

2017 Quality Child Care Niagara Annual Community Report

Every year, we embark on an exciting journey that highlights quality and commitment as key components to making the Vision and Values of Quality Child Care Niagara visible within the early years. This journey with all our licensed child care programs is extremely valuable and we are thrilled to continue building strong relationships with early learning and child care professionals.

QCCN Vision

A consistent approach to excellence in early learning for children and families through the commitment of highly knowledgeable and responsive educators.

QCCN Statement

A strength-based, reciprocal partnership supporting children and professionals through a continuum of collaboration, training and the use of developmental tools.

QCCN Values

The following values explain our notion of Quality.

- **Accountability** – Quality Child Care Niagara values dedication to implementing QCCN in alignment with organization policies, funding requirements, legislation and the College of Early Childhood Educators *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice*.
- **Engagement** – Quality Child Care Niagara promotes programs, environments and plans which deeply connects children, educators and families and reflect their hopes, interests and strengths.
- **Inclusivity** – Quality Child Care Niagara values, respects and promotes the uniqueness of each educator, child and family.
- **Intentionality** – Quality Child Care Niagara encourages educators to plan with purpose and meaning through an inquiry based approach.
- **Responsive** – Quality Child Care Niagara expects educators to consistently adapt their planning, environments and experiences; to support the strengths, interests and hopes of children and their families.
- **Reflective** – Quality Child Care Niagara values the practice of continuous learning, questioning and critical thinking.
- **Respectful** – Quality Child Care Niagara honours each early learning program, educator, child and family as unique, competent and capable.
- **Inviting Environments** – Quality Child Care Niagara recognizes the importance of interactive play spaces which are imaginative, flexible and fun to support competent risk taking unique to each child.
- **Commitment** – Quality Child Care Niagara values the loyalty and devotion of educators in supporting Niagara's children and families.

Quality Child Care Niagara 2017 in Review

An Overview of the 2017 Quality Child Care Niagara Reflective Practice Institutes

The Quality Child Care Niagara Coordinator worked in partnership with the six QCCN Community Mentor Consultants to support programs as they participated in the institutes. Prior to each Institute the QCCN Community Mentor Consultants connected via email/phone with each program to highlight what to expect during the institute. During the sessions the QCCN Community Mentor Consultants supported the participants at their table by facilitating the reflective questions. After each day of the institute the QCCN Community Mentor Consultants connected with the Supervisor of each program and posed questions to gather more information on how QCCN can support the program through the transition going forward.



"Every educator should feel that he or she belongs, is a valuable contributor, and deserves the opportunity to engage in meaningful work". p. 7 Ministry of Education (2014)

Roll-up of QCCN 2-Day Reflective Practice Institutes

- **Institute #4** – January 28 and February 25, 2017: 50 participants, 10 programs
- **Institute #5** – March 25 and April 22, 2017: 140 participants, 21 programs
- **Institute #6** – May 27 and June 17, 2017: 140 participants, 17 programs
- **Institute #7** – September 23 and October 21, 2017: 123 participants, 14 programs
- **Institute #8** – November 4 and December 2, 2017: 122 participants, 7 programs
- **School Age Session 1** – February 9, March 9 and April 6, 2017: 95 participants, 40 programs
- **School Age Session 2** – November 14, December 6, 2017 and January 10, 2018: 30 Participants, 6 programs

Participant Feedback

Feedback received from 1,149 participants provided the Quality Niagara Team, Mentor Consultants, and the Quality Child Care Niagara Advisory Committee with a snapshot of the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute tools and impact.

“I liked the reflective practice model with the facilitators at the table, clarifying and explaining and keeping everyone focused and moving forward. I enjoyed interacting with other educators outside my own center-fresh new faces and new contacts.” Petit Avenue

“Love the Aha Jar and the break out time for discussion.” Welland Regional Child Care Centre

Caregiver Interaction Scale: “This session reminded me of the importance of being careful to watch our tones and attitudes, as well as our moods when dealing with the children throughout the day.” YMCA Walker

The Brigance: “I have learned from this presentation to make the environment and experience different for every child because every child is different. It made me think about how I present activities to children and what I could change and do differently. It has made me think critically and purposefully.” A Child’s World Niagara Community

How impactful will the knowledge and skills from the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute be to your daily practice?

Very Impactful/Impactful 83% Somewhat Impactful 14% Not Helpful 1% Blank 2%

What did you find most valuable about the two-day QCCN Reflective Practice Institute?

- The table discussions, information, and tools refreshed. (40)
- I found the videos and examples of documentation and table reflections helpful. It was nice/helpful to hear what other centres are doing. (22)
- Refresher on DPS, ECERS, Speech/Language. Loved the literacy piece. (18)
- Revisiting and reviewing how to use tools like DPS, ECERS, C.A.R.E., Brigance Binder etc. (16)
- Reflections and sharing with other centres.” (15)
- Love using emergent literacy with the children in my group so seeing new ideas is helpful (10)
- Guide for everyday practice (2)

How will the knowledge and skills from the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute support you in your daily practice?

- It will impact my daily practice in my documentation and really thinking and reflecting on my interactions and observations. (38)
- Being more reflective on myself as an educator and let the kids guide the lesson for the day, more based on interests (18)
- Help me reflect on my practice (15)
- More reflecting and using the tools we are educated in. (13)
- I think by having a better understanding of who you are as a teacher and the effect you have on the classroom will help plan even better (10)
- Helpful for observing and documenting and being aware of characteristics of children’s perspectives and taking information given to provide care. (10)
- Support each other and share documentation and observations with each group (4)

“Identifying the values that influence your teaching practices is one of the most important professional development activities you can take up. Values influence everything you do, whether you have intentionally identified them or not.”

