

Early Childhood Services in EICS
Programming for Children with Special Needs

Family Oriented Programming (FOPs)

"Very young children (ages 3, 4, and 5) who require extensive programming may benefit from family-oriented programming sessions, which are individually planned, developmentally appropriate intervention for children with severe disabilities or delays and their families."
Alberta Education

"Family Oriented Programming is implemented under the direction of a certified teacher and takes place outside of centre based programming hours. It is designed to engage the child's parents or guardians in a process that helps them to implement the goals and objectives of the IPP (ISP) within the home and community environment."
Alberta Education

At Elk Island Catholic Schools we provide FOPs as part of your child's Program Unit Funded (PUF) program to enhance your child's experience. Parents, caregivers and children benefit from actively participating in the FOPs that are most valuable to the family and reflective of the needs of the child. Not all programs are offered in each community.

We offer a variety of FOPs each year.



FOP Descriptions:

Brain Architecture Game: The Brain Architecture Game is a tabletop game experience that builds understanding of the powerful role of experiences on early brain development - what promotes it, what derails it, and what are the consequences for our children and society. We will also watch short videos on How Brains are Built, Serve and Return, the effects of Toxic Stress on our children and what we can do to support our children's emotional health and well-being. We will come away with an awareness of the different levels of stress that affect our children and positive ways to support and build resiliency when life is difficult.

Facilitated by the Early Learning Consultant

Communication Temptations: We will review strategies and create opportunities for your child to enhance their early communication skills. Many activities and examples will be provided to help families develop first words, increase sentence length, increase communication, develop speech sounds, and expand your child's current use of language.

Facilitated by the EICS Speech and Language Consultants

DANCEPL3Y: DANCEPL3Y is an innovative and award winning program that encourages children to explore simple movements from a variety of dance styles from around the world (Hip Hop, Urban, Ballroom, Bollywood, Lyrical, Jazz/Fun and more!) The interactive class style is paired with positive

coaching where every student can claim their "Bubble of Awesome". Join us for a fun and interactive session!

Facilitated by Tracy Lockwood, Certified DANCEPL3Y Facilitator

Emotion Coaching: Listening with empathy is at the heart of Emotion Coaching. When children have parents who use Emotion Coaching, they learn about emotions in healthy ways. These children tend to do better in school and make stronger friendships.

In the Emotion Coaching Workshop, we will examine "meta-emotions" or "Feelings about Feelings. The Four Parenting Styles will be explored in depth. These styles have been identified by Dr. John Gottman through his research.

You will then work with your child to explore and teach feelings through literature and a small project.

Facilitated by the EICS Early Learning Consultant

Faith Filled Families: Have you ever wondered what your child is learning about his/her faith in our classrooms? How are they growing in their relationship with God? How can the school work with you to support the faith development of your child? How can you support your child's prayer life? These questions and more will be explored in this session as we learn to Know God, Love God and Serve God. You will also work with your child to build prayer starters!

Facilitated by the EICS Division Principal; Faith and Wellness Formation

Family Yoga: Parents and children are invited to participate in a family yoga class where you will be able to immerse yourselves in creative, cooperative physical play. This gentle exercise provides a wonderful opportunity for bonding, working together and building relationship. Yoga is an amazing opportunity to practice gross and fine motor skills including cross body actions, body awareness, motor planning; as well as breathing, self-control, verbal and nonverbal communication.

Facilitated by Certified Yoga Instructor

Christmas Crafts: This fun and interactive FOP session is designed for children and their parents to get "hands-on" experience making crafts for the Christmas season. The family and children will come away with some crafts and resources on crafts, ideas on next steps for development and adapting crafts to a child's skill level.

Facilitated by the EICS Occupational Therapists

First 2000 Days Festival Saturday, May 4, 2019 Drop In: There are 2000 days between the time your baby is born until he/she heads off to Kindergarten! Experiences during this time have a lasting impact on your child's later development and success. These first experiences determine how your child's brain is wired and lay the groundwork for future health and social and emotional skills.

You and your child will participate in an amazing variety of interactive play experiences. Professionals from the community will be available to discuss a variety of early childhood topics with you including: sleep, nutrition, safety and play.

This event is a collaborative partnership between Strathcona County Family and Community Services and community organizations that support the development of young children.

Exploring Your Community Library: Welcome to your Community Public Library! Your family will discover the warm and welcoming programming and services available at the community library. After exploring the library, we will all join together for fun stories and action games. You will then be invited to read, explore and play with your child(ren) in the library.

