



PLACEMENT MANUAL

Early Childhood Education Programs

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INTRODUCTION

Placements are one of the most important experiences offered in the Early Childhood Education Diploma program. In each successive placement experience, the student is encouraged to stretch his/her abilities and to build new areas of strength. The placement component strives to initiate a continuous process of personal and professional growth. These goals are accomplished with the support and guidance of the centre's staff. The Mentor at the placement site works directly with the age group of children with whom the student is placed, and plays a significant role in assisting the student to master the competencies necessary for educating young children.

MOTHERCRAFT'S THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Developmental theory:

Child development is a product of the combination of inborn qualities (nature) and the influence of experience and environment (nurture).

This notion allows us to understand and respond to every child individually, based on their unique strengths and vulnerabilities, and to tailor our programs and interventions appropriately.

Attachment theory:

This theory supports the notion that it is within the emotional relationship between infant and primary caregiver that the young child's cognitive and emotional sense of self and others is developed.

This understanding guides our program composition and service approaches, including the use of the primary caregiver model in all of our Centres for Early Development, and a focus on parent-child relationships in our early intervention programs.

Relational theory:

People, institutions and systems grow through their relationships with others.

This understanding has guided Mothercraft in building partnerships between previously disconnected service sectors to create seamless service environments and facilitate easier engagement for children and families.

OVERVIEW

The Early Childhood Education Diploma program includes three 6-week placements consisting of 210 hours each at 35 hours per week. All three placements total 630 placement hours.

Each student is required to complete a full 7 hour shift every day for each 6-week block, or the equivalent. Each shift will allow for lunch and breaks but these are not counted as part of placement hours.

Students must read and sign all policies regarding anaphylaxis and allergies, including “Peanut Free” policies at Mothercraft Centres for Early Development and participating placement sites. The use of strong scents or perfumes is not permitted in the classroom or on placement, due to possible allergic reactions.

Placement students may not be counted in the staffing ratios in child care centres. Direct unsupervised access (i.e. student alone with a child) is not permitted for persons who are not employees of the placement site. Placement students must always be with a program staff and are not permitted to be at a site without a program staff or their mentor being present.

In order to successfully complete placement requirements, students must experience a range of shifts. The completion of the equivalent of a one week opening shift and a one week closing shift is mandatory for all students for each placement.

All students are required to return to the Mothercraft College for any scheduled tutorials and to complete resource visits at other centres, as scheduled. On tutorial days it is expected that students work in the placement setting for 3 hours in the morning, and then return to the College to begin at 1:00p.m.

Placement in a school board is only an option in the 2nd block. The international placement option is only available in the 3rd placement.

After the academic study and placement components, the student should be able to integrate theoretical knowledge with practical experience and demonstrate professional competence which includes:

- a) a positive professional self-image;
- b) responsibility, creativity and flexibility;
- c) ability to work successfully as a member of a team;
- d) initiating and maintaining a quality environment for the young child;
- e) planning and implementing developmental program experiences, and;
- f) ongoing assessment of both personal growth and child development; and awareness of, and sensitivity to, the needs of families.

PLACEMENT POLICIES

Attendance

Student must have their professional looking biographies and pictures available at the start of placement as some sites require that these be posted. It is also the student's responsibility to post his/her time sheet in a mutually convenient location at the placement site. The student must record the shifts completed, along with any absences and time made up on a daily basis.

At the end of the placement, the placement site Supervisor or Mentor must sign the sheet and return it to the student. The time sheet is then returned to the student's package. Any difficulties concerning attendance arising during placement should be discussed with the site Mentor and also reported immediately to the Mothercraft Placement Supervisor.

Punctuality is responsible conduct. If students are going to be late for their shift, they are to notify the placement site Mentor or Supervisor beforehand. The time missed due to being late should be added to the end of the shift day to compensate. Students who are repeatedly late may be withdrawn from their placement at the site's or Mothercraft's discretion. This may result in a final grade of "incomplete" and a failing mark.

Absences are strongly discouraged unless in extreme emergency. It is the student's responsibility to report any absence to the placement site Mentor and Supervisor prior to the beginning of their missed shift.

Missed time must be made up and will be arranged by the student and site Mentor and/or Supervisor. Absences due to serious illness will require a medical certificate, to assist in determining the number of make-up days required.

It is the student's responsibility to make up time for absences during placement. The Mothercraft Placement Supervisor must be informed immediately, in writing, of any arrangements for make-up time made with the placement site Mentor or Supervisor. The following guidelines apply for making up missed time:

- For three days or less - the time can be made up before or after shifts, i.e. start an hour earlier, or work an hour later, with Placement Site approval.
- For more than three days - the time must be made up in full day blocks and requires approval by both the Placement site and Mothercraft Placement Coordinator.

