Full Day Kindergarten

Program Guide

BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Best Place on Earth

Contents

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Introduction

This guide was created to support teachers, principals, and others in creating high quality full day programs for Kindergarten students. It sets expectations for full day Kindergarten programs in British Columbia, summarizes current research findings, and suggests effective practices that can be put to immediate use in schools and Kindergarten classrooms. This guide is designed to help educators ensure that Kindergarten students benefit from experiences that reflect current knowledge about children's learning and development.

This guide builds on the philosophy of *The Primary Program: A Framework for Teaching* (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/primary_program/), and shares a vision of children as presented in the *British Columbia Early Learning Framework* (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/early_learning_framework.htm).

The British Columbia Early Learning Framework views young children as capable and full of potential; as persons with complex identities, grounded in their individual strengths and capacities, and their unique social, linguistic, and cultural heritage. In this image, children are rooted in and take nourishment from a rich, supportive ground, comprised of relationships with their families and communities, their language and culture, and the surrounding environment. As children grow and learn, they ask questions, explore, and make discoveries, supported by these roots and branching out to new experiences, people, places, and things in their environment. Within this complex ecology, every child belongs and contributes.

In putting forward an image of a capable child, full of potential, it is recognized that children differ in their strengths and capabilities, and that not all children have the same opportunities to develop their potential. However, a strong image of the child can inspire people who interact with children to promote their individual strengths, and to address conditions in children's environments — locally, provincially, and globally — that constrain opportunities to engage fully in early learning. (British Columbia Early Learning Framework, p. 4)

By 2011, full day programs will be available for all children of Kindergarten age in British Columbia. Until the 2010/11 school year, the Province only funded full day programs for certain populations, and boards of education could decide whether to offer them to Aboriginal students, English as a second language (ESL) students, and certain categories of students with special needs. To be eligible for full day Kindergarten funding, schools were previously required to offer programs designed specifically to address the needs of these students. In addition to the regular half day Kindergarten curriculum, these students received an additional half day of programming focussed on meeting their diverse needs.

As full day Kindergarten is expanded to all eligible children, it is important to preserve the promising practices from the pre-existing full day programs. The new full day program should continue to address the specific learning needs of these three populations.

- **Aboriginal Students**

  Regarding Aboriginal Kindergarten students, school districts and independent school authorities should acknowledge the valuable experiences for Aboriginal children in current full day Kindergarten programs. They should consider Local Education Agreements and Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements and avoid diminishing the unique aspects of existing full day Aboriginal Kindergarten such as language and culture enhancement (see Aboriginal Education at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/).

  As they plan, boards of education and independent schools should be mindful that Aboriginal full day Kindergarten was initially designed to provide a welcoming atmosphere for students and families and a solid, culturally relevant base for academic growth. Learning about indigenous culture and history at an age-appropriate level in Kindergarten gives Aboriginal children a richer understanding of their province and community, and provides them with a sense of place and belonging in their school.

  Boards of education are encouraged to consult Aboriginal communities in the development and delivery of their full day Kindergarten programs. Targeted Aboriginal education funding should be used to support culturally relevant learning opportunities for Aboriginal Kindergarten students. (See Aboriginal Education resources, including *Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10,* at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/documents.htm)

- **ESL Students**

  For students from homes where languages other than English are spoken (ESL or French as Second Language, FSL, for students enrolled in the Conseil scolaire francophone), many schools have provided full day Kindergarten programs that emphasize ESL services. ESL services overall have grown in magnitude and complexity to match increasing numbers of students and shifting immigration patterns. As a result of these shifts, many students are unfamiliar with the English alphabet and with Canadian traditions, history, culture, education systems, and lifestyles. ESL services therefore focus both on teaching English and providing an orientation to the cultures of British Columbia. (See www.bced.gov.bc.ca/esl/ for more information on ESL.)

- **Students with Special Needs**

  Kindergarten students with complex special needs are particularly vulnerable when they enter school. Early intervention is important for these learners, and these interventions can be more intense in a full day Kindergarten program. As full day Kindergarten is expanded, school districts, independent school authorities, and schools should consider how best to serve each individual student with special needs to ensure their full participation in a community of learners with interventions to support their learning. (See www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ for more information on students with special needs.)

As British Columbia expands its Kindergarten to full school day, many families will still need before and after school programs. Access to high quality early learning and care for these children will have a positive impact on their learning. School districts and independent schools are encouraged to address the needs of families by expanding access to before and after school programming as they expand Kindergarten. Children can benefit from a seamless day where additional early learning and care might take place right in their Kindergarten classrooms. Boards of education and independent school authorities can offer before and after school programs with user fees or work collaboratively with a provider.

Program changes such as expanding Kindergarten to full day can be both exciting and challenging. This guide is designed to help principals, teachers, and others as they meet the challenge of transforming Kindergarten into a full day program that benefits all British Columbia children. Additional resources for full day Kindergarten programs are available on the Ministry of Education's full day Kindergarten website: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/full_day_kindergarten.htm .

Section 1
The Purpose of Full Day Kindergarten

The purpose of full day Kindergarten is to enhance children's overall development — not to rush them into academics at an earlier age. The Province's decision to implement full day Kindergarten as part of a high quality education program was based on the considerable body of research demonstrating the importance of children's early years as the foundation for lifelong learning and success in school and beyond.

> *There is powerful new evidence from neuroscience that the early years of development from conception to age six, particularly for the first three years, set the base for competence and coping skills that will affect learning, behaviour and health throughout life.* (McCain & Mustard, 1999, p. 5)[1]

Full day Kindergarten can provide a range of benefits over and above those from half day programs largely because it allows more time for play based exploration and inquiry. These types of hands-on experiences are responsible for most of the cognitive growth that occurs in Kindergarten children.

In some half day Kindergarten programs, play based exploration and inquiry have been displaced by educators who feel time-pressed in meeting curriculum outcomes, including the important focus on emerging literacy. This has meant diminished opportunities to address other areas of learning and development — such as social-emotional and physical development — that are key to success in school and life.

British Columbia's Prescribed Learning Outcomes for Kindergarten remain in place for full day programs. The intent is not to add additional outcomes for Kindergarten, but to allow teachers more time to foster children's learning towards all the Prescribed Learning Outcomes, and in the five areas of development included in *The Primary Program: A Framework for Teaching:* aesthetic and artistic development, emotional and social development, intellectual development, physical development and well-being, and development of social responsibility.

Full day Kindergarten provides more time for children to

- engage in developmentally and culturally appropriate experiences that foster their learning and development in all areas
- learn through exploration and play, indoors and outdoors
- experience opportunities that foster their social-emotional learning, self-regulation, and positive relationships with teachers and peers
- engage in enriched experiences that facilitate conceptual, cognitive, and language growth, and foster inquiry
- learn about their local communities and cultures, and the natural environments in which they live
- participate in learning activities that extend beyond the school, such as neighbourhood and nature walks, and visiting the local library.

The extended day provides teachers with increased opportunities to support children's learning through

- interacting with children individually and in small groups, including facilitating their play
- providing children with individual attention and support for learning
- providing deeper exploration of topics related both to the curriculum and emergent curriculum based on children's interests
- conducting authentic, developmentally and culturally appropriate assessment
- communicating with children's families and communities.

> *Kindergarten can be considered as much a part of early child development as part of the education system. Ideally, early child development programs and the school system should be part of a continuum for children that extends from the early years through to adulthood. The brain develops in a seamless manner and what happens in the first years sets the base for later learning in the formal education system.* (McCain & Mustard, 1999, p. 18)[1]

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS
Benefits of Full Day Kindergarten

Early childhood programs have proven to be good investments, yielding both human and economic returns. Many countries have made early child development a high priority. Canadian scholars Margaret Norrie McCain, Fraser Mustard, and Stuart Shanker argue that effective programs available to all children improve the well-being of society by reducing inequities, particularly in health and education.[3]

Compared to half day programs, research shows that full day Kindergarten results in

- *higher achievement in later grades*
- *greater developmental competence and less frustration in children*
- *more positive pro-social and behavioural outcomes*
- *more time for instruction and practice*
- *greater parent/caregiver involvement and satisfaction*
- *benefits to all children regardless of socio-economic status[3]*
- *lower child care costs and fewer transportation difficulties for parents/caregivers.*

Studies comparing full and half day programs reveal that full day Kindergarten benefits both academic learning and social skills development.[6, 7, 8, 9] In comparison to half day Kindergarten, full day programs provide more time and opportunities for experimenting with language, exploring topics in depth, and creating more flexible learning environments. Children also have more interactions with the teacher and spend less time in large group instruction.[4, 5]

Cryan and colleagues found a broad range of positive effects for full day programs, including later academic success.[10] They also found that, compared to students in half day programs, full day Kindergarten children showed more independence, more active participation, and a greater ability to reflect on their thinking and learning. Full day students also demonstrated less anger and shyness, more willingness to approach the teacher, and more positive behaviours than half day students. Similar results are reported by other studies.[11, 12]

Elicker and Mathur's two-year experimental study of full and half day Kindergarten classes in Wisconsin found that students' progress was rated significantly higher in full day programs after pre-existing differences were statistically controlled.[4] Another study, which tracked 17,600 Philadelphia students from Kindergarten to Grade 4, found that those who had attended full day Kindergarten were 26 percent more likely to progress successfully, with higher achievement scores and report card marks, and better attendance than half day children by the end of Grade 3.[13] Children in full day programs also make more progress in knowledge of early literacy concepts by the end of Kindergarten and show improved reading achievement for the next four years.[14]

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS
Learning, Development, and the Brain

Early experiences have cumulative and delayed effects on children's development. Young children's cognitive, language, and motor development require active engagement with others, including regular opportunities to use their bodies and voices to interact. Through this interaction, they encounter new vocabulary and ways of using language to express emotions and ideas.

