



# *Early learning in Ontario— child care and full-day kindergarten*

**Jim Grieve, Assistant Deputy Minister  
Early Learning Division  
Ontario Ministry of Education  
September 10, 2012**



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# Vision for early learning in Ontario



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# Ministry of Education is responsible for child care



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# Child care in Ontario



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# Child care—by the numbers



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# Child care options in Ontario



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# Child care **funding**

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# Legislation and policy



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**57**  
**First Nations**  
receive funding  
for on-reserve  
child care  
centres



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# Child Care Modernization



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# Full-day kindergarten for four and five year olds



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Year 1—  
35,000 four and  
five year olds  
across Ontario  
enrolled in full-  
day kindergarten

15%



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About 50,000 children  
in full-day kindergarten  
in 2011-12 (year 2), 20%




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**Full-day kindergarten offered in about  
2,000 classrooms in nearly  
800 schools in 2011-12**



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September 2012:  
1,700 schools offer the program to **49%** of  
kindergarten students—about **122,000** children



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# Full-day kindergarten will be fully implemented by September 2014



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# Average class size of 26 children with 2 adults



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# Certified teacher and registered early childhood educator work as a team



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# Play based learning



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2010-11

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# The Full-Day Early Learning – Kindergarten Program

*Draft Version*



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# Curriculum

- play-based learning
- investigation
- exploration
- guided and explicit instruction







*Play is the highest form of research*  
- Albert Einstein



**cmeC**

Council of  
Ministers  
of Education,  
Canada

Conseil des  
ministres  
de l'Éducation  
(Canada)

## CMEC Statement on Play-Based Learning

At the recent World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education, organizers, keynote speakers, scientists, experts, and political figures underscored the enormous benefits of early learning.<sup>1</sup> CMEC agrees with this position and believes that purposeful play-based early learning sets the stage for future learning, health, and well-being.

### *Learning through play is supported by science.*

The benefits of play are recognized by the scientific community. There is now evidence that neural pathways in children's brains are influenced and advanced in their development through exploration, thinking skills, problem solving, and language expression that occur during play.

Research also demonstrates that play-based learning leads to greater social, emotional, and academic success. Based on such evidence, ministers of education endorse a sustainable pedagogy for the future that does not separate play from learning but brings them together to promote creativity in future generations. In fact, play is considered to be so essential to healthy development that the United Nations has recognized it as a specific right for all children.<sup>2</sup>

### *Learning through play is supported by experts.*

### *Learning through play is supported by children and parents.*

Learning through play is supported by children. It is their natural response to the environment around them. When children are manipulating objects, acting out roles, or experimenting with different materials, they are engaged in learning through play. Play allows them to actively construct, challenge, and expand their own understandings through making connections to prior experiences, thereby opening the door to new learning. Intentional play-based learning enables children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems, and engage in critical thinking. Play is responsive to each child's unique learning style and capitalizes on his or her innate curiosity and creativity. Play-based learning supports growth in the language and culture of children and their families.

### *When children are playing, children are learning.*

Given the evidence, CMEC believes in the intrinsic value and importance of play and its relationship to learning. Educators should intentionally plan and create challenging, dynamic, play-based learning opportunities. Intentional teaching is the opposite of teaching by rote or continuing with traditions simply because things have always been done that way. Intentional teaching involves educators being deliberate and purposeful in creating play-based

# Integrated extended day program complements the core day



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Where there is sufficient enrolment,  
boards offer **before and**  
**after school programs** on a  
**cost-recovery** basis




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Municipalities administer  
fee subsidies  
for before and after  
school programs



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Children with **special needs** or special education needs will continue to receive services for which they are eligible, while attending full-day kindergarten




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# Program evaluation



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# Is grade 1 ready for full-day kindergarteners?

SCHOOL



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# More information

[www.ontario.ca/kindergarten](http://www.ontario.ca/kindergarten)



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## FULL-DAY KINDERGARTEN



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## Full-Day Kindergarten

Nearly 600 schools currently offer full-day kindergarten. It will be offered in more than 800 schools in 2011. [Search for a list of schools](#) that will offer full-day kindergarten in your area.

## What and who





# More information

[www.ontario.ca/childcare](http://www.ontario.ca/childcare)



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### See also:



**Full-Day Kindergarten and Child Care**

[Learn more](#)

**Child Care Professionals**

[Information that can help you](#) in your work.

Early Learning Framework

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- ▶ Principles
- ▶ Observation and Documentation
- ▶ Learning Environments
- ▶ Continuum of Development

Learning in Ontario

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- ▶ French-Language Education
- ▶ Postsecondary
- ▶ Adult Learning

Employment Ontario

Popular Topics



E-MAIL PRINT

### What is the Early Learning Framework?

The Early Learning Framework is a guide to support early childhood programs in Ontario. With six distinct principles, the Early Learning Framework provides a shared language and understanding of child development. The goal is to support you, early childhood educators and other early learning practitioners, as you work in early childhood settings.

The Early Learning Framework is based on research and perspectives from diverse fields of knowledge. It recognizes the distinct values held by families, communities, and cultures. It complements most curriculum approaches. The framework is a dynamic document that will continue to evolve as it is used by those who work with and care for young children.



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