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Introduction

The Learning Together program, Yukon Education’s early learning initiative, is based on the success of British Columbia’s StrongStart BC early learning centers. The 2008 University of British Columbia’s Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) evaluation of StrongStart BC centres concluded that StrongStart BC early learning programs are effective and meet the needs of families, schools, and communities. The evaluation team also made a series of recommendations to strengthen the program, which have been reflected in the StrongStart BC Early Learning Programs Operations Guide. As a result of this work and with permission from the Government of British Columbia, this Learning Together Program Facilitation Guide was developed to provide Yukon schools and early learning programs with information, sample exemplary practices, and tools to reflect on their programs.

Purpose of this Guide

This Learning Together Program Facilitation Guide is intended to help schools plan, set up, run, and improve the quality of Learning Together early learning programs.

How do I use this Guide?

Learning Together program facilitators can use this guide to help set up and plan their programs, reflect on and self-evaluate their practices, create welcoming environments for families, build connections with the community, and communicate with principals and other stakeholders.

Principals can use this guide to provide leadership for the Learning Together early learning program, to find ways of connecting the program to the larger school community, and to facilitate dialogue among facilitators, teachers, families, and community members.

Superintendents can use this guide to not only better understand the Learning Together early learning program and Yukon Education’s responsibilities, but also stimulate dialogue among various groups in the education and early learning sectors and in the broader community.

Yukon Education can use this guide to support its programs, to guide the creation of new programs, to help with staffing decisions, to monitor program quality, and to facilitate communication between the facilitator, families and the community.
How this Guide is Organized

The Learning Together Program Facilitation Guide is organized into seven sections:

Facility Set Up
Working with Families
Program Delivery
The Role of the Facilitator
School and Yukon Education Responsibilities
Communication
Health and Safety Practices

Throughout the guide, hyperlinks take the reader to more information and examples of effective practises.

This symbol indicates a link to the BC Ministry of Education website and publications.

This symbol indicates a link to a StrongStart BC resource or example created by a school.

This symbol indicates a link to an external website or Internet resource.
Program Overview

*Learning Together* programs provide school-based early learning services for families, caregivers and children aged birth to five years, at no cost to families. The programs are intended to fill a niche for young children who are not attending childcare and are in the home with their parent or other caregivers, such as grandparents, nannies or a family friend. Both children and adults benefit from *Learning Together* early learning programs: children have access to high-quality learning environments and benefit from social interactions; adults who accompany the children learn new ways to support learning, both at the program and at home.

Yukon Education’s *Learning Together* Programs

*Learning Together* programs are usually located in school facilities and generally operate five days per week, for a minimum of 2.5 hours per day. Programs are most often open in the mornings, Monday to Friday. Some programs may be hosted as a part of other community partnerships and may be offered in locations other than schools. Similarly, based on the needs of each community, the program may be offered at a time that best suits families in the area.

*Learning Together* facilitators, who are qualified Yukon teachers, staff the programs, which are designed to be rich early learning environments. A variety of activities, including dramatic play, puzzles, blocks, stories and shared reading, music, and art are available to support children’s learning and development.

Adults attending *Learning Together* programs can expect to participate in organized sessions like circle time, in play activities, and in serving a healthy snack. Adults can discover new ways to support the children’s learning at home and may make valuable connections with others attending the program.
Facility Set-Up

The physical environment of an early learning program is often referred to as the “third teacher”. The set-up of the Learning Together facility affects the quality of the program. A high-quality early learning environment is rich, responsive, relevant, and respectful.

The following sections will help schools and facilitators plan the location, set up the program and consider the quality of the environment:

- Location of Learning Together Program
- The Learning Environment
- Equipment and Supplies
- Reflecting on the Environment
Location of the *Learning Together* Program

The location of a *Learning Together* program in a school, and the quality of the learning environment, indicates to families how highly Yukon Education and the school value them and the program. The location and the environment also communicate to families how young children are perceived as learners. If a program is difficult to find or access, or if the program is not bright, clean, and inviting, the adults and their children will not return.

Before choosing a *Learning Together* site, Yukon Education and the Early Learning Consultant responsible for this work try to consult with early childhood partners and other child/family serving agencies in the area to assess current offerings and community needs.

Once a potential *Learning Together* site has been identified, the school staff should be involved in the discussion, particularly the principal. Engaging school staff is critical to creating a well-integrated and welcoming program.

Elements to consider when locating a *Learning Together* program in the school include:

- access in the room to hot and cold running water, to address both hygiene and programming needs such as snack time and art activities.
- proximity to the kindergarten classroom, to increase the ease of interaction between staff, parents/caregivers, and children in the *Learning Together* program and kindergarten.
- easy access to washrooms, as young children often need quick trips accompanied by an adult when using the washroom.
- safe access to an outdoor play area suitable for pre-school age children, with handles on both the inside and the outside of the exterior access door.
- proximity to the school’s main entrance, to minimize distraction for classes caused by people entering and leaving the program.
- accessibility for wheelchairs and a storage area for strollers.
- location of parking for adults who drive young children to the program.
The Learning Environment

The Learning Together program’s physical environment affects not only the impression adults and children have about the program but also how they engage in the program activities. When the environment is welcoming, well-organized, and interesting, and when it reflects the cultural diversity of the community, adults and children will be more likely to engage actively and attend regularly.

Organizing the early learning environment takes careful thought and planning. Facilitators should consider how the space is divided, the types of activities it should accommodate, and ways to make the program accessible. The organization of the space should encourage adult participation and interaction with the children as well as facilitate individual and group play. The plan for the room should reflect the needs and interests of multiple age groups and abilities and support all domains of children’s development.

Excellent resources are available on designing environments for young children. For example, Designs for Living and Learning by Deb Curtis and Margie Carter describes ways to create healthy and inviting physical, social, and emotional environments for young children. Its illustrations will spark ideas for learning centres. Early Learning Environments That Work, by Rebecca Isbell and Betty Exelby, explores ways to use furniture, color, materials, and storage to nurture young children.

The following sections describe how to set up high-quality learning environments:

Learning Centres: The Physical Layout
Accommodating All Ages
Making the Environment Inviting
A Safe and Organized Environment
Shared Space
Examples of Quality Early Learning Environments
Learning Centres: The Physical Layout

The learning centres in a Learning Together program are areas set up to reflect children’s interests and encourage parent participation and interaction with the children.

The following is a list of common learning centres in a Learning Together program. Each is described in more detail in the Program Delivery section.

• Manipulative Centre
• Building Centre
• Science/Nature Centre
• Dramatic Play Centre
• Creative Centre
• Language and Literacy Centre
• Book Centre
• Outdoor Centre
• Games Centre

In smaller spaces, facilitators may offer fewer learning centres; however, they can rotate or change the centres to provide variety and address different areas of learning. Children and adults need time to experience a learning centre fully before it is replaced with a new one.

Learning centres can be delineated using shelving units, rugs, or partitions. The set-up should not create blind spots where children cannot be seen. If possible, the art area and sand/water table should be located on a hard surface such as a tiled floor, to aid in clean-up. Quiet and noisy areas should be separated, so that children and adults can respect each other’s play experiences. Include an area that allows for large group activities, such as circle time or movement activities.

Facilitators should label each learning centre using both words and symbols that best describe it. This will contribute to a language-rich environment and assist children in developing their pre-literacy skills by linking symbols with letters and objects.

Many programs set up learning centres in a “U” shape around the room, leaving an area at one end of the room open for large group activities, such as circle time, and allowing for ease of movement from one activity to another.
Accommodating All Ages

*Learning Together* early learning programs are open to all children prior to their entry into kindergarten. This could include children as young as newborn, and as old as five years of age. As such, developmentally appropriate activities in the program should be available for infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers. Facilitators need to organize activities to accommodate both small and large groups of children of all ages. Ensure materials are safe for very young children, and are large enough to prevent infants from choking. Safe spaces can be created for infants to nap while their older siblings are playing.
Making the Environment Inviting

Adults and children attending Learning Together early learning programs should enjoy their time in the program and want to return on a regular basis. The following ideas can help to make the early learning environment in the Learning Together program more inviting:

• **A Home-like Atmosphere.** Providing soft areas, such as couches, rugs, and cushions, a rocking chair for nursing, etc. can create a sense of warmth and familiarity. This home-like setting will help people feel more comfortable in a school program. Soft furnishings can also absorb the sound of noisy play. Displaying children’s art in a variety of places, including at low levels, will enable children to see their creations.

• **Attractive and Aesthetically Appealing.** The Learning Together 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 make it difficult for children to focus due to over-stimulation of the senses.

• **Open-ended.** 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 adults and allow for calm interludes between more boisterous activities.
A Safe and Organized Environment

The Learning Together physical environment needs to be safe and organized. It also must consider ease of movement and use of the program.

**Safety:** Safety is very important in a program that includes young children. Schools should ensure that any piece of freestanding furniture or equipment is durable and sturdy enough for a child to pull himself up on without tipping. Consider securing less-stable pieces of equipment to the wall or floor. Make sure that the room is set up so that anything within possible reach of infants and toddlers is safe for them. This may result in storing or displaying smaller items up higher, so very young children cannot reach them.

An environment that is open allows children and adults to see all the possibilities of play, and enables them to move safely and freely from one area of interest to another. Being able to see all of the room is also important for adults. A good view of the room will help adults who attend with multiple children supervise them safely.

**Organization:** A well-organized environment is more predictable and nurturing to children, as well as adults. When children know where material and equipment are kept and can access them easily, they can see all the possibilities of play and can choose activities independently. By creating a well-organized environment, facilitators can model strategies that will help parents organize children’s spaces at home and encourage children to take some responsibility at home as well. Having items labelled and stored, or displayed in an orderly way, means they are easy to find. Cleaning up also becomes more efficient for both adults and children.
Shared Space

In some facilities the Learning Together program may share space with another program. Where space is shared, clear expectations and communication are important. The facilitator may need extra time at the beginning and end of the program to set up, take down, and store the equipment.

Examples of Quality Early Learning Environments

This Learning Together room is bright and colourful, with visually-interesting things located at all levels of the room. Artwork is on display at a height where children can see. The sand table accommodates young children and adults. Steps to the table allow younger children to access the table safely.

