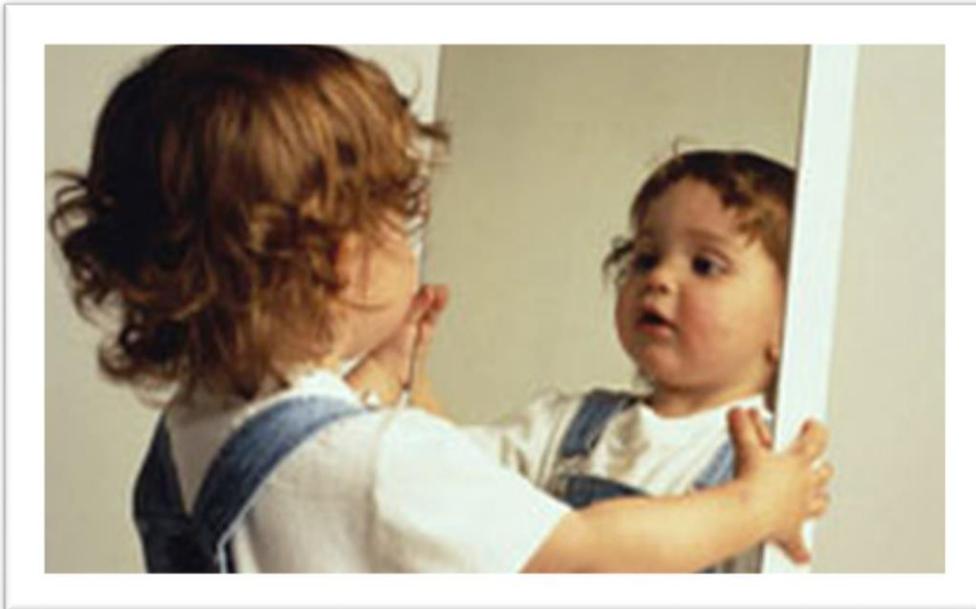


## Investing In Quality Peterborough Engagement Resource Guide



“We do not learn from experience,  
we learn from reflecting on experience.”

John Dewey

# Engagement Resource Guide

## Table of Contents

The Engagement Resource Guide outlines the engagement cycle for involvement in Investing In Quality Peterborough; the timeline and focus of mentor visits; lenses and tools used for mentor visits; as well as resource information on current research and best practice within the early learning profession. This guide is designed to help programs implement *How Does Learning Happen?* Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years from a leadership perspective. The Engagement Resource Guide will be emailed to all programs but each program will be given a paper copy to keep in their programs for reference.

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## Introduction

- Investing In Quality Peterborough
- The Engagement Cycle: Important Dates
- Reflective Model for Mentoring

### **Mission:**

Making a difference in the outcomes for children through knowledge transfer and promoting best practice quality assurance and professionalism.

Investing In Quality Peterborough is committed to strengthening and growing quality early learning programs in our community. The focus of the work we do is based on *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years* and in support of the professions' governing bodies (the Child Care and Early Years Act 2014; Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice as governed by the College of Early Childhood Educators).

We believe that in order to grow programs we need to develop reflective leaders. Strengthening leadership within the early learning community builds capacity, best practice and professionalism. We do this by providing a number of professional development opportunities and through peer mentoring supervisors within programs.

This resource guide is developed with the Four Foundations of *How Does Learning Happen?* as the focus for mentor visits and mentor tools.

### *How Does Learning Happen?* The Four Foundations



## The Engagement Cycle

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Mentoring supervisors to be reflective leaders in order to strengthen and grow their programs is one way we will support providing quality outcomes for children in our community.

Each early learning program will be assigned an IIQ staff who will support the supervisor through reflective dialogue, resource support and professional development opportunities.

Beginning in January 2018 we will work on an annual mentorship cycle that will include a minimum of 3 mentor visits per program each year with supervisors.

Each visit will have a specific focus and a lens based on *How Does Learning Happen?* The lenses that were developed focus on reflective leadership to strengthen and grow practice.

Reports to supervisors will also be written in a consistent and brief format which is included with each lens. Information about each lens and the submission requirements are in the following sections of this guide.

The cycle will be as follows:

Phase 1 Visit	January-March	Focus: Appreciative Inquiry Lens
Phase 2 Visit	April-July	Focus: Leadership Lens
Phase 3 Visit	August-December	Focus: Action Plan development with Template

You can find the lenses and action plan templates in the pertinent sections of this resource guide (refer to table of contents). They are also in section E in plastic sleeves for ease of use in your program. PDF fillable formats of the lenses will also be emailed to programs.

