PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

WHAT IS DIFFERENT?

For the first time, you are being asked to be intentional in your expectations of the CNC program. Under former requirements, you were simply asked to develop a written plan of daily routines and activities that set out what would happen on a daily basis. With this requirement, you must create a separate statement to guide overall program planning and interactions with children and their families that support:

- the development of the individual child; and

- the settlement of the family.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

A statement of program philosophy is important because it gives your organization an opportunity to consider the reasons why you are caring for children, beyond offering a basic service to parents. It provides a focus for the development of activities that can make a positive difference in the lives of newcomers, not just while they are participating in your program, but in the longer term as they settle in Canada.

While developing and learning about your philosophy, you and your staff will have an opportunity to consider the wide impact that your program can have on newcomer families—especially the children. It will ensure that you are all working from a shared set of beliefs and give your staff a common purpose as they strive to provide CNC of the highest possible quality and relevance to newcomers.

Your program philosophy statement will also be an important tool to help parents and others understand what they can expect from your program.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Purpose and Function of a Program Philosophy Statement:

Begin by taking some time to think about the purpose and function of a program philosophy statement. Your organization may already have a mission statement to guide its activities. If so, you can start by considering that statement more closely and, if possible talking with the people who developed it. As you develop your statement, you can build on the ideas already expressed in your

organization's mission.

Consultation:

One of the benefits of having a philosophy statement is having a common set of beliefs to unite your staff and guide their decision-making. For that reason, your philosophy statement should reflect the beliefs and ideas of your organization.

Consult widely, hold brainstorming sessions, and ask for input in other ways so that you have a large pool of ideas from which to draw.

Ideas to Consider:

To start your brainstorming sessions, you can ask your staff to think about each of the following five elements identified in the CNC Requirements, and consider what they mean to them and to the organization:

- Support the settlement of individual children and families.

- Provide a welcoming environment and a variety of positive experiences to support the health, safety and well-being of children.

- Promote positive attachments, build relationships, and support interactions between adults, children and among peers of all ages.

- Strengthen family life and respect home culture and language.

- Encourage respect and understanding within a multicultural context.

The Development Process:

Your statement of program philosophy should be written as clearly as possible, in ways that will help CNC staff plan activities and make decisions as they carry out their duties. Here are some steps to take:

- Appoint a committee to sort through the responses you receive and select one person to take the lead as a writer to express your philosophy. It should be written as clearly as possible, in ways that will help CNC staff plan activities and make decisions as they carry out their duties.

- Circulate your draft statement for a period of time to confirm it describes your beliefs and is in line with your organization's goals and possible mission statement.

- When you are satisfied, finalize your statement and publish it in your written materials. You may also wish to translate it into other languages as appropriate.

REQUIREMENTS

3-1 PHILOSOPHY

a. The CNC program has a written statement of program philosophy that supports the development of the individual child and the settlement of the family.