



Ontario

Ministry of
Community and
Social
Services

Parliament Buildings
Queen's Park
Toronto Ontario
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October 4, 1974

A Statement on Levels of Competency of Teachers in Day Nurseries (Revised Nov. 1975)

The Day Nurseries Act and Regulations, dated April-1974, define the qualifications of the supervisor and staff of a day nursery under Section 12 of the Regulations. These qualifications as stated are:

- 1) Every day nursery shall have a supervisor who, in the opinion of the Director
 - a) is sympathetic to the welfare of children;
 - b) has a specialized knowledge of and adequate experience in the methods of child guidance suited to the ages of children eligible for enrolment, and
 - c) is suitable in respect of age, health and personality to occupy the position.
- 2) In addition to the supervisor, the operator shall employ, for the supervision of the children enrolled in the day nursery, a staff having specialized knowledge and adequate experience in the methods of child guidance for the ages of the children supervised.

Day Nurseries Consultants in the Ministry of Community and Social Services further interpret Section 12(1) (b) and (2) in terms of four levels of responsibility and therefore competency. These are:

1. Supervisor of a day nursery with a capacity of more than 45 children.

Such a person will need to have competency in the business administration of the nursery, in developing and maintaining good staff relationships where the staff members will be at least seven in number, have a basic knowledge of the needs of a typical child, an understanding of family lifestyle, and his or her role in contributing to good parent-teacher and parent-child relationships. The Supervisor must have competency in training students, volunteers and participating parents.

At present the qualifications expected of this person are:

- Maturity
- 2 or more years' experience in a day nursery
- A full certificate, diploma or degree in Early Childhood Education, preferably with a Preschool Teacher's Certificate or equivalent.

2. Supervisor of a day nursery with a capacity of 45 children or less.

Such a person will need to have the same competencies as described in 1. At present the qualifications expected of this person are:

- 1 year's experience in a day nursery
- And/or sufficient maturity to successfully cope with the responsibilities of the position.
- A full certificate, diploma or degree in Early Childhood Education, preferably with a Preschool Teacher's Certificate or equivalent.

3. Assistant, Level 1

This person will be capable of taking responsibility for the day nursery program when the supervisor is absent. Level of competency will be similar to 1. At present the qualifications expected of such a person are:

- Sufficient maturity to cope with responsibilities in the supervisor's absence.
- A full certificate, diploma or degree in Early Childhood Education or equivalent.

4. Assistant, Level 2

This person will be either in process of obtaining training in Early Childhood Education by having enrolled in a Diploma Course in a College of Applied Arts and Technology or other institution, or will have successfully completed the Nursery Aide Course of 16 weeks.

It is taken for granted that the certificate, diploma or degree in Early Childhood Education as it is recommended above includes the following:

Personal Qualifications

- 1) Is enthusiastic about working with young children.
- 2) Has empathy with children and adults.
- 3) Is able and willing to accept responsibility.
- 4) Is mature, has self knowledge and a sense of self worth.
- 5) Has good health, both physically and mentally; has stamina and energy.
- 6) Is interested in continuing professional development.

Formal Training

- 1) Knowledge of Child Development with emphasis on infancy to 5 years.
- 2) Knowledge and empathy towards parents and family development.
- 3) Knowledge of introductory and child psychology.
- 4) Knowledge of history and philosophy of education, present trends developing in philosophy of Early Childhood Education and how this relates to practical work.
- 5) Basic knowledge of research: a) methods used;
b) relevant studies and those in progress.
- 6) Knowledge of Legislation affecting young children and day care programs.
- 7) Awareness of the immediate community and community services, with a sensitivity towards community needs.
- 8) Skills necessary for working in Early Childhood Education programs:
 - a) Programming - timetables for staff
 - staffing
 - nutrition
 - health
 - curriculum
 - planning staff and parent meetings
 - b) Budgets
 - c) Administration
 - d) Equipment - where to order
 - what is suitable
 - how to improvise and create
 - e) Physical setting - building
 - playground

Experience

- 1) Varied experience with normal children, comprehensive enough to give a knowledge of many types of schools, i.e. day care, co-op, laboratory, half-day, infants and toddlers.
- 2) In a chosen setting, supervised by the educational institution and the supervisor of the practice school.
- 3) Assuming many roles - supervisor
 - head teacher
 - teacher
 - assistant
- 4) Adequate amount of practice teaching as stipulated by the Certification Board.

The Association for Early Childhood Education, Ontario, is recognized as the certifying organization and its three levels of certification are considered as denoting specific levels of competency in the day nursery field.

Courses in Early Childhood Education are offered at the following levels in Ontario:

1. Post-degree program as offered at the Institute of Child Study, Ontario College of Education.
2. Degree program as offered in a number of universities such as the University of Guelph and Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, U. of Western Ontario.
3. Diploma program offered in most Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology.
4. An assistant teacher program of 16 weeks as offered under the Canada Manpower Program and usually taught in a College of Applied Arts.
5. A correspondence course offered at Humber College for teachers and volunteers working in nurseries for the Mentally Retarded.

Recognition is given to teachers who have taken courses in child development at the early childhood level in other provinces or countries and have certificates and or transcripts of these courses as well as experience; to the elementary school teacher with a primary methods certificate and/or work experience with young children at the Kindergarten or Junior Kindergarten level; to persons speaking a language other than English who work with young children from homes where this language is spoken, and who have completed a degree program before coming to Canada. Usually a short orientation in a day care centre is a requisite.

Special areas of competence are expected for programs meeting the needs of children with special handicaps, for infants and toddlers and the school age child. Courses preparing teachers to work in these areas are offered in Ontario and elsewhere. Many community colleges in their Early Childhood Education programs specialize in a specific area in addition to the regular program; e.g. Humber College in Mental Retardation; George Brown College in Infant care; Sheridan College in Family Life and Montessori Methods; