



# Families and Child Care: Building Meaningful Partnerships

Choosing child care is an important decision for every family. When families partner with child care providers, they create a shared responsibility for their child's safety, well-being, and growth. A strong partnership is built on **mutual respect, open communication, and a shared commitment** to supporting each child's development in a way that reflects their unique identity, strengths, and needs.

The best outcomes for children occur when families and educators work together as **equal and valued partners** in their care.

## Fostering Strong Relationships

Your child's child care provider becomes an important part of your extended support network. As your child grows and develops, they may form a meaningful connection with the educators or home provider. You can help nurture this relationship by acknowledging its importance and supporting daily communication.

### Daily Communication Matters

Taking time each day to connect with your child care provider helps everyone stay informed and aligned in supporting your child. These consistent check-ins promote trust and help your child feel secure.

## Four Steps to Strengthen the Family–Child Care Partnership

### 1. Clarify Mutual Expectations

Open and honest dialogue is the foundation of a strong partnership. Take time to discuss your values, priorities, and expectations with your child care provider. When reviewing the program contract and policies:

- Ask questions

- Share your family's routines and preferences
- Document any specific agreements or accommodations to avoid misunderstandings later on

## **2. Share Meaningful Information**

Regular communication ensures that both families and educators understand what supports your child best. Take time during drop-off and pick-up to share relevant updates such as:

- Changes in sleep, eating, or mood
- New routines or transitions at home
- Recent milestones or challenges

Likewise, ask your provider to share updates about your child's experiences in the program.

## **3. Address Concerns Early and Respectfully**

If questions or concerns arise, it's important to address them promptly and constructively. Don't wait for small concerns to grow—open dialogue can lead to collaborative solutions that benefit everyone.

- Schedule a time to speak privately
- Share your perspective with respect and curiosity
- Work together to identify supports or adjustments that center your child's well-being

## **4. Nurture a Long-Term Relationship**

A positive partnership is sustained through appreciation, active listening, and mutual support. When you treat your child care provider as a trusted, skilled professional—and when they recognize you as your child's first teacher—you are building the foundation for high-quality, inclusive care.

# The Role of EarlyON Child and Family Centres

**EarlyON Child and Family Centres** offer welcoming spaces where families and caregivers of children aged 0–6 can:

- Access information about early years programs and community supports
- Connect with early childhood professionals
- Build relationships with other families in your community

All programs are free and include:

- Drop-in play and exploration sessions
- Parent-child activities
- Early learning and literacy programs
- Parenting workshops and a lending/resource library

## **Contact Your Local EarlyON Centre:**

- **Oakville:** 905-849-6366
- **Burlington:** 905-632-9377
- **Milton:** 905-876-1244
- **Georgetown/Acton:** 905-873-2960