



# Academy Excelsiori

## *Content of questions*

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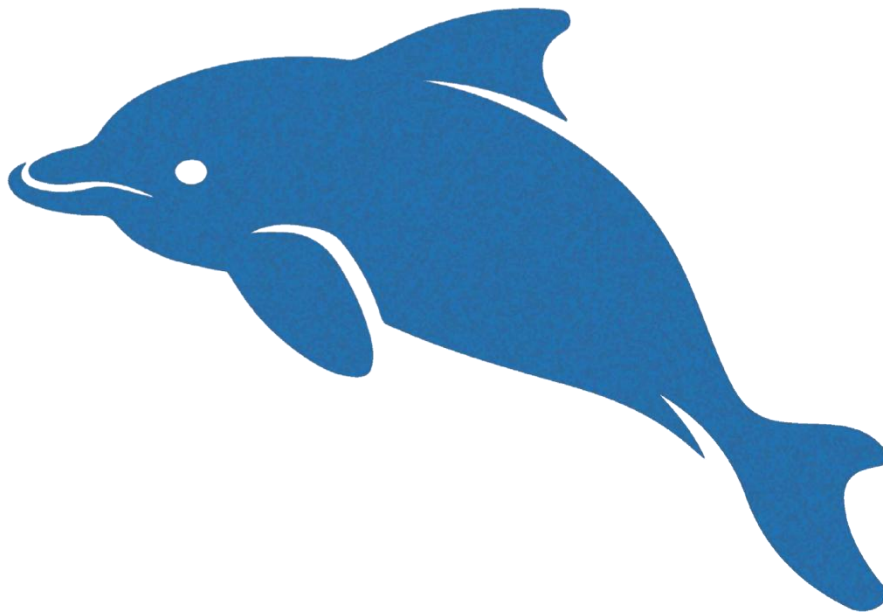
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# The mission of Excelsiori Daycare Inc.

The 0-5 years period is by far the most important period for children and it is at this time that the foundations of learning are established. Considering that their daycare environment is their first educational journey, the educational services we offer fulfill an essential mission. Ensuring the well-being, health and safety of children is the foundation of our mandate.

At Excelsiori, we provide a developmentally appropriate environment for young children and are sensitive to the needs of each child. We ensure their health and safety, while respecting the laws to which we are subject (the law on educational child care and public health measures).



# The role of the educators

Daycare staff work in a respectful and caring manner. More specifically, the educators are the educators are the cornerstone of the establishment. Their role is so important that it is imperative to support them at all times and on an ongoing basis to allow them to enrich their educational practice. They form a quality team of people trained and they graduated from the Childhood Education Technique. The educational staff is competent and dynamic, working in a pleasant atmosphere. Thanks to them, a superior educational program, based on essential academic subjects, is delivered to the children in a balanced and fun way. These people are not only dedicated to the overall development of the children by training them, according to their interests and taking into account their personality and cultural diversity. In addition to ensuring the health and safety of the children, the talent and experience of the educators allow them to adapt to the community and to integrate adequately at their own pace, while respecting their personal limits, if any like (fears, anxiety, lack of or too much stimulation, mental disorders, etc.).

Each member has an unconditional love and passion for children. In order to provide the best possible development, we encourage the staff to pursue continuing education as research continually brings new information and new teaching methods. It is through caring for the child in the absence of the parents that a meaningful relationship is established. While taking into consideration the child's views and reassuring them when necessary, they develop an attachment bond by offering emotional support, physical proximity that denotes appropriate displays of affection, pervasive comfort, immediate assistance, etc. By feeling loved and appreciated, the child develops confidence in himself and in others. Educators also have a great responsibility to nurture each child's curiosity, making sure that the desire to learn is fostered through pleasure.

The educational interventions advocated by the program require great sensitivity to the child's needs, environment and developmental pace. The child's needs, environment and developmental pace. Our staff is available and responsive, as they constantly take into account the needs of each child in their care and support their learning in each area according to their level of development.

All of them rely on the quality interactions between them and the young children. The role of the educators is also to establish a bond of trust with the parents and to create a partnership with them, in order to contribute together to the harmonious development of the child. The educators observes the children first and then plans experiences for them based on the themes of their games that can be extended and made more complex over time.

# The Educational Program

Excelsiori Preschool offers a diversified program to reach as many children as possible during school hours by varying the instruction and adapting their teaching strategies. Although the students are grouped by age, each one is unique and each individual receives special attention according to their stage of development. Some students have greater personal difficulties than others, some face greater challenges than their classmates, and some may not have obvious cognitive or developmental problems. All of these relevant details need to be taken into consideration.

With 8 children per group in the 18 months to 3-4 years old class and 10 children in the 4-5 years old class, we believe that we are able to meet the needs of the children in a more appropriate and precise manner. The feeling of belonging that comes from positive interactions in the group or with significant people in the environment, allows us to promote emotional security in the children. Enjoying the positive atmosphere of the daycare and seeing friends in the group increases the child's sociability, which is a large part of the child's micro-system, considering that he spends most of his day there.

It is important for us that the child attends the daycare for a maximum of 10 hours a day, to balance the experiences of the daycare with their respective families. After all, the main agents of socialization of children are the parents and it is from their basic education that development of the child.

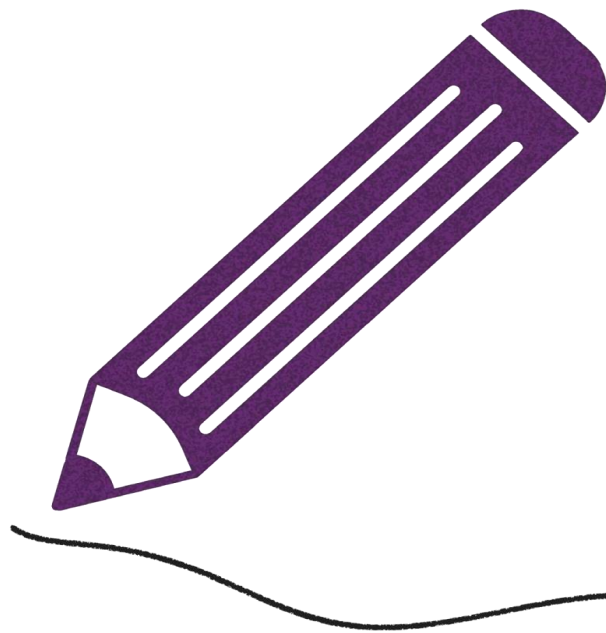
The daily observation that the educators make, at different times during the day, allows them to know adequately each child of the group, (their tastes, their needs, their capacities etc.), to thus orient the educational actions and the discussions with the parents. Furthermore, we want the intervention to be spontaneous and planned in its implementation. It is therefore important to master the knowledge acquired and not to omit the personal reflection and feedback stage. The critical judgment on the intervention made by the educator is done in order to adjust according to the child's dimensions, modifying their practice and adapting their future interventions. By asking relevant questions, referring to her observations and taking the advice and tools offered, the educator remains constant, available and provides the necessary knowledge for the different learning processes of the children.

What is also good is that, thanks to the Ministry, the early childhood target allows for the creation of training modules on various important training on different important knowledge which, by the same token, increases the quality of the service offered, according to the respective field of expertise. The management is done continuously and the progress can be followed with particular attention.

## The 5 basic principles of the pedagogical approach

Our educational program is a Ministry of Family Welfare approved program: A quality child care service that is able to recognize the needs of each child and respond appropriately. It is essential for the preschool to implement a quality educational program with concise and consistent interventions for the development of the children. Fun, varied and age-appropriate educational experiences are designed to prepare children for the future in the society that awaits them.

The educational program on which the harmonious development of young children is based encompasses 5 primary components that meet the needs of each child. At the same time, the basic principles that are also found in the educational program of the "Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés", highlight the preferred educational approach, which is the development of the child through play and his interests. By taking into account the diversity, authenticity and needs of each child, the Excelsiori daycare wants to promote self-esteem and self-fulfillment in connection with significant achievements for the child. Emotional and social skills are developed and social inclusion is achieved in a dynamic and respectful manner.



## **1- Each child Is unique**

Each intervention must respect the rhythm of each child's individual and family characteristics, strengths, physical or physiological differences and limitations. The adoption of this principle leads to planning the accompaniment of the children based on the analysis of each child's observations. We always want to take the child further in his or her learning.

Each educator at Excelsiori Inc. observes their child to find out what their interests are and to offer them opportunities to play. For example, during the morning snack, the children have the choice among the many fruits offered. In addition, each child and parent is greeted personally by the educators.

## **2- The child is the first agent of his development**

This means that we make sure to offer a context favourable to his learning by letting him initiate games from his fields of interest, by letting him choose the material and by letting him make his own use of it. The support and enrichment of their explorations are important in the various play areas, as they allow the child to develop their own interests, skills, self-confidence and assertiveness. Children learn through action, exploration, interpretation, observation, imitation and listening. For example, exploring a play area chosen by the child and which interests him or her will allow him or her to develop the area targeted by this workshop. This means that it is up to the child himself to give the direction of his learning, based on his initiatives.

## **3- The development of the child is global and integrated**

At Garderie Excelsiori, the educational staff masters the knowledge of each of the areas of development. This means that the interior and exterior layout at Excelsiori is organized every day in such a way as to encourage the good development of children and to stimulate them adequately. In addition, the many activities offered affect all spheres of development and invite children to use the resources offered and necessary for their cognitive, physical and motor, social and emotional or linguistic success. All areas influence each other. Take for example, in the kitchen area, the child handles food and distinguishes the different colors of it. This therefore makes it possible to stimulate both the physical-motor and cognitive dimension of each person. Also, during the song periods, the educators integrate gestures and images related to the season, which stimulates the language, motor and cognitive development of our children.

## **4-The child learns through play**

This means of learning, through which the child develops skills, puts forward his or her interests, which guide him or her towards the right choice of activities proposed by the educator. At Excelsiori Daycare, we accompany the child in order to allow him/her to get the most out of the games he/she starts. We support this approach from the outset, since play touches every area of global development. It involves the physical and motor domain when the child is in motion, when he manipulates objects or when he learns to control his gestures. The social and emotional domain is affected because play promotes self-confidence and allows the child to enter into a relationship with peers or with an adult. The language domain is forged through interactions that promote communication.

The cognitive domain is stimulated when the child is led to think, create, and respect rules. At Excelsiori Daycare we encourage exercise games, symbolic games, construction games, and rule-based games. In addition, at Excelsiori, we encourage children to develop through creativity. For example, we offer a wide variety of materials to the children to develop their interests and skills. By their actions or with their questions and suggestions, the educators provide guidance to the children through play.

## **5-Collaboration between the parent and the educator**

It contributes to the harmonious development of the child, which means that ensuring harmony between Excelsiori and the parents is essential, since it is important for the child to share his or her learning.

The accompaniment of the young child's global development is a common project that must be shared between the parents and the educators. This partnership is based on mutual respect and trust. As stated in the Ministry's educational program, we believe that the partnership relationship established between our staff and parents has only positive repercussions.

An inspiring model of relationships between the different spheres of the child's environment is represented to the child. The exchanges also allow us to talk about learning and thus ensure continuity between the two environments. The educators' goal is to value the privileged role of the parent with the child. Communication at the Excelsiori Daycare can take place in person, via the electronic agenda or by telephone. For example, the mobile application of the early childhood target, Cible Parent, allows parents to follow their child's learning at all times. It encourages communication between the educator and the parent. The individualized exchanges are more concrete and precise.



## The 4 dimensions of educational quality

Our educational program is based on and inspired by the educational program of the Ministry of the Family. The 4 dimensions of educational quality are taken into consideration in our service project and the specifics of these dimensions describe our operation. We apply the necessary steps to ensure the proper evaluation process and continue to improve the quality of our daycare service.

### - Educator-child interactions:

The emotional support of the educators is desired by having a playful and enthusiastic attitude. They should show interest in the children in their group, playing with them and providing physical proximity (affection). Emotional words such as soft words or comforting touches are encouraged. She must be sensitive to children's emotions, so she must be able to recognize and address them as needed. If the child shows any difficulties, she must assist them while following their rhythm. The most important thing for us is that the educator in question is able to take into consideration the child's point of view. By consulting them, they feel challenged and therefore welcomed. By incorporating their suggestions, the children feel important and accomplished. Depending on the interests and abilities of each child, the educator tries as often as possible to give the children responsibilities so that they can take risks and put their skills to use.

Quality is also reflected in the values conveyed by all staff and in all activities. For example, we must take into consideration the child as a unique being, respect him or her, and adapt to his or her developmental rhythm by putting his or her autonomy and interests first in the instructions given and the expectations proposed. As an example, the educator must support the adoption of appropriate behaviours, based on the values of respect for oneself, others and the environment, equality, sharing, solidarity, conflict resolution and valuing diversity. It ensures the well-being, health and safety of the young children we welcome. Through specific and planned activities, the educator supports learning effectively and lives in the moment with them, instead of being in the middle of something else.

We implement not only the necessary strategies to target and respond to the child's needs, but also activities to prepare them for school and life. Each moment is rich in learning. We offer individualized challenges that are achievable and appropriate, we encourage dialogue with the child no matter what time of day or what they are doing, and we awaken their interests in various contexts every day, because they learn through play and through fun.

- the children's experiences in the daycare center:

The initial goal is to support the educators' planning and the related objectives are to have the children carry out different learning experiences and to transmit to the caregivers the pleasure of teaching through movement and play. The objectives of the proposed activities guide the educators' personalized interventions in order to offer adequate development and follow their evolution. Following an in-depth reflection and evaluation of the children's educational file, we are able to contribute to the prevention of the appearance of difficulties related to the various spheres of development in addition to promoting their social inclusion. We want a schedule adapted to the children's rhythm. Flexibility will be required due to the unpredictability of the children, for example, as well as sharing for common play areas. Less waiting time means less behaviour management. We also want to avoid the use of screens in the child care environment. During the day, the child must experiment by playing, expressing himself, eating, sleeping, exploring, choosing, moving or doing nothing at all if that is what happens at any given moment! It is important to give feedback on children's experiences. Every learning experience is considered an experiential situation and looking back on these situations validates the understanding, joys, challenges and emotions experienced. Whether it is after tidying up, sleeping or washing their hands, privileged observations are made in the child. They are called upon to make choices, to participate, to show initiative and autonomy and to express their imagination. This is what will allow them to exercise control over their world, thus promoting their autonomy and the development of self-confidence. The experiences initiated by the children are supported by the people implementing the educational program and they value them throughout their stay.