## A Reflective Model for Mentoring

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The peer mentor role is designed to engage supervisors in reflective practice to strengthen and grow their staff and programs. It is an opportunity to have conversations that deepen thinking to extend learning.

To help with the reflective mentorship process, we have developed some tools that will guide our thinking and dialogue through a lens of *How Does Learning Happen?* and from a leadership perspective.

*“Leadership is a critical element of a quality early years program, and your commitment to putting How Does Learning Happen? into practice is essential. As a leader in the early years, it is important for you to reflect critically on your own practices, try new ideas, and act on what you learn. Strong leadership means more than performing the day-to-day administrative functions of the program; it also means being more intentional in establishing, maintaining, and supporting strong relationships and ongoing discussions with and among colleagues and educator teams, children, families, and community partners”. -An Introduction to How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years, For Leaders. Pg. 8.*

We view mentorship as a cycle of learning and one that does not begin or end. Mentorship visits and tools are intended to build upon one another and encourage ongoing dialogue and reflection. Just as children are always learning, so are we as supervisors and leaders.

Each January the peer mentor for your program will contact you to set up the three mentor visits for the year. Peer mentors will also be available by phone or email in between visits. If you feel an additional visit is needed this can be arranged as requested. We want this model to be flexible to the needs of the community. Each visit will be 1-2 hours in length.

The yearly engagement submission will be your program’s action plan on the template provided in the resource guide.

**Yearly submissions will be due on:** December 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Investing in Quality report will be provided to the community at the end of February each year.

## Section A: Phase One

- The Appreciative Inquiry Visit
- The Appreciative Inquiry Lens
- Mentor Discussion Notes

Visit #1 The Appreciative Inquiry Visit and Lens

The first mentorship visit will focus on building relationships. It will be an opportunity for the IIQ peer mentor to meet new supervisors and staff and reacquaint themselves with the program. It will also be an opportunity for new staff and supervisors to meet their peer mentor.

You will also have the opportunity to highlight your program strengths and accomplishments by doing a walk-through of your programs with the peer mentor. Reflecting on successes and learning are wonderful opportunities to lead you towards natural next steps within your programs. *“What we pay attention to grows.”* Buddha

During this visit we can begin to think and have conversations about areas of your program you would like to strengthen. A short summary report will be completed by the peer mentor and sent to you after their visit. (You can find this summary report with the Appreciation Lens on page 9).

**Preparation for the Appreciative Inquiry Visit:**

The appreciative inquiry lens on the next two pages will be filled out with staff a few weeks prior to the mentor visit.

All staff need to have input into this lens in support of the *“belief that every educator should feel he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor and deserves the opportunity to engage in meaningful work”*. HDLH? pg. 7

We also encourage you to review any recent survey results; environmental assessments and action plans in order to capture important feedback to complete the appreciative inquiry narrative.

**Process for Completion:**

This narrative is designed to inspire feedback from all staff. There is an area for staff to give their input as well as an area for supervisors, managers and Executive Directors to give their input. Print as many copies as you need. You may choose to complete this form:

- Per person
- Per team
- Group submission

One approach to gather input from all staff might be to post a large piece of paper with the questions in the staff room for everyone to write their ideas on. There is also a PDF fillable form in section four of your resource guide if you prefer to fill it out electronically.

## Appreciative Inquiry Lens

### Theory:

The appreciative inquiry narrative is a process for us to reflect on our work with a strength based approach. It is the opportunity to stop and reflect on what is working well in your programs and to acknowledge these successes. It is also an opportunity to let your accomplishments lead you towards natural next steps within your programs. The basic tenet of this approach is that what we pay attention to and focus on in our programs will grow.

### Preparation:

This form will be emailed to you a few weeks prior to a mentoring visit. In preparation for your visit with the Investing in Quality peer mentor we encourage you to review any recent survey results, environmental assessments and action plans in order to capture important feedback to complete the appreciative inquiry narrative.

### Process for Completion:

This narrative is designed to inspire feedback from all staff. There is an area for staff to give their input as well as an area for supervisors, managers and Executive Directors to give their input. Print as many copies as you need. You may choose to complete this form:

- Per person
- Per team
- Group submission

Note: One approach to gather input from all staff might be to post a large piece of paper with the questions in the staff room for everyone to write their ideas on.

## Appreciative Inquiry Lens

**Program:**

**Date:**

**Staff Feedback:** All staff are invited to capture examples of accomplishments or growth opportunities to share with IIQ staff to guide planning.

<p><b>What are the accomplishments and strengths of your program?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• E.g. How do your accomplishments and strengths support the four foundations in <i>How Does Learning Happen?</i></li><li>• E.g. How are relationships in the foreground?</li></ul>	<p><b>What would you like to grow in your program?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• E.g. emergent approaches to learning; supporting self-regulation in children; engagement of children in program; improving communication to families; growing educator teams, etc.</li></ul>

**Program:**

**Date:**

**Supervisor, Manager, Executive Director Feedback:** All supervisors are invited to capture examples of accomplishments or growth opportunities to share with IIQ staff to guide planning.

<p><b>What are the accomplishments and strengths of your program?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. How do your accomplishments and strengths support the four foundations in <i>How Does Learning Happen?</i></li> <li>• E.g. How are relationships in the foreground?</li> </ul>	<p><b>What would you like to grow in your program?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• E.g. emergent approaches to learning; supporting self-regulation in children; engagement of children in program; improving communication to families; growing educator teams, etc.</li> </ul>

Mentoring discussion notes:

Identified resources and supports needed: (books, training, communities of practice, etc.)

Mentor Summary Report Completed By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section B: Phase Two

- Leadership Lens Visit
- Leadership Lens
- Mentor Discussion Notes

The leadership lens is based on the Four Foundations of *How Does Learning Happen?* This lens has reflective questions about your current leadership practices to help you to move towards continual growth and development as a leader.

The themes of these questions are about relationship building, values, engaging and growing staff dispositions, mentorship practices and well-being of your staff and program.

This lens is designed to be used as a guide in your daily practice. It will also be used to guide mentor visits with your peer mentor.

When the Appreciative Inquiry Lens was completed, you and your program staff identified areas of your program you would like to grow. This visit will also be a good time for your peer mentor to check in with you on how things are going in these areas.

As was done in the first visit, a short summary report will be completed by the peer mentor and sent to you after their visit. (You can find this summary report following the Leadership Lens on page 15).

## How Does Learning Happen?

### Leadership Lens

#### Belonging

##### **Cultivating Authentic Relationships and Connections**

Positive, caring and respectful relationships are the foundation for optimal learning for both children and adults. As leaders of early learning programs, reflecting on how we grow positive and trusting relationships with our team is essential for providing positive outcomes for children. Consider these questions for reflection:

##### **How do I build trust and a sense of belonging with my staff?**

- In my practice what do I do in my daily work that demonstrates and grows belonging?
- How do I know when my staff and families feel a sense of belonging? What do I feel and see?
- What are some of my stories that illustrate how I have built a sense of trust and belonging with my staff? (What do I see specifically as a result of my efforts?)
- Are there other things I could think about doing to grow trust and a sense of connectedness among staff?

**Core Values** support the vision of our programs and shape the culture of the work we do. Values are essential to our identity as a program and as individuals. Workplaces that live to their values help create a sense of belonging among staff.

##### **As a leader in our agency how do I bring the program's values into everything I do?**

- In daily conversations with staff?
- In staff meetings?
- In orientation and training processes?
- In my relationships with children and families?
- In mentoring staff members?
- In short and long term planning?

## Leadership Lens

### Engagement

#### **Creating Contexts for Participation**

In order for optimal learning to happen we need to be fully engaged in our work. How leaders engage with staff members determines their willingness and ability to work to their best potential. *“The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He/she is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things.” Ronald Regan*

Consider these questions for reflection:

#### **How do I set the foundation for staff engagement?**

- What does it mean for you to be fully engaged in your work?
- How do you see staff fully engaged in their work? Are there differences in understanding? How do I negotiate these differences?
- How do I recognize and grow individual strengths and dispositions within my staff?
- How do I provide structures for staff to lead from any chair?
- How can I delegate leadership tasks to strengthen skill development among my team?
- How do I provide meaningful experiences for my staff that focus on growing skills?

#### **How do I grow peer mentorships within the program?**

- How are natural mentorships happening in our program?
- What components of these mentorships are making them successful?
- What dispositions do I notice in successful mentors? How can I nurture these dispositions in my staff?
- What professional development, tools or resources might support the growth of mentorship within our program?
- Where are there opportunities for me to support and grow leaders among my team?