Students must collect a separate attendance sheet from the Placement Coordinator for any make-up time. Once approval has been given for the make-up time, the Placement Coordinator will confirm the details with the student and the placement site.

Please note: Students are scheduled for 35 regular placement hours each week and can only complete a maximum of 44 hours per week on placement, excluding the time on lunch. This means a student can only make up nine (9) extra hours per week maximum.

Injuries/Incidents and WSIB Coverage

Mothercraft provides WSIB coverage for students during their placement hours. This coverage includes placements at Mothercraft childcare centres and other centres and programs.

If a student is injured or involved in an accident during placement, he/she must report it to the placement site Mentor and/or Supervisor on the day it occurs.

It is also the student's responsibility to provide the Mothercraft Placement Supervisor or Coordinator with the information in a timely manner.

Following the incident, students are required to complete a Mothercraft Student Incident Report. Decisions for claims of injury during placement are made by the Workplace Safety Insurance Board.

Personal Belongings and Devices

All personal belongings should be kept in a safe place. Avoid taking valuables or large amounts of cash to your placement site. The use of all electronic devices (i.e. cell phones, tablets, iPod etc.) is strictly prohibited in all program rooms, including the playground.

Paperwork and Materials/Resources

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all placement paperwork (e.g. packages) is completed and returned to the Mothercraft Placement Coordinator within one week of the last day of placement. Marks could be deducted for the late return of packages and packages submitted more than one week late, with no prior agreements, may not be accepted / graded.

Providing items needed for room goal or learning opportunity implementation is the student's responsibility. If the placement site centre does not have the items a student needs, he/she has a choice of either:

- redesigning the learning opportunity/goal, using the materials on site; OR
- personally providing these items.

Placement sites should not be asked or expected to reimburse students for any materials purchased.

Student Conduct

While on placement, students are representatives of Mothercraft College and are expected to behave professionally at all times. As they are deemed severe enough to warrant withdrawal from placement, the following behaviours will be reported immediately to the Mothercraft placement Supervisor for follow-up:

- Any type of abusive behaviour, including physical abuse or deliberate injury to a child, parent, staff or anyone else on the premises.
- Extreme unprofessional behaviour such as: showing up drunk or drugged, screaming and using inappropriate language.
- Severe emotional instability which is interfering with placement requirements.
- Illegal or immoral behaviour, behaviour that is emotionally damaging to children.

Students repeatedly demonstrating the behaviours outlined below need to be supervised more closely with frequent updating of and/or contact by the Mothercraft Placement Supervisor and, if not addressed adequately, the Placement Coordinator:

- Behaviours inappropriate to working with young children, such as: rigidity, racism, sexism, labelling children, lack of demonstration of affection.
- Behaviours which interfere with the learning process, such as: chronic absenteeism and lateness, extreme defensiveness to feedback, resistance to changing behaviours, excessive fatigue.
- Discussing or sharing confidential information inappropriately.
- Lack of awareness and/or attention to child safety.
- Inappropriate dress.

Examples of Inappropriate Dress
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crop/tank/halter tops• Sheer garments• Beachwear or sandals• Sweatpants• Mini Skirts• Cut off/Bicycle shorts• Leggings• High heels, open-toes or other shoes that are a potential hazard• Holes, stained, dirty, ripped, frayed or worn through.• Designs, words, pictures or graphics determined by Mothercraft as offensive and/or inappropriate.• Clothing or jewelry that is a potential health hazard or safety concern.

Child Abuse Policy and Procedural Guidelines

As stated in the Ontario Child & Family Services Act s.72(2): “Every person in Ontario, including a person who performs professional or official duties with respect to children is required under the Child and Family Services Act to report his/her suspicion that a child is in need of protection” (e.g., neglected or physically, sexually or emotionally abused or exposed to family violence and that a child has been or is at risk for abuse). The suspicion and the information upon which that suspicion is based, must be reported to a Children’s Aid Society (CAS) immediately.

It is up to the legal system to determine whether it is child abuse. Confidentiality is of the utmost importance and once abuse is suspected there must not be any discussion with other staff or students. The student must be aware that until proven in the courts, abuse is only a suspicion and breaking confidentiality could be very damaging to the child and the family.

If students have doubts or concerns about making a report of suspected abuse, they can consult anonymously with a worker from the Children’s Aid Society. In Toronto, the Children’s Aid Society 24-hour line is 416-924-4646.

When reporting, students must follow the steps outlined below.