Rushton and Larkin identify the following brain principles that have significant implications for children's development and learning:[21]

Holistic learning

- *The brain is designed to process many inputs at once and prefers multi-processing.*[24]
- *When a child is engaged in a learning experience, a number of areas of the brain are simultaneously activated. For example, emotions, learning, and memory are closely linked as different parts of the brain are activated in the learning process. In addition, "the mental mechanisms that process music (and rhyme and rhythm) are deeply entwined with the brain's other functions, including emotion, perception, memory, and even language."*[23]
- *The simple act of reading a book may be one of the brain's most challenging tasks. Speech comes naturally, but reading does not.*[23]

Environments and learning

- *The brain is primarily designed to survive. No intelligence or ability will unfold until or unless given the appropriate model environment.*[27] *High levels of stress, or a perceived threat, will inhibit learning.*[28]
- *Each of the senses can be independently or collectively affected by environmental factors that in turn will affect the brain's ability to learn. Enriched environments increase dendritic branching and synaptic responses.*[26]
- *Children raised in non-academically oriented environments have little experience is using decontextualized language. They are more likely to reason with visual, hands-on strategies.*[25]

Neurological growth and development

- *Each region of the brain consists of a highly sophisticated network of cells, dendrites, and nerves — interconnected with the other brain regions. As children gain experience, their brains change physiologically, with new dendrites formed every day, attaching new information to prior experiences.*
- *Certain "windows of opportunity" for learning do exist. The brain's "plasticity" allows for greater amounts of information to be processed and absorbed at certain critical periods.*[22] *For example, the critical period for learning a first language is lost by about age 10.*[23]
- *The brain is designed to perceive and generate patterns. It has a primitive response to pictures, symbols, and strong, simple images.*[27] *These are the most powerful influences on learners' behaviour.*
- *Each brain is unique. Lock-step, assembly-line learning violates a critical discovery about the human brain: each brain is not only unique, but also is growing on its own timetable.*

Section 2
Characteristics of Kindergarten Children

Like all children, those of Kindergarten age are unique individuals with diverse linguistic, cultural, and experiential backgrounds, and different strengths, talents, abilities, and interests. Early learners are also unique in their movement along the developmental continuum, and teaching practices must be responsive to this wide variation.

Despite their differences, Kindergarten age children also share a number of common characteristics, particularly in relation to their capacity for learning.

Kindergarten children learn with their whole bodies, their minds, and their hearts. They learn best when

- activities are play based, involving exploration and inquiry, with hands-on activities that engage all their senses
- activities are developmentally and culturally appropriate
- environments provide for their social-emotional, intellectual, aesthetic, artistic, and physical development, and growth in social responsibility
- the adults in their world — teachers, families, school and community members — work together to support them.

These characteristics are related to the ways in which young children's brains are developing. Between the ages of three and eight, their frontal lobe networks — responsible for memory, problem solving abilities, and processing speed — are growing rapidly. By age six, the brain is 90 percent of its adult weight. By age seven, the prefrontal cortex, the "control centre" of the brain, is at its most dense. Synaptic connections in sensory and motor areas are firmly established, and pruning (the process of eliminating synapses) has begun. Because of the activity occurring in the higher brain control centres, this is a critical period for the development of executive functioning, with increasing cognitive flexibility, working memory, levels of attention, self-regulation, and ability to inhibit impulses.[2]

Although brain development may limit what is possible at a given age, Kindergarten children are natural learners, full of wonder and curiosity about the world. This provides the motivation and initiative required for the next steps in development.[15, 16, 17] Learning stimulates the development of new connections needed to accomplish a task.[18, 19] This physiological development is possible because of the brain's plasticity.

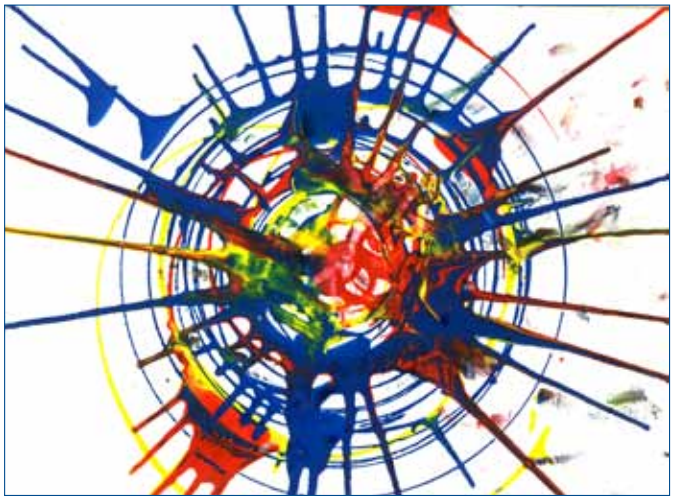
> *Plasticity, or neuroplasticity, is the lifelong ability of the brain to reorganize neural pathways based on new experiences. As we learn, we acquire new knowledge and skills through instruction or experience. In order to learn or memorize a fact or skill, there must be persistent functional changes in the brain that represent the new knowledge. The ability of the brain to change with learning is what is known as neuroplasticity.* (Chudler, 2009).[20]

Effective early learning programs are those that take full advantage of the brain's plasticity. Full day Kindergarten offers opportunities to support and enhance every aspect of children's development articulated in *The Primary Program: A Framework for Teaching:* aesthetic and artistic, emotional and social, intellectual, physical, and development of social responsibility. As discussed here, Kindergarten children are developing rapidly in all of these areas, creating a range of opportunities to meet Prescribed Learning Outcomes.

Aesthetic and Artistic Development

The arts provide unique opportunities for Kindergarten children to explore and express ideas and feelings, and to use imagination and creativity. Arts education activities appeal to all the senses, and children's engagement is integrated naturally. For example, they may respond to music through creative movement and to storytelling through dramatic play, while artistic representations of family and community support children's growing understanding of their own and others' culture.

Kindergarten children take great delight in experimenting with different art media and are not overly concerned with producing realistic likenesses. They are more interested in expressing their emerging concepts of self, family, friends, and other topics that engage them. During the Kindergarten year, many children develop a repertoire of graphic symbols for things in their environment, such as people, houses, and pets. Because these symbols are based on children's conceptual understandings rather than direct observation, they are often unique to individual children, which is appropriate to their level of development.



One of the notable changes that often occurs during Kindergarten is an increasing interest in representing objects in a more contextualized way. For example, children may move from representing objects that appear to float in space to using a baseline to position objects in relation to the ground. Some children will begin to use space and time representations to show events in order, such as a story or a sports game. In this way, visual art materials are not only tools for expressing ideas, but also tools for cognitive and conceptual development.

Emotional and Social Development

Kindergarten is a time in which children explore their own feelings, identities, and social relationships with others. Many will experience their first regular exposure to children who are different from them — culturally, socio-economically, or developmentally.

In the Kindergarten year, they will show significant social and emotional growth. While some children may appear shy at the beginning, they show increased confidence and become more active participants in class as they become more familiar with classroom routines, their teacher, and classmates. Some children may appear overly assertive in relationships with peers. For them, Kindergarten is a time for learning more appropriate ways of interacting with others.

Many Kindergarten children are also developing a sense of humour, and show delight in nonsense rhymes and playing with language. Many begin to take name-calling, teasing, and criticism seriously, and all children at this age have an opportunity to learn about the importance of understanding, accepting, and accommodating differences as part of their social and emotional development.

Intellectual Development

Kindergarten children are natural learners, full of wonder about the world and ripe for rapid intellectual development. Their cognitive growth comes primarily from hands-on experiences, exploration, investigation, and play rather than from listening to the teacher. Kindergarten children want to explore and figure things out. They ask a lot of questions, love to play guessing games, and have the capacity to learn concepts and become interested in symbols. They enjoy being read to in a variety of genres — stories, poems, and information books.

Kindergarten children's vocabulary and ability to express ideas are developing rapidly. They especially enjoy language play, rhymes, and learning new words. Oral language also plays a key role in constructing meaning and learning from experience. It allows children to move from the here and now of activity to construct conceptual understandings, generalizations, and theories about the world.[87]

Physical Development and Well-Being

Although children vary in physical development and abilities, most Kindergarten children are full of energy and enjoy physical activities. They are developing a sense of rhythm and enjoy activities accompanied by music, such as clapping, marching, and jumping.

By the age of five, children's physical growth slows down, allowing for the development of large and small muscle control. Eye coordination and other senses are still developing, and too much emphasis on fine motor activities and making precise visual discriminations may lead to frustration. Children at this age also need adult help to attain a balance between energetic and restful activities.

Development of Social Responsibility

The Kindergarten year is an important time to develop both independence and the ability to work cooperatively with others. At this age, children enjoy being trusted with responsibility, such as doing errands, bringing things from home, and helping solve practical problems. Although they may still see things from their own perspective, they are learning how to share, take turns, help one another, and show empathy toward others. In other words, they are developing a sense of social responsibility.

Section 3
Kindergarten Children's Learning

Teachers play a central role in enhancing children's development and learning. Teachers are intentional in everything they do. They create supportive learning environments, design and implement learning experiences and activities that engage children, and provide instruction and other kinds of support so that students can become successful independent and interdependent learners. Teachers apply the principles of learning and developmentally appropriate practices to meet the needs of diverse learners. These principles, while fundamental at all levels of education, are central to the Kindergarten program:

- Learning requires the active participation of the student.
- People learn in a variety of ways and at different rates.
- Learning is both an individual and a group process.

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS
Characteristics of Effective Kindergarten Programs

Kindergarten children learn best in programs that are intentional, planned, child-centred, inclusive, and adult guided. Program planning begins with knowledge and understanding of the diversity of individual learners' needs. The open-ended nature of effective Kindergarten programs emphasizes learning through inquiry and play and provides opportunities for children to interact with adults and other children.

Educators and researchers have reached a consensus that holistic early childhood approaches support children to develop emotional maturity, social competence, cognition, language skills, and physical well-being.[29, 30, 31] Research has not identified any single best approach within the child-directed/educator-guided continuum;[30, 32, 33] however, there is evidence that both laissez-faire and didactic approaches have their limitations.[33] Didactic approaches, dominated by direct instruction, scripted instruction, and a focus on a narrow set of literacy and numeracy skills, often produce positive effects over the short term, but these diminish over time. For example, Canadians Phillips, Norris, and Steffler investigated the effects of a prescriptive phonics program used in selected Kindergarten classes. In comparison to the control groups, children in the phonics program had poorer reading comprehension in Grade 3.[14]

Research also shows that teachers can have enormous influence on children's learning. An individual teacher can outweigh the effect of a particular approach[30, 40] and, in general, the quality of teaching in implementing a curriculum is more important than the curriculum itself.[30, 31, 40] Effective teachers use a variety of approaches that combine elements of educator-guided and child-directed activity.[41, 42]

Learning through Play

In playing, children express, explore, combine, and extend what they have learned about the sights, sounds, smells, and textures of the world around them; about the words, signs, symbols, and customs of their language and culture; and about their own and other people's thoughts, feelings, ideas, and sensations. In the play scenarios children invent and explore by themselves and with other children, they bring together everything they have learned and are wondering about. In play, children represent and transform the world around them, providing other children and adults with a window into their thoughts and perceptions, and often helping adults to see the world in new ways. (British Columbia Early Learning Framework, 2008, p. 12).

Much of children's early learning takes place through play. Play is so important that its significance in children's lives is recognized by the United Nations as a specific right. The positive emotions associated with play are as important as the skills children are building in creating a disposition to enjoy learning and to embrace it with confidence.

Play promotes healthy physical, intellectual, and social-emotional development in ways that cannot be achieved by focussing on narrow pre-academic skills, such as counting to 10 or

learning the alphabet. For example, when children play with blocks, sand, or water, they are learning the basis of logical and mathematical thinking, scientific reasoning, and cognitive problem solving. During dramatic play they are re-contextualizing what they have learned from personal experience or listening to stories. In symbolic play using literacy materials, they are deepening their understanding of the nature and purposes of written language.

During active play, children learn to have fun while being physically active. They have a chance to release their energy, display calmer behaviour during the day, and sleep better at night. During group play activities with their peers, children are building relationships, combining ideas, compromising, developing oral narratives, and learning to take the perspective of others — key elements of social competence, creative thinking, imagination, and emerging literacy.

To foster optimum development in all domains, children need two kinds of opportunities for play: child-initiated and teacher-initiated. These are described in detail in the pages following. Both opportunities contribute to the development of children's language skills, early literacy,[46] conceptual learning, problem solving, perspective taking, creativity, memory, and representational skills.[45] In both, the teacher or teacher assistant supports children to extend what they are doing and to make meaning as they engage in play activities. Teacher-supported play based programs have been shown to support children's self-regulation and academic learning more effectively than control classrooms that did not include any support from teachers.[61, 62, 63, 64, 65]

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS
Learning and Play

Play, when choreographed thoughtfully, is one of the most powerful learning contexts available. In the hands of a skilled Kindergarten teacher, play is a rich laboratory that can be used to teach multiple concepts simultaneously in a way that differentiates instruction. Two kinds of play are useful in Kindergarten — play initiated by children and teacher-initiated learning experiences guided by an adult. Through its less formal structure, play provides children with chances 1. to choose their own level of challenge, and 2. to be stretched by others in a low-stress opportunity. This is truly differentiation in action.[44]

Child-Initiated Play

In child-initiated play, children select and initiate their own activities from a variety of learning areas prepared by the teacher. Areas usually include dramatic play, blocks, science, math, games, puzzles, books, recordings, visual arts, and music. As children play they learn to interact with others, recognize and solve problems, and develop language, thinking, and motor skills.

Child-initiated play contributes to children's learning and development in the following ways:

Physical development and well-being

- Active play facilitates children's sensori-motor development.
- Active play contributes to children's overall health, and acts as a natural preventive for childhood obesity.
- Hopping, skipping, throwing and catching, climbing, running, jumping, and playing with balls, bats, hockey sticks, hoops, and ropes all contribute to children's gross motor skills development, and helps them support the physical education learning outcome to identify physical activities they enjoy doing.
- Fine motor skills develop as children engage in sand or water play (manipulating small objects and toys, measuring, pouring, sorting); playing house (dressing up in play clothes and shoes with different types of fasteners, using play cooking utensils and cutlery); building, stacking, and arranging blocks; using visual arts materials (pencils, felt pens, chalk, crayons, scissors, paint brushes and paint, sponges, modelling clay and dough, paper, tape, nature and found materials); and playing with puzzles.

Intellectual development

- Play contributes to healthy cognitive growth, the development of imagination and creative thinking, logical reasoning and problem solving skills, and memory.[2, 48, 49, 50]
- In dramatic play, children learn to use objects and actions symbolically, which is essential for language, literacy, and numeracy.[51, 52]
- Play and language both involve symbolic representation: language uses words to represent objects, actions, and situations, and in play children use language and objects to represent other things, such as a cardboard box for a tent. Socio-dramatic play fosters Kindergarten children's language development by nudging them to make intentional use of talk to identify and elaborate on play themes.[46]
- Play lays a foundation for future success in writing, reading and developing abstract scientific and mathematical concepts.[2, 48, 50] Active play — including recess — also contributes to children's academic achievement.[54]

Social-emotional development

- Social, make-believe play contributes to the development of cooperation, empathy, and impulse control, reduced aggression, and better overall emotional and social health.[50, 55] Appropriate rough-and-tumble play provides physical release. It also

facilitates pro-social cooperative attitudes and behaviour, and fosters friendships.[56] Playing games with rules (e.g., tag, board games) helps children adapt to social rules.[57]

- Play helps build social competence and confidence in interacting with peers.[59] Dramatic play, with its system of roles and rules — who does what and what is allowed — is the training ground where children learn and practise their developing self-regulation. Children are highly motivated to stick to the roles and rules that are part of the play.[52, 60]

  Child development experts argue that plenty of time for childhood play is one of the key factors leading to happiness in adulthood.[58]

Teacher-Initiated Play

In teacher-initiated play, children's activities are directed by the teacher or teacher assistant. This type of play can be facilitated through large group approaches that introduce new materials, ideas, and activities, which children can later explore on their own. Group learning needs to be systematic and sequenced, and may explore specific skills and concepts in areas such as literacy or mathematics.[124]

Educators can initiate play in various ways, from creating a thoughtful environment, to giving hints and prompts, to modelling what to do, to providing explicit instruction. For example, children's dramatic play can be stimulated by providing props and helping them create scenarios, expanding play roles, and developing written plans and rules that will govern their play.

Teacher-initiated group play fosters children's development in many ways, including the following:

Physical development and well-being

- Engaging children in music activities — such as playing musical instruments, doing finger plays, and participating in action songs and games — promotes fine motor development.
- Guided real-life activities such as cooking are beneficial as children pour, measure, and use spoons, ladles, tongs, etc.[66]
- Teacher-led games and activities that introduce new ways to move the body (e.g., dance, sports) or support exploration in movement contribute to children's physical development and well-being.[54]

Intellectual development

- Teachers can capitalize on language play to create opportunities that foster children's phonological awareness, such as rhyme, rhythm, onsets and rimes, and phonemic awareness.[46] Form and structure of language are transparent when children use language to communicate because they are focussing on the meaning.[67] In playing with language, however, the form and structure of language become apparent.

- Directing children to centres with theme related literacy materials and props increases writing and reading activity and furthers children's emerging knowledge of print.[68] Children often learn to recognize some words in the context of play, such as the words "blocks" and "sticks" in the construction centre.
- Teachers can provide rich experiences (e.g., field trips, stories) on which they may later base dramatic play scenarios. Props related to these experiences can encourage and extend dramatic play.
- When teachers gently enter children's dramatic play, they are able to nudge children's thinking to a higher conceptual level.[69]

Social-emotional development

- When teachers introduce games with rules (e.g., tag, soccer, board games), children learn cooperative interaction, important in promoting children's ability to adapt to social rules.[57] Playing as part of a large, coordinated group also helps to build a sense of community.
- Teachers help children learn to pretend by modelling different roles and helping children think about what might come next. Teachers don't direct all of the play; they step out once children get their pretend ideas going.

PRACTICAL POINTS

Supporting Play

(from ReadNow BC: Kindergarten Learning Project www.readnowbc.ca)

Stage	Role	Actions
Beginning — with direct support	The Model	showing, instructing, explaining, directing, making explicit, demonstrating, giving examples
Developing — with guided support	The Coach	structuring, sequencing, focussing, cueing, guiding, organizing, supporting
Applying — with minimal support	The Advisor	suggesting, reminding, promoting, monitoring, asking for elaboration
Extending	The Mentor	extending, stretching, wondering aloud, exploring, "what if-ing"

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS
Fostering Self-Regulation through Play

Self regulation is necessary in order for children to pay attention and learn in school. A growing body of research shows that intentional play experiences are highly effective in supporting the development of self-regulation in Kindergarten children. Research shows that embedding self-regulation in all classroom activities, especially play, works better than teaching self-regulation as a separate, stand-alone activity. In order for play to help children develop self-regulation, teachers need to plan for play, and have strategies for helping children develop play in the same way they work on letters and numbers.

Mature dramatic play naturally provides the three types of interactions that lead to self-regulation: regulation by others, regulation of others, and self-regulation. It is characterized by imaginary situations, multiple roles, clearly defined rules, flexible themes, extensive use of language, and extending the play over a period of time (even days). Picking up on the play theme requires creating play plans, reviewing, and revising.[125]

Further strategies to develop self-regulation and executive function include a daily planning and reviewing component. Meeting in a small group, each child decides what to do during work time — what area to play in, what materials to use, and who else will be involved — and shares this plan with an adult and possibly other children in his or her group. Work time is when children carry out their plans, alone and or with others, and then clean up. At recall time, they meet with the same adult and small group of children with whom they planned to share and discuss what they did and learned during work time.[80]

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS
Developing Children's Thinking Skills

Epstein[47] emphasizes the importance of planning and reflection in developing children's thinking. She suggests the following:

- *Make planning and reflection a regular part of the program day; at first, children will need more prompting to plan ahead and to engage in reflection.*
- *Make sure children can see the areas and materials in the room when they are planning so that they are more likely to choose a wider array of activities and materials over time.*
- *Ask children open-ended questions: A question like, "How will you build your town?" generally elicits more detail than one like "Will you use the wooden blocks?"*
- *Listen attentively to children's plans so that you can choose the most appropriate strategies to help them develop their ideas and carry them out.*
- *Interpret and expand what children do and say, and ensure that you have understood correctly.*
- *Support, accept, and extend all the ways children express their plans rather than criticizing or posing alternatives.*
- *Encourage children to elaborate on both their plans and their reflection on what they have done.*
- *Document children's plans: documentation (e.g., writing, drawing, and photography) helps children become more conscious of the process and value of planning and also helps them reflect on their experiences.*
- *Help children connect their plans and activities with their reflections: If children change their plans, teachers may ask, "Why did you make a different plan?" or "What made you think of doing that instead?" The intent is to encourage children to ponder their options, preferences, and problem solving strategies rather to force them to stick to one idea.*
- *Encourage children to carry over their activities to the next day. As children reflect on their experiences, they may recall problems they encountered or spinoffs they had not anticipated. As they consider these things, children can think about different solutions or ways to build on newly discovered interests the following day.*

Learning through Inquiry

Inquiry-based learning builds on Kindergarten children's innate curiosity and sense of wonder. Through inquiry, children are engaged in activities that help them actively pose questions, investigate, solve problems, and draw conclusions about the world around them. Questioning is at the core of inquiry based learning and drives the learning and teaching process. Through inquiry, children become researchers and do meaningful work, addressing questions that are interesting and relevant to them.

One of the advantages of full day Kindergarten is the increased opportunity to explore emergent curriculum, which capitalizes on children's innate curiosity and addresses many of the Prescribed Learning Outcomes for Kindergarten in a meaningful, integrated way. Emergent curriculum refers to the process of using the spontaneity arising in children's daily lives, together with teacher planning and guidance. The project approach is the way in which an emergent curriculum is carried out, and the terms "emergent curriculum" and "project approach" are often used interchangeably.

> *The key element of a project is that it is a research effort deliberately focused on finding answers to questions about a topic posed either by the children, the teacher, or the teacher working with the children.* (Helm & Katz. 2001, p. 1)[75]

Because projects are open-ended, children are more engaged and levels of difficulty can be adjusted, allowing for inclusion of children with special needs or use in combined grade classrooms. Projects provide numerous opportunities for children to practise observing, estimating, identifying, labelling, categorizing, classifying, and reflecting on new discoveries in order to make sense of the world.

EXAMPLE OF A KINDERGARTEN PROJECT

Animal Habitats

On a community walk, the children notice birds building a nest in a nearby tree. This observation begins a conversation about where animals live. The class then engages in a project on investigating neighbourhood animals and their habitats. Project activities might include

- *sorting and classifying pictures of neighbourhood animals*
- *reading stories and singing songs about the animals*
- *exploring traditional Aboriginal stories about local animals*
- *taking walks or field trips to observe animals with an emphasis on their habitats*
- *conducting library research on animals in the wild*
- *having students create, and share with their peers, a representation of the animal of their choice*
- *working with the students to create a habitat display (e.g., shoebox habitats).*

PRACTICAL POINTS
Making Children's Learning Visible

Much of the process of learning is ephemeral. Interests, skills, and abilities develop incrementally and, while we can often see evidence of outcomes, the actual moments during which Kindergarten children learn can be invisible to those outside the classroom. Recognizing this, many teachers have found effective ways to capture evidence of children's learning as it is occurring.

In British Columbia, this process is referred to as pedagogical narration. It involves observing, recording, and reflecting on ordinary moments, sharing observations with others, collectively building new meanings that make children's learning visible, linking the experience to the Prescribed Learning Outcomes, and incorporating documented learning into planning process.

Documenting evidence of learning in these ways serves a variety of purposes, including

- *creating a historical record of a child's learning, for example over the life of a project*
- *helping children become aware of their own thinking and learning*
- *allowing teachers to share a child's learning and show which outcomes have been achieved*
- *interpreting observations that form the basis for revisiting experiences*
- *informing parents and making them aware of their children's learning processes.*[77]

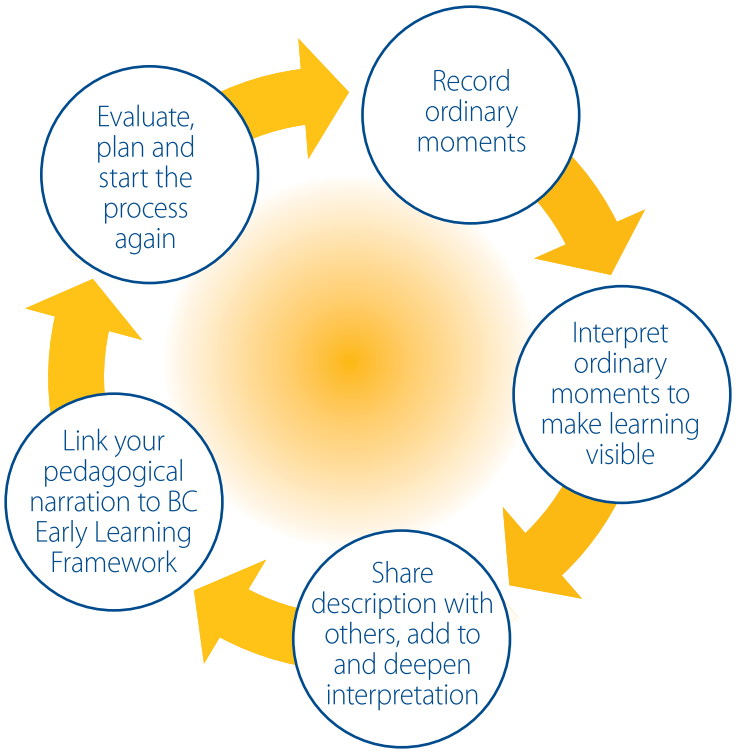
Pedagogical narration is discussed in greater detail in Understanding the British Columbia Early Learning Framework: From Theory to Practice, *available at* www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/pdfs/from_theory_to_practice.pdf

Similar approaches in other countries are known by different names. For example:

- Pedagogical documentation *is a process developed in Reggio Emilia, Italy and now used around the world. Teachers create visible records that can be revisited, reflected upon, and discussed. These include observational notes similar to "field notes" used in research, photographs of children engaged in play, video recordings of learning events, and artifacts such as samples of children's creations. In pedagogical documentation, the focus is on children's learning processes as they occur in naturalistic contexts. The documents are often organized into multimodal displays, constructed in collaboration with children.*
- Learning stories, *developed in New Zealand in the late 1990s, are narratives recorded by the teacher that describe significant learning episodes in children's everyday lives (learning in action) with a view to further their learning in subsequent experiences. The learning story is often accompanied by photographs and artifacts (such as a child's creation), and shared with children and their families. Learning stories begin with observation and documentation of children's learning and include a description of what occurred, an analysis or interpretation of the event, and ideas for future learning. A collection of learning stories can be used to create a portfolio of a child's learning processes during the Kindergarten year.*

Pedagogical Narration and the British Columbia Early Learning Framework: A Cyclical Process

(from *Understanding the British Columbia Early Learning Framework: From Theory to Practice*, p. 14)



Learning through the Natural Environment

Natural environments provide a perfect setting for children's holistic learning. School grounds, parks, beaches, and forests offer virtually unlimited potential for supporting children's development across all domains. For example, children can meet the Science Prescribed Learning Outcomes by making observations, describing and comparing local plants and animals, and considering ways to take care of the environment. At the same time, the activity of exploration can support their physical development, while building a relationship with nature can support the development of social responsibility.

Natural environments also provide a good opportunity to learn about culture. For example, all Kindergarten students can benefit from indigenous knowledge that emphasizes people's connectedness to the land, and promotes ideas such as respect and stewardship. Children's curiosity and questions about the environment can also stimulate inquiry based projects.

Learning through Community

Kindergarten learning can connect to the community in two ways: by including community members, such as Elders, in classrooms to interact with the children, and by taking children outside the school to experience community learning directly. In addition to strengthening children's sense of place and belonging in their neighbourhoods, connecting with the wider community can help children learn about the diversity of individuals and families, and demonstrate principles such as respect and inclusion.

For example, there is great diversity among BC's Aboriginal language groups, and all schools are located on traditional Aboriginal territory. Teachers can support students to explore ideas of culture and diversity by focussing on their local territory.

> *"Schools that acknowledge, accept, and teach a child's cultural heritage have significantly better success in educating students"* (Cleary & Peacock, 1998, p. 108).[78]

It is important not to assume that students are fully knowledgeable about the traditions and culture of their peoples. Parents, extended family, and other community members can be a great resource, as can school districts' Aboriginal education coordinators.

In general, teachers can encourage parents, extended family, Elders, and other community members to participate in Kindergarten learning experiences and become cultural resources for learning by

- welcoming family members to stay for part of a day
- encouraging them to become more involved as classroom helpers
- collaborating with families and community groups to plan educational goals for children
- inviting Elders to share their knowledge and expertise
- inviting families, caregivers, and community members to share lunch with children, share special events, and accompany children on neighbourhood walks, nature walks, and field trips.