- the layout of the premises and the equipment:

It is by providing a healthy, safe and supportive environment that young children can develop appropriately. The staff makes sure that the premises and equipment are arranged in such a way that the living environment is functional, safe and warm. The material made available to the children is adapted to their level of development in order to support them in their learning and to promote their overall development. The layout of the play areas is organized and facilitates the smooth running of activities while offering stimulating challenges according to their level of development. We want them to exercise their balance and flexibility. Often, furniture is moved indoors and the floor is freed up so that children are less restricted in their movement. When the living space is large enough, the natural formation of subgroups is also important for social and emotional development. Children have free and direct access to play materials, except for things that may cause damage or pose a safety risk. Materials are changed regularly according to the children's interests and the seasons. To support exploration of the environment, play is varied and structures are made attractive. It is important that the children can move without constraints, with ease and in complete safety. Everything is done with a view to diversification, quality and cleanliness.

Excelsiori Daycare recognizes the parent as the child's first educator. Therefore, collaboration with the parent is a determining factor that certainly contributes to guiding the child towards healthy choices and to supporting him/her in this process since his/her choices will positively influence his/her future. We welcome the young child, but also his family. It is through a true partnership, in which everyone's contribution is respected, that the daycare team can share the responsibility of the parent when the latter is absent during the day. Our goal is to become a complement to family life, a welcoming place for the child to feel comfortable in all levels of development. Parents are continually called upon to actively participate in the life of the school either through decisions made in the parent council or on field trips. We strongly encourage parents to let their child bring his/her own blanket, so that he/she has something that connects him/her to his/her family environment. In addition, we consider that parents have the right to stay at the daycare with their child for as long as they wish. This allows them to have confidence in their educator and in the service that guards the apple of their eye during their absence. During this time, they also serve as role models for their children, fostering constructive, child-centered and developmental interactions between parents, service providers and educational program deliverers. In addition to communication, personal meetings are held as needed and parent meetings are held three times a year.

## Healthy lifestyle habits

Thanks to the productive collaboration of our tutors and the continuous improvement of the curriculum proposed in the parents' guide developed by the daycare itself, we can see real learning. By learning, we mean the results that come from teaching methods that favor the progression of personal and social skills, inviting children to build their qualities on instructive and educational bases, and thus develop their aptitudes while building their self-confidence. Based on practical, educational and recreational experiences, children's development is a top priority and is at the very heart of the preschool's vision. The development of the child's dimensions is therefore fostered and promoted through an environment that is conducive to the development of healthy lifestyle habits, through the learning of behaviours that positively influence their health.

The daycare's specialized program is designed for children aged 18 months to 5 years. The cultural activities and academic subjects offered prepare them for elementary school by providing them with the necessary tools to excel in their future school environment, both personally and academically. The educational success of the child is promoted by facilitating the transition to school.

As an example used here, drawing is encouraged, as it allows the child to assert his or her personality while acquiring skills that prepare them for writing. Throughout their development, the daycare places a lot of importance on functional prehensions in writing situations, in order to teach them to hold a pencil properly. For example, to make shapes or lines, lines or waves, letters or precise drawings. Graphic activities are done on a daily basis depending on the class or seasonal theme.

Routines not only provide a framework for the children and make them feel secure, but they also allow

educators to have privileged contact with each child. Throughout the day, routines and organized transitions introduce children to the rules of social life and support their autonomy by tidying up, thanking, asking, explaining, etc. Yes, Excelsiori offers a well-established class schedule, but it is malleable and versatile. For example, at any point in the program, the teacher can choose to shift the learning objectives to free play without any time constraints. This is when the child chooses, invents and organizes his ideas according to his preferences and interests, without having a specific objective in mind. It is mainly during these moments that the child is encouraged to build his identity.

Did you know that...

Up to age 3, spontaneous exercise of maturing skills in a rich and stimulating environment is sufficient to actualize the child's motor potential.

From age 3 on, adult stimulation will become more important; the child needs it to meet motor-related challenges.

His global development is also at stake! We see him evolve on the language level; by developing his language, his communication in all its forms, on the cognitive level; by developing his creative thinking and his ability to solve problems, on the motor level; by improving his motor skills, on the emotional and social level; by playing with others and by learning to get along with them, to develop self-confidence, because the absence of rules allows him to take initiative and decide what he wants. He then feels more in control of his environment when his autonomy is stimulated. Group leaders support learning, always keeping in mind the overall development of their students. This development is our priority since the child must develop in all areas simultaneously. Each of these areas makes a major contribution to the learning process.

It goes without saying that the program is varied and fun, but still stimulating. To maintain energy and a good mood, there will be a 105-minute rest period each day after lunch. In addition, quiet games will be allowed for children who do not sleep. Sedentary activities are limited to snack time, meal times and certain times when quiet games such as drawing, crafts or painting are available to develop their imagination, artistic sense and creativity. Structured play helps children develop attention and understanding of rules, but they also need to play freely. To increase personal performance effectiveness and developmental learning, free play encourages experimentation by exploring curiosity, taking risks and learning from the joys of doing well as well as the occasional mistakes or disappointments.

## An active lifestyle

We offer structured and very stimulating activities for children. By offering activities with rules and steps to follow, the children are invited to join in with what is proposed by the adult and can thus learn new things and consolidate those already acquired. Different types of structured activities are offered, including project activities, visits to the library and the park, cooking activities, motor skills courses, theme days for dressing up, crafts and science experiments, etc.

A few outings are also organized during the year such as cultural activities such as back to school, pumpkin picking at the Proulx Farm, the Science Fair, the Christmas choir, Little Ray's Reptile Zoo, Winterlude, the sugar shack, the Canadian Museum of Nature, the Children's Museum, the Experimental Farm, municipal parks and days at the pool when the weather permits.

Bins containing playground equipment are always ready to be used at any time of the day to facilitate their use and the pleasure of daily movement.

Knowing that children between the ages of 3 and 5 do not get enough physical activity on a daily basis to develop optimally, we want to support and encourage daily active play both indoors and outdoors. Children are encouraged to move at low, medium or high intensity (e.g. running, jumping, dancing, and more passive activities such as yoga, singing, relaxation and rest). This type of play is a great way to support motor development while helping them adopt healthy lifestyle habits. Active play is encouraged by providing appropriate materials, space to move and staff interaction with the children.

Although we encourage children to be active, we believe that it is essential that parents be involved in their child's physical activity. That is why we invite parents to participate in some of our activities and in our educational program. Through our electronic agenda, parents are informed of the activities carried out with their children.