Ensure that there are activities for the youngest children who participate in Learning Together early learning programs. This program has provided mats on the floor for crawling babies and safe toys at floor level.

The material in this sensory table actively promotes an appreciation of nature and offers sensory learning opportunities. Programs should consider providing a variety of unique materials in a sensory table.
Top: A cozy book corner can encourage shared reading suitable for all ages. Cushions are available for caregivers and children to cuddle and read together and books are displayed prominently for children to enjoy. This bright and colorful environment engages both children and adults.

Bottom: This Learning Together program includes self-portraits of the children who attend the program. The artwork is displayed prominently in the classrooms to create a sense of belonging and ownership in the room.
Equipment and Supplies

*Learning Together* early learning programs should offer a range of durable equipment and toys with high play value and appropriateness for different ages.

When purchasing equipment, facilitators and Yukon Education’s Early Learning Consultant should consider the scale and shape of the facility, the types of learning centres that will be created, and the activities that will be part of the daily program schedule.

Schools and facilitators will need to consider their annual *Learning Together* operating budget for the purchase of supplies and replacement items. Some of the supplies in the *Learning Together* program will need to be re-stocked on a regular basis, such as paint, clay, cleaning items, and paper.

Based on the advice from *StrongStart BC* programs, the BC Ministry of Education has developed and posted suggested equipment lists that take into consideration the unique needs of centres: [Suggested *StrongStart BC* Centre Equipment List](#)

When planning the equipment and supplies needed for *Learning Together* programs, schools and facilitators will need to consider:

- **Maintenance**
- **Snack Supplies**
- **Cleaning Supplies**
- **Art Supplies**
Maintenance

Equipment in *Learning Together* programs will receive heavy use and will be subject to wear and tear. Schools and facilitators will need to devise a regular maintenance schedule for the *Learning Together* equipment and be aware of cleanliness standards. Program facilitators should maintain a monthly and yearly check of equipment for wear and tear and cleanliness. Make sure to keep all warranties for equipment and keep informed of recalls.

Health Canada provides an updated list of product recalls online.

Snack Supplies

Snack supplies can be stored in the kitchen of the school, or in the snack preparation area of the Learning Together program. Perishable food items used for snack time should be stored in sealed containers in a refrigerator which cools to a consistent 4°C. Non-perishable food items should be stored in sealed containers. Facilitators should monitor food supplies for freshness. Keep in mind food allergies and sensitivities when planning snack menus.

Based on the advice from *StrongStart BC* programs, the BC Ministry of Education has developed and posted a suggested kitchen equipment list: [Suggested *StrongStart BC* Kitchen Equipment List](#)

Cleaning Supplies

Schools are responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of the program and the equipment. Cleaning supplies used in a *Learning Together* program should be non-toxic, and stored in a secure location, inaccessible to children.

Facilitators may wish to speak with school custodial staff concerning appropriate cleaning supplies. A valued role for parents and caregivers in some programs is the regular cleaning of toys.
Art Supplies

Special consideration should be given to the materials that are being used for creative art in the Learning Together program. Art materials should be non-toxic, clean, and large enough so as not to be swallowed by an infant or toddler. Facilitators will need to model and guide adults to supervise children carefully when using art supplies that may be a potential safety concern. For younger children just learning how to use art materials safely, facilitators may want to suggest to adults that they place their hand over their child’s hand when using small tools that require fine motor coordination, such as crayons, paint brushes, or scissors.

Where available, Learning Together programs should use supplies that meet early years guidelines.

Homemade play-dough should be stored in an airtight container and discarded after one week of use. Play-dough can be created easily at home, so keep a copy of the recipe on hand for parents and caregivers.

Remind children and adults to wash their hands thoroughly after completing art activities.

There are several recipes for homemade play-dough, many of which can be found online.
Reflecting on the Environment

The physical environment in an early learning program is often referred to as the “third teacher”. A quality early learning environment is rich, responsive, relevant, and respectful. By taking time to reflect on these aspects of the environment, schools and Learning Together facilitators can ensure the quality of their Learning Together programs.

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 five senses. Children are natural explorers and look for answers using everything that is 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 environment:

- Is the environment inviting and welcoming, to both children and adults?
- Are materials and activities open-ended?
- Does the environment contain a variety of colours and textures?
- Does the environment contain large open spaces and quiet intimate spaces for play?
- Does the environment engage all five senses?
- Do the materials and activities provoke thinking, engage creativity and allow for uncertainty?
- Do materials and activities challenge the children to try new ideas and test theories?
Responsive environments consider the developmental appropriateness for all the children who attend, regardless of their age, ability or interests. Children are active learners, and they learn in a variety of ways. Learning Together environments should be accessible for children and adults of all ages. Questions to ask when reflecting on the environment:

- Do learning centres support a variety of experiences?
- Are children and adults 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 so that several children can engage in play at the same time?

Culturally relevant environments reflect the families that use the program. Children who see familiar objects in a new setting may be encouraged to test new theories. Adults who see items that they value in the environment may feel more comfortable in an unfamiliar setting. Questions to ask when reflecting on the environment:

- Are there pictures that represent the cultures of the families who attend?
- 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 families asked to share their culture and celebrations?
- Do materials depict the community setting (i.e. urban or rural)?
- Do materials include authentic items rather than toy replicas?
Respectful environments make children and adults feel that they are welcome and safe. The environment should reflect pride in the program and show that each child and family is valued. The children and adults should be encouraged to explore new experiences.

Questions to ask when reflecting on the environment:

- Are children encouraged to explore and make their own choices?
- Are materials sturdy and safe?
- Are children’s ideas reflected in the program?
- Do the activities and materials reflect non-stereotyped community members (i.e. picture books with women police officers)?
- Is the environment clean and well organized?

Well-designed early learning environments are engaging for children and keep participants coming back.
Working with Families

One of the unique aspects of Learning Together programs is that they are intended to benefit both children and adults. Facilitators should create a program that says to children, as well as adults: “This is a place for you!”

The following sections describe areas to consider when planning how to create a successful program for both adults and children:

Physical Environment
Adult Participation
Developing Relationships with Families
Identifying Families
Physical Environment

Families should feel welcome at Learning Together programs. Part of helping families to feel comfortable in the program is making the physical environment welcoming for everyone. Such an environment might include:

• Adult-sized chairs and other furniture items placed strategically in the room to maximize child-adult interaction at learning centres.

• A range of materials that considers the range in age of children that may attend, from birth to 5 years old.

• A photo wall displaying images from the children’s homes and family life.

• A safe, cozy area for babies to lie on or crawl on, out of the way of toddlers.

• Homey features such as rugs, non-toxic plants, pillows, wooden end tables, benches etc.

• Sources of light such as lamps, a light table, spotlights and the use of projectors for shadows and light experiences as well as natural light.

• Objects or decorative items that represent the cultures of the families attending the program.

The following sub-sections describe items to consider when setting up the physical environment to reflect the needs of families:

Family Storage Needs

Strollers

Caregiver Information Board

Caregiver Resources

Sign-In Area and Procedure
Family Storage Needs

Many families arrive at Learning Together programs with coats, purses, diaper bags, and backpacks that require safe storage. Many Learning Together programs include a cubby or coat storage area to accommodate personal items. Individual hooks for each child are helpful, as are large bins for each family.

Personal items such as purses, diaper bags, and backpacks should be kept away from play areas and children’s reach. Suggest to families that they do not bring valuables with them when they attend Learning Together programs, as the program is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Adults should be encouraged to keep any valuables with them at all times.

Several schools have developed unique ways for children to be responsible for their own outerwear when entering the program. Try taking a picture of each child who attends the program. Upon arrival, the children can find their photograph and place it on a coat hook or cubby with their personal items. This allows children to participate in a routine that fosters independence and responsibility, and helps keep the room orderly. Programs may need to create a “lost and found” area when items go astray.

Strollers

Whenever possible, covered space should be provided for stroller parking. Signage can direct adults to the storage area. Be sure that strollers do not block safety exits. Facilitators should advise families not to leave personal belongings or food in strollers.

Schools may wish to locate the entrance to the Learning Together program where it can be easily accessed by strollers or provide an alternate “stroller friendly” entrance.
Caregiver Information Board

*Learning Together* programs are busy, active places. One-on-one conversations with caregivers might be difficult to achieve, so an information bulletin board placed near the entrance to the program can enhance communication with families. Program information, upcoming community events, school information, pamphlets and resources, contact information for health programs, and caregiver education articles can be posted on the board.

*Learning Together* programs may wish to have a caregiver or community partner help create a caregiver information board. It should be updated regularly and reflect the community.

Caregiver Resources

The *Learning Together* program may be the only program that a family accesses. To support caregivers, resources at the site might include:

- A reference lending library offering books on parenting skills, healthy cooking recipes, and monthly parenting magazines. Items in this lending library can reflect the languages and cultures of the families in the community.

- A regular *Learning Together* newsletter that informs parents about new program resources, guest speakers, days the program is closed, visitors from other agencies, recipes for play-dough, etc.

- Written information on child development — be sure the resources use plain language.

- Pamphlets from local community partners for caregivers to take home.

- Guidelines about the policies regarding illness, registration, and other topics.

- A list of opportunities or suggestions for caregiver participation or contributions within the program.
Sign-In Area and Procedure

The sign-in area is usually the first thing families see when they arrive at the Learning Together program. It could be a table just outside or inside the classroom with a sign-in book for daily attendance. For newcomers, the area could include Learning Together welcome packages or pamphlets with information for families to take with them, even if the program is closed. Having a white board near the sign-in area is also a good method to communicate daily with families and to remind them about the day’s program, including the snack menu.

Simple instructions should be posted for sign-in (translated into local languages along with pictures to support text, if possible). The sign-in sheet or book should include space for the child’s first and last name, age, and parent/caregiver’s name. This helps to keep track of daily attendance and new families.

A sign-in procedure will be critical if the school needs to be evacuated in case of fire or other emergency. This information can also help the facilitator see trends in age and patterns of attendance that are valuable for planning. Sign-in sheets also provide Yukon Education with attendance information needed for entry in YSIS.

A photograph of a sample sign-in area from BC School District 71 can be found on the school district website.