Facilitated by the Literacy Librarians of Camrose, Strathcona County and Fort Saskatchewan

Kindergarten Language Skills: We will review strategies and provide a variety of activities for parents and children to practice kindergarten-appropriate language skills. Skills targeted will include grammar, sentence structure, vocabulary, comprehending questions and directions, categorizing/sorting items by similarities and differences, and literacy/phonological awareness.

Facilitated by the EICS Speech and Language Consultants

Numeracy: Math is Everywhere...Everyday! "Evidence shows that early success in math is linked to later success in both math and reading." (Duncan et al, 2007)

In this session you will engage with your child in a variety of numeracy and mathematics activities. Come play, explore and examine a variety of numeracy and mathematics concepts at developmentally appropriate centres.

You will be invited to explore:

- Is numeracy the same as math?
- Your mindset - fixed? Or growth?
- The concept that mistakes are the stepping stones to learning.
- Tips to help our children improve their everyday maths including
- Using literature to support your child's mathematics skills.

Facilitated by the EICS Curriculum Consultant

Managing Behaviour: During this session, we will be sharing some of our positive behavior management strategies that we use in the classroom with your children. We will share information about the function behind behaviour as well as provide a number of managing behaviour strategies. Resources will include the ABC Data Sheet and online resources and apps for creating visuals such as first/then boards, social stories, visual schedules. We will also be making 'waiting bags' with you and your child.

Facilitated by the EICS Behaviour Consultant

Mindfulness: Mindfulness is a universal tool that can help all of us move forward to balance, resiliency, responsibility, mental and physical wellbeing. It has a direct impact on children's social

and emotional learning. In this session you will learn about the science behind stress and mindfulness. Your child will learn how his/her brain works using the "hand" model. Our brain puppet, Mindful Murray, will help you understand what stress does and how our brains and bodies react to it. You will learn strategies to teach your child how to respond to our environment instead of reacting to it. Sleep stories will also be offered as a tool to help your child rest well.

Facilitated by Nicole Labreque, School Counsellor and Certified Meditation Teacher and Sarah Balla, Division Health Champion

Music Therapy: Learn how music makes a positive difference in your child's life - through songs, actions, scarf play, body play, and playing with instruments. Some of the concepts covered in this session will include: relaxation, motor skills, social skills, communication, bonding for families, cognitive skills, and the importance of music and play. Interactive and fun!

Facilitated by Melanie Doderai, Certified Music Therapist

P.L.A.Y. (Physical Literacy and You!): Physical literacy can be described as the motivation, confidence, physical competence skills, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life (Whitehead, 2016). Developing physical literacy is an essential part of healthy child development. Children who are exposed to a multitude of movement experiences in a variety of environments are more confident and competent movers, thus giving them a greater chance of remaining active throughout their lifespan. Join us for an interactive, fun and movement filled experience!

Facilitated by Tracy Lockwood, PLAY Educator Consultant

Snack-chefs. Children and parents will make a snack together with the group while exploring and playing the physical properties of foods. It is a great session for children who are "picky". These children often need more exploration of foods without the pressure to "eat it". Preparing food is a great way to encourage "picky eaters" to increase their interactions with foods. In order to sign up for this session, an allergy and food restrictions form is required.

Facilitated by the EICS Occupational Therapists

Play Groups: Play groups are a fun and interactive way to focus on play and social skills in a variety of ways. The team will help you understand and set up predictable interactions, interactive games, unison activities, structured group activities and how to coach your child on how to be a great peer model. A variety of tips will be shared!

Facilitated by the EICS Early Learning Teams

Social Communication Skills: In this FOP you will learn how to support your child's social skill development. Social thinking, the importance of social skills and the stages of group collaboration, play and problem solving will be discussed. You will come away with tools to determine your child's current level of social skill development and strategies to help your child practice and learn new social skills. Hone your new skills by participating in musical play with your child and his/her friends.

Facilitated by the EICS Speech Language Pathologists

Family Swim: Enjoy a family swim with your child while learning how social stories can be used to support your child's transitioning to and from the pool, understanding of pool rules and water safety. Swimming is a gross motor activity involving all parts of the body. It can also be an effective sensory activity. This fun activity is also full of language concepts, self-help skills, and fine motor skills.

Facilitated by the EICS Early Learning Teams and the Adaptive Swim Instructors of our Local Pools

Tinkerlab: Design, build, concoct and discover! Encourage your child's curiosity, exploration and creative thinking by participating in this interactive event. The eternal circle of the design process will be discussed - reflect, investigate, ideate, plan, create, test and modify. A variety of tinker challenges will be provided for your child to choose from and explore.