## Healthy eating habits

Our educational program includes promotional and preventive services aimed at providing your child with an environment conducive to the development of healthy eating habits. We sincerely believe that healthy eating has a major influence on the growth and health of children. It is by introducing it at a young age that children will develop healthy habits. This is why it is essential to give children appetizing, varied, good quality food in sufficient quantity to allow them to grow. We not only want to meet their physiological needs, but also guide them in learning how to eat healthily. We make sure that the children consume the recommended amount of food (1/2 plate of vegetables and fruits, 1/4 plate of protein foods and 1/4 plate of whole grain foods). As for the whole grain foods, we focus on whole grains with a good fiber content and not on enriched products. For the protein food group, we put more emphasis on fish, legumes, eggs and meats.

In order to stimulate the children's interest and taste for food, we present different foods in our menus, so that the child can develop his or her food tastes. In order to maximize the consumption of vegetables, they are presented raw, blanched, steamed or in a little boiling water, so as to preserve the maximum of their nutritional value. Vegetables in the form of raw vegetables are frequently served. All dinners include at least two varieties of vegetables. As for fruit, fresh fruit is offered to the children as a snack every day. In order to respect our mandate of food variety, the balanced menus are spread out over eight weeks. All menus include each of the food groups.

Parents can find out through the Cible Petit Enfant electronic calendar and/or by talking to the educators how their child's mealtime went. Our weekly menu is always posted in the daycare and on our website, this allows parents to reconcile with a complementary and/or different meal to ensure food variety at home. Parents can inform us of their child's dietary restrictions for health reasons, or for special diets (allergies, food intolerance, vegetarianism, religious accommodation) in discussion with the educators.

Occasionally, with the participation of the person in charge of food, the children have the opportunity to prepare a meal. They see the food before and during preparation and then discuss the steps taken. Meal and snack times are held in a relaxed atmosphere.



# Global development

At Excelsiori Daycare, the child is considered a unique individual with a growing curiosity and a natural desire to learn. At the Daycare, adaptation and integration to community life means gradually bringing the child to adapt and integrate harmoniously. An appropriate entry into the daycare environment and adapted to the child will allow him/her to develop the necessary skills for his/her global development, to learn the values and rules of society. The adult who accompanies the child trusts in his abilities and relies on the exploitation of his full potential. His development then depends on his own personal characteristics, his limits and the influence of his environment. The transition of the child to the Excelsiori Daycare, aims at the inclusion of each child and each family. It is certain that a progressive integration into the preschool may be necessary depending on the needs of certain children. A consultation between the parents and the preschool staff will then determine the conditions of integration of the child, since their well-being is paramount. We want the child to blossom, as well as all those around him/her, including the group's friends, the educators and the staff. Furthermore, it is important for us that our establishment be an interesting environment for the child. They must also feel safe and secure.

## Physical and motor development

It is with their bodies that children come into contact with their environment and explore the world around them. The physical and motor domain includes nutrition, health and safety, sleep, hygiene, sensory development, body schema, gross motor skills, fine motor skills.

### With respect to feeding:

Meals are served on the premises. When the weather permits, meals and snacks are served on the dining tables in the yard. We encourage each child to taste the food and give feedback. They do not eat foods that are not part of the four food groups such as junk food with high fat, sugar or salt content and low nutritional density. The beverages consumed are water or milk. There are no fruit-flavored drinks or soft drinks. We encourage the children as much as possible to drink enough water every day. We are also vigilant about sodium intake being higher than recommended for almost all children. Given the increased risk of adverse health effects if children eat less well, especially in today's society, we want to provide balanced meals. In order not to compromise their health and development, by offering healthy food to children we help to ensure minimal nutritional intakes for children, especially for those who may be food insecure. At the daycare, we welcome children with food allergies in an environment designed to address this condition by offering a supervised menu. The precautions and considerations necessary for the safety of this clientele are at the heart of the preschool's internal policies. The educators accompany all the children in the awareness of food allergies, the prevention of allergic reactions and the development of knowledge related to nutrition.

### Health and safety:

Remember that the private preschool is linked to safe premises, therefore a hygienic and structured environment, (everything that is installed at the daycare largely promotes prevention and the maintenance of a healthy environment, not compromising the health and safety of children and employees). Obviously, we offer material adapted to the age of the children. These materials are sturdy and free of elements that could hurt them. We respect the protocols for giving medication, for the use of sunscreen and the household or dangerous products are locked up.

We make sure that all our staff have first aid training adapted to the early childhood. We keep it up to date every three years, as required by the Ministry of the Family. Continuous supervision is emphasized, in that no child is left unsupervised. We carefully record the arrival and departure of each child. We are constantly on the lookout for dangers both inside and outside. We regularly check toys, equipment and premises. We regularly comb through checklists developed for this purpose, conducting safety checks in classrooms, the kitchen, common play areas, bathrooms, hallways and storage areas. We ask staff and accompanying parents to follow the guidelines issued on field trips. We use a walking rope for the younger children and a buddy system for the others. Finally, we require parents to sign the "Authorization for Field Trips" form. In short, the daycare is a facility designed so that children can play as freely as possible without risking injury to themselves or others. It is also mentioned and repeated to all that in order to keep the children safe, it is important to make sure that the doors and gates are closed when arriving and departing.





**Sleep or relaxation:**

It is an important contributor to the physical and mental health of young children and plays an essential role in the consolidation of information and learning. Sleep is involved in the regulation of emotions, which facilitates the establishment of harmonious relationships with peers, the resolution of interpersonal conflicts and the child's investment in play. It is during deep sleep that growth hormones are secreted. With this most important information in mind, we provide rest time for the children. Our educators integrate a calm routine before the relaxation and make sure that this time is pleasant in a positive atmosphere.

At Excelsiori Inc., we offer a variety of activities to help children relax, including

**o Pre-nap relaxation activities**

In order to allow the children to relax, we offer a 10 to 15 minute period of calm play before naptime, including calm activities such as group stories, relaxation CDs, relaxation, picture cards.

**o Music activities**

In order to allow the children to relax well we use quiet music without words before the nap to relax the child.

**o Yoga activities**

To help children relax, we offer yoga exercises. Yoga helps children become aware of their body and its possibilities.

**o Reading activities**

In order to allow children to relax, we offer a reading corner at Excelsiori Inc. The reading corner is the place where the child can find peace and quiet. The purpose of the reading corner is to help the child relax and unwind, promote concentration, develop language and memory, and become aware of the world around them.

**Hygiene:**

Care of children in hygiene, diaper changes and hand/face cleaning, are contexts in which the facility encourages emotional and meaningful relationships with each child and provides learning opportunities. Potty training is a good example. Our educators announce their actions in advance, act gently, adopt a pleasant attitude and a warm tone of voice, and talk about the children's bodies in a constructive manner with a view to building a good and solid body image. Hygiene-related actions are also important learning elements and contribute to the development of young children's independence.

