



ARCQE Policy Packages Now Available!

ARCQE is pleased to offer the Early Learning and Care Service Sector Policy packages, which have been designed to assist in creating and reinforcing the policy writing and renewal process. Our current topics address areas of Program & Administration which to date include policies relating to:

Program

Adult/Child Interactions - Establishing a policy supportive of positive adult/child interactions ensures that the level of practice among providers/caregivers within an agency/centre meets a consistent standard. Also, having a formal written policy on adult/child interactions provides a greater means of monitoring and maintaining a consistent high standard of practice.

Child Guidance - All staff in an Early Learning and Care setting play a significant role in supporting and assisting children to develop positive social and problem solving skills. The child guidance policy focuses on guiding a child's behaviour as opposed to punishing/disciplining a child.

Establishing Meaningful Partnerships With Families - It has long been recognized that the family has the primary responsibility for raising its children and is the major influence on their well-being and development. With continuous evolving societal norms, Early Learning and Care programs have assisted families in this important role. Everyone benefits from such a meaningful partnership – the family, the program and, most of all - the child.

Establishing The Daily Schedule - Establishing the daily schedule in each Early Learning and Care program is a critically important task facing Caregivers/Providers. This schedule provides the framework for the children's day, setting the stage for their learning/development as well as their enjoyment of the experience away from home. When the schedule is developmentally appropriate for the specific group of children and carried out consistently, children gain a sense of predictability and security which leads to a trust in their environment. This greatly contributes to the child's as well as the adult's overall satisfaction with their experience together.

Facilitating Inclusion - Over past decades, many changes have taken place relating to how society views children with special needs and the variety of ways in supporting them and their families. Quality Early Learning and Care programs strive to meet the needs of all the children in their care. When a child with specialized needs joins the group, considerations must be made to ensure that s/he can be included as an active participant in all aspects of the program. When an Early Learning and Care program has a sincere desire to be inclusive to all children, it embraces with hope the changes that it may be required to make, the partnership that will develop with the child's family, and the collaboration with other community resources.

Reflecting Cultural Competencies In Practice - Early Childhood Educators know the importance of providing an environment with experiences that positively enhance children's developing self-esteem. However, children's ethnic identity is an integral part of this development. It is critical, therefore that programs ensure children and their families feel valued, respected, and see aspects of themselves reflected within the Early Childhood setting. When staff design and carry out a program that reflects cultural diversity of children, their families and the larger community, they weave cultural sensitivities throughout all aspects routines, environment, daily experiences, support to families as well as policies. The benefits are many.

Supervision Of Children - The Caregivers/Providers primary responsibility is to ensure that the children in their care are protected from harm - that they are physically as well as emotionally safe. This allows children to fully explore their world and gain mastery over it. Quality programs for young children clearly articulate the role of the Caregiver's /Provider's in supervising children and ensuring that all staff effectively carry out this role.

Use of Technology Materials In Programs For Young Children - In recent years, many Early Learning and Care programs have been impacted by increased quantity as well as variety of technological materials that are available. This has necessitated a need for careful examination of use of technological materials in programs for young children.

Administration

Compensation - In a policy about how employees are paid it is important to state: the frequency they will get paid (for example, bi-weekly or monthly), information on deductions (Employment Insurance, CPP, for which benefit premiums, etc.) and the method of payment (for example, cheque or direct deposit). The policy may mention where employees can direct concerns about pay. Alberta Employment Standards provide guidelines about pay administration.

Grievance - The grievance policy should clearly outline who reports to whom, and what method an employee uses to settle and resolve a complaint. It provides the employee an acceptable and effective means in bringing forward concerns and complaints regarding their work environment to the appropriate level of the organization. Every employee has a right to have information about the correct procedure for bringing concerns forward. It should include both informal and formal procedures to resolve conflict.

Hours Of Work & Overtime - Your policy should include clearly stated expectations about hours of work and breaks, and information about overtime. Some organizations cover both hours of work and overtime in a single document; others separate them. Alberta Employment Standards sets a “standard work week”, which establishes when employees are to be paid at an overtime rate.

Performance Review and Supervision - Performance review and supervision is an integral part of overall organizational management. It should relate employee work performance and achievements to the operational and strategic functioning of the organization. While historically the focus of the review was on past performance, often used for the sole purpose of compensation decisions, today best practice performance review and supervision (management) focuses on ongoing employee performance improvement and professional development. While establishing a performance review policy is not a legal requirement, Human Rights Codes require employers to treat employees equitably and fairly, without discrimination. A well designed, documented and implemented performance review policy can serve to both ensure, and demonstrate, objective and fair decision-making regarding compensation, promotion, disciplinary action and termination.

Professional Development - Providing employees with training and development opportunities not only contributes to the quality and effectiveness of your organization it also serves to motivate and retain employees. When establishing an employee development policy you need to consider both the financial and human resource capacity of your organization to support employee training and development.

Termination and Discipline - Your policy should clearly introduce and outline disciplinary procedures. It should provide examples of what type of action would result in an instant dismissal. The importance of consistent and objective application, clear communication and detailed documentation (date, actions taken, relation of behaviour to job, etc) needs to be included.

Vacation - Vacation is annual paid time off for employees. There are minimum standards for paid vacation. Your policy may exceed the minimum standards allowed in the law. Vacation policies tend to cover employee’s eligibility for vacation with pay, length of vacation (typically longer with more years of service), how vacation time can be taken (all at once, one week at a time, etc) ,vacation pay (how much, and when employees receive it).

Cost

Each package includes a policy rationale, minimum standards requirements, enhanced standards & practice relating to Accreditation, open-ended questions to facilitate policy development that reflects individual program dynamics, & supporting resources. Policy packages retail @ **\$25.00 each for centres who hold a Resource Access Pass card** or at the **Standard fee of \$35.00 each**. ARCQE also sells custom-sized binders to fit 8.5 x 14” policy documents which allows programs to collect packages as further become available & store for easy access & use. Binders retail @ \$18.00.

Watch for new policies being released on an ongoing basis. For more information on ARCQE resources contact our office at (780) 421-4930 or toll free at 1-866-429-4930 or on our website @ www.arcqe.ca