A sample sign-in sheet can be found in Appendix A.
Adult Participation

Caregiver involvement in *Learning Together* early learning programs is fundamental to the purpose of the program. Research tells us that parents or caregivers who are active partners in their children’s education and development increase the chance of children’s success. Research has also shown that when early learning programs include specific goals for caregiver engagement and learning, caregivers transfer the knowledge and skills to their home environment.

By finding opportunities for teachable moments, facilitators can help adults feel more connected to the program and understand the important role that they play in their child’s learning and development.

Adult participation in the program is mainly through the adult interaction with children, but can also take additional forms, such as welcoming new families, assisting with snack preparation, assisting with clean-up, providing suggestions for new program ideas or materials, or participating in some other way that feels meaningful to them.

The following strategies can be used to involve adults in their child’s learning and development:

- Using teachable moments to model ways to support learning and describe the learning that is occurring in the moment for the adults.
- Reinforcing verbally and non-verbally the importance of caregiver involvement.
- Encouraging participation by asking for input in program planning.
- Displaying posters describing early learning ideas.
- Using circle time to demonstrate and explain what is being learned and how to continue the learning at home.
- Displaying photos of activities and descriptions of learning taking place at learning centres.
- Setting up the physical environment to encourage adult/child participation.

School District 43 has developed a set of posters describing various early learning activities and what children are learning at each activity. Examples of the *play posters and order form* can be found on their website.
Developing Relationships with Families

Parents and caregivers from many backgrounds arrive at Learning Together programs with a variety of parenting styles and knowledge. Developing positive relationships with families takes time and effort, but is a core component of the Learning Together program. Facilitators should appreciate and acknowledge that parents and caregivers are children’s first teachers.

Facilitators should take time to reflect thoughtfully on how they are developing meaningful and trusting relationships with families and consider the following:

• Demonstrating respect to all families and community members by focusing 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. It is helpful if facilitators wear a name tag to identify themselves.

• Setting up mentoring opportunities for new families with seasoned participants. New families can be introduced to adults and children who regularly attend and have a good understanding of the program.

• Providing new families with a brief description of the program and giving them a welcome package that explains the program in greater detail.

• Posting a daily schedule and letting families know what is planned for the day.

• Clearly communicating expectations of adult participation. Parents and caregivers will feel more comfortable when they know what to expect.

• Practicing active listening and empathy in conversations with adults and children, focusing on the matter at hand and suspending judgment.
Welcome Packages

Welcome packages can be an effective way to inform new families about the Learning Together program. Packages can include a brief overview and purpose of the program, the days and hours of operation, a typical monthly calendar, and perhaps the Learning Together registration form and photo/media release form. The reading level of families varies widely, so be sure to use plain language when creating welcome packages for families. If you know certain language groups from the area are likely to attend, consider translating the packages.

Plain Language Sites:

www.plainlanguagenetwork.org/plaintrain/IntroducingPlainLanguage.html

Communication with Caregivers

There are many other ways to communicate with families. Some methods for increasing positive communication and interaction with families include:

• Potlucks and picnics
• Celebrations
• Suggestion box
• Caregiver workshops
• Program calendars
• Caregiver handbooks

Some of the information caregivers may be interested in receiving include:

• Recipes for play-dough and other play activities at home
• Developmental information
• General school information
• Special event announcements
• Inter-agency contacts and information
• Community event announcements
• Parenting suggestions
• Promotional materials for new parents
• Program closures
• Other information as pertinent to the program

Sample Learning Together newsletters can be found in Appendix B.
Confidentiality

Learning Together programs must ensure confidentiality of information for families attending the program. It is important that families feel safe and secure participating in the program. The facilitator will need to be compliant with school and Yukon Education policies regarding confidentiality. Learning Together facilitators should refer to Yukon Education and their host school’s policies on confidentiality.

The Learning Together facilitator may be aware of privileged information about families. Should parents need to discuss sensitive matters with a facilitator, the facilitator should make every attempt to arrange a mutually convenient time to discuss the matter away from other families.

All paperwork that contains personal information should be stored in a safe, secure manner. Child and family names should not be mentioned in newsletters or other methods of communication, to protect their privacy.

Photo and Media Consent

Providing caregivers and children with photos of themselves and placing photos of the children around the program makes participants feel involved, and may also help adults and children to gain a better understanding of a child’s learning. However, permission must be obtained from the parent or guardian before using pictures of children in newsletters, posters, advertisements, websites or other publications. Yukon Education has a standard photo and media release form that is required to be completed with the Learning Together program registration form and must be kept on file at the school.

A copy of the Learning Together program Photo/Media Release form can be found in Appendix D.
Volunteer Support

The role of volunteers should be consistent with Yukon Education’s policy, and should honour the philosophy of Learning Together as a program that engages parents, caregivers and children. Volunteers who are not attending with children can make a positive contribution to the program. Some Learning Together programs may have First Nations elders, retired teachers or other community members volunteer in the program.

Volunteers can assist in areas such as:
• Creating materials for art activities
• Preparing food for snacks
• Modelling skills at learning centres
• Reading with children
• Encouraging children to participate in learning activities
• Assisting other caregivers who bring more than one child
• Organizing resources at the end of the session
• Documenting children’s learning and development
• Assisting with field trips

Identifying Families

One of the responsibilities of Learning Together programs is attracting families to participate, including vulnerable families. Facilitators may need help from community organizations or services to get program information out to families. This is especially relevant for Learning Together programs where there are very few children in a community. Local health partners may connect schools to first-time parents or newcomers to the community.

Organizations that may be able to assist with connecting with families include:

Healthy Families Yukon
Child Development Center Yukon
Council of Yukon First Nations
Program Delivery

The years between birth and school-age are a critical time in a child’s life. The experiences that children have in the early years influence their health, well-being, and life-long learning. Children who have had exposure to language rich environments and play-based early learning experiences, and are supported by loving and responsive relationships, are more likely to develop the skills, knowledge and dispositions to support their success in school.

Learning Together early learning programs offer activities that support the learning goals of the British Columbia Early Learning Framework. Learning Together program facilitators are required to use the British Columbia Early Learning Framework and Understanding the British Columbia Early Learning Framework: From Theory to Practice as curriculum documents to inform and guide their practice. These documents help facilitators examine and reflect on their program to determine if it addressed the goals in the four areas of early learning laid out in the Framework (Well-Being and Belonging, Exploration and Creativity, Language and Literacies, Social Responsibility and Diversity).

Facilitators can use the Questions to Consider in the two documents to reflect on their program, assess the effectiveness of the learning centres and activities, and the learning environment.

The following sections describe considerations for program delivery:

Program Goals
Daily Program
Reflecting on the Learning Together Program
Program Goals

The overall goal of Learning Together early learning programs is to support the development of young children consistent with the goals of the British Columbia Early Learning Framework and to provide opportunities for adults to observe and practice effective strategies that support early learning.

Learning Together facilitators can use the Framework to develop short-term (daily/weekly) and long-term (monthly and yearly) program goals. These goals should also be assessed on a regular basis.

The following sections describe items to consider when creating program goals:

Sample Yearly Program Goals
Sample Monthly Program Goals
Sample Yearly Program Goals

The following are examples taken from existing programs:

• Create monthly program plans that focus on a particular learning goal from each of the four areas of early learning contained in the Framework.

• Schedule community partners to visit the program on a regular basis. The visits will need to be planned well in advance, in order to publicize them in the Learning Together newsletter.

• Organize a minimum of two school-Learning Together partnership events; for example, hosting a Learning Together open house during the school open house event can bring the school community together.

• Develop a new caregiver resource area in the program that contains materials in at least 3 languages.

• Provide professional development opportunities for the facilitator to increase skills in working with adults.

• Identify strategies to attract new families to the Learning Together program.
Sample Monthly Program Goals

The following are examples of monthly goals for a typical program:

1. Plan and participate in meetings with a local community partner.
2. Contact public health nurse to see if she knows of new families who have moved into the neighbourhood.
3. Focus on the following learning goals this month:

**Well-Being and Belonging:** provide an environment where young children can feel confidence in and control of their bodies by:

- providing opportunities for music and large muscle movement in circle time, encouraging children to move in different ways.
- using the gym and age-appropriate equipment several times to develop coordination, balance, stability, locomotion, and rhythm.

**Exploration and Creativity:** build, create, and design using different materials and techniques by:

- using a variety of “real” things, such as mixing bowls and wooden spoons, in the dramatic play centre.
- using a variety natural items such as leaves and pine cones for art projects.

**Languages and Literacies:** engage in sound and word play by:

- inviting a First Nations elder to teach a song or tell a story during circle time.
- using rhythm and rhyming games during circle and gym time, and encouraging children to make up their own word games.

**Social Responsibility and Diversity:** understand how children’s own actions may affect nature and the planet by:

- planning a playground litter pickup during outdoor time; talking at circle time about how litter affects everyone’s enjoyment of the area etc.
- engaging children and adults in day-to-day recycling and waste reduction, and modelling how scraps can be kept for other uses, and what scraps can be recycled.
Daily Program

The *Learning Together* program is a play-based program. Most of children’s early learning takes place through play. The positive emotions associated with play are as important as the skills they build in creating a disposition that embraces learning.

The activities that make up the daily program should also allow for some flexibility and choice, to address the individual interests of the children and adults who attend, and to be responsive to the needs and desires of the families served. The daily activities should support the early learning goals of the *Framework*.

The *Learning Together* Daily Program includes consideration of the following:

**Daily Schedule**

**Learning Centres**

**Circle Time**

**Shared Book Time**

**Creative Art/Project Time**

**Snack Time**

**Library, Computer or Gym Time**

**Goodbye Time**

**Program Activity Links**
Daily Schedule

Both the children and adults will benefit from a predictable schedule of activities in a Learning Together program. Routines make people feel comfortable and build their confidence in the value of the program. Children need routines in order to be able to predict the flow of the day and build independence. Understanding and following routines is one of the learning goals in the British Columbia Early Learning Framework. When children feel comfortable and confident about the program’s activities, they will feel more empowered and self-assured to try new things. As a bonus, children and families that are confident about the routine of the program can become “tour guides” for visitors or mentors for new participants.

Sample daily schedules can be found in Appendix C.