Kindergarten children can also be active contributors to their schools and local communities by participating in environmental activities, such as schoolyard cleanup and recycling or visiting community Elders and seniors to celebrate special events and share their learning.

Assessing Children's Learning and Development

In Kindergarten, assessment begins as soon as children start school and continues in an ongoing, systematic way. Assessments embedded within the context of daily activities, and those affording children opportunities to represent their ideas and understandings in a variety of ways, provide authentic and reliable information. For more information see *The Primary Program,* Chapter 8, and Classroom Assessment Resources available at: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom_assessment/welcome.htm.

When assessing Kindergarten children's learning and development, the following should be considered:

- normal behaviour of young children is highly variable
- some children have spoken a language other than English at home, and may be experiencing the use of English as the main language for communication for the first time
- young children are not highly skilled in generalizing from one situation to another
- Kindergarten children may not be able to demonstrate what they know and can do clearly because of difficulties in responding or using pencils or other markers
- many children have not yet mastered the use of symbols, so formal assessments are unreliable measures of their learning
- young children may not be able to demonstrate what they know and can do clearly because of differences in language and culture, separation anxiety, or rapport with the examiner; this can distort results, especially with young children.[104]

Teachers can find assessment opportunities embedded in classroom learning activities, for example, observing children in the context of play and in project work. Teachers will also need to plan times for more in-depth assessment of specific Prescribed Learning Outcomes of the curricula.

The Kindergarten Learning Project, developed in collaboration with more than 1,200 BC educators, provides easy to use assessment materials for tracking Kindergarten children's growth in oral language, reading and viewing, writing and representing, numeracy, and social responsibility throughout the Kindergarten year. These resources (available at www.readnowbc.ca/klp.php) are based on developmental continuums and the BC curriculum. They can be used at several times during the Kindergarten year.

Other strategies for assessing and documenting young children's learning include pedagogical documentation and learning stories. Both are used widely in early childhood programs and have great potential in the Kindergarten context. "Practical Points: Making Children's Learning Visible," earlier in this section, offers more information on documentation techniques. Full day Kindergarten provides increased time to use these valuable tools.

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS
Age of Entry and Delayed Entry to Kindergarten

The positive relationship between Kindergarten entrance age and school achievement primarily reflects skill accumulation prior to Kindergarten, rather than a heightened ability to learn in school among older children. The association between achievement test scores and entrance age appears during the first months of Kindergarten, declines sharply in subsequent years, and is especially pronounced among children from upper income families, a group likely to have accumulated the most skills prior to school entry.[96]

Some parents and educators worry that later born children will be at an academic disadvantage compared to older children in the class. However, studies indicate that, although older children tend to do better initially, differences due to age are small and disappear with time.[96]

Research findings do not support delaying children's entry to school. By the end of the primary grades, children whose entry was delayed do not outperform children who began on time.[96, 102] *More importantly, delayed entry children are more often referred to special education, which means that special help they might need is also delayed a year.*[103] *In fact, the children who do not perform well on readiness assessments are among the most likely to benefit from full-time Kindergarten.*[104]

Kindergarten Entry and School Readiness

> *School readiness includes the readiness of the individual child, the school's readiness for children, and the ability of the family and community to support optimal early child development. It is the responsibility of schools to be ready for all children at all levels of readiness. … Our new knowledge of early brain and child development has revealed that modifiable factors in a child's early experience can greatly affect that child's learning trajectory.* (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2008, p. 1008)[88]

A basic principle of child development is that variability is the norm, with a wide range of abilities present within any age group. Some differences result from individual learner characteristics and some are due to experience.

An individual child's school readiness is determined in large measure by the environment in which he or she lives and grows.[3] "While there is no single definition of school readiness, experts agree that readiness is a multifaceted concept that goes beyond academic and cognitive skills to include physical, social, and emotional development, as well as approaches to learning."[89] Any discussion of school readiness, therefore, needs to take into account

- the diversity of children's early life experiences
- the wide variation in young children's development and learning
- the degree to which expectations of children entering Kindergarten are reasonable, appropriate, and supportive of individual differences.[90]

In British Columbia, children are eligible for Kindergarten in the calendar year they turn 5 years old. The Kindergarten program needs to be supportive of all children, whether they are still four years old or approaching age six when they start Kindergarten. Whatever culture, language, aptitudes, skills, and interests children bring to Kindergarten, it is the school's role to support all children's learning and development. In keeping with the Ministry of Education Special Education Policy, all students should have equitable access to learning, as well as opportunities for achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programs.

POINTS TO PONDER

Ready Schools

Readiness assessments typically focus on children, but readiness as a concept should also examine a school's readiness for children. Educators in British Columbia who wish to pursue this idea may want to consider resources such as Ready Schools (www.readyschoolassessment.org/):

> Ready Schools do all that is necessary to assure the success of every child. Readiness, for schools, is what the school staff and administrators know and do to help each child achieve grade level proficiencies across all areas of the curriculum: academic, social-emotional, and physical learning and development.

The Ready School web site includes tools to look at eight dimensions of what it means to be a ready school:

- *Leaders and Leadership — principal as advocate and leader*
- *Transitions to School*
- *Teacher Supports*
- *Engaging Environments*
- *Effective Curricula*
- *Family, School, and Community Partnerships*
- *Respecting Diversity*
- *Assessing Progress*

Principals play a critical role in creating successful Kindergarten programs. They can be strong leaders in ensuring quality programs by advocating for age-appropriate resources that teachers need for a rich, play based Kindergarten environment. Principals can encourage teachers in their efforts to link with families and the community and facilitate ongoing professional development.

> *High-caliber Kindergartens need educated administrators. Kindergarten savvy leaders get it — they understand the unique learning opportunities available in a Kindergarten context. Their job is to support these opportunities through capacity building, ensuring Kindergarten staff have the education and resources to do the job. It also will require them to support inclusion of sustained child-initiated activities (inside the classroom and on the playground) in every Kindergarten classroom daily.* (Graue, 2009, p. 15)[28]

Section 4: Planning Kindergarten Environments, Routines, and Schedules

The Kindergarten environment — including its physical, social and organizational attributes — can play a critical role in children's learning. Children feel more secure and learn more readily in programs that

- are well organized
- provide predictable routines
- have consistent expectations
- demonstrate mutual respect
- foster positive relationships with teachers and peers.

In these environments, Kindergarten children show greater self-control and engagement, and spend less time off task. All of these qualities are important for children's emotional, social, and intellectual growth. See *Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide* (BC Ministry of Education, 2008) for ideas about schools that foster a safe and supportive learning environment. The guide is available at: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/addressing_students_needs.htm.

> *When children are in environments where learning is occurring in a meaningful context, where they have choices, and where they are encouraged to follow their interests, learning takes place best.* (Singer, Golinkoff, & Hirsch-Pasek, 2006, p.9)[39]

Creating a Caring Classroom Environment

Learning requires initiative, persistence, and taking risks — venturing beyond what is known into the unknown. (For a detailed discussion, see *The Primary Program,* Chapter 2). Because it is an emotional process as well as an intellectual one, children need emotional support and encouragement. Kindergarten teachers' support of individual children engaged in learning activities increases their emotional security, persistence, and independence, especially for relatively insecure children.[108] When children experience positive relationships with their teacher, motivational support, and help for learning, they feel more competent and show more interest in school learning.[109]

Teachers create caring classrooms when they

- show interest in children's personal lives outside the school
- teach children social-emotional skills explicitly and help them apply these skills to everyday life in developmentally appropriate ways
- create classroom rules that recognize positive behaviour, such as cooperation, caring, helping, responsibility, encouragement, and support
- are clear, firm, fair, and consistent in applying rules and procedures.[111]

Children are active participants and contributors to the caring classroom. Supporting Kindergarten children's emotional development and social-emotional learning plays a significant role in helping them make and maintain friendships and build respectful and caring relationships. Children's abilities to form these relationships, especially establishing and maintaining friendships, are important not only for their successful transition to school, but also to their later school careers and life beyond school.[112, 113]

An important role of the Kindergarten teacher is to be sensitive to children's emotions, help them interpret their feelings, label them, and learn to regulate them in socially appropriate ways.[114] Effective ways to do this include talking about feelings, helping children problem-solve when conflict arises, and reading stories and discussing how the characters feel. This supports the Social Studies Prescribed Learning Outcomes for children to demonstrate ways of caring for their immediate environment.

RESEARCH DIRECTIONS
Effective Kindergarten Programs

Kindergarten children learn best in programs that are intentional, planned, child-centred, and adult guided. Program planning begins with knowledge and understanding of what children know and how they learn. Effective kindergarten programs emphasize learning through inquiry and play, and provide opportunities for children to interact with adults and other children.

Research summarized by the National Education Association (2006) identified multiple Kindergarten program factors that contribute to desirable learning outcomes, specifically

- *educational decisions based on age appropriateness and individual appropriateness*
- *a play oriented classroom environment*
- *a focus on all five domains of development*
- *active learning experiences*
- *projects that focus on developing the interests of the children*
- *opportunities for in-depth learning experiences*
- *opportunities for higher-order thinking*
- *cultural sensitivities specific to local communities*
- *independent opportunities to practise and apply knowledge and skills throughout the day*
- *varying types of instructional groupings, including one-to-one instruction*
- *multiple assessment strategies*
- *increased communication and collaboration with Grade 1 teachers and parents*
- *increased communication and collaboration with, and referrals to, community agencies.*[43]

Classroom Organization

Organizing the Kindergarten learning environment takes careful thought and planning. The room should reflect the children's needs and interests and support all domains of their development. Considerations should include:

- how the space is divided
- the types of activities it should accommodate
- ways to make the classroom age-appropriate.

To facilitate both individual and group play, the classroom should have tables rather than desks, an area for circle time and physical activities, and a wet area for science and visual art

activities whenever possible. An open environment allows children and adults to see all the possibilities of play, and enables children of all levels of ability to move safely and freely from one area of interest to another. A good view of the room will help the teacher supervise.