### **Sensory Development:**

Sensory development is related to the development of sight, hearing, taste, touch and smell. Children approach the world around them through their sensory perceptions. The focus is on colors, shapes, sounds, smells, tastes and textures. We make sure to provide materials that awaken their senses and encourage exploration. For example, we have scent boxes to play guessing games, objects that are made of different textures to touch, play dough, paint, musical instruments etc. Each child has been provided with cooking equipment to experience the food they want to eat. Sensory development is also sparked by voice, physical contact and constant interaction between the children and the adults around.

### **Body schema:**

The body schema refers, on the one hand, to the awareness of one's body in movement, in a static state, to the place it occupies in space (agility, flexibility, speed, etc.) and to its expressions (mimics, gestures, attitudes, etc.) We plan educational intentions to go and awaken these notions. In addition, the child is called upon to recognize and identify body parts, learn rhymes with gestures, mime games, psychomotor routes, etc.

### **Gross motor skills**

The aim of gross motor skills is to develop tactile perception, balance and physical abilities, such as throwing, walking, climbing, jumping, running, crawling, handling large objects, catching a ball or hitting a ball with a stick, etc. Gross motor skills refer to large movements that engage the whole body in action.

Movement can also be incorporated into transitional periods, for example to energize movement. It is important to us that young children develop the desire and pleasure to move. From the age of 1 to 2 years, we practice transporting objects, we show how to squat. At the age of 2 to 3 years, we teach children to run, climb and slide, kick a ball, and simply go up and down the stairs. At age 3 to 4, we teach them to go up and down the stairs by alternating feet, to throw a ball to a target. At the age of 4 to 5, we show them to catch a ball without dropping it, to have a well established laterality.

### Fine Motor Skills:

Allows for the feasibility of fine hand and sometimes foot movements, activities requiring hand-eye coordination such as bringing food to the mouth or manipulating pieces of a puzzle, such as picking up, holding tight, reaching, grasping, manipulating or catching small objects, eating with utensils, painting, dressing, holding a pencil to draw or write, assembly games, block games, using scissors to cut, gluing, playing with play dough, making necklaces or bracelets.

Symbolic play offers many opportunities to dress up and imitate the actions of adults cooking, writing, cleaning, etc. We practice from the age of 1 to 2 years how to turn the pages of a book or several pages at a time, to build a tower of 2-3 blocks. At the age of 2 to 3 years, we show how to thread marbles on a string. At the age of 3 to 4, we show how to close and open a bottle, cut a strip of paper and make streamers with modeling clay. Children begin to draw on their own. At the age of 4 to 5 years we want to know if the child is right or left handed and to cut out a simple shape.

## Cognitive development

The focus here is on knowledge to promote thinking to engage in motor actions, learning by experimenting, manipulating, numbers/colors/letters/vocabulary words/science experiments etc. This development includes all of the abilities and knowledge related to the organization of observable thought over time. It is an evolution that grows at a variable pace, influenced by culture, stimulation and experience during activities in the here-and-now. All this knowledge allows the child to acquire knowledge, to adapt to his environment and to understand the world around him. This therefore reflects the ability to adapt vis--vis reality and demonstrates his ability to solve problems. We offer and practice in a child of 1 to 2 years, the ability to imitate simple actions, to recognize his image in the mirror. Reached the age of 2 to 3 years, we practice children to count objects and understand the difference between one and many. By age 3 to 4, we teach children to use common terms of circumstance and to understand their meaning such as, "today", "tomorrow", "yesterday". At age 4-5, we teach children to understand certain concepts of time: "one minute", "tomorrow".

In this context, the components of cognitive development could be presented in several ways. Attention, memory, symbolic function, concept development, reasoning, and mathematics and science awareness.

### **Attention:**

Practicing attention helps children use their observation skills to focus on a person (like their mother or little brother), an object (like a toy elephant), or an activity (eating a meal, playing soccer) for a period of time. Attention span is related to the ability to learn things (like remembering where a person or object is). Our educators support learning and engage children with visual aids for example.

### **Memory:**

Memory plays a fundamental role in overall cognitive functioning. Conversations with the children and feedback on their experiences at the daycare and at home allow them to name events and contribute to their memory. They provide an opportunity to come in and focus on different aspects of learning, ("What did you build? What other play materials did you use? What difficulties did you encounter? What solutions did you find?") This facilitates memorization and enriches the child's memory of the event. At Garderie Excelsiori, the educators verbalize the different stages of the day (meals, naps and outdoor play) with rhymes to help the children remember them and to help them find their place in time. Name the objects that the child handles and describe his gestures, knowing that this repetition, associated with the child's action, will help him memorize the new vocabulary. Memory games are good specific examples that also occasionally make them work.

### **The symbolic function:**

It is inscribed in the form of so-called symbolic thinking, which allows one to mentally represent an object, person or situation in its absence and this, based on a symbol.

Words, pictures, pictograms and numbers are used. We learn about safety symbols, that a symbol can have more than one meaning, etc. In addition, the educators plan to use drawing, which is the most effective tool for working on the symbolic function. The child must first have acquired the symbolic function in order to want to represent what he knows and be able to do so. Then, he can start drawing invented figures. Sometimes we stimulate this mental process and change the functions of the objects in the child's play. At the age of 3 to 4 years, we teach the children to use their imagination as they create an imaginary friend.

### **Concept Development:**

A concept is a general, abstract representation of the reality of an object, situation or phenomenon, based on similarities (the shape of objects, their colors, their size, their usefulness, etc. For example, games consisting of classifying objects by matching them (associating two identical objects by differentiating between similarities and differences), establishing simple relationships (associating different objects based on a common characteristic) and grouping them (identifying common characteristics to make up a set), are essential for developing young children's cognitive skills and these types of learning are practiced regularly at Garderie Excelsiori.

### **Reasoning:**

Reasoning is a set of cognitive processes that allow us to draw conclusions from experiences and facts. Reasoning serves a variety of purposes: making decisions, solving problems, evaluating an argument, testing a hypothesis. Playing reasoning games such as associating and disassociating objects is a well-established logic here to work on this notion. Also, to validate knowledge or to learn reasoning, an educator can, for example, answer 3-year-olds with questions when they ask them. When a child asks if the toy bottle contains real milk, she can answer them with : "Do we store this little bottle in the same place as the milk we drink at snack time?" With this done, she accompanies the child in the development of their ability to reason.

### **Mathematical Awareness:**

Informal, everyday mathematical knowledge is an important foundation for learning mathematics in school. This includes, among other things, numbers (figures, quantities), geometric shapes and measurement (terms such as "large", "small", "long", "wide", "deep", "far", "near"), and assembly games, which lend themselves well to an introduction to measurement. These different notions taught allow to use them in a concrete situation, often to solve a problem, (how big to cut out this door in the cardboard box so that the figurines can enter?), to make experiments of a physical or motor nature, to support the understanding of the concept of measurement, (compare the length of the child's jumps by observing the traces he leaves in the sandbox or invite the children to make several buildings of the same height with blocks), etc.

