

## Engage and Connect Remotely with Quality Child Care Niagara

### Upcoming QCCN Community Conversation Café

**QCCN Community Conversation Café: Next Steps for Continued Support Following the QCCN Reflective Practice Institute ([click here to register](#))**

**Wednesday June 30, 2021 from 6:30 to 7:30 pm**

Are you a recent participant of the Quality Child Care Niagara Reflective Practice Institute Online Modules and would like the opportunity to ask questions and gain further insight through collaborative discussion? Or maybe you are a past participant of our in person two-day Reflective Practice Institute and wish to engage in further reflection about the use of the QCCN tools and resources?

If so, please join the QCCN Team for a thoughtful Conversation Café where we will touch on frequently asked questions related to the QCCN training, discuss any common trends or challenges following the training, and share any additional thoughts on how we can further support you.

**Scroll down to view QCCN Centre Pictures from 2020**

## QCCN Centre Pictures 2020

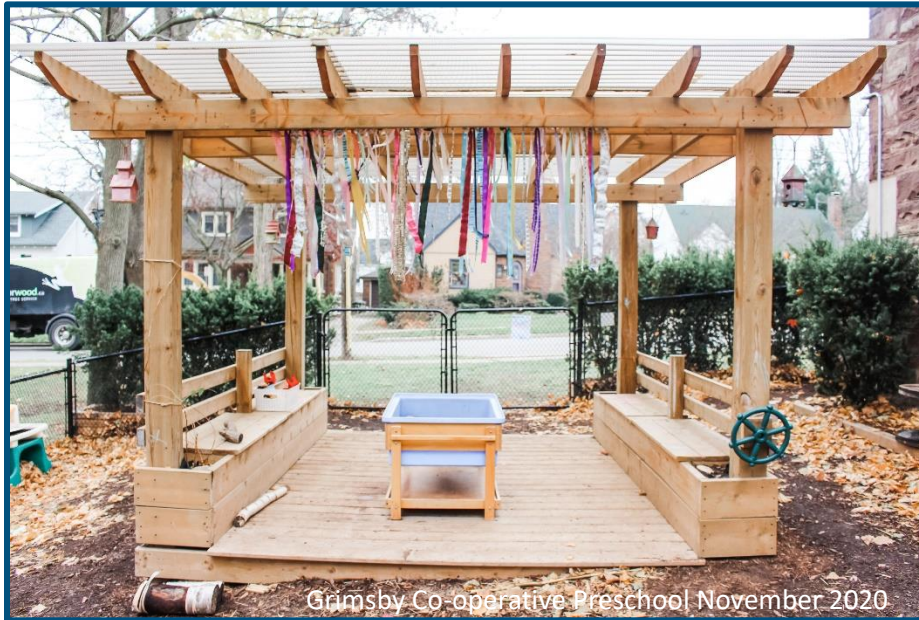
As we embark into a new year together as a community, we would like to share and reflect on some centre pictures that were taken during last year's QCCN Annual Support Visits. Quality Child Care Niagara would like to acknowledge the hard work and continued dedication of all early learning and child care professionals in Niagara.

“We were setting up our classroom following the Covid-19 protocols put in place by Public Health. Although this was a bit of a challenge, we were able to come up with this idea to incorporate sensory experiences within our classroom. Each child has their own sensory bin labeled with their name and picture allowing independent, free play. Having both their name and pictures assists our younger students to learn name recognition.



Fort Erie Aboriginal Head Start  
November 2020

The intent was to still allow our children to have sensory experiences, all while navigating through this Global pandemic. Throughout our time in the classroom, we have utilized the individual sensory bins for: sand, water, noodles, rice, playdough, and kinetic sand. All which are changed daily.” - Krista and Louise



Gamsby Co-operative Preschool November 2020

“Our outdoor space is an extension of our indoor classroom with many opportunities to spark curiosity, ask questions and explore the natural world around us. The pergola provides shelter, allowing us to enjoy outdoor play in all types of weather. It acts as a relaxing place, a safe place and a gathering place that encourages imagination and wonder while also invites physical play by

climbing, dancing and jumping. The ribbons started as a simple calming idea for some higher need children but has become so much more to our program. It’s given the opportunity to create interest and learning about weather and wind; size shape and colour, inspiring children to stretch, reach, jump and run under the ribbons inviting such variety in how the children explore and enjoy them.”

“The intention behind the set up came from observing many of our preschool children bringing the babies from the dramatic play centre over to the book area to read to them and tuck them in to sleep. We try to add books throughout the classroom to encourage literacy throughout a variety of activities/routines as well as showcasing “Special Stories” like borrowed resources from the library or ECCDC.”



ACW John Brant October 2020



“At ACW ROSS we try to set up the environment to help promote independence and fine motor skills while connecting the children to nature.”

“This picture is a glimpse of our outdoor learning environment. The area is designed to promote a flexible and responsive naturalized play space that incorporates nature, well-being, mindfulness and imagination. We often gather with the children here to share stories and to bring our minds and bodies to relaxation while practicing yoga and meditation. The children love to pretend, move, observe their surroundings, and be social with each other in our outdoor learning environment.



