

The text is surrounded by several small illustrations of children in various playful poses: one standing on top of 'For now.', one jumping on top of 'For life.', one standing on top of 'Be ready!', one on a tricycle below 'Be ready!', one jumping below 'Be ready!', one standing below 'Be ready!', one jumping to the left of 'Be ready!', one jumping to the left of 'For life.', one jumping to the left of 'For now.', and one jumping to the right of 'For now.'

For now.
For life.
Be ready!

New Brunswick's Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum

For now. For life. Be ready!

New Brunswick's Early Learning and Child Care

Curriculum is a guide designed to support parents and caregivers in creating stimulating and nurturing learning environments for young children. It is based on up-to-date research on how to maximize children's learning so that they can grow to their fullest potential with dignity, a sense of self-worth, and a zest for living.

As parents, watching your children learn and grow is very rewarding. From the day children are born, they enter a new and colourful world of discovery, where everything is new and unfamiliar. To get to know themselves, others, and their world, they need to feel safe and confident. Creating rich, stimulating, engaging environments for children to explore will ensure that they are active participants in their own learning.

You are your children's first teacher. Your children need your support and encouragement as they learn to build trust in their world. For this reason, their **relationships**, especially with you, must be nurturing, loving, secure, and positive. Their **environments** must be safe, flexible and engaging. They must have plenty of opportunities for **play** that promotes creativity, imagination and passion for learning.



Building Relationships.

Building trusting relationships is important for your children during their early years of life. In order to get the most out of this incredible period of growth, your children must have relationships that make them feel safe and confident in their explorations. In order to be open to new learning experiences, children need to feel included, supported and comfortable enough to experiment.

- When parents respond positively to their babies in the first year of life, their children will learn to depend on them for love, guidance and protection. Comforting your children when they cry will not spoil them – it builds relationships based on safety and trust.
- Be warm and caring with your children. Comfort and reassure them when they are hurt, upset, sick or frightened. Listen to them. They have so much to share. Your attention will make them feel valued and respected.
- When children become comfortable with those around them, they will want to be involved in meaningful conversations where they can share ideas and feelings.
- Positive relationships teach your children about others and themselves. In this way, they will learn to accept and respect their own cultures and ideas, as well as those of others.





Environments of Discovery. The environment, which plays an essential role in your children's learning and growth, includes both the physical and social environment. Healthy learning environments encourage play, and in turn maximize opportunities for learning. Positive relationships contribute to children's social environment and allow for experimental play within their physical environment, in both the indoors and outdoors. Physical surroundings can include anything from a nature trail, your backyard or materials that can be used for play and discovery, such as books, art supplies, dramatic play materials, blocks, and musical items.

- When creating learning environments for your children, remember that activities for playful exploration work best in open and flexible settings, where children are free to develop creative problem solving skills using the variety of materials available.
- Follow your children's lead as you play together. Learning happens whenever your children are at play. Sharing activities like baking cookies, feeding animals or walking outdoors are examples of learning in action.
- Provide your children with a wide range of materials that allow for interactive and creative play.



Opportunities for Play. Your children need many opportunities for play. Through play they will develop an appreciation for their own capabilities, building confidence and self-esteem. Their personal motivation to learn will drive them to create and build their learning through the activities that they choose.

- At play, children are free to travel along their own paths of discovery. Your children will be empowered when they take the lead in their own learning experiences.
- As children develop creativity and imagination they will increase their potential for solving problems and reaching goals independently.
- When they laugh, talk and learn with others, they will gain an appreciation for their own abilities and the abilities of others.
- Through play, children express themselves and learn about their world. They learn new skills and continue to enhance them.





The Curriculum in Action.

Sarah takes her daughter, Jennifer (age 4), for a walk in the woods near their home. For fun, Sarah and Jennifer make a plan to collect items that they find along their walk. Jennifer collects her treasures with delight. Sticks, pine cones, rocks, leaves, moss – things she finds interesting to look at or to touch. As they collect their items, they identify ones they recognize, they name them and talk about their colours, sizes, shapes, and textures. For the objects that they do not recognize, they discuss what each might be called, making up their own names for the objects.

During their walk, the two are actively engaged in conversation about what they hear and see, taking turns in sharing their own discoveries. Sharing and actively participating in this activity with her mother allows Jennifer to feel safe and confident in expressing herself to her mom. Jennifer knows that her mother will be supportive and show an interest in whatever she might find or say.

This simple walk in the woods proved to be a lesson in learning. Through this activity, Sarah was able to build a trusting and caring relationship with her daughter. The physical environment of the open woodland provided Jennifer with a place to play and explore freely, as well as an opportunity to use her own creativity. Jennifer now has a sense of confidence as a leader in her own learning.

The activity supported her desire to explore her environment and encouraged her curiosity, enhancing her interest in learning and in the world that surrounds her.



You're Ready! You now have the foundation to ensure that your children grow to their full potential. The Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum builds on that foundation by providing you with tools in supporting your children's learning. A walk may inspire them to speak openly and confidently about what they've learned and where their true interests lie.

By supporting your children's learning, and recognizing their passions in life and in play, you continually build upon the skills and knowledge they need for future success. With the curriculum as your guide, you are ready to lead them on their path of a healthy, happy and successful life.





Be informed.

Visit www.gnb.ca/childcare
for more details about the
Early Learning and Child Care
Curriculum.