



Section 11
Parental Involvement



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Parental Involvement

This section explains the responsibility of a facility to involve parents in the overall direction of the facility.

It also looks at the things that operators could do to ensure that parents are welcome and involved in the early childhood program and overall operation of the facility.

It also recommends when a parent *is not allowed* to access a child, or visit or participate in the program.

Throughout the regulations, and this manual, the word “parent” includes guardians.

11

47(1)

An operator who is a non-profit organization controlled by a board of directors shall ensure, and confirm in writing to the Director, that

- (a) A majority of the members of the board of directors are the parents or guardians of children attending the child day care facility; or
- (b) The board of directors has established a day care committee, the majority of whom are parents or guardians of children attending the child day care facility.

Regulation 47(1)

Parental Involvement For Centre Child Day Care Facilities

Why

- To ensure parental involvement in:
 - decisions affecting the early childhood program, and/or
 - the operation of the facility

What it means

- As part of the *Application for a License*, the license applicant must include a written description of how parents will be involved in the decision making of the facility (board or parental committee).
- If the facility is run by a board whose only function is to oversee the daycare, then the board must be made up of mostly parents of children attending the facility. Other community members are allowed on the board, but there must not be more community members than parents.
- If the facility is run by a larger organization that has a board (or council), then there must be a committee made up of parents of children attending the facility that will take concerns and suggestions for the facility to the larger board.

How

- Encourage all parents to attend the Annual General Meeting and volunteer to be a member of the board of directors.
- Hold regular board of directors meetings so that the facility operations are well maintained.
- Being a board or committee member is one opportunity for parents to become involved, but it should not be the only one.
- Don't micromanage the operation of the child care facility. Hire competent staff, and support them, but let them do their jobs.

47(2)

An operator who is an individual or who is providing a family home day care service shall establish, and confirm in writing to the Director, a means of involving the parents or guardians of children attending the child day care facility.

Regulation 47(2)

Parental Involvement For Family Home Day Care

Why

- To ensure parental involvement in:
 - decisions affecting the early childhood program, and/or
 - the operation of the facility
- To ensure that parents are welcome to visit and participate in the daily program

What it means

- As part of the *Application for a License*, the license applicant must include a written description of how parents will be involved.

How

- Write a parental involvement policy that outlines opportunities for parents to be part of their child's day care experience.
- In general, the larger the family home day care, the more opportunities there should be for parents to be involved both in the operation of the facility and in delivery of the daily program.
- Invite parents to become involved by approaching them directly. Some parents will not volunteer on their own, but if they are specifically asked to do something many of them will.
- Involve parents through:
 - sharing cultural traditions
 - telling stories or sharing a craft or skill
 - collecting/providing materials for crafts (e.g., egg cartons, magazines)
 - assisting with field trips
 - having the opportunity to provide feedback or an evaluation

Recommended

An operator should develop a policy that encourages parents of a child attending the facility to visit the facility and participate in the delivery of the daily program. The policy should also include when parents may not be allowed to visit or participate.

Recommendation

Parental Involvement Policy

Why

- To ensure that parents are welcome to visit and participate in the daily program
- To clearly state the conditions when parents are not permitted to visit the facility or participate in the daily program

What it means

- The operator must welcome and encourage parents to visit the facility and participate in the delivery of the daily program *except*:
 - when a court order or agreement limits or prevents access. If there is a court order that limits parental access the order will specify the conditions – for example, the parent may visit only when a social worker is present.
 - when there are concerns based on a past visit, and the Director has been notified, *and* the Director agrees that a parent should not be allowed to visit or participate.

How

- Encourage parents to look at the daily schedule to see where they might want to participate or watch.
- Invite parents for certain activities – such as reading or telling stories, sharing a skill, assisting with field trips, on-the-land activities, or fun days.
- Give parents a clearly defined role, and if there are things you don't want them to do, such as changing diapers, then make that clear too.
- Make sure staff know what parents are supposed to do and not do.
- Other ways for parents to be involved include:
 - establishing goals and objectives for the early childhood program
 - establishing program policies
 - overseeing financial operations
 - handling complaints
 - hiring staff
 - supporting staff
 - serving on committees, such as a Parent Advisory Committee
 - volunteering to help at the facility
 - sharing cultural traditions

- telling stories or sharing a craft or skill
- fundraising
- assisting with field trips/outings
- writing a newsletter or blog
- maintaining a website for the facility
- assisting with administrative tasks – e.g., filing
- collecting/providing materials for crafts – e.g., egg cartons, magazines
- having the opportunity to provide feedback or an evaluation
- Make sure that all staff are aware of any court order or agreement that limits or prevents a parent or other person from accessing a child.
- Develop a policy for parent's behaviour in the facility. If a parent with limited or no access arrives at the facility or tries to access the child in any way, this should be treated as a serious emergency.
- It may be hard to decide that a parent should not visit. As a rule you should expect parents to behave in ways that are similar to how you expect staff to behave. Inappropriate behaviours include:
 - comments such as put downs, swearing and temper outbursts,
 - comments that are suggestive or racist,
 - behaviours such as being under the influence of alcohol or physically punishing a child.

These behaviours would not be allowed by staff and they should not be allowed by a parent either.
- During a visit, if a parent behaves in such a way that you have concerns about them visiting again, speak to the parent in private – be specific about what they said or did that is the concern, and tell them what you expect during future visits.
- Talk to the Regional Early Childhood Officer about limiting future parent visits.
- If inappropriate behaviour by a parent continues or is such that you do not want them to visit again:
 - document, in writing, the visit and your concerns about the parent visiting again,
 - share your concerns with the Regional Early Childhood Officer who will communicate them to the Director,
 - ask the Director to support your decision,
 - make sure all staff are aware that a parent is not allowed to visit or participate in the delivery of the daily program.

