

Environmental Supports

Physical Spaces, Materials and Program Structure



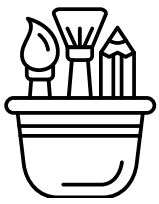
Physical location and program layout

Regardless of their ability, are all children able to - as independently as possible,

- Get to and from the program location and navigate program space(s) ? (pathways, ramps, signage)
- Reach materials (toys, games, supplies), participate in activities and interact with peers?
- Use the washroom?

Consider whether slight adjustments to program elements could better suit all participants.

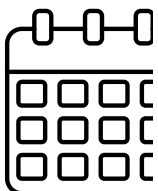
- Can the program area be visually defined with markings, chalk, pylons etc?
- Are there a variety of seating options?



Materials and supplies

Try to incorporate a variety of items into your program space to support various abilities.

- Include large-barrel markers, easy to hold paint brushes and/or grip-aids for art activities
- Use balls that vary in size, weight, colour and texture (or slightly deflate balls)
- Test out shorter/lighter bats or other adaptive sports equipment; consider adjusting 'difficulty' by lowering baskets, expanding goal areas



Schedule and Routines

Clear, consistent schedules and routines provide a strong base of support for all children.

Schedule: the order / sequence of activities that occur at the program. The specific activities in the schedule may change by the day, but the general flow or structure should remain relatively consistent.

Routines: the order / sequence of tasks related for an activity. Each time an activity occurs, the associated tasks should follow the same basic sequence to help children know what's expected.



Balance of Activities

- When considering what activities to incorporate into your program schedule, look for ways to balance a variety of elements such as: location (indoor / outdoor), level of movement (active / quiet or passive), length, structure (organized / free play), size (large group / small groups / independent), type (competitive / individualistic / cooperative)



Opportunities for Choice

Being able to make choices helps children feel more in control and respected. The choices don't have to be complicated - they may involve picking between different art supplies or materials. When the ratio of children to leaders allows, offer opportunities for children to choose between participating in different activities happening at the same time. Avoid offering broad or open-ended choices and make sure you can live with all the options you provide. Some children struggle with too many choices, preferring to pick between two or three.