### **Science awareness:**

Science awareness with young children can touch the world they see, such as understanding the characteristics of plants and animals and the changes seen in nature. We make sure that our educators have the right attitude and open-mindedness to share the curiosity that drives the children. We provide the necessary materials and visual aids to support our staff and the children in their quest for knowledge.

# Language development

Cognitive and language skills are thus very much in demand when children learn to speak. This is an important factor in communication. This is why understanding language is more important than the ability to express oneself verbally. Language develops first in the child, with his or her own words or sounds perceived and heard that create a reaction with those around. In order for the child to understand the meaning of certain words, we need to make the meaning of the word clear by establishing common methods of communication.

For younger children, teaching them to emit and recognize sounds, facial expressions, gestures/signs/pictograms to communicate, facilitates pre-linguistic language and later, communication with the members of their entourage. For older children, we want to encourage exchanges with others, encourage children to start a game, read, etc. We offer and practice with a 2 to 3 year old child, to make two word sentences (dropped balloon) and to follow a simple story. This is why the vocabulary of children between 2 and 3 years old can vary between 200 and 300 words. By the age of 3 to 4, we teach children to make complete sentences and to know nursery rhymes and songs, to say their age, name and gender. At the age of 4-5 years, we show the child to be able to express why he is a distraction and to hold a real conversation.

It is very important that our daycare center constantly remains an example as a language model. To support children's oral language development, educators must use a rich and varied vocabulary at all times in their interventions and must take advantage of every opportunity to name objects, people and events that occur. For example, it is known that using the same word in different contexts can support children's understanding. Therefore, by repeating appropriate words with good pronunciation, children can increase their vocabulary repertoire. Without asking them to correct themselves, because we want to avoid distracting them from their communication intention, we ask them open-ended questions, when their level of development allows it.

In addition, we give the children plenty of opportunity to speak and allow them the time they need to express themselves. We plan language-rich experiences such as listening and sharing, songs and rhymes, etc. Book reading and storytelling are emphasized.

## Social and emotional development

The young child is above all a social being who develops in contact with others. Their social and emotional development are closely linked. The Excelsiori Daycare places a great deal of importance on the child's relationship with his or her immediate environment, since this greatly favours his or her social and emotional development.

We want to help the child form bonds with friends and create relationships with the people around him. It is important for the child to appreciate the presence of other children, to share and exchange. We help them develop their social skills by socializing. We try to resolve conflicts.

The educators also accompany the children in the search for solutions according to the abilities of the children in the group, using a form of mediation adapted to the age of the children; each of the children involved can express their point of view and their feelings. The staff is expected to be available to serve as a role model for the children's expected behavior. We want to teach them to live in a community by showing them what is acceptable and what is not, to be patient, to wait for their turn, to share, to control their emotions by offering simple strategies, to be confident in what they do, to make friends by showing them how to socialize, to show them how to negotiate correctly with others, i.e., by compromising, to respect others and the material, to participate in the games offered, to achieve attainable challenges in order to have positive experiences for their self-esteem. They are given tools to control their emotions and impulses. They are encouraged to solve problems, so they learn to react to difficult situations with the given coping strategies. The skills that children develop to establish satisfying relationships with their peers and adults in their environment lead them to adapt more easily to the various contexts of life that they must face.

We offer and practice at the age of 1 to 2 years, how to develop interest in other children, we learn social behaviors, how to develop trust, to delineate the needs of limits, to tolerate more separation with his parents and we introduce him to play next to another child, (parallel play). At the age of 2 to 3 years, despite the tendency to be possessive, we show the children to have a play partner, to be sometimes angry and to manage it, we also learn little by little to express its disagreement verbally and to express certain fears of which in the dark or even of Santa Claus. At the age of 3 to 4, we teach children to like playing with other children, to understand social rules, to understand the reasons for a ban and to take initiative. And rendered at 4 to 5 years old, we teach children to like to have the limits we impose explained to them, to express their aggression verbally rather than physically, to tolerate a certain delay before seeing their needs' met, to begin to be disciplined, (to listen to instructions), and to cooperate during conflicts.

Cultural outings they allow children to learn to organize themselves in a community while making beautiful learning. Gradually, the child is integrated into society by going on activities within it. If not on outings, it is by going on walks or to the park that they meet different people, see different angles of life and learn things that are important to know, such as for example, we teach the children about pedestrian safety. Also, the children understand that cultural diversity is present in the daycare but it is also present outside.



The daycare wants to see the moral aspect as an important factor of development. Autonomy, expression of feelings and respect are all part of a child's moral development. So through the team's programming, the child care provider asks to elaborate on learning to apologize when it is necessary to take into account what others feel, to enforce clear rules and concrete regulations with consistency. In order to support the child in his or her learning and to help him or her understand what is expected of him or her, our educators adopt positively worded instructions, all repeated regularly. The children must learn through positive reinforcement, serve as a model by being their adult of reference at the daycare, demonstrate what is acceptable or not through role-playing or group reading.

## The Zone of Proximity

As educators, we must work within the zone of proximality: this corresponds to the distance between the child's current level of development and his or her potential level of development. If the child's play is too low for his level, he will be bored and if the degree is too high then he will experience anxiety. The proximal zone allows us to interact with the child and do problem solving with him, our role is to guide him.

**Here is an example of a dance activity to illustrate avenues of intervention in order to provide appropriate assistance and support children's autonomy:**

1. Procedure : The educator plays music to which the children can dance. She names different parts of the body (an arm, a leg, the head, etc.). The educator can also designate a leader from among the children. The other children must dance only the body part that has been named.