1. Inform the placement site Mentor and Supervisor and Mothercraft Placement Supervisor of the intention to make a report. The student may not discuss or disclose the content of the report until he/she is directed to do so by the child welfare authorities.
2. Report suspicions directly to a Children’s Aid Society intake worker. Students who suspect abuse must report their suspicions themselves. The legislation clearly states that this obligation cannot be delegated to anyone else.

3. Document in writing what he/she saw, in his/her own words, or record exactly what the child said.

Once the student has submitted a report, his/her duty is fulfilled and, unless contacted by CAS, the student is not entitled to any further information regarding the case.

EXPECTATIONS AND GOALS

General Expectations

When interacting with families, students are expected to share only positive information about the child. If a question or concern about the physical and/or social-emotional development of a child arises, students are to speak to their placement Mentor. It is not the student's place to approach the families with these issues, as this is the teacher's responsibility.

Accident/incident/serious occurrence reports concerning the children are to be filled out by the placement site staff. If a student observes an accident, they are expected to share their observations with the placement Mentor. In the event of a serious occurrence, the student is expected to inform the Mothercraft Placement Supervisor immediately.

During the first week of all placements, students are expected to:

1. Get an orientation of the placement site and review policies of the centre for a better understanding of the site "culture".
2. Observe and note the interactions and routines in the room generally and that of specific children.
3. Move towards "active watching" after 2 days. This may mean help set up for sleep, snack, read a story or offer to help in other ways.
4. Interact with individual children.
5. Begin participation in planning.
6. Be punctual and reliable.

By the end of the first week students should be:

1. Preparing specific learning opportunities.
2. Taking initiative in transitions, routines and spontaneous learning opportunities.

In the remaining weeks of each placement block, students are expected to:

1. Observe the children for planning purposes.
2. Have questions prepared for discussion on supervision, management, routines and planning.
3. Be thoroughly prepared with written Learning Opportunity Plans (2 days prior to actual implementation).
4. Be willing to accept and act upon feedback.
5. Note areas of weakness and strength after midterm evaluation.
6. Complete developmental checklist.
7. Demonstrate initiative and commitment to learning through spontaneous programming above the required Learning Opportunities.
8. Movement toward personal and professional growth as evidenced by the completion of a Performance Goal contract for each placement, shared with the Placement Mentor and signed by the student and Mothercraft Placement Supervisor.

Goals for Each Placement

1st Placement

Students, through their involvement as participant-observers, should understand the following components of an early childhood setting:

- a) health and safety factors;
- b) the physical environment;
- c) basic interactional relationships among staff, children and parents;
- d) the role of play in the child's discovery of self and the environment; and
- e) the developmental needs of children, i.e., infants, toddlers, preschoolers.

While on the 1st placement, students should work to:

- a) manage, initiate and implement routines e.g. snack, clean-up, diapering/toileting, sleep, cloakroom;
- b) in consultation with the Placement Mentor, plan, implement and evaluate 8 learning opportunities for the following areas: gross motor, sensory, cognitive/teaching, and music;
- c) begin to assess her/his own strengths and weaknesses;
- d) demonstrate cooperation, enjoyment and enthusiasm in working with children and staff members; and
- e) demonstrate professionalism with regard to attendance, dress, attitude and confidentiality.

2nd Placement

Through their interaction and involvement with children and staff in an early childhood setting, students are expected to be able to:

- a) identify and facilitate the development of children's strengths and weaknesses; and
- b) apply theoretical knowledge to practical learning opportunities.

By the time students are completing their 2nd placement, they should be working to:

- a) continue to refine previous goals;
- b) apply theoretical knowledge to practical learning opportunities.
- c) demonstrate an increasing knowledge of the equipment and physical needs of the setting;
- d) demonstrate an increasing ability to understand and implement programming goals for individual and small groupings;
- e) demonstrate flexibility and success in dealing with difficult behavioural situations or conflicts; and
- f) learn how to give appropriate encouragement and praise for effort made.

3rd Placement

By the last placement block, students should be able to:

- a) develop and apply the capacity to take "active charge" of a group of children while respecting the individuality of each member of the group;

- b) use gained knowledge, skills and techniques to demonstrate procedures and learning opportunities which foster the development of the whole child;
- c) plan both individual and collective short term goals for a given group of children and implement programming leading to the realization of these goals;
- d) provide relevant information to families appropriately; and
- e) be “in charge” for a minimum of two days.

Students should be able to:

- a) solidify and be able to articulate his/her own philosophy in writing with children and their families;
- b) demonstrate awareness of and comfort with appropriate behaviour guidance strategies;
- c) contribute appropriately to program goals of the child care agency;
- d) demonstrate the ability to recognize and respond to different learning styles;
- e) demonstrate the ability to be self-directed and to take initiative;
- f) identify and work toward the realization of personal performance goals; and
- g) communicate appropriately with families.