An innovative technique to encourage caregivers to take an active part in the daily schedule is to write a point of focus for the program on the blackboard. For example, “Today, adults are encouraged to try exploring the concept of volume with their children. What container holds more? Which shape holds the most? Will this round container fill up the cube?” The facilitator then adds props to the learning centres to support this concept; in this case, adding measuring cups and a variety of containers to the sand table. The caregivers attending have responded positively to this, saying that it helps to provide them with some focus for their session.

Learning Centres

Interactive play occurs when adults and children explore the learning centres together. Learning centres are designated areas of the room where materials and activities are arranged to guide children’s learning. Centres can be arranged to accommodate individual children or groups of children. For example, providing a small desk with one or two children’s chairs and some natural materials such as pine cones and leaves can be an area for one or two people, while the dramatic play centre can be set up in a large corner of the room, with enough space to accommodate several children and adults.

Play at learning centres can be exploratory, with “hands on/minds on” learning using sand, blocks, dress-up clothes, water, collections, paints, puzzles and more.

Learning centres can be designed purposefully to address the four areas of the Framework.
Manipulative Centre: play-dough, sand or water table, clay, sensory table.

The sand table provides opportunities to learn in all four areas of early learning:

- **Well-being and Belonging:** dumping and pouring of the sand provides opportunities for children to develop muscles in their hands and fingers, with a wide variety of materials.
- **Exploration and Creativity:** providing sand and a variety of tools encourages children to build, create and design using different materials and techniques.
- **Languages and Literacies:** using cups in a variety of sizes introduces mathematical concepts into the play.
- **Social Responsibility and Diversity:** playing together at the sand table encourages children of different ages and or backgrounds to play together.

Building Centre: wooden blocks, carpentry bench, soft blocks, railway set.

**Wooden blocks** provide opportunities to learn in all four areas of early learning:

- **Well-being and Belonging:** building with and balancing the blocks helps children to develop coordination, balance, stability, locomotion and rhythm.
- **Exploration and Creativity:** manipulating blocks allows children to try possible solutions to problems in meaningful ways.
- **Languages and Literacies:** using blocks, children can represent and communicate their ideas.
- **Social Responsibility and Diversity:** building together or side-by-side encourages children to share materials and be respectful of other’s ideas.
Science/Nature Centre: discovery table with “found” objects, nature table, collection centre (interesting rocks, seeds, etc.), light table.

A nature table provides opportunities for learning in all four areas of early learning:

- **Well-being and Belonging:** providing items found in the natural environment allows children to express their natural curiosity as they explore.

- **Exploration and Creativity:** using natural objects in new ways, testing out the various textures and odours in the collection of objects.

- **Languages and Literacies:** talking about the items encourages new vocabulary.

- **Social Responsibility and Diversity:** taking turns and observing what other children do and say about the objects encourages respect for others.
**Dramatic Play Centre**: dress-up clothes, dolls, kitchen set, playhouse, hospital, grocery store, space station, food.

**Dress-up clothes** provide opportunities for learning in all four areas of early learning:

- **Well-being and Belonging**: practicing self-care skills in trying on and hanging up clothes in the centre.

- **Exploration and Creativity**: Trying on clothes in new and original ways allows children to explore the world using their bodies and all their senses.

- **Languages and Literacies**: Dressing up encourages dramatic play opportunities, where children express their thoughts and ideas.

- **Social responsibility and Diversity**: Using “real” clothes, such as a baker’s hat or a mail carrier’s bag, allows children to explore and learn about their community and the wider world.

**Creative Centre**: art table, beautiful junk, creativity centre, invention centre.

**Paint and easels** provide opportunities for learning in all four areas of early learning:

- **Well-being and Belonging**: Providing paint brushes and feathers of various sizes lets children gain confidence and control of their bodies.

- **Exploration and Creativity**: painting with natural materials encourages children to discover new ways of expression.

- **Languages and Literacies**: expressing their own ideas visually and discussing their creations with others.

- **Social responsibility and Diversity**: practising positive regard for shared materials and working harmoniously alongside others.
**Language and Literacy Centre:** chalk board/ white board, literacy bucket (contains assorted paper, pens, pencils, felts, stationery, order forms) magnetic letters, flannel board, puppet theatre.

**Flannel boards** provide opportunities for learning in all four areas of early learning:
- **Well-being and Belonging:** independently using a flannel board after it has been used for a story during circle time builds confidence to extend the learning.
- **Exploration and Creativity:** Manipulating a variety of items for the flannel board, some of which stick on the board and some which do not, encourages problem solving to figure out how things work.
- **Languages and Literacies:** Flannel boards encourage children to use a wide variety of materials and expressive mediums to represent and communicate their ideas.
- **Social responsibility and Diversity:** Working with other children at the flannel board encourages children to initiate, maintain, and enjoy relationships with other children including turn-taking, problem-solving, negotiating, and understanding other people’s points of view.

**Book Centre:** large and small books, comfortable places to read.

**Picture books** provide opportunities for learning in all four areas of early learning:
- **Well-being and Belonging:** Sitting on a parent or caregiver’s lap to enjoy a picture book provides children with attention and affection and connects these emotions with books.
- **Exploration and Creativity:** choosing a book with parent or caregiver allows a child to try new ideas and provides opportunities to discuss thinking strategies behind choices.
- **Languages and Literacies:** Providing books fosters a love of reading and encourages curiosity about vocabulary and written language.
- **Social responsibility and Diversity:** Treating books with care provides opportunities for adults to model respectful, responsible behaviour.
Other common learning centres in *Learning Together* programs include:

- **Outdoor Centres**: garden corner (bean planting, herb planting), bubble play, parachute play.

- **Games Centres**: straws and connectors, puzzles, bingo, snakes and ladders, matching games.

- **Theme Centre**: special-interest centre, determined by the interests of the children, or a special event that is happening (i.e. snow storm).

School District 43 (Coquitlam) has created a set of 8 laminated posters describing various early learning activities, and what children are learning during each of these play activities. Each poster is 11.5" x 17". A set of 8 posters costs $20. More information on ordering these posters, including poster examples, can be found on their [website](#).
Circle Time

Circle time, a large-group time led by the facilitator, should be a daily scheduled activity at each Learning Together program. Facilitators can use the Framework to help reflect on and plan their circle times. When planning circle time, ensure your activities are:

• Appropriate for a variety of ages and focused on the children attending that day.
• Reflective of the interests of children and their families.
• Welcoming for both adults and children who want to participate, while providing them with alternate quiet activities should they choose not to participate.

Circle time is typically a gathering time to share poems, songs, stories and action games. This activity builds literacy skills through use of big books, puppet play, story reading, and storytelling. Music and numeracy activities can also be incorporated into circle time. Demonstrations of new equipment, modeling ways to support children’s learning, and offering parenting tips can occur during circle time.

Both adults and children can participate in circle time together; however, younger children may need to be engaged in other ways if they have a shorter attention span.

Some Learning Together programs have two planned circle times during each program session; one short circle time during the first part of the program, aimed at the younger children, and another longer circle time near the end of the session geared toward the older children. Two circle times also accommodates families who leave early or arrive late to the program.

Online resources for circle time activities:
www.preschoolrainbow.org/activities-large.htm
www.childcarelounge.com/Caregivers/circle.htm
Shared Book Time

Shared book time encourages adults and children to bond while reading books. Shared book time is a joyful time for both the adult and child. Ideally, adults will begin to use strategies that have been modelled by the facilitator at circle time or during their individual one-on-one book times with their child.

Many Learning Together programs schedule shared book time immediately prior to circle time. Children and adults are asked to tidy up for circle time, and when they are ready, they can read books together while waiting for circle time to begin. Children are encouraged to choose a book to read or look at with the adult. Facilitators can model different ways to enjoy a book besides actually reading the story. The action of choosing a book, discussing the pictures in the book, talking about favourite parts of the book, guessing what comes next in the story, and spending time close together are all important aspects of pre-reading skills and build understanding of the purpose and enjoyment of reading. This is especially helpful for those who do not read English.

Ideas to help caregivers understand the importance of reading to their children can be found on the Read Now BC website.
Creative Art/Project Time

Most young children take a natural delight in art. They love to be creative through manipulating materials such as paint, clay, and glue. Art activities encourage children to express emotions, plan and follow through on plans, make representations of their thoughts and ideas, and problem-solve. When children are creating, they are learning about symbolic representation, an important element of emergent literacy and numeracy. The early symbolic representation in art can help to lay a firm foundation for future academic learning.

Tips to keep in mind when planning art activities include:
• Art activities should focus on the process, not the product.
• Creative art/project time should be open ended and child directed; i.e. don’t use colouring sheets.
• For younger children, adults can use hand-over-hand strategies to help their young children enjoy using the materials.
• Art allows adults and children to explore different media that might not be available in the home.
• Adults can explore alongside their children.

Art materials are experienced by children using all their senses. Facilitators can model the value of providing open-ended, sensory art materials, and using open-ended questions to help children describe what they are doing, seeing, feeling, and thinking. Open-ended questions to encourage children to talk and think about art include:
• How does the clay smell?
• How does the finger-paint feel?
• What made you decide to draw a robot?
• Tell me about your drawing.
• Can you think of a different way to use a paint brush?
• How did you make the orange paint?
• How did you make the clay look like that?

Online art resources:
Art ideas for infants, for toddlers, and for preschoolers.
Snack Time

Offering healthy and nutritious snacks are a requirement of the Learning Together program. Routines like hand washing, serving, using manners, and interacting with the group can all be learned and practiced during snack time.

Snack time connects to several learning goals in the British Columbia Early Learning Framework:

• Learn about ways to keep themselves healthy, including nourishment, sleep, and physical activity,

• Understand and follow routines,

• Build healthy relationships with both adults and children,

• Learn to appreciate diversity.

Snack time is a language-rich activity. Informal conversation occurs between children, and between adults and children. Interaction is important during this time, so encourage all children to join in.

Families can be exposed to new, healthy food choices at Learning Together programs. Frequently, children are more willing to try new foods at snack time than at home. Cultural traditions in food can be shared and explored at snack time.

Some Learning Together programs have milk and cereal available as soon as the program opens. This practice provides families who may not have had time or the resources to have breakfast in the morning to have some food before the program gets fully underway.

Consideration of food safety, healthy eating and food allergies must be taken when planning snack time.

Resources to help plan healthy snacks:

A resource entitled “Meal and Snack Ideas for Your One to Three-Year-Old Toddler” that is available in several languages:
http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile69e.stm

Food Flair is a comprehensive manual, developed by LEAP BC with ideas and activities to help create environments that support healthy eating for young children.
Library, Computer or Gym Time

One of the advantages of placing *Learning Together* programs in schools is access to other spaces in the school, including the gym, playground, computer lab, kitchen, and library.

Whenever possible, schools should schedule some time each week for the *Learning Together* program to use shared spaces, such as the library, computer room, and gym. In some schools, where these spaces are heavily booked, it has been possible to use them when the rest of the school is outside for recess.

**Library**

Use of the school library encourages adults and children to become regular public library users. Both school and public libraries are a great resource for families. Teacher-librarians often provide story time for *Learning Together* children and their families either in the classroom or in the library. Some teacher-librarians have set up a special book loaning system for *Learning Together* families, which includes library cards, a pre-school book section, and a caregiver reference section.

**Computer Room**

Computers can be a great tool for parents to search for information about child development. Computers can also be used to document children’s development in classroom activities with photos, especially as many families do not have access to technology at home. The school’s computer room can help to expose adults and children to new technology that they might not otherwise have access to. The facilitator and technology support teacher can help guide adults and children to access appropriate electronic early learning tools found online.

Families can use computers in *Learning Together* programs to search for information about child development and find resources. Computers can also be used to document children’s development in classroom activities with photos, especially if families do not have access to computers at home.

Careful thought should be given to how much time children engage with computers at *Learning Together* programs. The major focus of the program is interaction among the children, the adults, and the learning environment.
Gym or Outdoor Playground

Gym time for large-muscle activities is highly valued by most Learning Together caregivers. Many children and adults do not have regular opportunities to move within such a large, indoor space. Gym equipment that is appropriate for children age 0-5 years includes balls, hoola hoops, parachutes, and cones for navigating around.

Learning Together programs should also consider using the outdoor space available at the school, especially during good weather.

Specialized equipment is not necessary for children attending Learning Together programs. Many activities that require little or no equipment can be organized outdoors or in the gym.

Connecting with nature is one of the learning goals in the Framework. Outdoor activities such as scavenger hunts and short walks can help to support this goal.

Many ideas for physical activities for families with young children can be found in the Healthy Opportunities for Preschoolers resource, developed by LEAP BC.

Goodbye Time

Goodbye time is an important social ritual and routine at the end of the Learning Together session. This transition time can be challenging for some adults and children. Facilitators can organize routine ways to signal the end of the session to make it easier for families to leave the program. Activities could include gathering art projects, dressing in outdoor clothes, or a good-bye song. Children need to understand that they can return to the program on another day and their favourite activities will still be in the program.

Because Learning Together is a drop-in program, families arrive and depart at various times throughout the session. Some families may leave before goodbye time. Facilitators can plan a quick ritual or activity for these families, such as a special goodbye wave or short verse.
Program Activity Links

**Perpetual Preschool** - a site with over 12,000 free ideas for educators and parents of young children.

**Enchanted Learning** - a site with theme ideas from preschool to Grade 3.

**Tools for Aboriginal Communities** - a series of calendars, specially created for the parents of young children from Aboriginal communities, featuring activities that aim to promote healthy child development in the early years. Each calendar is illustrated by a First Nations artist and targets a different age group.

**Healthy Opportunities for Preschoolers** - HOP - The resources provided in this book are intended for use in training care providers in support of the Healthy Opportunities for Preschoolers initiative.

**Big Science for Little Hands** - Science World’s early learning site that includes activities for 3-5 year-olds that are intended to serve as a starting point and inspiration for scientific explorations. Each theme includes small and large group activities which can be adapted to any environment.
Reflecting on the Learning Together Program

Learning Together facilitators can use the British Columbia Early Learning Framework and Understanding the British Columbia Early Learning Framework: From Theory to Practice, as well as other tools, to examine, reflect, and plan their program to ensure that it addresses all areas of early learning.

Early learning teachers use a variety of tools for reflection such as:

• Written field notes
• Anecdotal descriptions
• Children’s portfolios
• Checklists
• Photographs

By reflecting on the program, and creating plans based on those reflections, facilitators will continuously improve the quality of their early learning program.

The Role of the Facilitator

By definition, facilitators help a group of people understand and reach their common objectives. In a Learning Together program, the common objective is children’s optimal development and learning through a partnership between families and Yukon Education.

Learning Together facilitators encourage adult and child participation, create environments and activities to influence children’s learning, model strategies that can be used by adults to support children’s learning, and provide information to increase adults’ understanding of children’s development and learning. Learning Together programs provide parents and caregivers with opportunities to observe and practice new approaches.

Research has shown that one of the main contributors to a quality early learning program is the educator, in the case of Learning Together programs, the facilitator. The skills of the facilitator are pivotal to the success of the program.

The following sections describe the roles and responsibilities of facilitators:

Facilitators and Adults
Facilitators and Children
Facilitators and Families
Facilitators and the School/Yukon Education
Facilitators and the Community
Facilitators and Adults

Being a role model, leading by example, is a key aspect of being a Learning Together facilitator. Providing caregivers with information is another important responsibility.

Facilitators can share information with parents and caregivers in a number of ways:

• Provide opportunities for adults to observe and learn new skills and techniques to interact with their children.
• Share information about child development and parenting strategies.
• Demonstrate ways to connect with community resources.
• Share ideas about ways to enrich home environments to support early learning.

Encouraging adults to actively participate and interact with their children is an important responsibility of the facilitator. This can be accomplished in many ways, including:

• describing expectations for adults’ active participation, using a Learning Together welcome package, or by posting expectations on the parent information board.
• encouraging adult/child interactions at learning centres.
• providing verbal prompts to assist adults who feel awkward or don’t know what to do next.
• helping adults to observe and understand better their child’s growth and development through dialogue or through documentation such as scrap-booking, photos and exemplars.
Facilitators and Children

Facilitators are responsible for creating a learning environment and activities that positively influence children’s learning. More information on setting up the Learning Together facility and program planning to foster learning can be found in other sections of this resource.

Learning Together facilitators support and influence children’s learning by observing, forming relationships, having conversations, and celebrating diversity.

Careful observation of the children’s responses can help the facilitator provide a more responsive program. Facilitators should regularly observe how children use and interact with the environment, with each other, and with parents and caregivers. Observations can help ensure that health and safety are addressed, that the program reflects the needs of the children, and that the activities captivate their interests. The observations that facilitators make regarding the children in the program can help to guide the program planning.

The Learning Together environment is a social one, where children interact with each other and with adults. Facilitators can build relationships with children, and through these relationships enhance the learning taking place in the program. Meaningful interactions occur when facilitators take the time to share their interests with children, listen carefully and respectfully to each child, and respond to their individual interests. Conversations with the children can assist them in making their own choices about learning activities.

Learning Together programs are attended by families of many diverse backgrounds. Facilitators should consider how to reflect the diversity of families in the programming and the facility set-up, props and materials.

A facilitator’s teaching role includes:
• Offering new possibilities for children that they may not have at home.
• Listening to and responding to children’s ideas and needs.
• Fostering relationships among and with children.
• Arranging the classroom in ways to invite children’s participation and creativity.
• Capturing and sharing examples of learning, using various forms of documentation such as pedagogical narrations, photographs, oral storytelling.
Facilitators and Families

Adults and children may arrive at Learning Together early learning programs with some confusion or anxiety about the program. Facilitators can ease families into the program by providing a welcoming environment, personally greeting them, and showing genuine interest in their attending and becoming involved. Connecting with families can be done in a variety of ways, including creating a welcoming environment in the program, showing respect for the families that attend, and connecting with families outside the scheduled program hours or in the community.

Facilitators may wish to consider the following on how they can best establish meaningful relationships and connection with families:

• Consider sharing their own brief biography, including picture, on the parent information board. Parents want to know about the facilitator working in the program.
• Hold social events at the Learning Together site for families. Newsletters, potlucks, and open houses can assist in making connections.
• Utilize parent’s strengths to get them involved in the program. Consider developing an inventory of skills that adults would like to share with the program. This could include assisting with translating information into other languages, or sharing songs from different cultures.
• Refer and connect families to community resources. This could be accomplished by having community resources available on the parent information board, or having community service providers such as public health nurses visit the program.
• Honour the language and cultures of all families that attend the program. Consider how those cultures can be reflected in the program.
Facilitators and the School/Yukon Education

To be effective, facilitators need to develop a strong, positive relationship with the staff in the school where the program is located, as well as with staff at Yukon Education. Facilitators, principals, and Yukon Education contacts may wish to:

- Hold regular meetings to plan and reflect on the program.
- Meet with school staff (teachers, principal, custodian, and librarian) and school council to discuss the program.
- Connect with community groups and other service providers to discuss the program and how to create linkages and referral systems.
- Add information on the Learning Together program to school newsletters, websites, and other publications.

Facilitators and the Community

The British Columbia Early Learning Framework vision of families, communities, and governments is that “they will work in partnership to support children in building the foundations for early development and lifelong learning.”

Learning Together facilitators, the school, and Yukon Education’s Early Learning Consultant can connect with their community in meaningful ways. This could be by participating in community-based Early Childhood Development planning tables, connecting with local First Nations, and/or inviting community agencies to display resources and share information in the Learning Together program.
School and Yukon Education Responsibilities

Yukon Education holds the ultimate responsibility for *Learning Together* early learning programs. Schools and program facilitators are responsible for following guidelines and policies on *Learning Together* programs as directed by Yukon Education.

The following sections describe the areas of responsibility for schools regarding their *Learning Together* early learning program:

- **Reporting**
- **Computer Access**
- **Signage**
- **Hours of Operation**
- **Role of the Principal**
Reporting

Strong evidence confirms that when programs are continually funded and sustained over many years, part of their success can be attributed to the collection of good data.

A core responsibility of schools is to ensure registrations forms are collected for all children who attend Learning Together early learning programs, and to record attendance at these programs.

Yukon Education and Learning Together facilitators should work together to set up protocols for who is responsible for the various aspects of attendance reporting.

The following sections describe the considerations for reporting attendance and collecting data:

Registration

Attendance

Record Keeping
Registration

*Learning Together* early learning programs have families fill out a registration form. Because of the drop-in nature of the program, facilitators may need to take a session or two to develop a relationship with a family before asking the parent or caregiver to complete a registration form.

Information provided on the registration form must be verified with valid identification, such as a birth certificate, passport, or documents issued by Immigration Canada. The required information on the registration form includes:

- Legal surname
- Legal given name
- Legal middle name
- Usual surname
- Usual given name
- Usual middle name
- Birth date
- Gender
- Residential Postal Code

A copy of the *Learning Together* Registration Form can be found in Appendix D.

Frequently asked questions and answers on Registration and Attendance can be found in Appendix E.

Personal information about a child (name, date of birth) needs to be verified with valid identification. The most common piece of identification is a birth certificate, but some families do not have this document.

Several *Learning Together* programs have developed creative ways to encourage parents to complete a registration form, including providing a “Welcome to *Learning Together*” package to new families. This welcome package may contain items such as a brief introduction to the *Learning Together* program, including expectations for parents, goals of the program, a schedule of operation for the program, illness policy, other community resources, and a registration form.

Clipboards are helpful for completing registration forms. Pens that attach to the clipboard allow parents/caregivers to interact with their child and still complete the necessary forms. A child could be given a child-size clipboard to print or draw on while the adult is filling in the form.
Attendance

As per Yukon Education policy, attendance records must be kept for all children attending Learning Together early learning programs. Attendance information must then be entered into YSIS. Facilitators are required to enter positive attendance for each child attending a Learning Together program. This information will be extracted from YSIS by Yukon Education at different points in the year to gather information and data on program attendance and use.

The best way to accomplish this is for adults to sign-in themselves and their children in a sign-in book each time they attend the program. Facilitators may need to remind adults about this process. Locating the sign-in book or daily sign-in sheet at or near the entrance works well. Information from daily sign-in sheets can then be transferred to weekly or monthly attendance records on YSIS. Daily attendance is also needed in case of emergency evacuation of the school, to verify that everyone is safely out of the building.

Sample Sign in Sheets can be found in Appendix A.

Record Keeping

Several types of records must be kept on file at each Learning Together early learning program. This includes, but is not limited to:

• Registration and media release for each child who attends the program.
• Attendance for each child who attends the program.
• Full accounting of the receipts and expenditures of the yearly financial operating budget for Learning Together programs provided to schools by Yukon Education.

Additional information that may be useful to record or retain might include:

• Visits from community partners.
• Field trip permission forms.
• Copies of newsletters and calendars.
• Accidents or illnesses.
• Referrals to community agencies.
Computer Access

Learning Together facilitators require access to a computer, either in the Learning Together room or elsewhere. Computer access is required to enter attendance information into YSIS, receive and respond to emails, create documents for distribution to families, and to access research about early learning.

Signage, Advertisement and Publicity

Yukon Education approved outdoor signage for Learning Together programs is recommended and can help new families to locate the program easily. Learning Together programs could have sandwich board signs that can be placed in an area visible to families from a nearby road. Schools may also consider posting signs at the entrance to the school. Signage should be placed in a location where it is visible to as many people as possible to promote the program, and as close to the entrance to the site as possible.

Any advertisement or publicity for the Learning Together program (including posters, flyers, newspaper or radio ads, interviews etc.) must go through Yukon Education’s Communications Unit. Requests for signage, advertisement or publicity for a Learning Together program should be directed through Yukon Education’s Early Learning Consultant.

Information about a school’s Learning Together program that is communicated directly to program participants, through monthly newsletters, the school website etc. does not need to go through Yukon Education.
Hours of Operation

The days and times of operation for the program should meet the needs of families in the community. Once these have been established, these hours should be posted and communicated widely. Programs operating in the morning appear to be able to attract more families than those operating in the afternoon; however, this may not be the case in certain communities.

Learning Together programs usually operate five days a week for 2.5 hours a day, during the school year, September through June. Programs are closed when the school is closed, for example, on school professional development days and statutory holidays.

Learning Together programs in rural Yukon communities may operate with different schedules, organization and logistics, due to the nature of their location and the community. A caregiver participation component must be present in some way as this is one of the defining features of the Learning Together early learning programs.

Most programs open shortly after the school day begins, so that caregivers who drop off older children at school can carry on to the Learning Together program with their younger children.

Overcrowding

If overcrowding is a problem, facilitators may wish to consider proposing different attendance patterns during the week. For example, families could sign up to attend Mondays, Wednesday, and Fridays, or Tuesdays and Thursdays. Another idea from the to ease overcrowding is to suggest to some families that they arrive and leave early while others arrive late and stay until the program ends. Many adults with very young children may only wish to stay for an hour or two.

Occasional Program Closures

Occasionally, a Learning Together program cannot follow its regular schedule of operation. These closures may be due to circumstances such as inclement weather, professional development days, or facilitator absence. It is important that families have as much advance notice as possible that the program will be closed. The principal and school office should be aware of any program closures. Also, posting a sign outside the program indicating program closures will be helpful for families and the rest of the school. Facilitators may wish to advise parents to contact the school first when unsure if the program will be operating. This may save an unnecessary trip for families.
Role of the Principal

The StrongStart BC Evaluation report states that “Research on school leadership credits the role of the school principal as essential to the successful implementation of new programs in schools—not for pedagogy of new programs which are typically led by school district staff but for human resource, parent resource, professional development, communication, interagency collaboration, safety and facility management.”

The evaluation found that early learning programs thrived when the principal supported the program.

Support from principals can be provided in several ways. Principals can drop in to the program to greet parents, share stories with the children, meet regularly with the facilitator, and advocate for the program at the community level.

Other ways that principals can play a leadership role in the Learning Together program include:

• Making the facilitator a real member of the school staff team.
• Creating strong collaborative relationships with partners that affect the program, both inside and outside the school community.
• Supporting collaboration of early learning staff, including Learning Together facilitators, kindergarten teachers, and school support teachers.
• Directing resources to the program.
• Resolving obstacles to providing a quality early learning program.
• Building a collaborative approach to solving problems with staff.
• Meeting with new principals in schools with Learning Together programs to ensure a smooth transition.

By being actively engaged with the Learning Together program, principals will become involved early on with young children and their families. This early involvement will strengthen school-home connections and build partnerships with families.
Communication

To make Learning Together early learning programs successful, information needs to flow between and among Yukon Education, school administrators, Learning Together facilitators, families, and community partners (ex. First Nations partnerships, Department of Health, and other local agencies that serve families).

The following sections describe communications schools should consider:

Communication and Yukon Education
School Communication
Communication with the Community
Advertising Learning Together Programs
Connecting Families with Other Services
Communication and Yukon Education

To support effective programming for Learning Together early learning programs, schools, facilitators, and the Early Learning Consultant at Yukon Education communicate on a regular basis by a variety of means.

Yukon Education communicates with families about the initiatives and programs they are offering. Parents often contact Yukon Education for information on early learning programs in their community. To answer parents’ questions about Learning Together programs, Yukon Education has a dedicated section of their website for information about Learning Together programs. This website helps to promote the programs, clarify the intent of the program, inform interested families of the hours of operation, and other pertinent information.

Yukon Education’s website with information about the Learning Together Program.

School Communication

Well-established communication strategies should be in place between the Learning Together facilitators, the school principal and school staff. To be truly effective, Learning Together early learning programs must be an integral part of the school. Facilitators should be present at regular school staff meeting and have the opportunity to communicate about the program and to discuss ways the programs can connect and interact with the school at large.

Regular school communication processes can include Learning Together information. Promoting Learning Together programs can be a regular feature mentioned in each school newsletter. The newsletter offers an excellent vehicle for “spreading the news” to neighbourhood families who may have pre-school age children.

To increase communication, schools can involve their Learning Together programs in events throughout the year such as Welcome to Kindergarten, sports days, special assemblies, and celebrations.
Communication with the Community

Awareness is growing about the importance of providing programs to children prior to kindergarten entry. One way to transmit this message is to encourage key individuals to visit a Learning Together early learning program.

To be successful, Learning Together programs need to build relationships not only within the school but also with the broader community. Strong relationships among Learning Together program facilitators and community members will strengthen the efforts of each. Yukon Education, principals, and program facilitators can all play a role in building these relationships. When creating yearly program goals, consider including a schedule for sending out invitations to influential community leaders:

- First Nations partners
- Municipal leaders
- Business leaders
- Staff from interagency services
- Your local MLA or MP
- Members of School Council

Learning Together programs are part of the wider array of early learning services. Learning Together can help families connect with other community programs such as libraries, healthcare, and childcare. Facilitators should create opportunities for community agencies to connect with families who attend Learning Together programs. This could include inviting guests to the program, sharing resources, consulting with other drop-in programs, posting information about other agencies, and inviting community groups to any open houses or community events the program may hold. Opportunities for community connection can be effectively established by having service providers and professionals participate in the daily program of Learning Together. It does not have to be a formal presentation but rather a chance for service providers and parents/caregivers to interact.
Advertising *Learning Together* Programs

Schools will need an ongoing advertising and marketing plan for *Learning Together* programs to connect with families moving into the area and young families with newborns, as well as other families who may not be aware of the program. Advertisement limited to the school community will not reach families whose young children are not yet attending school. Yukon Education’s Communications Unit coordinates publicity for the *Learning Together* programs:

- Radio interviews
- Newspaper and media print coverage
- Posters and flyers

Word of mouth is often the most effective and economical way to advertise the program. Encourage adults attending the program to invite families that they know to visit the program. Adults who are enthusiastic about *Learning Together* can be the best ambassadors for the program, and engaging them in promoting the program will also build their own feelings of “ownership” for its success.

Connecting Families with Other Services

Research has shown that successful early learning programs build parenting skills, provide information, and refer families to community resources. The *StrongStart BC* evaluation found that “referrals were becoming a natural, efficient, and commonplace part of the integrated approach to young children” (*StrongStart BC* Evaluation, p. 45).

Reciprocal relationships need to be established between *Learning Together* programs and various community agencies so they can work together to make referrals.

One of the greatest advantages of collaborative relationships among *Learning Together* programs and other services is early identification and interventions to help children and families at critical stages of children’s development.
Health and Safety Practices

*Learning Together* early learning programs should be safe for children, adults, and staff. School administration and program facilitators should assess the safety of the environment, food served, and children’s personal safety within the program. The physical environment must be safe for children of all ages, including infants and toddlers. Snacks or other food served should take into account allergies and food sensitivities of the children and adults who attend. The program should have procedures in place in case of accidents and emergencies.