PRACTICAL POINTS
Making the Environment Inviting

Kindergarten environments are more inviting with the following characteristics:

- ***A comfortable atmosphere.*** *Soft areas with rugs and cushions will help children feel more comfortable and can also absorb the sound of noisy play.*
- ***Displays of children's artwork.*** *Displaying children's artwork in a variety of places that extend beyond the classroom into hallways, including at low levels, will enable children to see their creations.*
- ***Culturally relevant materials.*** *Materials should reflect the communities and cultures of the children in the class. To ensure these are authentic, teachers should consult with parents, other family members, and local cultural organizations, as well as with designated experts or advisors. For example, every BC school district has an Aboriginal Education coordinator who can provide information about local Aboriginal protocols, including any specific permissions that may be required to use or display cultural materials in the classroom.*
- ***Attractive and aesthetic appeal.*** *The Kindergarten environment should be appealing to the senses with colour, light, and textures. Both bright colours and pastels can be appealing, as well as soft and hard textures, but too many colours and textures can over-stimulate the senses and make it difficult for children to focus.*
- ***Open-ended activities.*** *Activities that are open-ended allow children to carry on their learning through multiple days and to add their personal interest to activities. Allow space for children to keep their long-term projects.*
- ***Varying levels of stimulation.*** *Ensure the environment has places for both noisy and quiet activities. Cozy, quiet spaces encourage intimate conversations among children and with adults and allow for calm interludes between more boisterous activities.*

Creating a Flexible Learning Environment

The learning environment should be flexible, recognizing that children learn holistically, and that individual learners have individual needs. Teachers should plan for an environment that engages children with a wide variety of abilities, learning styles, and preferences. Providing a variety of ways to access the curricula to meet various learning styles can help to provide the best outcomes for all learners, including those with special needs.

Flexible environments include the following:

Hands-on materials, which encourage children to use their imagination. In addition to blocks, visual arts materials, found materials such as sticks, cloth, boxes, and so on enhance children's learning through play.[81] Loose parts — anything that can be moved around, carried, rolled, piled, or combined, such as wood, containers, shapes, and so on — foster creativity and problem solving. Teachers may want to avoid the use of commercial toys that are linked to television shows or other adult-generated stories, as they tend to undermine children's own imaginative play.

Oral language, which plays a special role in nurturing children's capacity to express ideas and feelings, and to extend and shape their own thinking and learning. Language-rich environments provide children with chances to communicate, explore relationships, tell stories, ask questions, and shape the world around them. Teachers can encourage children to explore their rich linguistic potential by following a child's lead, responding in ways that are appropriate to the context and to the child's level of linguistic development, and elaborating and extending the child's language. It is also important to incorporate other approaches into oral language activities. For example, teachers may include icons and pictures, incorporate singing, make intentional use of body language or elements of signing, or include opportunities for physical engagement during oral instruction and storytelling.

Oral storytelling, which is a central part of BC Aboriginal cultures, allows children to share their experiences and to demonstrate their listening skills. It also helps to: sharpen their imagination, working memory, and visualization skills; enhance critical and creative thinking; increase vocabulary and understanding of unfamiliar words; improve listening and speaking abilities; spark an interest in reading; and develop greater understanding of their own and others' cultural heritage.[83] For example, teachers can provide opportunities for students to hear Aboriginal stories about the environment, traditions, and history by inviting Aboriginal Elders or storytellers into the classroom.

Literacy-rich classrooms surround children in environmental print such as calendars, schedules, signs, and directions to show how words are used purposefully in everyday activities. Collaboratively written texts from circle time and words of songs and poems can be written on charts and posted on the walls.

A library corner can be filled with books of different genres — stories, poems, information books, and magazines. Aboriginal stories about environment, traditions, and history can

also be included. Literacy materials can be available in learning centres. For example, information books can be provided in a science centre, and notepads and pencils in the house centre. A flexible Kindergarten environment supports the Language Arts Prescribed Learning Outcomes by providing opportunities for children to respond to literature in a variety of activities (e.g., role playing, visual arts, music, movement, choral reading, talking).

Numeracy develops when children are given opportunities to engage with early numeracy concepts such as classification, magnitude, enumeration, dynamics, pattern, shape, measurement, and spatial relations. Found materials such as buttons, beads, and small stones are useful for counting and sorting. Open-ended materials such as wooden blocks, tangram puzzles, measuring tools (cups, measuring tapes, scales), can be provided in a math centre, along with board games, card games to meet Mathematics Prescribed Learning Outcomes with a play based approach. Situating the math centre near the dramatic play centre encourages children to use math manipulatives in their play.

Physical activity enhances brain development, coordination, social skills, gross motor skills, emotions, leadership, and imagination. It also helps children build confidence and self-esteem, and learn to enjoy being active. Kindergarten children learn through all their senses, so the learning environment must accommodate hands-on, whole body learning and the physical activity needed for healthy development. Additional information on keeping students healthy is available on the Ministry of Education website at: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/keeping_students_healthy.htm.

Learning Centres

Learning centres are designated areas where materials are arranged to guide children's learning. Play at learning centres can be exploratory, with hands-on learning using sand, blocks, dress-up clothes, water, collections, paints, puzzles, musical instruments, and more. Interactive play occurs when children explore the learning centres together.

Centres can be arranged to accommodate individuals or groups. For example, a small table with one or two children's chairs and some natural materials such as pine cones and leaves can be an area for two people, while a dramatic play centre can be set up in a large corner of the room, with enough space to accommodate several children and adults. Exploration should be designed to meet the needs of all students, recognizing their diverse array of learning styles,

including kinesthetic, auditory, and visual learning. Children should also be able to access information in a variety of ways.

Learning centres can take many forms and may include the following:

- **dramatic play area** with dress-up clothes, table and chairs, props such as puppets and dolls, toys and other objects (e.g., food and kitchen set for a playhouse, stethoscope and bandages for a play hospital, food boxes and cash register for a play store)
- **construction centre** with wooden blocks, soft blocks, carpentry bench, tools, railway set, natural and found materials
- **manipulative centre** with modelling dough or clay, and a sand or water table
- **games and puzzles centre** with straws and connectors, puzzles, simple board or matching games
- **creative arts centre** with easels, paint, crayons, paper of various kinds, beads and string, and reclaimed materials such as cardboard rolls and plastic tubs
- **music centre** with pitched and non-pitched classroom instruments (e.g., rhythm sticks, xylophones, slide whistles, finger cymbals, hand drums), music recordings, space for movement
- **math centre** with measuring tools such as tape measures and scales, blocks, and found materials for sorting, classifying, and measuring
- **science/nature centre** with nature materials (e.g., rocks, seeds), magnifying glasses, sand table, water table and objects that sink and float, light table or overhead projector
- **language and literacy centre** with chalk board/white board, assorted paper, pencils, felt pens, stationery, order forms, magnetic letters, flannel board, puppet theatre
- **cultural exploration area** with hands-on and visual materials that teach about local Aboriginal peoples, as well as cultures represented in the classroom and community
- **library corner** with books in a variety of genres (e.g., stories, poems, rhymes, information books), class-made books, children's magazines, large pillows and comfortable seating
- **theme centre,** a special-interest centre determined by the interests of the children, related to prescribed or emergent curriculum, or a special event

- **outdoor centres,** such as a garden corner (e.g., bean planting, herb planting), bubble play, parachute play.

Teachers also need to situate learning centres in ways that accommodate movement patterns, allow for access to relevant supplies, and ensure that noisy activities do not disrupt quieter ones.

Routines and Schedules in Full Day Kindergarten

As discussed in earlier sections of this program guide, full day Kindergarten has been shown to provide a wide range of benefits for children — over and above those achieved in half day programs. This is due in part to the fact that teachers in full day programs have more time, and more opportunities, to support children's learning and development in all domains.

British Columbia's Prescribed Learning Outcomes for Kindergarten have not changed with the advent of full day Kindergarten. What has changed is that Kindergarten programs now have a "gift of time," allowing for a deeper exploration of topics related to both the curriculum and children's individual interests.

Research shows that full day programs can be most effective when they use a consistent framework, with daily routines and schedules that include

- well-defined time periods, from the beginning of the school day until the end
- a balance of active and quiet times during the day
- developmentally appropriate length of time in teacher-led activities
- opportunities to learn and play individually and in small groups
- opportunities to play outdoors daily
- sufficient time for self-selected individual and group activities (approximately two hours per day for full day programs)
- sufficient time for transitions and routines, such as clean up.[79]

Another important component of the daily routine is the plan-do-review sequence, in which children make choices about what they will do, carry out their ideas, and reflect upon their activities with adults and other children.[80]

Teachers may also wish to consult the "Planning Your Program" section of the resource, *Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10*. This resource was developed to help all teachers provide students with knowledge of, and opportunities to share experiences with Aboriginal peoples in BC.

Following are two examples of ways to shape the Kindergarten day, beginning with time for children to settle in the morning and concluding with group sharing and reflection.