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Assessment

The assigned Mothercraft Placement Supervisor assesses student progress and provides feedback during the placement. A minimum of 1 visit will be made to observe the student, and then to meet with him/her and the placement site Mentor to discuss progress and plan for further development and goal completion.

Students are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns with their site Mentor and, if also needed, their Mothercraft placement Supervisor.

The following items reflect the Competencies that students will be assessed on and should be progressively demonstrating while on placement:

Communication with Children & Adults

- Verbally
- Non-verbally
- Enhances interactions

Guiding Behaviour

- Helps children develop respect
- Guides children in transitions
- Establishes and maintain expectations
- Acknowledges positive behaviour
- Helps children recognize and express feelings
- Facilitates children's interactions
- Encourages children's independence
- Interacts positively
- Redirects aggressive energy

Planning Curriculum

- Selects appropriate teaching strategies to reach curriculum goals
- Plans learning opportunities which extend children's learning
- Selects, obtains and organizes materials and resources

Implementing Curriculum

- Expands children's learning
- Modifies learning opportunities
- Evaluates learning

Providing a Positive Physical Learning Environment for Children

- Change equipment and materials
- Demonstrate and encourage respect for environment
- Arrange and maintain a safe sanitary environment
- Help children in matters of hygiene
- Emergency Procedures and Fire Drills

Performing Professionally

- Dependability, reliability and self-control
- Response to supervision
- Relationship with centre staff

- Initiative and resourcefulness
- Professional growth and evaluation
- Appearance
- Relationship and communication with families

The Competency Evaluation Form helps site Mentors describe behaviour and skills demonstrated by students while on placement. The form is used for both the midterm and final Mentor assessments. Comments by placement site Mentors are essential for a thorough evaluation and, along with the Mothercraft placement Supervisor observations made during a visit, are taken into consideration in evaluating student performance on placement.

A Developmental Checklist is included as part of the assessment process to assist students in gaining a firmer understanding of child development in each age group. It should be completed by the student, based on ongoing observation, by the end of the placement block. This Checklist does not require evaluation by the placement site Mentor. However, students must obtain written permission using the parent consent form provided from the parent/s of the child on whom the checklist is used.

It is the student's responsibility to fill out Learning Opportunity Reports at least 2 days prior to the implementation of the activity, but omitting the sections on children's response and self-evaluation. Students should show the completed learning opportunity sheets to the Placement Mentor during this planning stage.

An anti-bias approach and concept should be demonstrated in the implementation of learning opportunities. After the learning opportunity has been implemented, evaluation by the student should include:

- a description of the children's response to the learning opportunity that reflects ELECT; what the children particularly enjoyed/disliked about the learning opportunity; the student's evaluation of factors that contributed to the learning opportunity's success or failure to meet objectives; and,
- how the student would improve the learning opportunity next time by identifying what was missing, e.g. how it could be extended or varied.

This learning opportunity report should be handed to the Placement Mentor within one day after the completion of the learning opportunity.

To enable the student to better understand the effect of the physical environment on children's learning and development, students on the **1st placement** are required to describe and implement goals as prescribed on the Room Goal Plan. The placement site Mentor approves the plan prior to the student's implementation of it and signs each section only when the goal has been implemented by the student.

During the **2nd placement**, students must complete Pedagogical Documentation which should be reviewed and discussed with the site Mentor and Mothercraft Supervisor and then added to the student placement package for submission.

During the **3rd and final placement**, a Program Plan must be developed and implemented by the student. The placement site Mentor approves the plan prior to the student's implementation and provides written comments on the plan which is then added to the student placement package for submission.

Evaluation Criteria

Final grades are calculated and assigned by the Mothercraft Placement Coordinator and approved by the Mothercraft Manager of Academic Programs or College Director. Similar to Academic courses, students are expected to maintain a 60% in all placements. Failure in 1 placement block will result in a Letter of Advisement and a meeting to discuss re-taking the placement block will be scheduled. Failure in two placement blocks will result in a 2nd Letter of Advisement and possible withdrawal from the Program.

Students will be evaluated on their placement work, according to the following criteria:

Observation and Competency Evaluation	60
Developmental Checklist	10
Learning Opportunities (8)	15
Assignment specific to placement block	<u>15</u>
Total =	100

NOTE: student placement packages must be handed in within one week of the last day of placement, except for the third placement when packages are due on the last day of placement. Marks will be deducted if the package is incomplete or handed in late.



STUDENT PLACEMENT SIGN-OFF SHEET

I _____ have read and understand the Mothercraft Placement Manual, including the Child Abuse Policy outlined on page five (5).

Signed _____

Date _____