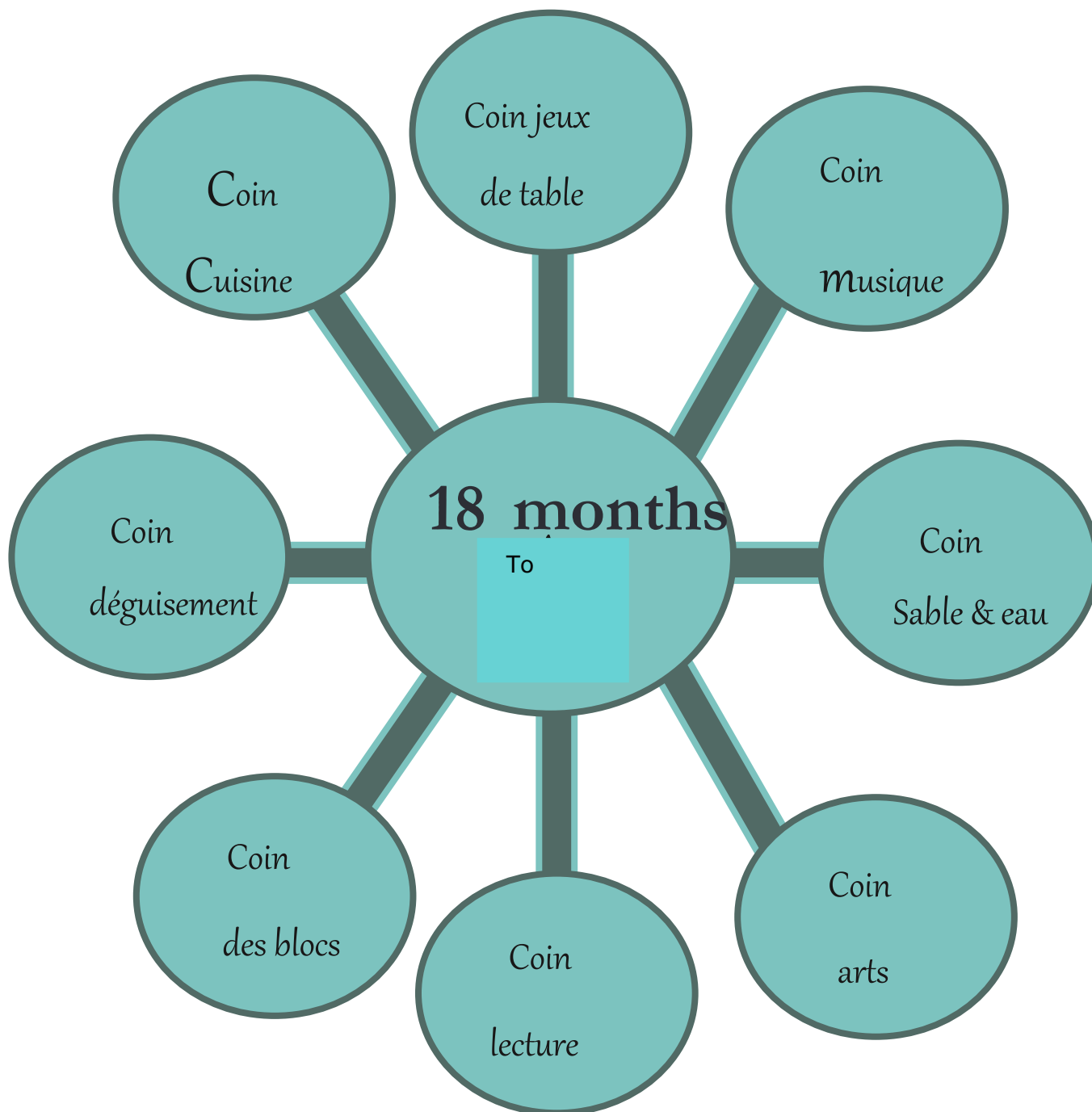
The rest of their body must remain still.

2. Questioning to reach the zone of proximal development: The educator observes the children: She observes if the child is able to adjust their position according to the named body part and looks around unsure how to do so. In addition, we observe if he/she seems to know the different parts of his/her body. If he/she manages to maintain his/her balance in the different situations or his rather unstable position.

3. Intervention points and variations in order to stimulate differently or to decrease/increase the level of difficulty: Introduce new instructions related to time (slow, medium, fast tempo), to space (amplitude of the movement, small and large), energy or intensity (small and large energy), the relationship between the partners (face to face, in a circle, one after the other, doing the same thing as the partner like the mirror game, doing the opposite, etc.).

**We want to bring the child where he can be!**





## Workshop corners

The development of the dimensions of the child is therefore encouraged and promoted through an environment favorable to the development of healthy lifestyles, healthy eating habits and the learning of behaviors that positively influence their health. Consequently, several pleasant workshop corners are set up to compensate for these behavioral developments. The following workshops motivate him to learn and shape the important aspects related to his well-being. According to the pedagogical approach through play, the activities vary according to the age group, i.e. for 18 months. 2 to 3 year olds and 4 to 5 year olds.

### **o The arts corner**

The arts corner is by far the favorite of the little ones. It allows children to create, transform and unleash their creativity. They develop their imagination, their concentration, they explore various sides of their creativity, colors and textures, they develop their senses and personal tastes, in addition to expressing themselves freely. Often we can understand children better, when this corner allows the expression of un verbalized feelings.

### **o The music corner**

The music corner allows the child to explore the musical universe and its concepts with instruments, dance, songs, nursery rhymes and musical games challenging the rhythm. Children can create sounds that will stimulate their senses and creativity. The music corner aims to develop listening, attention and imagination, sensitivity to sounds, rhythm and tempo as well as to promote the capacity for expression and self-confidence. This space offered also allows you to express yourself through song and to discover the link between music and language. We see, moreover, that some develop a passion for the arts.

Every week, the educators choose a day when the children practice with certain musical instruments and in addition, the educators have one day a week when they teach the children dance.

### **o Blocks and building corner**

The block and construction corner aims to get children to build structures with small blocks, medium blocks and large colored or wooden blocks. The child is then seen manipulating and building towers or different structures from their imagination. In addition to stimulating this imagination, we come to meet the need for motor skills by allowing them to manipulate the blocks differently. They lift, deposit, place, which promotes individual mental process and collective work. For the more cognitive aspect, they count, compare, categorize height differences and conceptualize in three dimensions.

#### **o Table and manipulative games corner**

The board game and manipulative corner leads the child to manipulate puzzles, felt boards, shapes and colors, for example. Board and association games encourage the child to observe and concentrate in order to obtain a final result. We then recommend determination, initiative, autonomy, the ability to make choices or self-assessment, to create a feeling of competence, to develop a sense of observation.

#### **o The sand / water corner (sensory experience)**

The sand and water corner is in fact a privileged place for sensory experiences. While manipulating different textures and objects, children explore the potential of things to do with sand and water. Here are some simple examples: Water and sand boxes, modeling clay, bubbles. The purpose of the sand and water corner is to develop the sense of touch and smell in addition to awakening the curiosity of children. The sense of sight is thus developed, since they can observe with their experiences, the results and the transformations

#### **o The costume corner (role play and drama)**

The disguise corner is the place where role-playing is initiated and where to create out-of-the-ordinary thematic/dramatic experiences. It is with their imagination that children increase their knowledge of the world around them. Here the symbolic game is always present and privileged. The versatile material with multiple uses allows the child to find inspiration for his games, to invent and thus, to take advantage of his developing imagination. We see the language that is stimulated with the communication and the expression of feelings. One child can let off steam, while another experiences fantasies expressed by different characters. By putting their environment and fears into play, they develop confidence in their abilities and a better understanding of those around them.

#### **o The kitchen area**

The kitchen corner introduces children to healthy eating with simple recipes. We start from the preparation of food by measuring the quantities required, to create one or more culinary experiences. The objective is to develop good hygienic and eating habits in addition to awakening the senses of taste and smell. They discover what they prefer and what they dislike and broaden their knowledge of different cooking styles.

#### o The reading corner (stories and discussions)

The Reading Corner is where the biggest stories and discussions are heard! In this place, calm reigns and the child can recharge his batteries. The goal of this workshop is to get the child to relax and unwind, which then promotes attention, concentration and memory. Mostly, specific morals and teachings are targeted. In addition, through interactive readings (exchanges, talks and group interactions), the child becomes aware of the world around him. It is during these moments that we want to stimulate mental representations, note their ability to transform reality according to their imagination.



