

“With our Best Future in Mind”

In June 2009, Dr. Charles Pascal, Special Advisor on Early Learning to the premier of Ontario, released his much anticipated provincial report *“With Our Best Future in Mind”*. Andrew Fleck Child Care Services fully endorses the report in its entirety as it has the potential to transform our fragmented services into a more positive and seamless experience for families by developing an integrated system. We are one of the oldest and most diversified non-profit, charitable, full-service early learning, child care and family support organizations in Ontario. Our mission is to support children and their families through high quality, inclusive services that meet their diverse developmental, early learning and child care needs. In preparation for the exciting changes recommended in the report we have completed a summary of each of our programs.

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TCNS

Mandate:

TCNS provides a programming option for young preschool children who have a diagnosis within the Autism Spectrum. A program of Andrew Fleck Child Care Services since 2002, TCNS provides a fully funded half day option for parents to meet their child’s developmental needs. TCNS employs a multidisciplinary approach which includes engaging parents as partners; TCNS supports positive developmental outcomes for children by providing a high quality, consistent, learning through play environment that meets the individual needs of the children within a group program experience.

Two Early Childhood Educators and a Program Coordinator with administration support provided through CISS for intake, central administration and monitoring of program needs provide this program for approximately 15 families each year. Consultant support is provided to the Educators and parents/guardians through an Occupational Therapist, Speech Language Pathologist and a Behaviour Consultant.

Principles to be followed:

- Parents are respected as the primary and long term case managers for their child
- Engaging parents actively in the learning through play environment will ensure best outcomes for each child in their development
- Supports and provides opportunities for parent networking both formally and informally

- Programming is developed using a multidisciplinary team approach including parents to set developmental goals that enable each child to reach their optimum level of development
- Knowledge is transferred through coaching/mentoring as well as through formal training opportunities for parents/guardians, staff, students and volunteers
- Natural transitions and documentation are to support a seamless transfer of knowledge and strategies for the family, child and the receiving service when moving to school or other community programs/services
- Provides placements for ECE, DSW and CYW second year students

Vision:

TCNS staff will support families who have a child diagnosed under the Autism Spectrum or are at risk of receiving a diagnosis from 18 months to 3.8 years of age. Future referrals will be supported informally through the link with Child & Family Centres and formally through diagnosis from the Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre.

TCNS will be available to model and demonstrate best practices as it relates to young children who have a diagnosis of Autism to parents and to community professionals. When feasible, parents/children will attend together to benefit from modeling, coaching from the consultants and staff.

The program will provide an exemplary learning through play, total communication, developmentally appropriate program that incorporates behaviour guidance principles that support the whole child in a small group setting while respecting the sensory needs of the children in attendance.

Best Practices will be employed to support measurable outcomes for children in attendance through a variety of modalities to support the whole child. The Hanen approach to language development, "More than Words", and "It Takes Two to Talk" coupled with the implementation of the ELECT document will inform and support child development while reflecting on current practices to support the development of child profiles.

Through the partnership with the Behaviour Consultant from the Ottawa Children's Treatment Centre (OCTC) there will be an increased opportunity to support preventative parent training regarding handling routines, providing structure, daily living needs and successfully setting expectations for sleep time.

Further support for sharing knowledge will be provided by the consulting Occupational Therapist and Speech Language Pathologist through training, coaching and mentoring for parents.

The Child and Family Centers are to provide a portal of information to respond to the expressed and changing needs of children and families in a central location.

The TCNS program will be co-located with a licensed early learning & child care program serving young children to provide reverse integration opportunities to enhance social skill and language development.

Protocols to be developed to support seamless transitions in accessing the program as well as at discharge.

The TCNS team will continue to use a proactive response to the changing needs for the both children and families.

As demonstrated through research, the partnership in supporting parents whose children are being diagnosed at a younger age on the autism spectrum will be paramount to building for positive developmental outcomes for each child. We believe TCNS will have a strong role to play in supporting individual children while acting as a model for high quality holistic programming. We look forward to being able to provide a reverse integration experience in the future.

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