## Leadership Lens

### Well-Being

#### **Nurturing Well-Being in Staff**

The physical and emotional well-being of staff has a direct impact on the quality of relationships we provide in our early learning programs. We cannot support healthy children if we do not take care of ourselves first. Staff well-being is a shared responsibility and workplaces play a role in setting a foundation for well-being. To have healthy programs we need to invest in our people. Consider these questions for reflection:

#### **In what ways do I strive to offer a safe, accepting and fair workplace where staff can make their best contributions?**

- What does a sense of well-being mean to me? What does it mean to my staff?
- What do I feel and see when I have a sense of well-being?
- How do I know when my staff feel a sense of well-being? What do I feel and see?
- What structures do I have in place that provide a foundation for a sense of well-being?
- What health and well-being issues might be affecting our workplace? How might I address these issues?
- How are staff's ideas and needs incorporated into health and well-being planning?
- How do I prepare my educators for change? What supports and systems are in place?
- How do I recognize and celebrate my successes? My staff's successes?
- What tools/skills do I use to help myself self-regulate in the workplace? What areas might I consider for growth?
- How do I grow self-regulation skills among my staff?
- Are there other ways I can think about and support staff wellness?

## Leadership Lens

### Expression

#### **Fostering Communication through Expression**

Open and honest communication is essential for successful relationships. Providing spaces where people have the opportunity to offer input, seek to understand new ideas and perspectives, and can express themselves in a way that is authentic to them supports building relationships and teamwork. Consider these questions for reflection:

#### **In what ways do I provide structures for openness and expression between the staff and myself?**

- What types of decision making processes do I use that encourage a sense of democracy?
- What types of frameworks do I have in place that allow staff to make decisions for their programs?
- How is everyone's voice included in the program? How is this visible in our work?
- How much time do I spend "Connecting: Directing: Correcting" staff? How can I improve my connections?
- What processes do I have in place for successful communication?
- How can I encourage my staff to be curious and question their thinking, assumptions and practices?
- How do I cultivate a culture of reflective practice so that the learning of my team happens every day?

Mentoring discussion notes:

Identified resources and supports needed: (books, training, communities of practice, etc.)

Mentor summary report completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section C: Phase Three

- The Action Plan Development Visit
- The Action Plan Tool
- Supporting Resources for Action Plan Development

**Visit #3 Action Plan**

An action plan is a way to take your program’s vision, goals and intentions into reality. It allows you to dream and identify strategies to meet your goals through intentional, sequential steps. Action plans give credibility and accountability to our work. Effective action plans build in components for reflection around lessons learned and next steps for the future.

In early learning settings, action plans are often developed within teams to support quality improvement in programs. Involving staff members in this process gives everyone a voice and supports best practice.

In the third mentor visit you will be working with your peer mentor in beginning to develop your action plan. You do not need to wait until the mentor visit to begin your plan and we encourage you to begin this process with your staff teams as soon as possible. We ask that you use the template on the following pages to guide your process in the development of your plan. \*Multi-site agencies may have some goals in their action plan that link across all sites and should also have program specific goals.

An important aspect to take into consideration when developing your action plan will be your most recent parent, staff and environment survey results. These will be handy to have on hand during your peer mentor visit.

Writing good goals is essential in the development of an action plan and we recommend using S.M.A.R.T. goals which are consistent with the recommendations from the College of Early Childhood Educators. (The S.M.A.R.T. goal resource is included in this resource guide on page 20).

The following resources are included in this resource guide to guide you in developing a successful action plan:

- *Resource for Setting Action Plans*  
This resource takes you through the pre-work needed before beginning to think about developing the action plan.
- *The Smart Goal Resource*  
This document gives you the tools needed to set a goal that is relevant, achievable and measurable.
- *Action Plan Template*
- *A sample of a completed action plan*

## Setting Program Goals for Action Plans A Resource

### The Purpose of This Resource

Quality improvement is an ongoing process. Reflecting on what can be changed in our programs, why it's important and how to go about it is a process that needs to be thoughtful and reflective to support quality. This resource will outline some recommended steps to support quality change by discussing the importance of surveys, goal setting and action plans. This document is intended as a resource. Some programs may have a process for writing action plans that works for them already and prefer to continue doing this. Action plan writing may be new for other programs so they may choose to use this document as a resource for planning processes.

