



## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT FAMILY DAY

*All children and families are welcome, included, and treated with kindness and respect*

Walk down a busy downtown street in the GTA and you'll encounter people of all cultures, ethnicities, religions, abilities and lifestyles.

It is this diverse society in which we are raising our children. And it is this diverse society in which we attempt to teach our children to respect and be kind to all people. Education of this sort begins at home and is then naturally carried into the child care setting, where educators must play a strong role in promoting acceptance.

At Family Day, we pride ourselves on our diverse and inclusive child care programs. As put forth in our policies, we strictly adhere to the Human Rights Code, which outlines our commitment to inclusion. And, our educators are trained and coached on inclusive practices which are followed at all times.

This ensures our centres, licensed home programs and resource programs are all places in which children belong – and are taught that they belong.

### **The Research**

There is evidence that early childhood – before children have had a chance to form ideas about difference – is a prime time for learning positive ideas about embracing differences and respecting diversity.<sup>1</sup>



Children are aware, at three and four years of age, of ethnic, racial, gender, language and physical differences. They notice these differences and similarities as part of their natural developmental process and integrate all types of messages about difference.<sup>2</sup>

Since this is such a critical time in a child's development, it is important for them to be around adults who promote and reinforce positive attitudes about inclusion and diversity.

"Our educators plan programming using a strengths-based approach and adapt activities to support all levels of development and interest," says Lisa Shortall, Manager of Training at Family Day. "We create stimulating and safe environments that support children's learning and development. We work with external

partners to support the inclusion of children with special needs, and our programs are accepting of children with a diversity of capabilities."

### **Our Policies**

Family Day has a Program Statement and policies on inclusion and anti-racism, which our educators are mandated to follow. The policies centre on the concept that *all* children have the right to be cared for in environments that meet their needs and help them grow and develop to their full potential

within their own communities.

Shortall says families should "feel good about attending our programs" as we use a validated curriculum that aligns with 'How Does Learning Happen, Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years.' In addition, all educators follow policies and procedures as outlined in the code and standards of the College of Early Childhood Educators.

### **A Positive Partnership**

Teaching children about diversity is not a one-off lesson. Rather, it is a *process* – a partnership among Family Day educators, children, families, and the surrounding community.

"With everyone's help we are able to foster the development of all children in

*... continued on page 2*

## Diversity and Inclusion

continued from page 1

our care,” says Heather Ryan, Child Care Supervisor at Family Day. “We ensure that parents and children feel safe and comfortable in our environments and that our centres are places where children can learn, play and develop at their own pace.”

Our educators make a strong effort to learn about our children. Our staff receive professional development on how to be mindful of their own biases and how to challenge negative stereotypes.

“We integrate many aspects of diversity into the programs on an ongoing basis,” says Adriana Gentile, an RECE at our Roselawn and Ross Doan programs. “We look at the community around each centre and we bring that into the program by integrating and celebrating different holidays, foods and crafts. Families are encouraged to share their home cultures, as we talk about *why* we celebrate, and we learn from each other.”

By integrating activities with methodology, our educators work hard, each and every day, to create a sense of community in all of our programs – and this makes for a positive experience for children at Family Day.

Our aim is to continue to learn, grow and work with families to further strengthen our child care programs. And, we have plans in the works to conduct a demographic survey to help us broaden our knowledge around how we can best serve our children and their families.

<sup>1</sup> Can early childhood education and care help keep Canada's promise of respect for diversity? Martha Friendly and Nina Prabhu

<sup>2</sup> Diversity and Equality Guidelines for Child Care Providers, Office of the Minister for Children – Dublin, Ireland

Message from  
Joan Arruda, CEO



## Welcome to Family Day

It is my pleasure to welcome all new and returning children and their families to our programs. As parents, your choice of child care is a very important decision. Naturally, you are concerned about your child's education and safety within the school and child care environments. Thank you for choosing a Family Day program and putting your trust in us.

Family Day is a multi-service early learning organization with services in both centre-based care and licensed home child care. The agency is also very strong in family-centred practice and offers family support programs in Ontario Early Years locations, AOK (All Our Kids) programs in York Region, and other programs funded through The United Way. In addition, we have Integration Coordinators who support children with exceptional needs in the Every Child Belongs program in the City of Toronto.

You will find the Family Day Handbook and Program Statement in your welcome package and on our website. I encourage you to become familiar with both of these documents as they constitute our commitment to you and to your children.

At Family Day, we encourage agency-family partnerships and value them as a way of working within our communities. Each year we conduct an online survey and we would appreciate your feedback. We also invite you to join us for curriculum nights and parent groups.

Cheers, Joan





## Attend our Parent Groups



FAMILY  
DAY

Our fall Parent Advisory Groups have been scheduled for November. These free events bring parents together to talk about curriculum, general updates, and news related to specific regions. The evening groups, which offer child care and a light dinner, will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. as follows:

*Brampton*  
*Mississauga*  
*Markham*  
*Thornhill*  
*Toronto*  
*Toronto*

*November 22 at Our Lady of Providence*  
*November 15 at Philip Pocock*  
*November 21 at Armadale*  
*November 14 at Thornhill*  
*November 15 at Flemingdon Park*  
*November 23 at Mary Ward*



## 10 Healthy Foods for Fall

*Providing nutritious foods for your family is easy to do in the fall. There are so many fresh fruits and vegetables around that it's hard to choose. Here's a look at 10 of the healthiest:*

**1. Sweet Potatoes** Sweet potatoes are rich in vitamin A, which is important for good vision, healthy skin and a strong immune system.