## Integration into community life

At Excelsiori Inc., adaptation and integration to life in the community means gradually bringing the child to adapt to life in the world and to integrate harmoniously into it. Adequate adaptation will therefore provide the child in his childcare environment with the development of the skills necessary to facilitate the entry into life in society. He must be taught the values and the collective rules. The transition to Excelsiori Inc. aims to adapt preschool life in a positive way by promoting the inclusion of each child and each family within the daycare.

It is certain that a progressive integration may be necessary depending on the needs of certain children. A consultation between the parents and the preschool staff will then determine the conditions of integration of the child, since their well-being is linked to the development in the environment of the environment with the help of the educators and the staff. In addition, it is important to us that our establishment be an interesting living environment for your child. He needs to feel safe there.

We confirm that for the well-being of the child, he should experience as little change as possible and finally solidify his confidence in his environment as well as vis-à-vis the people who take care of him. In order to facilitate the integration of a new child, we recommend a gradual entry according to the availability of the parent. A good integration will have immediate repercussions and a lasting effect on the child's sense of security as well as on his self-esteem.

The advantages of gradual entry are based on the belief that the child needs time to appropriate his new environment and to feel comfortable in it. This period of adaptation reduces the level of stress that the child must inevitably experience. Also, the parent will take advantage of this period to establish their relationship of trust with the staff, in particular with the educator responsible for their child. The latter, for his part, will solidify his own bond with the educator all the better because he will witness the complicity between her and her parent.

The simplest ways to facilitate integration are to give a warm welcome to the child and his parents; to slow down the comings and goings at the beginning and end of the day; to have a locker for the child who is identified with his photo; to have family landmarks, (such as comforting objects, family photos, comforter, pacifier, etc.); assign tasks appropriate to children's abilities; to have a quiet corner available to the child to go and recharge his batteries if he feels the need.

In addition, to bring children to live meaningful and enriching experiences, we organize special activities for the child in his community. For example: the choir during the holidays; a museum day; many outings to the library and the park; farm outings; the outing to the sugar shack and more.

To encourage parents to be welcomed and collaborate, we organize family activities such as apple and pumpkin outings at the beginning of the year; parent meetings; a day with their child at preschool; invitations to parents to accompany us on outings or simply to participate when they see fit.

At Excelsiori Inc, adaptation and integration into community life are advocated by 4 values: first, accountability. It must be developed in the child through the global and integrated process, that is, through learning through play. Second, respect for oneself, others and the environment. Third, self-esteem. Since the child is the first agent of his development, he must be able to love himself in order to then love others. Fourth, the child's perseverance so as not to give up at the first challenge or failure. Demonstrate to him that he should not give up on the first attempt.

Every year, we receive the firefighters to provide an experience for the children. Once a month, we go on a cultural outing with the children to give them a concrete experience of their learning. We travel by school bus and the children are all excited to get on it.

Please note that we are fortunate to have the Lucien Lalonde municipal library nearby, located at 225 Rue Berri, less than 500 meters from our facility. In connection with the awakening to reading in our educational program, the fact of going there once a week, allows a really pleasant experience for the children. The library also has a beautiful park renovated by the City of Gatineau and which encourages the development of children in its territory. Our little ones can go there according to their needs, at their request or simply to unclog the yard in the event that a special activity takes place. Large game modules and fixed equipment are often appreciated.



## Outdoor activities

Today, children go outside less often and play there for less time. You have to go back to the old ways to:

- Let children take risks;
- Expend excess energy
- Develop motor and sensory skills;
- The benefits of contact with nature

The most popular ways to encourage outdoor physical activity are:

- accompany the children in an activity;
- offer games or activities;
- provide equipment, discover new places;
- Encourage them to explore new activities.

Our friends therefore have access to a private courtyard which is located at the back of the building and which is accessible from inside the daycare. This has a field with artificial grass and divided into two parts; a safe and suitable space for the little ones and a space that promotes physical activity that offers different play modules adapted to the physical and motor development of children. Outside, the play areas are divided into the courtyard and allow the development of different spheres of motor skills. There are rigid tunnels, balls, boxes of different sizes, hoops, cars and small houses.

Here are key experiences for the outdoors:

- move without moving: crouch in the sandbox, turn to grab an object, throw a balloon or a ball;
- move while moving: run in a vast space, roll on a grassy slope, jump in the sand, climb the ladder of the slide;
- move with objects: move on a tricycle, a pedal car, pull a cart or push a friend in a cart, kick a ball, hit a ball or a shuttlecock with a racket, throw a ball in a hanging basket or on the ground;
- follow sequences of movements while respecting a common rhythm: move at the speed of a bird, an insect or a squirrel, sway to the sound of the wind;
- feel and reproduce a regular rhythm: make movements while listening to the sound of a truck backing up.

The layout of physical places must be given special attention and be considered as an “educator in itself”. It must facilitate unfolding, active games, be stimulating and user-friendly.



## Integration of one or more children with special needs

Children with special needs are welcomed at preschool, provided that a place is available for them and that the childcare staff members are able to offer quality services to these children. The preschool educational program is built around the concept of the authenticity of the child and the acceptance of difference. This is why each child, family and staff member contributes to the richness of the childcare environment. A room can be adapted for the specific needs of one or more children, permanently or temporarily. Some groups may have a lower ratio if it is deemed appropriate by specialists, the educator or management, in order to ensure the proper functioning of the group and to obtain favorable integration.

In addition, qualified personnel who are part of our team or in consultation, will accompany your children who benefit from an intervention plan, throughout their journey at Excelsiori Inc. It is important to say that the participation of parents is required in these situations and that the preschool can use the services offered by different players in the health and social services network in the Outaouais.

At Excelsiori Inc., we welcome children with food allergies in an environment specifically designed to address this condition. In particular, by offering a supervised menu according to Canada's Food Guide. The precautions and considerations necessary for the safety of this clientele are at the heart of the preschool's internal policies. The educational staff supports all children in raising awareness of food allergies, preventing allergic reactions and developing knowledge related to nutrition.



## Means and types of orientation activities

At Excelsiori Inc. the child develops through the relationships established with the adults and children around him. This relationship is very significant since it is a way for the child to develop a feeling of security which will develop trust in himself and in others. This will allow the child to explore his horizons and bring him to autonomy. It is with sensitivity, supervision, attention, respect and predictability that the adult will achieve this relationship.

Fortunately, every adult, like every child, is unique. Consequently, the links that are created as well as the relationship that is built with each of the children are unique and allow them to progress, persevere and grow at their own pace. Since we know our children well, both in terms of their personality, their temperament and their development, this ensures that the child evolves in a healthy and safe environment. This is why the daycare offers your child conditions conducive to good overall development which will promote the bond of attachment by focusing on stability, continuity and the establishment of routines to create the effect of predictable and reassuring situations for the child.

Meaningful relationships are therefore comparable to a dance. You learn to dance together. Staff members are constantly on the move and adjusting to children. It is certain that relationships differ from one child to another. The staff does not see this observation as an obstacle, quite the contrary!

In conclusion, the child needs to be given clear limits and to be offered stability. He needs to know our limits and recognize those of others. To do so, he must continually experiment.