### What Is An Action Plan?

Action plans are a detailed plan outlining the sequence of steps needed in order to reach one or more goals. In early learning settings action plans are often developed within teams as a result of parent, educator or community feedback. Before writing a successful action plan, we need first to get feedback from parents, educators, children (when possible) and the community about their perception of our programs. One thing to keep in mind is that action plans can support both smaller and larger goals.

## Suggested Steps to Write Successful Action Plans

### Surveys: Step 1

A survey is a way to engage families/staff/children and seek perspectives. Showing that you genuinely care about someone's opinions and experiences is a powerful way to build a relationship. This practice is considered a critical component of high quality learning environments. Successful programs know **what** their families and staff want and try to understand **why** and **how** to meet their needs.

#### When developing a survey some key considerations include:

- 1) Considering the purpose or intent - what do you want to know more about?
- 2) Developing questions - the wording of questions can influence how people respond.
- 3) Communication with families - how will you let parents and/or staff know about an upcoming survey and why it will be circulated - how will you share the results with families and/or staff?

### Review the Survey Results: Step 2

- 1) Review information gathered to see what the feedback tells you about the strengths of the program. What does it tell you about possible areas for growth or change?
- 2) With your staff team look for possible themes throughout the responses.
- 3) Consider any other sources of information you may have before going on to Step 3.

### Step 3: Select a goal

- 1) A top priority would be compliance issues that could impact your licence.
- 2) Of the areas identified what do you believe would have the biggest impact on children, families and educators? (The children should be the number one priority for quality improvement).
- 3) If you see a topic come up in a number of places (e.g. on a family survey, a staff survey, an organizational goal) there are strong reasons to make this a priority.
- 4) Use the SMART goal process including a reflection piece to make meaning of results-See Appendix A.
- 5) Share the results with families and staff in an open and accessible manner.

*Some Examples of setting goals based on survey results:*

#### **Program A:**

A program gathered feedback from families on, among other things, transition times. The program considered the feedback, developed an action plan and made intentional changes around transition times. The following year families were asked again for their feedback which led to some minor changes. The positive influences these changes had on children, families and educators is beautifully described in the program's submission. Further, the example demonstrates that this should be an ongoing cycle and that, while the issues may change, the process does not. This provides a rich example of how surveys can engage families as partners in growing quality that influences the experiences of children, families and educators.

#### **Receiving unexpected responses:**

As a supervisor you may pride yourself on providing lots of feedback to staff. You conduct a staff survey and are surprised to discover that staff rate the amount of feedback significantly lower than you had expected.

- 'Indicate on a scale of 1 to 5 how you feel about the amount of feedback you receive from your supervisor.'

As you reflect on this, could it be that there is a difference in understanding about feedback? What could you do? Could you ask the educators further questions? What kind of feedback do they like? When does it work best for them to receive the feedback?

#### **Implementing change to meet needs of current families:**

A number of years ago a program had traditionally adopted summer hours for the months of July and August closing at 5:30 p.m. instead of 6:00 p.m. This provided coverage in the staffing schedule for staff at the beginning of the day to set up rich outdoor environments, something the program valued highly. The staff also got to leave work a little earlier during those months. These hours worked for a number of years. A couple of years ago the program received feedback, through a survey, that the summer hours did not meet the needs of the current families. This was something that could be changed so the program carefully considered the feedback and decided not to adopt summer hours. Staff were involved in the process and made fully aware of why the change had been made.

**Something that cannot be changed:**

A program is located in a school with some parking spaces designated for your families and staff. During school drop off and pick up time traffic is backed up and parking is extremely challenging. There may be little that can be done to alleviate this, but finding out about families' experiences can provide you with valuable information. Knowing that they may be experiencing high levels of stress by the time they arrive at your door may mean you carefully consider whether this is a good time to engage them in a conversation about their child. This provides insight into why families do not take time to read the documentation that staff have worked so hard on. Experiences can be shared so when a new school is being built parking can be better addressed.

**Planning for the future:**

Perhaps feedback indicates low staff turnover is considered something families value very highly. As a supervisor you know that 2 of your younger staff are hoping to start families in the next year or so and a couple of your mature staff will be retiring around the same time. What can you do now to prepare families and keep low staff turnover as a strength of your program?