As educators we foster the children's development at our centre by giving them opportunities to support a well-developed vestibular system needed for attention, self-regulation and emerging reading and writing skills which comes from the engagement and coordination of their muscles, including all the gross and fine motor play that happens outdoors in nature. We have brought our learning outside and sparked creativity in new ways. Our outdoor space has been utilized as much as possible, as a safer alternative to being indoors with the current pandemic and unique year that we have all faced and worked through together.”

“Sensory play is an integral part of children’s development, however due to Covid-19 allowing for opportunities for sensory development proved to be challenging. In order to overcome this obstacle, our program created individual sensory bins that are changed often to suit the children’s current interest. These sensory bins represented air, land and sea during our inquiry into transportation. There were 3 different sensory bin options including cotton balls to



North End Co-operative Preschool November 2020

represent the air, blue rice to represent the sea and brown pebbles to represent land. Each bin also had the letter of the child’s first name in the shape of a road to expose them to literacy in a fun and interactive way... [W]e can easily disinfect the items on the cards and switch them with another bin to keep it interesting. Though this is sensory, it also works for cognitive development.”



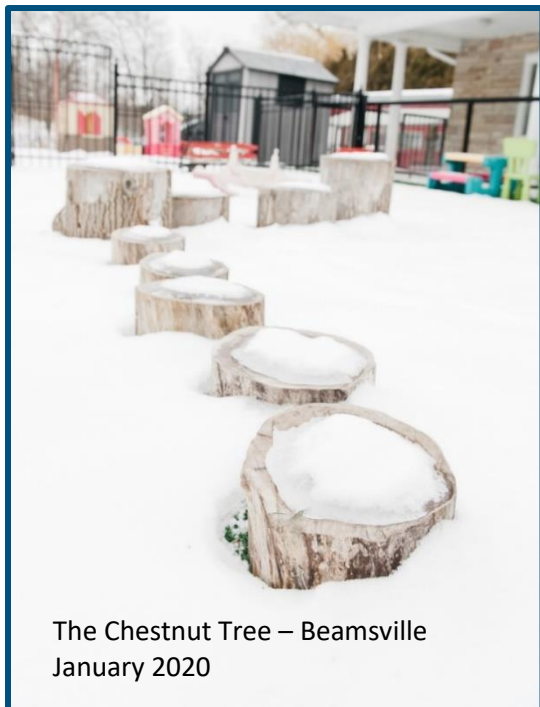
"The block center is one of the most sought-after areas within the classroom. We believe that fundamental learning is achieved in this center each day. The foundations for language, science, math, fine and gross motor skills are exhibited daily. Pictured is the base of our open-ended Block Play area. Block play contributes to children building confidence in working individually and in groups, which is essential for later social and academic settings. Block play provides open-ended, unstructured imaginative play while encouraging planning, problem solving and spatial orientation. Through their use of the blocks, children learn about the world around them. We link items to the block play related to the children’s interests, experiences and developmental skill sets; having these items available to the children daily supports schema play. Overall, Block play aids in a rich environment to support all children in their learning and exploration.”

The Toddler outdoor playground at St. Thomas' Daycare is designed for ages 18 months to 2.5 years of age. This oasis was created to provide our youngest population with a space to experience the wonders of nature. Educators encourage a sense of belonging, well-being, and provide ongoing opportunities for engagement and expression for every child entering this space. Children are able to freely explore the grounds and experience nature by running, climbing, sliding, digging, and balancing. Children are given the opportunity to take risks,

problem solve and learn by exploring their surroundings. Many opportunities present themselves for engagement and expression through social interactions between children and their educators. Educators facilitate learning and encourage the exchange of ideas. Children learn to share and build new friendships. "There are two gifts we should give children; one is roots and the other is wings". – Barbara Jean Lick, R.E.C.E. (Quote at the end from Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (poet)



St. Thomas Daycare October 2020



The Chestnut Tree – Beamsville  
January 2020

"The logs are set up to give a small distance from each other so that the children are able to walk, run, or jump between the logs. This helps the children with their gross motor skills. They are learning how to balance between each log. It is also supporting growth of balancing skills by the children first learning to walk across the logs, then jump, and eventually being able to run across the logs. The children in the program also like to stand on the logs in different positions that creates an experience of being able to balance in place (i.e. on one foot). The natural logs also support the children in natural experiences. This is something that occurs outside naturally and they are able to have a sensory experience with the different feel of the bark. They also are able to see how the weather changes the wood and the snow/rain makes the wood change colours and feel wet."

“This is the Math area of a Junior Casa (preschool) classroom. These shelves are filled with tactile math materials that help strengthen various skills such as matching symbols to their quantity, patterning and simple addition. The 'jobs' are made of natural materials (wood, glass, and metal) and colours and placed neatly on the shelf to help create a calm and clean environment. The shelves are set at the children's level in order to encourage independence and provide a sense of belonging. Materials are routinely switched out in order to match the children's interests and developmental level.”