The following sections describe areas of consideration for the health and safety of families attending *Learning Together* programs:

**Providing a Safe Environment**

**Food Safety**
Providing a Safe Environment

The first consideration for making a Learning Together program safe for all who attend is the program environment. Safety issues within the environment should be addressed before the program is open to families.

In making a Learning Together environment safe, schools and program facilitators should consider the following:

- Cleaning and Disinfecting Surfaces
- Access to Water for Hand Washing
- Dishwashing Guidelines
- Hot Liquids
- Bathrooms
- Diapering Guidelines
- Electrical Outlets
- Medications and Illnesses
- Accidents
- First Aid Recommendations
- Fire Drills/Earthquake Drills/Lockdown Drills
Cleaning and Disinfecting Surfaces

All surfaces in the Learning Together environment should be kept clean. Surfaces that require the most attention are toys that children may put in their mouths, the diaper changing areas, and food preparation areas.

Small items, such as small toys, cups, bowls, and utensils, can be washed in a dishwasher. Larger items, such as tables will require a different method of disinfecting. The most common way to disinfect tables is to use sanitizing spray. Please note that many sprays on the market are not disinfectants. It is easy to make your own disinfectant.

- For small dishes and small toys:
  Mix 1 tsp. of household bleach with 1 gallon of water or 5 ml with 4 litres. Immerse dishes for two minutes.

- For larger toys and surfaces:
  Mix 10 ml of bleach with 1 litre of water (1:100 solution). Leave on for 30 seconds. Create a new mixture daily and apply from a spray bottle.

Bleach solution should be stored in a cool place, out of reach of children. If facilitators choose to use commercial disinfectant, care should be given to its use, following the manufacturer’s instructions on the label. Facilitators may wish to discuss cleaning procedures with the school custodian.

Access to Water for Hand Washing

Wherever possible, the Learning Together program should have access to hot and cold water within the program centre. This will enhance program offerings but more importantly, will prevent the spread of bacteria. Facilitators, adults and children should wash their hands before preparing and eating food and after using the toilet, and should use individual towels, liquid soap and running water. A stable platform or step stool can be provided in front of high sinks for children.
Dishwashing Guidelines

All Learning Together programs should provide a healthy snack for the families that attend. All dishes used for snack time should be cleaned properly. Use an electric dishwasher daily, if possible, or wash dishes daily using warm water and detergent.

Learning Together programs can use the “3 sink method” when washing dishes.

1. wash dishes in a clean detergent solution
2. rinse with clean water at 43°C
3. sanitize for at least 45 seconds using clean hot water, or use 2 ml of household bleach with 1 litre of water (or other sanitizing solutions)
4. air dry

The following is a link to a poster on washing dishes:
www.ingoodhands.ca/pdf/Dishwashing.pdf

Hot Liquids

Hot liquids - not fire - are the most common causes of burns to young children. Scalds from hot water can represent a significant risk to young children who attend Learning Together early learning programs. The best way to prevent burns from water is to carefully assess the temperature of the water. A safe temperature for a hot water heater is 49°C (120°F). Facilitators can speak to the school principal if they feel that the temperature of the hot water in the program needs to be reduced.

Burns can also occur from hot liquids, such as coffee and tea. Remind caregivers that hot beverages like coffee or tea should be left outside of the classroom and out of children’s reach.
Bathrooms

All children and adults who attend the Learning Together program should have adequate access to bathroom facilities. Special consideration should be given to families who attend the program with young children in diapers. Keep in mind that parents/caregivers will need to accompany their children in the bathroom.

Schools may wish to designate a specific bathroom for families attending the Learning Together program. This is advisable since these bathrooms will be used by both adults and children at the same time. Schools may not wish to have adults access bathrooms that students use.

Adults should supervise their own children in the bathroom to ensure flushing and hand-washing procedures. Also consider:

• A stable platform or step stool should be provided in front of high sinks or toilets.
• Bathrooms should have running hot and cold water, liquid soap and individual hand towels.

Consider posting hand washing information in the bathrooms, printed in a variety of languages.

Diapering Guidelines

Many families attend Learning Together programs with infants and toddlers who are still in diapers. Consideration should be given to how families can change and dispose of diapers in a safe and sanitary manner.

• Change tables should have a non-porous surface and should be sanitized by the adult after each use.
• Provide a closed garbage container for soiled diapers.
• Keep the diapering area separate from the food preparation area; ideally the change table will be mounted in the bathroom.
Electrical Outlets

Young children must be protected from potential electrical shocks. Cover electrical outlets in all areas of the program that are used by children. If your Learning Together room is used by other programs, or is cleaned by custodial staff, be sure to check that these outlets are still covered prior to opening the program for families.

Medications and Illnesses

Families may arrive at the Learning Together program with illness or with medication. Parents/caregivers should be the only persons responsible for administering medication.

- If a child or parent/caregiver appears to be sick with a communicable illness, the parent should be asked to leave the classroom to protect other children, parents and staff and for the comfort of the sick person. Symptoms such as a generalized rash, vomiting, diarrhea, chronic cough, fever, or known communicable disease such as measles or mumps should raise concern.
- If in doubt or if a caregiver refuses to follow the illness policy, Health and Social Services expertise should be consulted.
- Health and Social Services will be able to provide information on identification of illnesses, next steps, and prevention of common childhood diseases and illnesses. This information can be shared with adults attending the program, as well as the school.

The following link offers a list of communicable diseases, the time frame to report any possible, suspicious and confirmed cases as well as a list of people to contact: www.hss.govyk.ca/pdf/comm_diseases.pdf

Accidents

When an accident or injury occurs at a Learning Together early learning program, immediate action should be taken to help the injured party. Steps should then be taken to ensure that a similar occurrence does not happen. Facilitators should review the occurrence, including precipitating factors, location and equipment, to learn from the experience and to prevent future occurrences. School accident procedures should be followed if the accident is deemed moderate to severe.
First Aid Recommendations

The *Learning Together* facilitator should be provided with the opportunity to register for a certified first aid course when other school staff may be offered a similar opportunity. A standard first aid kit should be readily available in the classroom. Where bodily fluid and/or blood are involved, the following procedures are recommended:

- Wash hands before and after and wear disposable gloves.
- Cover cuts.
- Clean affected surfaces with bleach.
- Dispose of all materials in secure plastic bags.
- Wash blood-stained laundry in hot soapy water.

Fire Drills/Earthquake Drills/Lockdown Drills

The *Learning Together* facilitator should follow Yukon Education and school policies and procedures concerning safety drills.

Fire, earthquake, and lockdown drills may occur at schools on a regularly scheduled basis. It is important that *Learning Together* early learning programs be familiar with the site’s evacuation procedure. Keep an up-to-date attendance list accessible by the entrance to the program, and post the emergency procedures for parents and visitors who attend the program. Speak to the school principal regarding emergency drills and request to be notified prior to these drills occurring. Prior notification of emergency drills allows the facilitator to guide families through the procedure, making it a positive experience for families. Many children may be fearful of the loud warning sound, and preparing them will be helpful.

*Learning Together* programs may wish to consider adding an earthquake kit to their safety supplies. An earthquake kit is a portable bag or backpack that contains emergency supplies, and hangs or is placed beside the room exit. This kit will need to be taken with the facilitator when the room is evacuated during an emergency evacuation.
Food Safety

Snack time is an integral component of the Learning Together daily program. Considerations for healthy eating, safety, and food allergies must be taken when planning and preparing for snack time.

Food Storage and Preparation Guidelines

Allergies

Anaphylaxis Framework
Food Storage and Preparation Guidelines

Snack time is an important part of every Learning Together session. This is a time to share food, encourage conversation, and learn more about the cultures with the families that attend the program.

When planning and preparing snack, consideration should be given to food safety, including allergies, safe food handling, and storage.

Other items to consider when planning and preparing snack include:

• Store dry foods in covered glass or plastic containers.
• Wash fruits and vegetables before serving.
• Store perishable foods in a refrigerator.
• Throw out leftovers that have been served.
• Keep food surfaces (cutting boards) free from cracks and sanitize regularly.
• Clean and disinfect snack tables regularly.
• Provide garbage containers with lids.
• Avoid peanuts, hard candies, whole grapes, popcorn, nuts and seeds.
• Be cautious with hard vegetables or chunks of food (due to choking possibilities).
Allergies

Adults and children with life-threatening allergies who attend Learning Together early learning programs will need assurance that they are protected while in the program. All schools must have an anaphylactic plan in place. Please talk to your principal about this plan.

Facilitators must be made aware of any allergies and have a full understanding of the child or adult’s condition. As part of the enrolment process, consult with parents/caregivers about any allergies and necessary safety precautions, including the posting of an alert about the child’s allergy on the parent notice board. Other adults attending the program can be informed about these allergies as well, since parents and caregivers often help with snack preparation.

Anaphylaxis Framework

To protect children with life-threatening allergies, Yukon Education requires schools to maintain school-based anaphylaxis policies and practices that meet rigorous standards. This includes identifying individuals at risk, storing and administering medication, and creating an allergy-aware school community.

Anaphylaxis Guidelines can be found online on the Yukon Education website.
Appendices

*Learning Together* Sign-In Sheet .................................................. A

*Learning Together* Newsletter .................................................. B

*Learning Together* Daily Schedule ............................................. C

*Learning Together* Registration and Media Release ...................... D

*Learning Together* Key Roles and Responsibilities ........................ E
Appendix A:

*Learning Together* Sign-In Sheet

*Learning Together* Program Daily Sign-in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE: ______________________________________________</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Child’s Name</strong> (First and Last)</td>
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Appendix B:

Learning Together Newsletter

The Learning Together Program is available Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at School. The program is an adult and child participation experience. The purpose of this program is to provide play-based activities that will support and strengthen all aspects of your child’s healthy growth and development.

I would like for you to participate in the free play activities, circle time, snack and craft time by engaging with your child and leading conversation about the time that you are sharing together. By engaging your child in conversation, you are promoting vocabulary and concept development, which are key to early literacy success.