EXAMPLE 1		Commentary
8:55	Welcome	
9:00	**Shared book time** (parents are invited in to read with their child if they wish)	**Shared book time** at the beginning of the day allows for transition between home and school for children and parents, and allows time for parent-teacher conversation.
9:15	**Opening circle time:** Hello song, calendar, weather, morning message; singing, finger plays, or teacher reads big books or story or poetry; planning.	**Opening circle time** is important for classroom community building, a time for coming together. Children think about and share their plans before moving to individual and small group activities at learning centres.
9:30	**Centre time**	**Centre time** provides opportunities for children to learn and meet Prescribed Learning Outcomes through play.
10:15	**Review,** cleanup and washroom break	**Review time** provides opportunities for children to discuss what they did and learned during centre time in relation to their plan.
10:30	Snack and **outdoor or indoor physical activity**	**Regular physical activity** is essential for learning and well-being and to meet daily physical activity requirements.
11:00	**Story/Discussion**	**Stories and discussions** foster children's language and literacy development and knowledge of the world. Discussions are focussed on topics of study.
11:25	Lunch — children eat in classroom; monitors arrive at 11:30 to help	**Lunch** provides opportunities for promoting social behaviour and healthy habits.
11:30	Teacher's lunch	
12:25	Transition from lunch break (washrooms, etc)	
12:30	**Quiet drawing time** with music (crayons and paper or drawing journals set out before children come back from lunch)	**Quiet drawing time** helps children "wind down" after lunchtime play; the music promotes attentive relaxation. Drawing helps children express and generate ideas.
12:50	**Group time:** singing or sharing drawing journals, or big book	**Group time** contributes to classroom community building and language development. It also acts a transition.
1:00	**Math stations:** (at least 4) — children rotate after 10-15 minutes; teacher works with children to develop math skills at the different stations	**Math stations** promote mathematics and numeracy learning through hands-on play, exploration, and manipulation. Activities are designed to relate to Prescribed Learning Outcomes.
1:40	**Outdoor activity**	**Outdoor play and snacks** are needed in the morning and afternoon in full day Kindergarten.
2:00	**Washroom and snack** (monitors supervise)	
2:15	**Centre time or hands-on science/art education/ literacy activities**	**Hands-on science/arts education/literacy activities** address the Prescribed Learning Outcomes in developmentally appropriate ways. Connect with activities from the morning.
2:45	**Tidy up and Group Reflection**	**Tidying up** is part of social responsibility. **Group reflection** is a transition time that encourages children to reflect on their learning and bring closure to this part the day.
3:00	Children go home or transition to after school activities	

EXAMPLE 2	Commentary
8:55 Welcome	
9:00 **Free exploration time** (parents are invited to interact with or observe their child)	**Free exploration** at the beginning of the day allows for transition between home and school for children and parents, allows time for parent-teacher conversation and observation.
9:15 **Opening Circle Time**	**Opening circle time** is important for classroom community building, a time for coming together. Children think about and share their plans before moving to individual and small group activities at learning centres.
9:30 **Centre Time** (plan-do-review)	**Centre time** provides opportunities for children to learn through and meet Prescribed Learning Outcomes through play.
10:25 Cleanup and washroom break 10:30 Recess/snack	
10:45 **Read-aloud time** (stories, poems, or information books)	**Read-aloud time** fosters development of children's language and literacy development and knowledge of the world. Teachers use a variety of genres to expand children's literacy repertoires.
11:00 **Response to reading**	**Response to reading** affords opportunities for making connections to read aloud time through open-ended activities. Children choose from a variety of ways to respond.
11:30 **Outdoor activity** or indoor gym	**Outdoor Activity** provides opportunities to connect with community through walks and use environment as a teaching tool, as well as achieve the mandated 30 minutes of daily physical activity.
12:00 Lunch 12:55 Transition from lunch break	**Lunch** provides opportunities for promoting social behaviour and healthy habits.
1:00 **Quiet Activity Time** — stretching, quiet drawing, shared reading, puzzles, etc. 1:20 **Group Transition** — finger plays or rhyming or counting songs; transition, and planning for project time	**Quiet Activity Time** after the break helps children settle.
1:45 **Project Time or hands-on science or arts education activities**	**Project activities** engage children in learning emergent curriculum or Prescribed Learning Outcomes in developmentally appropriate ways, through play and inquiry. Projects are ongoing and relate to an in-depth inquiry. Children think about and share their plans before moving to individual and small group activities project work. Link to activities from the morning.
2:45 Cleanup and **Group Reflection**	**Group reflection** is a transition time that encourages children to reflect on their learning and bring closure to this part the day.
3:00 Children go home or transition to after school activities	

Routines and Schedules in Combined Classes

In combined K-1 or multi-age classes, scheduling with open-ended blocks of time can be helpful. All children need not be doing the same thing at the same time. For example, teachers can use a must do/may do strategy, allowing Kindergarten students free choice at learning centres, and assigning students in Grade 1 particular tasks to complete. A symbol system can be used to indicate levels of difficulty. For example: green = go ahead; orange = slow down; red = stop and think.

COMBINED GRADE EXAMPLE	Commentary
8:55 Welcome	
9:00 **Shared book reading**	**Shared book time** at the beginning of the day allows for transition between home and school for children and parents, and allows time for parent-teacher conversation.
9:15 **Opening Circle Time**	**Opening circle time** is even more important for classroom community building in combined classes, a time for coming together before children move to individual and small group activities at learning centres.
9:30 **Shared Experience**	**Shared Experience:** read aloud or discussion or topic related experience that allows for open-ended response.
9:45 **Response to Shared Experience** • "must do" for older children, • "may do" for Ks; children **plan** first	**Response to Shared Experience:** children choose how to respond from a list generated with the teacher. Some children may choose to continue to work on their response until the end of this block of time.
9:55 **Individual or small group activities** • Ks and 1s: Learning Centres • Older children: Language Arts block — may be assigned literacy tasks (e.g., "must do" spelling task) before moving to other language arts activities, which may be in literacy learning centres. • Teacher may work with small groups at this time (e.g., guided reading with grade 2s and 3s).	**Individual or small group activities:** children need to be working at tasks they can do independently or collaboratively so that the teacher can teach or work with individuals or small groups. Some choice and open-endedness leads to increased motivation and engagement and a decreased need for direct teacher supervision.
10:25 **Review,** cleanup and washroom break	
10:30 Recess	
10:45 **Math Time** • Ks: math centres • Older children: may be assigned math-related tasks, followed by centres • Teacher may work with small groups at this time	**Math Time:** see individual and small group activities, above.
11:30 Physical Activity — all children	**Regular physical activity** is essential for learning and well-being and to meet daily physical activity requirements.
12:00 Lunch 12:55 Entrance	**Lunch** provides opportunities for promoting social behaviour and healthy habits.

1:00 1:20	**Quiet Time**: reading, writing, drawing to music, etc. Group Transition	**Quiet Time:** activities may be differentiated by age (e.g., silent reading or writing for older children, drawing for Ks.)
1:30	**Science/Social Studies/Arts Education/Theme or Project Work** — followed by centres, journals, etc.	**Science/Social Studies/Arts Education/Theme or Project Work:** children engage in a variety of ways with the topic or theme. Projects are ongoing and relate to an in-depth inquiry. Children think about and share their plans before moving to individual and small group activities. If they finish before the time period is up, they may engage in learning centres. Children may reflect on the day (writing and/or drawing) in journals, learning logs, or family message journals.
2:45	Cleanup and Group Reflection	**Group reflection** is a transition time that encourages children to refect on their learning, and brings closure to this part of their day.
3:00	Children go home or transition to after school activities	

POINTS TO PONDER

Reflecting on the Environment

A high quality Kindergarten environment is rich, responsive, relevant, and respectful. A rich environment does not necessarily mean filling the room with expensive toys. A rich environment is full of a variety of learning opportunities that stimulate all senses. Kindergarten children are natural explorers and look for answers using everything available to them. A rich environment encourages children to challenge themselves and the theories they have about the world around them.

*Questions to ask when reflecting on the **richness** of the environment:*

- *Are materials and activities open-ended?*
- *Does the environment contain a variety of colours and textures?*
- *Are there sources of light such as natural light, lamps, a light table, spotlights, and the use of projectors for shadows and light experiences?*
- *Does the environment contain large open spaces and quiet intimate spaces for play?*
- *Do the materials and activities provoke thinking, engage creativity, and allow for the imagination?*
- *Is the environment language and literacy rich?*
- *Do materials and activities challenge the children to try new ideas and test theories?*

Responsive environments consider developmental appropriateness for all Kindergarten children, regardless of their abilities or interests.

*Questions to ask when reflecting on the **responsiveness** of the environment:*

- *Are children encouraged to provide ideas for themes and materials?*
- *Are the activities and materials continually assessed and modified to ensure prolonged interest and age-appropriateness?*
- *Are there enough materials to allow several children to engage in play at the same time?*

Culturally relevant environments reflect the children's communities and cultures and help to stimulate both learning and a sense of belonging. Children who see familiar objects in a new setting may be encouraged to test new theories and feel more respected and valued. For instance, examples of local Aboriginal artwork can stimulate discussion about how specific cultures use materials, colours, or shapes in different ways. Teachers can consult with families or community members about cultural materials and resources that are appropriate for the classroom.

*Questions to ask when reflecting on the **cultural relevance** of the environment:*

- *Are there pictures that represent the cultures of the children in the class?*
- *Are there materials in the environment that reflect their home lives?*
- *Are there materials that reflect the natural environment in the surrounding area?*

- *Are there learning materials and activities that promote the understanding of diverse cultures? Are children and families asked to share their cultures and celebrations?*
- *Do materials depict the community setting (e.g., urban, rural)?*
- *Do materials include authentic items rather than toy replicas whenever possible?*
- *Are the activities and materials culturally sensitive?*

Respectful environments make children and families feel welcome and safe. The environment should show that each child is valued: "This is a place for you!"

Questions to ask when reflecting on the ***respectfulness*** *of the environment:*

- *Is the environment inviting and welcoming, to both children and adults?*
- *Are children encouraged to explore and make their own choices?*
- *Are children's ideas reflected in the classroom?*
- *Do the activities and materials reflect authentic community members and avoid stereotypes (e.g., picture books with women and men performing a variety of jobs, persons with disabilities engaging with community)?*
- *Are the materials inclusive of those with special needs?*

Section 5
Kindergarten, Families, and Community

Children's relationships influence their well-being, development, and learning. Trusting, loving, two-way relationships with adults and other children in their families and in the community are essential to early learning and to the sharing of knowledge from one generation to the next. Consistent, secure, responsive, and respectful relationships with caring adults are vital to children's well-being. (British Columbia Early Learning Framework, p. 15)

Family and community connections are essential to children's learning and development, and should be incorporated into Kindergarten programs. At this age, children are developing a sense of their identity, both as individuals and in relation to the geographic, social, cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity represented by their peers. When children see their home and community culture reflected in the classroom, they feel a sense of belonging, find learning meaningful, and are motivated to do well; as well, relationships among schools, families, and communities tend to improve.

