

**Infant Toddler Early Literacy Checklist**  
**Part One: Supporting Literacy in Young Children**  
**A. Environments – Demonstrating a commitment to preparing the environment to support literacy acquisition in infants and toddlers.**

The following items are available:	Frequent	Occasional	Seldom	Comments
<b>Children’s books including:</b> ➤ Art books (including books about artists, music, instruments, musicians and Black and White contrast books)				
➤ Simple Fairy tales				
➤ Rhyme books				
➤ Concept books ( I Spy, Colours, Shapes, Alphabet, Opposites, Numbers)				
➤ Books that produce sound ( books that rattle, produce sounds of the environment, animals and/or musical instruments)				
➤ Books with textures				
➤ Books that reflect the interest of the children in the group				
➤ Vinyl books				
➤ Books that reflect all aspects of diversity and are non-sexist, anti-racist, and non -stereotypical.				
➤ Books that cater to a variety of ages and skills.				
➤ Board books				
➤ Cloth books				
<b>Toddlers – all of the above including:</b>				
➤ A sampling of reference books ( i.e. Bugs)				
➤ A sampling of paperback books				
<b>Books available for loan to children and families</b>				
<b>Teacher- made books containing pictures depicting children and their families currently within the programme</b>				

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The following items are available:	Frequent	Occasional	Seldom	Comments
<b>Props essential for retelling stories and simple rhymes and folk tales which encompass:</b>				
➤ Specific story books (i.e. Goldie Locks)				
➤ Felt boards				
➤ Musical instruments, including home-made and reflective of diverse cultures				
➤ Other				
<b>Prop boxes containing necessary materials to promote dramatics related to:</b>				
➤ Daily living				
➤ Specific story books				
➤ Special occasions (i.e. birthday party, holidays...)				
➤ Occupations				
➤ Recreational activities (camping, ball games)				
➤ Cooking equipment reflective of diversity				
➤ Musical instruments, including home-made and reflective of diverse cultures				
➤ Other				
<b>Paper including, for example:</b>				
➤ Textured paper				
➤ Construction paper				
➤ Cardboard				
➤ Bristol board				
➤ Tissue and tracing paper				
➤ Newspaper and newsprint				
➤ Finger-paint paper				
➤ Pads of paper				
➤ Magazines				
➤ Mural paper				

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<b>Mark-making tools including:</b>				
<b>Infants:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Sensory materials including : play dough, Jell-O, paint, whipped cream, sandpaper</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pencils ( chunky)</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Crayons ( chunky)</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Markers ( starting at 24 months)</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Paint - including finger-paint ( Non-toxic)</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Chalk ( thick and thin)</li> </ul>				
<b>Toddlers: All of the above including:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Light table</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Easels</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Other</li> </ul>				
<b>PHYSICAL SET-UP:</b>				
<b>Photographs, posters and pictures for display that depict events/things relevant to children’s lives (reflecting their family composition, holidays and other events) including:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Illustrations from children’s books</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Nature, music and other cultural items</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Non-stereotypical representations of the above</li> </ul>				
<b>Letters of the alphabet including:</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Alphabet and shape books</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Alphabet chunky puzzles</li> </ul>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Toys that include simple shapes</li> </ul>				
<b>Paper, mark-making and creative materials are available to toddlers at all free play times</b>				

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The following items are available to explore:	Frequent	Occasional	Seldom	Comments
Mobiles are suspended in the playroom and over the change table and changed periodically				
Play room shelves are labelled with real items or photos				
Opportunities to navigate over, under and around obstacles in the room				
Opportunities for children to move on different terrains such as carpet, grass, hard and soft flooring surfaces				
<b>Reading Centres/Corners:</b> ➤ Child-sized chairs, tables, as well as couches and other comfortable seating for reading and/or listening to stories				
➤ Low bookshelves that display, as well as store, books that are accessible to children.				
➤ Books are in good condition				
➤ Front covers of the books are visible				

**Infant Toddler Early Literacy Checklist**

**Part One: Supporting Literacy in Young Children**

**B. Interactions – Facilitating the emergence of knowledge and skills that support literacy acquisition in infant and toddlers.**

