

Growing with Centennial

Play, Laugh, Learn

Welcome!

Growing with Centennial is the quarterly newsletter for Centennial Infant and Child Centre’s Early Intervention Program. This newsletter has been designed to help you support your child’s development in a number of ways. It includes ideas for play with homemade toys, tips for movement, information for infants, communication strategies, updates about what’s happening at Centennial and much more!

We hope this will be a way for all of us to share personal stories, news and resources. It will be published approximately every 3 months, and your Early Childhood Interventionist will bring you a copy. It will also be available on our website: www.cicc.ca. If you have any questions, please ask your CICC Early Interventionist.

Who we are & what we do

Centennial Infant and Child Centre is committed to the development and education of young children with developmental challenges.

Centennial focuses on the individual needs of each child and family through early intervention at home, in our integrated preschool program and through participation in community programs.

Our Mission Statement: Centennial Infant and Child Centre strengthens families and their young children with special needs to develop confidence and skills for the best start in life.

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Baby girl who is receiving Early Intervention, playing at Sick Kids.

CICC Families

Our Experience with Early Intervention

Coming into Sick Kids for the first time was terrifying, and not just because it was by ambulance. As a first time Mother, watching my 17-day-old Daughter screaming in pain, I was learning a very different level of fear and protectiveness to anything I had ever experienced before. That was five months ago now and we have been astounded and extremely fortunate with the care and expertise that we have experienced from the teams at Sick Kids and Centennial throughout my Daughter’s surgeries and recovery steps so far.

I had heard of Sick Kids since moving to Toronto, but I had never heard of Centennial Infant and Child Centre or the work that this organization does to help support children and their families. I am extremely grateful to have been introduced to our Early Interventionist, Frances Mahoney. She has been an incredible support as we navigate the potential impacts of my Daughter’s traumatic brain injury and how it may effect her physical, behavioural and cognitive development.

Frances has been kind and knowledgeable in all of our sessions, she has listened and come to understand the implications of my Daughter’s injury and subsequent surgeries. She has been extremely warm and thoughtful in building up a strong rapport with us, despite our sessions now being virtual.

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The economical and practical advice that Frances has given us on activities and toys to target specific concerns and development progress has been welcomed and extremely helpful in moving us forward. I would also like to recognize the positive support of Ad Rosszell, the CICC Occupational Therapist. Ad accompanies Frances in some of our sessions to support my Daughter's motor development.

We have been told that the recovery journey for my Daughter will be multiple years ahead, and that we will have to navigate many potential unknowns of what could be abnormal physical, behavioural, emotional or mental development for us to work through. We are incredibly grateful to have Frances and Ad on our team, providing such knowledgeable and practical support as we try and figure this all out to give my Daughter the best recovery opportunities possible.

Written with love by: Anonymous Early Intervention Family

Ideas for Infants

By Mandeep Grewal-Barton
CICC, Early Childhood Interventionist, (RECE, B.A. Sc, R.T.)

Peek a Boo! Where Did You Go?

Peek a boo is a game many families enjoy where you can have fun interacting with your baby, using their favorite thing to look at... you!

Start by placing your hands in front of your face. Peek through your fingers to watch your baby's reaction. Talk to your baby, so they know you are still there, and then remove your hands. Say 'peek a boo, I see you!'. Repeat several times and see if your baby shows signs that they are waiting for you to show your face. They may make a sound, or move their body.

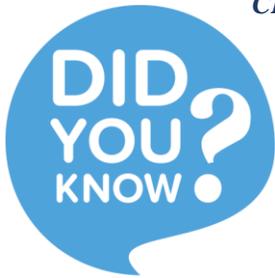
Next, try hiding behind a small cloth. Hold it in front of your face and call out to your child. If they touch the cloth, make a sound or move, then you can drop the cloth and let them know 'you found me!'. You can also put the small cloth on their head and let them find you by pulling it off, helping them as needed. Have fun and be silly!

Play this game during bath time when washing their face, during dressing and undressing as a shirt goes over top their head, using a stuffed animal or doll, hide behind a book or cover a mirror as they look at themselves in it.

This game can also be played by covering a toy or food to see if your baby can find it. Cover half of the item with a cloth, make a sound using the object, talk to your baby, when they make a sound or gesture, pull the cloth away and let them know 'you found the ____!'.

Peek a boo is a fun way to practice object permanence; the understanding that objects or people are still there, even if you cannot see or hear them. Another way to practice this concept is talking to your baby when you are walking away from them. They will recognize your voice and know you are still close by even though they cannot see you.





CICC Early Interventionists continue to support clients in a variety of ways:

- *Virtual visits, phone and email consultation, and joint virtual Neo-Natal Follow Up Clinic appointments, joint visits with CICC Occupational Therapists, as well as other community partners.*
- *Accepting and processing new referrals. We have provided service to 40+ new clients from our waitlist through virtual and phone intake visits.*
- *Continued weekly tip sheets and new editions of Growing with Centennial newsletter. Visit our website for electronic copies:
www.cicc.ca/programs/early-intervention/early-intervention-at-home/*

Play and Learn

Homemade Toys with Frances Mahoney,
CICC, Early Childhood Interventionist

Exploring the Senses

There are many items in our home that are safe and fun to use for children to explore their senses through play. Touching, tasting, smelling, hearing, seeing, it is through these senses that children learn more about the world around them!

Below are ideas for sensory activities you can create from household items. Remember, sensory play requires supervision.

- Scarves or small pieces of fabric in tissue or diaper wipe boxes.
- Start a band! Give your child pots and pans, lids and wooden spoons, model banging down to make music.
- Mixing bowls with objects of various textures (i.e. crinkly wrapping paper, bumpy ball, soft cloth, dry rice, etc.).
- Make scented playdough! You can use various spices or essential oils to give the playdough a different smell.
- Bath time is an important time to explore the senses! You can use baby-safe bubble bath, homemade bath paint, sponges, baby dolls, and measuring cups to make bath time more fun.
- Water bottles: empty, clean, fill up with fun materials (i.e. shiny paper, cornmeal, macaroni, etc.) and secure lid on tight with tape.
- Books with feely textures.
- Wet sensory play: goop (cornstarch and water), Jello, water play, playdough, yogurt painting, ice cubes, etc.
- Dry sensory play: cornmeal, rice, lentils, pasta, Cheerio “sand” made by blending Cheerios, etc.



Making music!



Dry sensory play with rice and toys!

Remember, have fun and join in the sensory play with your child! This is a wonderful opportunity for communication, as you talk about how the activity feels, tastes, smells, sounds and looks. If your child is hesitant to explore the activity, provide a tool like a spoon or toy. Model how to play then wait and see what your child does! Try the activity multiple times, some children need time to get used to a new sensory experience.

Time to Start Daycare

By Lucy Patterson
CICC Resource Consultant



What an exciting time! Your child will learn so much:

- *How to interact and play with other children*
- *How to be in a group (good practice for school)*
- *How to follow directions and routines.*

A Resource Consultant (RC) is trained to work with children who need extra support; but will also have a good understanding of how daycares work. An RC can help you to make sure the teachers understand your child's unique needs. He/she will be familiar with your child's daycare and will help by meeting with you and your child's new teachers to discuss your goals and any concerns you have.

These meetings are a good time for you and your child's teachers to discuss concerns or questions and develop solutions as a team.

No matter what challenges your child may have in daycare, when an RC is involved with your child, he/she can help the teachers to plan how to best guide your child and make sure that supports are in place. The RC may also have access to extra temporary funds for the daycare, to ensure your child is able to participate in all aspects of the program.

As your child settles in, the RC will continue to be involved by observing in the daycare to make sure things are going well, in addition he/she may offer support in the following ways:

- Offer suggestions for activities or adaptations that will help with your child's development and participation
- Coordinate with other professionals working with your child, speech, an occupational therapist etc. to ensure consistency.
- Offer extra training for teachers if needed.

With the support of a Resource Consultant, daycare will be a place where your child can learn new skills, make new friends, and have fun!

About Resource Consultants

Each licensed daycare has a Resource Consultant (RC) who works with several daycares. You can find the name and contact information of the RC connected to your child's daycare on the Toronto Children's Services website: <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/children-parenting/children-programs-activities/licensed-child-care/>

Look up the daycare your child will attend and scroll to the bottom of the page to find this information. The Supervisor of the daycare must make a referral to the RC, then she/he will contact you.

Resource Websites for COVID-19

Housing Help Centres

Housing Help Centres help people find and keep housing and avoid eviction. Visit the City of Toronto website to find the housing help centre closes to you. <https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/housing-shelter/homeless-help/#housing>

Daily Bread Foodbank

Some foodbanks in the city are closed and temporary banks have been opened, to check availability call 211.

<https://www.dailybread.ca/need-food/programs-by-location/>

Women's Shelter

To locate a women's shelter with child care support, visit:

<https://www.sheltersafe.ca/>

For more resources, please contact your EI.