**Considering responses:**

Survey responses indicated that families are very happy with the menu offered to children. A single response stands out indicating the family is not happy with the menus. Carefully think about the response. Does it grow best practice? Is it an individual preference, but not necessarily best practice? For example, the family serves their child juice and thinks the program should offer this as well; meanwhile your program has just adopted a no juice policy.

**Communicating developmental information with families**

Now that children can begin school at a younger age, you have noticed that there is an increasing concern among families about 'school readiness'. A number of families want to see more evidence that children are 'being prepared for school'. While this is coming out of a genuine concern about their child's ability to transition to school, it signals a wonderful opportunity for conversations about such things as how children learn and making learning visible through pedagogical documentation. Perhaps families and educators could observe the children together and engage in conversations with the children, etc. An open house might be considered to share resources.

## SMART GOALS

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For quality improvement to happen in early learning programs we need to continually assess our progress and look for ways to grow our programs. The parent, staff and environment surveys are some of the resources we can rely on to set realistic goals in order to develop successful program action plans or professional learning plans.

Setting appropriate goals involves 5 steps (as outlined on the College of ECE website-Portfolio handbook page 1).

### S.M.A.R.T Goals:

#### Specific

- What exactly do we wish to accomplish? Think in specific and concrete terms.

Examples:

- ✓ Provide an outdoor activity for families to participate in each week during all seasons.
- ✓ Take Infant Mental Health training as a team to support the overall health of the infants in our care.
- ✓ Document children's learning weekly and participate in monthly team reflection meetings about documentation.
- ✓ Increase engagement and communication with parent's about *How Does Learning Happen?* by posing questions/documentation in the classroom monthly asking them how the foundations are demonstrated in the classrooms from their perspectives.

#### Measurable

- How will we know when we have reached this goal?

Example:

- ✓ Infant Mental Health training was completed by all team members.

#### Achievable

- Is this goal realistic?
- Do we have the resources to achieve it and if not how will we get them?

#### Relevant

- Why this goal right now?
- How does this goal align with our current work/feedback from surveys?
- How does this goal align with the mission and values of our agency?
- How does this goal align with *How Does Learning Happen?*

#### Timely

- Have we set realistic time-lines for completion of this goal?
- Are there people can help support us to meet this timeline?



**Action Plan Goal:**

What values does this goal support growing and how does this connect with *How Does Learning Happen?*

What other possible outcomes may happen as a result of this goal?

### Planning for Success

<b>What resources, tools and supports are needed?</b> <i>E.g. What opportunities for growth and development do you need to consider?</i>	<b>What are the indicators of success?</b> <i>E.g. How will you know when you have achieved your goal? What will you see happening?</i>	<b>What strengths can different staff members bring to achieving this goal?</b>

### Action Plan Steps

<b>What steps are needed to achieve this goal?</b> E.g. What professional development do you need to participate in? Who are the mentors that can help you?	<b>What are the estimated timelines to achieve each step?</b>

## Reflections and Next Steps

What were your successes in doing this action plan?

What did you learn? What do you want to learn more about?

Were there any outcomes as a result of executing this action plan that grew or changed your practice that supported quality programs for children? How is this visible within your program? What do you see?

How can this goal evolve as we move forward with new ideas?

Mentoring discussion notes:

Identified resources and supports needed: (books, training, communities of practice, etc.)

Mentor summary report completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### SAMPLE of an Action Plan

**Goal:** To determine phase 2 of preschool playground plan and successfully fund and implement with Ministry approval by spring 2017.

This action plan is based on parent and staff survey feedback. Parents wanted to see more opportunities for outdoor play and felt some of our equipment was getting dated and potentially unsafe. Staff felt we needed to consider the different areas we offer in our outdoor environment to support different areas of growth and development for children. Staff also felt that we needed to offer more opportunities for play based on nature items and loose parts.

What values does this goal support growing and how does this connect with *How Does Learning Happen?*

- Supports agency's values and beliefs in offering developmentally age appropriate early childhood curriculum that sets the foundations for life-long learning and health
- Supports agency's values and beliefs about the outdoor environment being just as important as the indoor environment and the belief that children need time in the outdoors each day
- Supports the overall sense of health and well-being of children as they are allowed to express themselves and engage in the environment freely

What other possible outcomes have happened as a result of this goal?