The following occur:	Frequent	Occasional	Seldom	Comments
<b>Time and staff support for each child, individually and in groups, to express ideas or feelings during an activity or routine.</b>				
<b>Use of total communication approach (aural, oral, visual) during daily activities and routines:</b>				
➤ Symbol/written words				
➤ Signs				
➤ Gestures				
➤ Concrete objects				
➤ Pictures				
➤ Songs/chants				
➤ Role- play				
➤ Facial expressions				
➤ Face-to-face				
<b>Adult language adjusted to match and support extension of the communication styles of each child, for example:</b>				
➤ Simplify and slow down language				
➤ Give children time to respond non-verbally / verbally				
➤ Repeat and expand on child's speech				
➤ Use consistent words for same objects or activities				
➤ Use of key words and phrases from the languages spoken by children and families in the program, including sign language, Braille and augmentative communication systems				
➤ Teaching key words and phrases from the languages spoken by children and families to other children and families and staff				

**Infant Toddler Early Literacy Checklist**

**Part One: Supporting Literacy in Young Children**

**B. Interactions – Facilitating the emergence of knowledge and skills that support literacy acquisition in infant and toddlers.**

The following occur:	Frequent	Occasional	Seldom	Comments
<b>Use of a variety of positive responses when children speak in their first language, including smiling and showing interest in what they are saying</b>				
<b>Use of varied strategies to help children try new items/materials related to literacy, including:</b>				
➤ Modelling the behaviour, including appropriate word choice and avoidance of slang				
➤ Use of positive and encouraging talk and tone of voice				
➤ Imitate non-verbal children’s attempts at communication, (i.e. babble)				
➤ Playing with the child				
➤ Talk to infants/toddlers as if they can talk to you				
➤ Introducing a familiar item that links to a new one				
➤ Expand vocabulary				
➤ Using correct language/grammar				
➤ Using sign language				
<b>Offering a variety of experiences that promote language development in a positive and joyful manner:</b>				
➤ Through art, music, sensory play, painting, dramatic play, etc.				
➤ Toy microphones, telephones				
➤ Puppetry				
➤ Felt board				
➤ Story telling				
➤ Chanting and singing				
<b>Opportunities for listening to ensure children appreciate the communication function of language such as reading stories, role-playing nursery rhymes and fingerplays,( i.e. This little piggy)</b>				
<b>Seeking an appropriate response to a variety of materials</b>				
<b>Demonstration of how oral and written language connects, (i.e. I’m writing what I’m saying)</b>				
<b>Demonstrating that writing communicates a message, (i.e. adult points out print in the environment and converts it to words “open”, “close”, “exit”)</b>				

**Infant Toddler Early Literacy Checklist**

**Part One: Supporting Literacy in Young Children**

**B. Interactions – Facilitating the emergence of knowledge and skills that support literacy acquisition in infant and toddlers.**

The following occur:	Frequent	Occasional	Seldom	Comments
Routinely read aloud to each child				
Relay respect for books				
Routinely sing the Alphabet Song				
Sing songs while clapping out the syllables				
Encouraging children to recognize print and identify letters in their names by saying the letters of a child's name while in the process of writing it				
Noise level is moderately quiet so children can hear language, (i.e. unpurposeful background music is avoided)				

**Infant Toddler Early Literacy Checklist**  
**Part Two: Supporting Literacy within the Family**  
**A. Environments – Demonstrating a commitment to preparing the environment to support literacy within the family.**

The following occur:	Frequent	Occasional	Seldom	Comments
Posted written communications with family members are presented in a format that will be understood by all families, including letters, notices and other signage				
<b>Informal and formal opportunities and facilities are available to accommodate:</b> > Parent networking and mutual support  > Parents and children together				
Physical set-up of the program, including bulletin boards, posters, decorations and other cultural items, displays evidence of the diversity of families in Ontario and are “print-rich”				
Drop-off/pick-up times and locations are designed to support informal discussion among staff and parents				
Families provided with information – through direct, face-to-face discussions, by telephone and in writing through postings, notices and letters – about upcoming literacy workshops and events				
Program newsletters reflect diversity of Ontario's families and respect literacy levels of readers				