Reflecting in Communities of Practice Deb Curtis and Margie Carter

How did you find the review of the QCCN Tools?

Very Helpful/Helpful 82% Somewhat Helpful 15% Not Helpful 15% Blank 2%

Quality Child Care Niagara Advisory Committee News and Updates

The Quality Child Care Niagara Advisory Committee, comprised of community partners from 19 agencies, met five times in 2017 to discuss the impact of QCCN on Niagara's child care community.

QCCN Advisory Events in 2017

- The Quality Child Care Niagara Advisory offered advice related to the new process of the Quality Child Care Niagara Consultant visiting programs in receipt of Special Support Funding to support the educators with suggestions and guidance related to strategies to assist the program in supporting all children within an inclusive environment.
- The Ministry of Education provided ongoing updates and links to documents shared with programs as well as regulation changes and in turn fielded questions and comments from the Advisory Committee.
- A presentation given to the Advisory Committee by Niagara Region in May 2017 led to the creation of a task group looking at ongoing statistical requirements and efficiencies for Quality Child Care Niagara. Additional conversations occurred with Speech Services Niagara around their collection of statistical data, meaning, and possible efficiencies that could be implemented going forward.
- Advisory members volunteered to support the Awards of Excellence Quality Child Care Niagara Exceptional Program Award through visiting programs and offering suggestions.

Alignment with Ontario's Legislation and Frameworks

As the landscape of the Early Learning and Child Care field changed with the roll out of further revisions to the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* in August 2017 the Community Mentor Consultants met to review both the changes and the reflective practice materials to update with current information.

Quality Child Care Niagara Annual Support Visits

Throughout 2017, one hundred and sixty-five programs received Quality Child Care Niagara Support Visits, which included eight hundred interactions with staff through initial visits and follow-ups. The visits included offering support with environmental design, providing valuable resource lists, supporting the process of and offering recommendations related to specialized support funding and providing ongoing Quality Child Care Niagara resources. Many programs received multiple visits as more support was required with changes to legislation and licensing and increased needs of children within the programs.

The visits provided the Quality Child Care Niagara Consultants with greater insight into the dynamics of each program and how they may be supported. More and more, it is apparent that centres are finding it difficult to secure and retain staff with the ongoing growth of families and need for care within the Niagara Region. There is also a growing need for support between the balance of engaging authentically with the children, families and staff within child care and meeting administrative duties and adhering to legislation. Supporting self-regulation in the early years and workplace and dealing effectively with change has been a large focus for the Quality Child Care Niagara Consultants, when supporting early learning and child care professionals.

Growing Quality Child Care Niagara Partnerships

Quality Child Care Niagara has been rooted in the community for many years and is fortunate to continually benefit from new and emerging partnerships that continued to strengthen throughout 2017.

Alignment with Niagara College

The Quality Child Care Niagara Consultants provided six training sessions for two hundred and forty students in their Second Year on the DISC Preschool Screen and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – 3. Conversations took place regarding the 2018-19 year and how Quality Child Care Niagara could be woven into the curriculum to support students to graduate with all Quality Child Care Niagara training.

Hanen Training

QCCN Consultants were trained during the summer of 2015. Pieces of the Hanen Training have been incorporated into the Reflective Practice Institutes. Throughout 2017 it was brought up around the tables with the Community Mentor Consultants that there was an increase in the need for further training with Hanen Sharing Sensitive News as educators looked at the implementation of the tools and how they would be sharing those results back with families. Moving forward, Sharing Sensitive News sessions are being offered in the spring and fall of 2018 to support educators as well as several programs requesting on site delivery of the session.

Infant Mental Health

A presentation was made to the QCCN Advisory in November 2017 regarding the initial pilot findings. Further conversations will take place with the Advisory Committee once the data from the pilot have been collected and collated. At meetings we are looking into how an ongoing partnership can take place for incorporating the Ages and Stages Questionnaire and Ages and Stages Social Emotional Questionnaire into the framework of Quality Child Care Niagara.

Speech Services Niagara

The partnership with Speech Services has remained strong through the two year roll out. April Shaw has been supporting the sessions by attending the Day 2 Institutes and delivering the Emergent Literacy component as well as Debbie Hamilton in a dual role as a Community Mentor Consultant and facilitating the Speech and Language Developmental Checklist on Day 1.

YMCA School Age Programs

A trial Institute took place in February, March and April 2017 to support the unique needs of the YMCA School Age Programs. The three day session was crafted to run from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. with a focus on school age needs. The feedback received from the educators within the trial group offered insight into the need of school age specific training, the opportunity for centres to network around curriculum, scheduling, experiences and materials. Given the positive feedback from the participants and regional directors, another training session was supported in November and December 2017 which led to all YMCA School Age Programs having at least one member of staff trained.

Quality Child Care Niagara Moving Forward

In reflecting upon the past year, it was an exciting year of change across Niagara and one that now requires further thought and reflection and an opportunity for centres to practice all of the skills and knowledge gained through the Institutes. The Quality Child Care Niagara Team and the Early Childhood Community Development Centre are extremely proud to support the transformations taking place in programs across Niagara and we look forward to the impact the changes will have for children and their families. We extend our deepest gratitude to Niagara Region Children's Service for the continued support and funding.

Quality Child Care Niagara Institute



2017 Quality Child Care Niagara Exceptional Program Award
winner Grimsby Co-operative Preschool Inc.