- By involving families in the process we supported their understanding of the importance of nature for children and are growing future stewards of the environment
- The beginning of developing long term community partnership relationships

<p><b>What resources, tools and supports are needed?</b>                      -e.g. <i>What opportunities for growth and development do you need to consider?</i></p>	<p><b>What are the indicators of success?</b>                      -e.g. <i>How will you know when you have achieved your goal? What will you see happening?</i></p>	<p><b>What strengths can different staff members bring to achieving this goal?</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-bring staff on board who have interest in nature and natural playgrounds</li> <li>-outdoor education training through the Lawson foundation</li> <li>-catalogues/websites for dreaming about ideas for playground creation</li> <li>-who can we approach in the community to support this project? (businesses, other community partners)</li> <li>-estimates and recommendations from nature playground companies</li> <li>-Early Learning and Child Care Act</li> <li>-media support</li> <li>-families to bring in items for yard sale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-families and staff offer input and are engaged in the project</li> <li>-plan is developed with a viable budget</li> <li>-support is given to project through donations/advertising, etc.</li> <li>-community partner relationships are developed</li> <li>-funding is approved and received</li> <li>-predetermined (10%) of money raised through fundraising</li> <li>-Phase 2 of our outdoor play space is installed, approved by the Ministry of Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-ED for large vision of organizational planning and long term goal setting skills</li> <li>-program supervisor to support Ministry guidelines and finer details of the project</li> <li>-staff who have participated in outdoor training and have demonstrated an interest in nature play (Jenny, Collin, Tammy)</li> <li>-families who have an interest in this project</li> <li>-Board treasurer for financial input and skills</li> </ul>

## Action Plan

<b>Steps to be completed (Sample)</b> E.g. What professional development do you need to participate in? Who are the mentors that can help you?	<b>Timeline for completion</b>
- seek input from staff , families and children on what materials, equipment and environment changes they would like to see in phase 2 of playground expansion	- September 2016
- from this feedback develop phase 2 plans and cost out a budget	- November 2016
- seek donations, found materials and engage community partners	- January 2017
- apply for funding	- January 2017
- hold a fundraiser yard sale	- April 2017
- installation of phase 2	- June 2017
- ministry approval	- June 2017
- grand opening and celebration	- July 2017
- continue to seek feedback from staff, families and children on how phase 2 is working	- Ongoing

## Reflections and Next Steps

### **What were your successes in doing this action plan?**

- Phase 2 of our playground expansion has been implemented and used by the children on a daily basis
- New partnerships were developed with Home Depot and Camp Kawartha
- Families are using the playground on the weekends
- Staff and families took ownership and demonstrated leadership

### **What did you learn? What do you want to learn more about?**

- The importance of involving the whole team in planning
- How to build consensus when doing long range planning
- We would like to continue to explore other community partners both in fundraising and friend raising we might approach and build relationships with

### **Were there any outcomes as a result of executing this action plan that grew or changed your practice that supported quality programs for children?**

- As we planned the new playground, we discussed the relationship we wanted to encourage with children and nature which made us rethink the spaces and materials used
- We now offer more loose parts that have changed how children use the space. We have observed more ownership from the children; increased creativity and problem solving skills
- The space now also offers different spaces for engagement. Active spaces, quiet areas, etc. which speaks to children's different needs and temperaments

### **How can this goal evolve as we move forward with new ideas?**

- We still have more work to do on our playground so this process has helped determine a good framework for playground remodelling and expansion as we look to the future

## Section D: Resources and Research

- How Does Learning Happen?
- Think, Feel, Act, Lessons from Research about Young Children
- Early Learning Framework
- Ministry of Education Videos
- College of ECE

## Resources

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- *How Does Learning Happen?*; Ministry of Education  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/HowLearningHappens.pdf>
- *How Does Learning Happen? An Introduction for Leaders*; Ministry of Education  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/LeadersEn.pdf>
- Think, Feel, Act: Lessons from research about young children; Ministry of Education  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/ResearchBriefs.pdf>
- Videos on Early Learning Practices; Ministry of Education  
Positive Relationships and Brain Development  
Pedagogical Leadership  
Pedagogical Documentation  
Inclusion  
Parent Engagement  
Learning Environments  
Self-Regulation  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/research.html>
- Early Learning Framework; Ministry of Education  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/oelf/>
- Videos: Principles of the Elect  
Observation and Documentation  
Learning Environments  
Continuum of Development  
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/oelf/>
- College of Early Childhood Educators  
<https://www.college-ece.ca/en>

## Section E: Appendix

- Appreciative Inquiry Lens
- Leadership Lens
- Action Plan Template