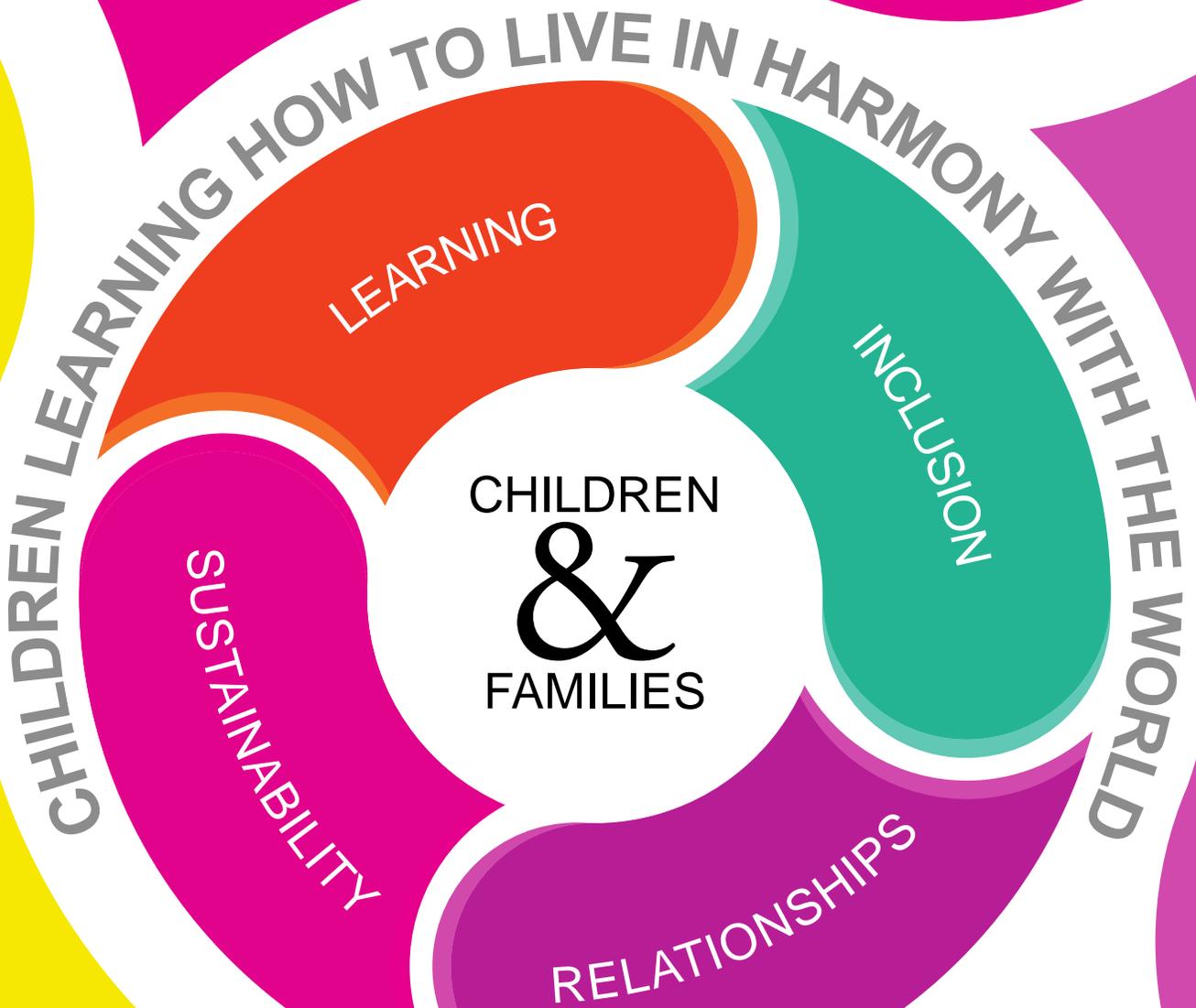


Nanabijou

Childcare Centre

Strategic Plan 2016 - 2019





INTRODUCTION

Recently, the Board of the Nanabijou Childcare Centre (the Centre) undertook the development of a Strategic Plan. The process involved a) presentations by subject experts, b) surveying parents and guardians, the Board members and staff, and c) a retreat attended by staff and Board members. This is the Centre's first Strategic Plan and it is intended to frame our Centre's work for the next three years.

The Board wishes to thank Lakehead University's President, faculty and staff as well as the Lakehead University Student Union for their support, without which our Centre would be unable to continue to provide quality childcare to Lakehead University students and staff and families in the City of Thunder Bay.

The Board also wishes to acknowledge that our Centre is on the traditional land of the Anishinaabe people, those of Fort William First Nations and other nations of the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850.

"For the Anishinaabe people, the **Nanaboozhoo** is an important cultural character. It is a shapeshifting spirit who teaches right from wrong through his adventures while offering lessons on how to live in harmony with the natural world."¹ This description drives the Vision for our Centre.

VISION

Children learning how to live in harmony with the world.

MISSION

Nanabijou Childcare Centre is a *home away from home* where a team of dedicated early childhood educators provide a safe, inclusive, healthy, nurturing, learning environment for children and their families.

THE CENTRE VALUES:

INCLUSION

- Each child and family at our Centre is unique and our Centre adapts to every child's needs.

FAMILY

- Our Centre, as an extension of the family and home, ensures that every child is safe, has nutritious food, and plays in a healthy and sustainable environment that encourages exploration and enquiry.

¹ Cyril Assiniboine, Ojibwa artist, http://www.mint.ca/store/coins/1-oz.-fine-silver-coin-legend-of-nanaboozhoo-mintage-8500-2014-prod1920050?rcmiid=link|search|searchresults|1_oz_Fine_Silver_Coin_-_Legend_of_Nanaboozhoo_-_Mintage_8500_2014&#.Vs45Vebppvo

COMMUNICATION

- Relationships and communication between and among children, families, educators and the environment are based on respect and acceptance.
- We value the relationship that exists between our Centre and our Lakehead University and Lakehead University Student Union partners.

PROFESSIONALLY TRAINED EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

- Our Registered Early Childhood Educators practice reflection and life-long learning and are driven to provide quality child care.

PRINCIPLES AND BELIEFS

The Board has embraced and adopted the Ministry of Education's Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT) framework. Included in the framework are principles and beliefs that guide practice in early years settings² and guide the practice at our Centre.

The **principles** are:

1. Positive experiences in early childhood set the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour, health and well-being.
2. Partnerships with families and communities are essential.
3. Respect for diversity, equity and inclusion is vital.
4. An intentional, planned program supports learning.
5. Play and inquiry are learning approaches that capitalize on children's natural curiosity and exuberance.
6. Knowledgeable, responsive and reflective educators are essential.

Our Centre **believes** that high-quality early childhood programs³:

1. Establish positive, responsive relationships with children and their families.
2. Value children as individuals and as active and competent contributors with their own interests and points of view.
3. Recognize the connection between emotional well-being and social and cognitive development and the importance of focusing on these areas holistically.
4. Provide environments and experiences for children to explore ideas, investigate their theories and interact with others in play.
5. Engage with families and support each child within the context of their family, recognizing that family and child well-being are inextricably linked.
6. Provide ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and practice to support continuous professional learning and growth.

² How Does Learning Happen? 2014, Ministry of Education, p. 10-11

³ Ibid.,

STRATEGIC PILLARS

Strategic Pillars make the strategic plan a reality. As a result of the consultative process the Board has identified the following four pillars for their first strategic plan. The pillars include a clearly articulated programming philosophy, an inclusive learning environment, engaged children, families and early childhood educators, and environmental and financial sustainability. These pillars drive the work of our Centre for the next 3 years.

1. LEARNING

As articulated in the ELECT framework *“An intentional, planned program supports learning”*. Parents, guardians and staff alike are aware of our intention, as articulated in our program and implementation plan, and can work collaboratively for the benefit of the children.

2. INCLUSION

The City of Thunder Bay is a diverse community, as is the Lakehead University student body, faculty and staff. Our Centre provides child care in an environment that is inclusive and respectful of the needs of the child and the family. Children play and learn in an environment that not only values but celebrates their differences and contributions.

3. RELATIONSHIPS

The relationships between and among the children, families, and educators is central to our Centre’s realizing its potential. Our Centre is everyone’s *“home away from home”*. Respect, trust and honesty are essential to open communication and strong relationships and they are the guiding principles at our Centre.

4. SUSTAINABILITY

Located on the beautiful grounds of Lakehead University and nestled along the river and amongst the trees, our Centre is committed to being a steward of the land and environment and to teaching the children at our Centre to *“live in harmony with the natural world.”* The classroom is everywhere.

It is the Board’s responsibility, through sound financial management, to support these pillars and to ensure our Centre’s longevity.

NEXT STEPS/WORKPLAN

The Board has approved a work plan that outlines the strategic objectives and the activities that will be undertaken to operationalize the Strategic Plan over the next three years. The Board’s role is to oversee the progression through the work plan. It is the Executive Director’s responsibility to implement the work plan and it is hoped that the parents/guardians and staff will be active partners in the implementation.