The most important thing is to HAVE FUN! Enjoy your time together and have fun exploring and creating in our classroom. I am delighted that you and your child will be participating in the program. I look forward to getting to know you and your child and having lots of fun together.

Daily Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00</td>
<td>Free Play - play with your child doing puzzles, blocks, art, dramatic play or sand and water play</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Library: Monday</td>
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<td>Gym: Tuesday and Thursday</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guest Visitor/Extended Free Play: Wednesday</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30</td>
<td>Snack (provided)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:50</td>
<td>Circle Time - teacher led and includes stories, games, action songs, and movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:10</td>
<td>Craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30</td>
<td>Home Time</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* For safety reasons, hot drinks are not permitted in the classroom area.
November 2012 Newsletter

Welcome to Our New Families:

We have many new families and children that have joined us this month at the Learning Together Program. Welcome to all of you! I am so happy that you have chosen to be a part of our class!

If you know of other families that you think might be interested in the Learning Together Program, please come and see me for an information bookmark that you can give to them that has all the information about the program on it!

You will notice that the doors to our classroom now open at 9am! Please feel free to come by anytime after 9am – this will give the children extra time for free-play in the classroom before heading to the gym or to library. With the winter weather now upon us, our classroom is a warm and happy place to learn and to have fun!

Theme:

Our theme for November is Things Found in the Dark and at Night.

Guest speakers for the month of November:

Wednesday, November 14 – Kim Neufeld, Yukon Health Promotion Unit: “The Healthy Plate”

* Wednesday, November 28 – Debra Kapaniuk, Child Development Center: Mingle and Questions

* If you and/or your child would like to lead an activity (science experiment, art activity, song, dance, drama etc.) related to Things Found in the Dark and at Night, please let me know. Wednesdays, November 7 and 21 are available for caregiver and child-led activities.

Learning Together Closed on Monday, November 12:

Please note that Yukon Schools are closed on Monday, November 12 for the Remembrance Day Holiday. There will be no Learning Together Program.

Website of the Month:

Tumblebooks is a great website where you can access lots of great books for children to listen and watch online! The Yukon Department of Education has a subscription to the site, which allows you to login and access the content from your home.

Check it out! www.tumblebooks.com
### Appendix C:

**Learning Together Daily Schedule**

*Learning Together Program* Daily Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 – 9:55</td>
<td>Free Play</td>
<td>1. Welcome caregivers and children at the door. Nametags are in the pocket chart outside of the classroom for those who have been to the program.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>2. Caregivers sign the daily sign-in form that is on the table. Enter attendance into YSIS.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3. Caregivers and children proceed to free-play doing puzzles, blocks, art, dramatic play or sand and water play. During this time, the teacher circulates and models how to engage in conversation during the play process, encouraging positive reinforcement and the use of vocabulary/concept words.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>* Give new participants the registration form and photo/media release form (to return next time). Provide a copy of the welcome letter and explain to them the nature of the program. Have them make nametags. Provide a tour of the classroom.</td>
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<td>** At 9:55 it’s time to clean-up! You can say the clean-up poem to prompt the clean up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 – 10:25</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>Library (Mon): meet on the carpet and give a quick talk about how to select books. The caregiver and child will select a book from the school's library.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gym</td>
<td>Gym (Tues/Thurs): head down to the gym and take out the large blue bins that have equipment in it along with any other equipment, like scooters, hula-hoops etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guest Visitor</td>
<td>Guest Visitor: they may be speaking to the entire class or just to the parents. If the guest is just speaking to the parents, the children may continue on in free play while the teacher circulates and provides support.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Free-Play</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30-10:50</td>
<td>Snack</td>
<td>Children wash their hands and help to set the tables for snack time. Snack foods are in the fridge and on the shelves by the sink. Invite students to carry items over and to be involved in the process. Students should help bring over the cups, plates, bowls, snack foods and weekly flowers that are in the vases. Prior to eating, say the Snack Time poem. During snack time, caregivers reflect and talk to their child about the morning’s activities. After snack, put out the two wash basins on the counter (one with soapy water, one with rinse water and disinfectant) and ask the children to wash their dishes and leave them in the drying rack. Caregivers help children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:50-11:10</td>
<td>Circle Time</td>
<td>Invite everyone over to the carpet area. Activities will be related to our month’s theme: Intro: Story: Song: Poem: Game: Movement:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:10-11:30</td>
<td>Craft</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D:

**Learning Together**

Registration and Media Release

---

### STUDENT ENROLMENT FORM

This information is being collected under the authority of the Yukon Education Act for statistical purposes and for Yukon Education’s student information system (YSIS). No personal information will be disclosed without the written consent of the child’s parents/guardians, or from a student over the age of 19.

**Yukon Education** is required under the Yukon Access to Information and Protection of Privacy (ATIPP) Act to ensure that only the information necessary to perform a department’s function is collected and that the information is stored in a secure manner. Parents/Guardians have the right to view the information collected and to correct it if necessary.

#### STUDENT INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Last Name</th>
<th>Usual Last Name</th>
<th>Legal First Name</th>
<th>Preferred First Name</th>
<th>Legal Middle Name</th>
<th>Preferred Middle Name</th>
<th>Gender (M/F)</th>
<th>Birth Date DD-MON-YYYY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**PREVIOUS SCHOOL INFORMATION**

- Have you previously attended a Yukon school? Yes [ ] No [ ]
- Have you attended a British Columbia school? Yes [ ] No [ ]

**PHYSICAL ADDRESS**

- Home Phone
- Street
- City
- Province/Territory
- Postal Code

**MAILING ADDRESS**

- Home Phone
- Street
- City
- Province/Territory
- Postal Code

**PROOF OF AGE DOCUMENTATION**

- Birth Certificate [ ] Other [ ]

**PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship to Student</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Living With Student Yes [ ] No [ ]</th>
<th>Same As Student Address Yes [ ] No [ ]</th>
<th>Street</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Province/Territory</th>
<th>Postal Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other Information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Language</th>
<th>Other Information</th>
<th>First Language</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have any questions about filling out this form, please call: YSIS Help Desk (867-667-8842).

If you have any questions about the collection or use of the personal information on this form, please contact the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Coordinator at 667-8326.
MEDIA RELEASE FORM

For ____________________________ Student name (please print):

Schools often receive last-minute requests from reporters to feature school activities in news stories. In addition, the Department of Education likes to feature Yukon students in photos, videos and on Department of Education websites. Approval of parent/guardians, or the students themselves if they are at least 19 years old, is required for the Department or third parties such as news reporters to use these images. Consent is optional and pertains only to events organized by the Department of Education, including schools, regardless of whether the event takes place on or outside school grounds.

☐ I ____________________________ (print parent/guardian name), legal parent or guardian of ____________________________ (print student name), give consent

OR

☐ I, the above named student, am over 19 years of age and give consent

☐ to the Department of Education

☐ and/or third parties including, but not limited to, community news organizations

to use image(s) or video(s) of the student named above (from now on referred to as “images”) for the purpose of promotion, exhibition or any other appropriate, lawful purposes including training and educational programming. By signing this optional release, I waive the right to inspect or approve the images or publication(s), such as written material(s), in which the image appears.

I agree that the copyright in the image that has been taken in the above mentioned way remains with the photographer or the organization the photographer works for. I hereby waive any claims I may have based on the usage of the image or work derived from it. Specifically, I acknowledge that there is no consideration or expectation of any remuneration for the use of the image.

If a parent or student wants to withdraw this consent at any time, please notify school office staff. I agree that this release shall be binding, have read this release and am fully familiar with its contents.

ALTERNATELY:

☐ I do NOT give permission for use of images by the Department or third parties for ANY purposes

Signed:

Parent/Guardian (Signature) If over 19 years old: Student (Signature)

Date
Appendix E:

Learning Together Key Roles and Responsibilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yukon Education</th>
<th>Early Learning Consultant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direct and Evaluate</strong></td>
<td><strong>Support</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learning policies, operations, budgets, programs and initiatives</td>
<td>Early Learning policies, operations, budgets, programs and initiatives in schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborate with Health and Social Services and other community partners to consider joint partnerships</td>
<td>• Provide coaching, co-teaching and professional development to Learning Together facilitators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collect and review attendance and program data</td>
<td>• Connect with community groups and other service providers to establish partnerships with the programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Evaluate programs to celebrate success and set goals for growth</td>
<td>• Coordinate publicity and advertisement of programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consider potential sites for program expansion</td>
<td>• Provide operational and programming guidelines to schools and program facilitators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish budgets for programming</td>
<td>• Make recommendations and coordinate orders to Yukon Education for resources necessary for quality programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expand program into future school sites</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Enter registration information into YSIS (Secretary) |
*Contact guest teachers for facilitator absence (Secretary) |
*Manage accounts and records for budget (Secretary) |
*Encourage caregiver and child participation |
*Create stimulating play-based learning opportunities |
*Model strategies that can be used by caregivers to support children’s learning |
*Provide information on early learning to caregivers to increase understanding of children’s development and learning |
*Share information about monthly programming via schedule and newsletter |
*Incorporate the program participants into the life of the school: displays, assemblies, concerts, open house |
*Maintain attendance and registration records |
*Manage budget appropriately for classroom materials and snacks |
*Participate in reflection and review of the program |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal/School-Site</th>
<th>Facilitator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manage</strong></td>
<td><strong>Implement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Learning policies, operations, budgets, programs and initiatives at their school</td>
<td>Early Learning policies, operations, budgets, programs and initiatives at their Learning Together program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supervise program and facilitator (Principal)</td>
<td>• Encourage caregiver and child participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Schedule programming to align with Yukon Education mandate (Principal)</td>
<td>• Create stimulating play-based learning opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advocate for the program with parents, school council and school community (Principal)</td>
<td>• Model strategies that can be used by caregivers to support children’s learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Active presence at the program: drop in, greet parents, share stories with the children, meet regularly with the facilitator (Principal)</td>
<td>• Provide information on early learning to caregivers to increase understanding of children’s development and learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Incorporate the program participants into the life of the school: displays, assemblies, concerts, open house (Principal/Facilitator)</td>
<td>• Share information about monthly programming via schedule and newsletter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enter registration information into YSIS (Secretary)</td>
<td>• Incorporate the program participants into the life of the school: displays, assemblies, concerts, open house</td>
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*Learning Together Early Learning Programs – DRAFT*