Facilitated by the EICS Early Learning Teams and the Early Learning Consultant

Visual Supports and Teaching with Stories: Learn how to use these tools to support your child's understanding of what is being said and what is expected, help them communicate, develop a routine, explain new or challenging situations, introduce change or expectations, reduce anxiety and frustration, help orient your child to where he is and where he is going next, and provide him more independence throughout his day. You will have an opportunity to review a variety of visual supports and social narrative so you can choose the tool that is just right for your child. You will then have an opportunity to trial and practice using the tool with your child.

Facilitated by the EICS Speech Language Pathologists

Wiggly or Worried:

In this FOP, parents will be introduced to the Zones of Regulation program for the first half of this session. For the second half, parents and their children will try out a variety of sensory regulation strategies. The children will also make a "weather bottle" (shake and watch the storm settle and the weather becomes calm again).

by the EICS Occupational Therapists

Speech Sound Development (Part One): When parents practice speech sounds at home with their child, it improves the rate of progress and helps children generalize speech sounds they are learning at school. This FOP is designed to give families suggestions on how to follow through with speech practice in the home environment. You will learn about typical sound development for 2 to 4 year olds, motor planning, strategies for practicing sounds, and how to make the practice fun and enjoyable for both you and your child. You will have the opportunity to try some of the strategies with your child. Working together, we will see quicker results in improving your child's ability to be understood by others. Target sounds may include: vowels, p, b, m, t, d, n, k, g, s, z, f, and v.

Facilitated by the EICS Speech Language Pathologists

Speech Sound Development (Part Two): This FOP is designed for kindergarten children or children who are able to produce early developing speech sounds. We will spend a small amount of

time learning about typical sound development for 4 to 6 year olds and strategies for practicing sounds. The majority of the session will give you an opportunity to try some of the strategies with your child in a variety of fun, play-based activities you will be able to use at home as well. Working together, we will see quicker results in improving your child's ability to be understood by others. Target sounds may include: k, g, f, v, s, z, s-blends, sh, ch, j, l, r, and consonant clusters.

Facilitated by the EICS Speech Language Pathologists

Early Literacy Skills for ALL Children: The topic of this session will be to discuss how parents can help teach early literacy skills to their children who use Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC). The first part of the workshop will explain different types of AAC, challenges to language learning as well as the many reasons why learning to read and write is so important for individuals who use AAC. Through interactive activities, families will reflect on access and opportunity barriers that children with complex communication needs may have to overcome when learning to read and write. Finally, the session will also provide examples of strategies and approaches that can be used now and in the future when teaching literacy skills to children who use AAC.

Facilitated by EICS Teachers

The Language of Toys: The session is geared to helping parents to use their home toys and activities to stimulate speech and language. A brief overview of language development, language facilitation strategies and examples of various toy dialogues and home ideas will be presented. Then during the session parents will get a chance to use these strategies while playing with toys provided alongside their child.

Facilitated by the EICS Speech and Language Consultants

Listening Skills for Speech and Language: This session is designed to give families suggestions on how to use language while encouraging development of comprehension and listening skills within daily routine, activities and interactive play in the home environment. A brief overview of listening development, listening strategies and examples of activities and home ideas to help with listening skills are presented.

Facilitated by the EICS Speech and Language Consultants

Supporting Siblings: In this session issues and concerns that arise for siblings of a child who has complex needs are discussed. Families are presented with strategies and supports that can help maintain a healthy dynamic.

Facilitated by Shannon Schmidt

Gardening with Families: The children and their parents are invited to visit a local greenhouse where they are given the opportunity to look, touch and smell different plants. On the tour they are shown the step it takes to prepare plants for sale. After a guided tour, it is time to get their hands dirty. They are provided a flowering plant to repot and take home.

Facilitated by the EICS Early Learning Team and the Staff of a Local Greenhouse

Demonstration of Learning: The Parents are invited to join their child in participating in a variety of activities that demonstrate their child's communication, fine motor, early literacy and early numeracy skills.

Facilitated by the EICS Early Learning Teams

Home Visits: Parents can request a home visit that can target specific concerns. An Early Learning team member will come into the home or another designated community facility ie. a playground, library. The team member will use a variety of activities to assist both the parent and child with strategies to support their development.

Facilitated by the EICS Early Learning Teams

Watch for new offerings over the school year!