**Infant Toddler Early Literacy Checklist**  
**Part Two: Supporting Literacy within the Family**  
**B. Interactions – Facilitating the emergence of knowledge and skills that support literacy within the family.**

The following occur:	Frequent	Occasional	Seldom	Comments
Opportunities for families/practitioner interactions on a spontaneous basis				
Verbal communications with family members are conducted in a way that will be understood by all families, including those whose first language is neither French nor English				
Practitioners greet families warmly and regularly invite them to spend time together				
Practitioners encourage parents and other family members to include their children in gatherings				
Literacy events for families are planned on a regular basis with parent involvement and giving families' schedules consideration				
<b>Opportunities provided to work with each family to identify their strengths, goals, interests and resources regarding literacy through:</b> > Informal discussions				
> Family-focused interviews				
> Home visits				
> Other				
Documented information regarding a child's progress in literacy skills development shared with families at times convenient to them				

**Infant Toddler Early Literacy Checklist**  
**Part Two: Supporting Literacy within the Family**  
**B. Interactions – Facilitating the emergence of knowledge and skills that support literacy within the family.**

The following occur:	Frequent	Occasional	Seldom	Comments
<b>Resources – strategies and materials – are available to parents to assist them in supporting their child’s early literacy and language development</b> > Available on-site				
> Available for loan/take home				
<b>Alternate forms of communication are provided for families who speak a language other than English or French, or communicate through Braille or who experience other barriers</b>				
<b>Parents involved in development of literacy materials, activities and events</b>				
<b>Family literacy activities reflect families’ lives:</b> > Culturally				
> Socially				
> Economically				
> Other				
<b>Parents’ input sought in development of Community Literacy Plan</b>				

## Early Literacy Checklist

### Part Three: Community partnerships in supporting child and family literacy skills

#### A. Collaboration – Demonstrating a commitment to forming and strengthening partnerships that promote child and family literacy and the community.

The following occur:	Frequent	Occasional	Seldom	Comments
Regular communication and information sharing with the range of early years programs in the community				
Planning, implementing and hosting of community-based early and family literacy events open to those outside your program				
Staff resources shared with other early years programs in the community including:				
➤ Staff-shadowing opportunities so staff in one program learn about one another				
➤ Staff-exchange programs so programs with strong literacy components can support programs with literacy challenges				
➤ Professional education activities extended to staff in other programs, promoting cross-sectoral collaboration and information sharing				
➤ Two or more staff from different programs and services share a conference registration				
Funding resources shared with early years programs in the community, including:				
➤ Proceeds from funding and/or fundraising shared with other early years programs, where possible				
In-kind and volunteer resources shared with early years programs in the community, including:				
➤ Volunteer sharing				
➤ Providing space for literacy activities				
➤ Sharing on-line access, email addresses, etc.				
Formal protocols or agreements developed, maintained and tracked for the above resource sharing				
Participation (attendance) in literacy events sponsored by “other” sectors				
Participation in literacy organization by serving on boards, committees, etc.				
Promoting Early Literacy Specialist role in the community				
Contribution to development of the Community Literacy Plan				

Sources for this Infant Toddler version adapted from the 2002 Early Literacy Checklist by The Mothercraft Institute for Early Development Toronto Ontario:

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Best Start Expert Panel on Early Learning. (2007). *Early Learning for Every Child Today: Framework for Ontario Early Childhood Settings*, Toronto, ON: Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services.

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# Infant Toddler Early Literacy Action Plan

Room:

Date:

Parts One - Three	Goals	How to Achieve	Resources Required	Date to be completed	Team member responsible for the task
Supporting Literacy in Young Children: Environments					
Supporting Literacy in Young Children: Interactions					
Supporting Literacy in Families					
Community Partnerships and Collaboration					

Early Years Program Staff:

Date:

Early Literacy Specialist:

Date: