ◆ Exploring and learning about family, the community and the wider world
- ◆ Understanding the concept of fairness both for themselves and others
- ◆ Recognizing discrimination and inequality and responding appropriately.
- ◆ Participating in the making, following, and re-working of rules in their everyday world
- ◆ Understanding that everyone has value and that differences should be celebrated, accepted and welcomed
- ◆ Expressing a positive regard for others, themselves and property

Learn about well-being and belonging by:

- ◆ Building healthy relationships with both adults and children
- ◆ Feeling secure in an environment where they are safe and respected
- ◆ Understanding and following routines
- ◆ Adapting to and enjoying experiences of change, surprise, and uncertainty
- ◆ Feeling valued and exploring their own strategies for learning
- ◆ Recognizing, accepting and expressing a wide range of emotions, thoughts, and views
- ◆ Showing responsibility for themselves and beginning to show responsibility for others.

