



November 16, 2020

Social & Community Services
Department
Children's Services
690 Dorval Drive 5th Floor
Oakville ON L6K 3X9

Dear Service Provider,

RE: Supports Available for the Early Years and Child Care Sector in Halton

As you are aware, the *Ministry of Education Operational Guidance During COVID-19 Outbreak – Child Care Reopening* document provides operators with guidance to safely operate child care. The reopening of child care in Ontario has come with many new restrictions and protocols. One of the new restrictions includes no non-essential visitors in child care programs. This has prompted service providers to rethink how they engage with parents, staff and the community. It has also prompted Halton Region to consider how to effectively support child care and early years operators with the new guidance. With that in mind, I would like to share some changes in service delivery so you are aware of the supports available and how to access them.

The Halton Resource Connection Update:

Quality First

In our new context, Quality First Consultants will be changing their focus from conducting on-site observations associated with the Quality First model to connecting virtually with front line staff who are working in early years and child care to support effective implementation of *How Does Learning Happen?*. Quality First Consultants will continue to utilize coaching practices to support staff with embedding *How Does Learning Happen?* into programming with the reopening restrictions and protocols. Quality First Consultants will contact early childhood programs early November to arrange a convenient time for a virtual connection. Should you have questions about Quality First, please do not hesitate to reach out to Melanie Cunha at melaniec@thrc.ca or 905-875-4600 ext. 245.

Support Facilitators

Support Facilitators continue to work with the community to provide hands on support for the whole classroom so educators can provide individualized attention to specific children and challenges within the classroom. For more information regarding Support Facilitators, please connect with your Resource Consultant or Inclusion Manager.

Regional Municipality of Halton

HEAD OFFICE: 1151 Bronte Rd, Oakville, ON L6M 3L1
905-825-6000 | Toll free: 1-866-442-5866

Preschool Facilitators

Preschool facilitators who support with the classroom environment, are not currently available. Educators are encouraged to work with their Quality First Consultant.

Resource Library Staff

The resource library provides a wide variety of professional learning opportunities, resources and materials to support educators working with children in Halton. In consultation with community partners, resource library staff develop and facilitate professional learning sessions specifically designed to support child care educators in Halton. With restrictions on in-person programming, a variety of online professional learning sessions are available. Operators and educators are encouraged to review the calendar at <https://thrc.ca/professionallearning/>.

Members of the Resource Lending Library can access equipment and resources by visiting THRC's [website](#) and using the online booking system. Resource library staff are available on site to support curbside pickup and drop off of bins and equipment and other services such as lamination.

THRC also provides personal protective equipment (PPE) to the early years and child care sector in Halton. Operators can order PPE through THRC monthly at no cost. For more information on how to secure PPE, please visit: <https://thrc.ca/ppe>.

Halton Region's Program Support Services Team

Over the last several weeks, Halton Region's Program Support Services Team has connected virtually with child care operators across Halton to learn about successes and difficulties in navigating these challenging times. Through these calls we heard that leaders from across the child care sector want an opportunity to come together and share their stories, resources and questions with one another. The Program Support Services Team will facilitate a series of leadership conversations beginning in November. More information about how to participate in leadership conversations will be available soon.

Attached is a chart summarizing services and supports available to the early years and child care sector in Halton with reference to the roles and responsibilities of each service. We recognize that connecting virtually may pose a challenge for some programs. We are willing to work with you and welcome your feedback. Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Cindy Morin at cindy.morin@halton.ca or 905-825-6000 ext. 2577.

I appreciate your efforts to keep children, staff, families and our community safe while upholding a welcoming and caring environment for children and families.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandy Palinski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sandy Palinski
Director, Children's Services