**2. Parsnips** Parsnips add one of the greatest amounts of dietary fibre to your diet. In a half-cup serving, this root vegetable has four grams of fibre.

**3. Pears** Among a list of the most common fruits, pears contain the highest amount of fibre – and they are full of vitamin C.

**4. Winter Squash** There are many types of winter squash – all of them healthy. Butternut squash is considered the healthiest, ranking tenth for non-green vegetables.

**5. Pumpkin** Pumpkins are full of dietary fibre and have a high content of vitamin A. Pumpkins are also rich in B vitamins like folate, niacin and thiamin.

**6. Brussels Sprouts** Brussels sprouts are high in protein. They're also loaded with bone-healthy vitamin K and immune-boosting vitamin C.

**7. Pomegranates** Of late, pomegranates have received attention for their high level of antioxidants. And they taste delicious – as is or in juice.

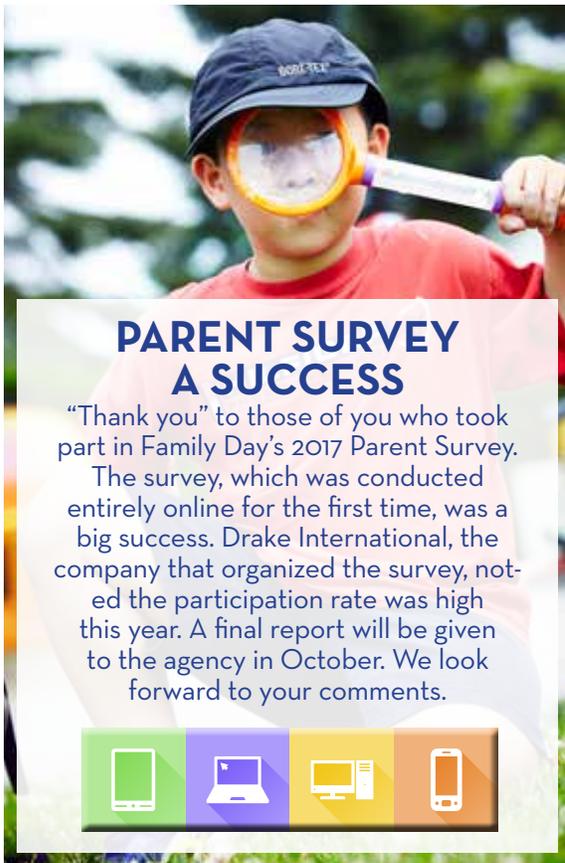
**8. Apples** Apples are packed with vitamin C and antioxidants; they are also a great source of fibre. The skin and the layer directly

beneath it have most of the fibre and nutrients.

**9. Turnip Greens** Turnip greens are packed with more vitamins than your body could process in a day. One serving provides 660 per cent of the recommended daily value (DV) of vitamin K, and 220 per cent DV of vitamin A.

**10. Kale** Kale is a great source of vitamins A, K, C and B. It's loaded with beta-carotene, as well as calcium, manganese and potassium.

*Source: 10 Healthy Fall Foods by Joseph Miller, HowStuffWorks*



## PARENT SURVEY A SUCCESS

“Thank you” to those of you who took part in Family Day’s 2017 Parent Survey.

The survey, which was conducted entirely online for the first time, was a big success. Drake International, the company that organized the survey, noted the participation rate was high this year. A final report will be given to the agency in October. We look forward to your comments.



## Gearing up for our United Way Campaign

Family Day will once again participate in the annual United Way Campaign in 2017. The campaign raises funds for the charity in a variety of ways. Thanks to your generous donations, Family Day’s 2016 campaign was a great success; we hope 2017 will be just as positive. In keeping with tradition, each of our centres will host a “dance-a-thon” this year.

*Stay tuned for details.*



## STORYPARK PILOT PROJECT WRAPS UP

Family Day has concluded the pilot phase of its Storypark project. The easy-to-use, online tool helps parents, families and educators work together to record, share and extend children’s learning. It allows educators to capture children’s development by posting photos, videos, stories, notes and comments. Five of our sites tested the new tool, and the feedback was great. Storypark will be rolled out across the rest of the agency in the months to come.



## Follow us on social media



Are you new to Family Day? Are you looking to stay informed? We invite you to join us on social media for agency updates, sector news, photos and videos, and a variety of useful parent information. Join our Facebook community at [facebook.com/FamilyDayCareServices](https://www.facebook.com/FamilyDayCareServices) and find us on Twitter at [twitter.com/FamilyDayGTA](https://twitter.com/FamilyDayGTA).



**FAMILY  
DAY**

### Family Day Care Services

155 Gordon Baker Road, Suite 400  
Toronto, Ontario M2H 3N5  
416 922-9556  
familydaycare.com

 [facebook.com/FamilyDayCareServices](https://www.facebook.com/FamilyDayCareServices)  
 [@FamilyDayGTA](https://twitter.com/FamilyDayGTA)

### Our Programs

- Licensed Home Child Care
- Child Care Centres
- School Age Programs
- Resource Programs
- Ontario Early Years Centres
- Homework Plus

### FOCUS Newsletter

Editorial: Janine Druery  
[jdruery@familydaycare.com](mailto:jdruery@familydaycare.com)

Design and production:  
WISHART.NET



United Way  
Toronto & York Region

*For countless families, Family Day is the only way!*