When differences between a child's home and school culture go unrecognized, they can also have a significant impact on learning. For example, research shows that, by the age of eight, disparities between school and home values and ways of communicating may negatively impact children's belief in their abilities and enthusiasm for learning.[106, 107]

Experience shows that greater progress is made in young children's learning and development when services are guided by a central vision that embraces the contributions of community partners such as local preschools, early learning and care, family services such as public health nursing, public libraries, recreation programs, and intervention programs. Kindergarten teachers can take the lead by building bridges with other early years programs, including StrongStart BC early learning programs (www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/strongstart_bc/), early learning and care programs, and enhanced ongoing relationships with Grade 1 teachers.

Developing Relationships with Families

Developing positive relationships with families takes time and effort, but is a core component of the full day Kindergarten program. Educators should appreciate and acknowledge that families are children's first teachers, and take time to reflect thoughtfully on how they are developing meaningful and trusting relationships with families.

Kindergarten teachers should consider

- demonstrating respect to all families and community members by focussing on the strengths of families, treating families with dignity, listening with an open mind, and being sensitive to cultural differences
- greeting each adult and child upon arrival, bending down to welcome children on their level
- clearly communicating expectations of adult participation; families will feel more comfortable when they know what to expect
- practising active listening and empathy in conversations with adults and children, focussing on the matter at hand and suspending judgment
- knowing some of the key characteristics of children's cultures and backgrounds — this can improve mutual understanding and the ability to work effectively with students and their families.

A Seamless Day — Learning and Care

Full day Kindergarten offers valuable opportunities to deliver a seamless system of early learning and care. Seamless day programs help to

- reduce the number of disruptive transitions children experience in their day
- increase school success and overall well-being of all children
- support families by respecting their schedules and providing services in easily accessible locations in their local school.

Coherence between Kindergarten and early learning and care services enhances best practices and pedagogy, allows for sharing of space and resources, and fosters a seamless process of monitoring and supporting children's development and skills throughout their day. Children can benefit when teachers and early childhood educators share information and communicate about children's learning and development.

Parents is a term used in the school system to refer not only to biological parents but also foster parents or other adults who have legal custody of a child, including child welfare workers.

Transitions

Two types of transitions are central to children's daily lives. "Vertical transitions" occur at key turning points (e.g., birth, entry to formal schooling, entry to high school, school graduation). Children also experience "horizontal transitions," such as home to school to after school care to home. One of the major transitions children and families encounter in Kindergarten is a shift from the informal environments of home, early learning and care, preschool, or other community based services to the more formal structure of school. This transition is as much a social-emotional issue as it is an academic one. Making friends — for children and parents — is an integral part of this transition.[121, 122]

Strong family-school-community relationships can make transitions easier. These relationships are strengthened by ongoing communication and valuing the roles of all the adults in children's lives: parents, extended families, local community members, teachers, school principals, and other educational personnel (teacher-librarians, teaching assistants, etc.). Effective communication and collaborative relationships that support children's vertical and horizontal transitions contribute to their social and emotional well-being and academic success, throughout their school years and beyond.[92, 123]

The transition process for a child with special needs requires especially careful planning. School districts and individual schools should establish procedures to support collaborative consultation in the transition to Kindergarten. For some children, the process may need to include school personnel, district staff, representatives from community services such as child development centres, preschools, professionals such as child welfare workers, Supported Child Development Consultants, Early Intervention Therapists, and parents. Transition planning for children with complex special needs should begin at least one year before school entry.

Transitions for children in care should also be carefully planned, as these children can be vulnerable to changes. For more information see the *Joint Educational Planning and Support for Children and Youth in Care: Cross-Ministry Guidelines* (available at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/pdf/educ_guide_sep_2008.pdf)

Family to School Communication and Reporting

Effective communication between schools and families is critical for establishing positive relationships that support children's learning and development. Detailed information on home to school communication is provided in Chapter 9 of *The Primary Program: A Framework for Learning*. Information about communicating children's progress can be found in Chapter 8. The Ministry of Education policy on student reporting is available at: www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/student_reporting.htm

The Kindergarten year plays an important role in developing positive relationships with families and establishing a foundation for home to school relationships that last throughout the child's school life. Parents are interested in how their children are adapting to school, as well as how they are learning and developing. They may also have some misconceptions about the purpose of full day Kindergarten, particularly in relation to literacy and numeracy.

It is important to communicate to parents what we know about how Kindergarten children learn, and what can be expected in terms of reaching developmental milestones. Some parents may believe that the purpose of full day Kindergarten is to try to "hurry up" children's academic learning, for example, learning to read by the end of the Kindergarten year.

The developmental continua developed by BC teachers in the Kindergarten Learning Project (available at www.readnowbc.ca/klp.php) can assist teachers in communicating appropriate expectations and information about children's development in key areas. Developmental continua can be used both to track children's progress and, accompanied by samples of children's work, to communicate children's progress to parents.

Since Kindergarten is a unique year in the school system, schools, school districts, and independent school authorities may also want to reflect on the ways in which formal reports effectively communicate the nature, purposes, and goals of the full day Kindergarten program in relation to all areas of development.

PRACTICAL POINTS

Parent Information

Kindergarten programs are busy, active places. One-on-one conversations with parents and caregivers might be difficult to achieve, so an information bulletin board placed near the entrance to the Kindergarten classroom can enhance communication with families. Program information, upcoming community events, school information, pamphlets and resources, contact information for local health units, and parent education articles can be posted on the board. Having a white board nearby is also a good method to communicate daily with families and post reminders.

Other resources to support parents might include

- *written information on child development resources using plain language*
- *pamphlets from local agencies for parents/caregivers to take home*
- *a list of web sites to visit*
- *guidelines about the Kindergarten's policies regarding illness, registration, and other topics*
- *a list of opportunities or suggestions for parent/caregiver participation or contributions within the Kindergarten program*
- *notices about community events (e.g., Aboriginal community events) that may be of interest to children and their families*
- *photos of activities and descriptions of learning taking place during play and at learning centres*
- *samples of children's work with descriptions of how they demonstrate learning.*

PRACTICAL POINTS

Volunteer Support

Volunteers can make a positive contribution to Kindergarten programs. The role of volunteers should be consistent with board/authority policy, and should honour the philosophy of Kindergarten as a program that engages families as well as children. Volunteers can assist in a variety of ways both inside and outside the classroom, through activities such as

- *creating materials for projects*
- *preparing food for snacks*
- *setting up learning centres*
- *reading with children*
- *organizing resources*
- *assisting with field trips.*

Afterword

British Columbia's move to full day Kindergarten represents an important investment in the future of our province. A growing body of research shows that full day programs can provide a range of benefits for children and their families, including higher academic achievement in later grades, greater developmental competence, more positive behavioural outcomes, and greater parent involvement and satisfaction.

For teachers, the move to full day programs provides more time to interact with children — individually and in groups — and more flexibility to offer play based ways to support all aspects of children's development. Full day programs also provide more time and flexibility to support all children, including those with special needs, Aboriginal children, and those from families whose first language is not English. The longer day also provides opportunities for more engagement with children's families, cultures, and communities.

Change always involves some uncertainty, and moving to full day Kindergarten will present some challenges. However, with both research and real-life examples to draw upon, BC educators are well positioned to rise to the challenge and provide the best support possible for young children's learning and development.

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Resources and Links

The following web sites contain a wealth of information and support related to the topics addressed in this program guide.

Aboriginal Education
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/

Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreements
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/agreements/welcome.htm

Aboriginal Education Policy (including full day Kindergarten):
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/funding_abed.htm#

Addressing Students' Needs (including Special Education, ESL Learning, and School Safety)
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/addressing_students_needs.htm

BC Early Learning Framework
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/early_learning_framework.htm

BC Performance Standards
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/perf_stands/

Classroom Assessment and Student Reporting
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/classroom_assessment/welcome.htm

Diversity in BC Schools: A Framework
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/diversity.htm

Diversity Newsletter for Educators
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/diversitynewsletter.htm

Daily Physical Activity for Kindergarten to Grade 12
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/dpa/

Early Learning
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/

Educator Resources for Students with Special Needs
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/sped_res_docs.htm

English as a Second Language (ESL) Policy
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/esl.htm

First Nations Map
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/map.htm

Full Day Kindergarten
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/full_day_Kindergarten.htm

A Guide to Adaptations and Modifications
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/docs/adaptations_and_modifications_guide.pdf

Healthy Schools
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/health/

Independent Schools
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/independentschools/

Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs)
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/irp.htm

Joint Educational Planning and Support for Children and Youth in Care: Cross-Ministry Guidelines
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/pdf/educ_guide_sep_2008.pdf

Kindergarten Learning Project
www. readnowbc.ca/Klp.php

Making Linkages: How the British Columbia Early Learning Framework Links to the Primary Program: A Framework for Teaching
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/making_linkages.htm

Ministry of Children and Family Development — Child Care
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/

Ministry of Education — main page
www.gov.bc.ca/bced/

Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport — Child Care Licensing information
www.hls.gov.bc.ca/ccf/child_care.html

Primary Program: A Framework for Teaching
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/primary_program/

Provincial Curriculum
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp/

ReadNow BC
www.readnowbc.ca/

Reports and Publications
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/pubs.htm

Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/addressing_students_needs.htm

Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/abed/documents.htm

StrongStart BC Early Learning Programs
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/strongstart_bc/

Students from Refugee Backgrounds: A Guide for Teachers and Schools
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/esl/refugees_teachers_guide.pdf

Special Education
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/

Special Education — A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines
www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg.htm

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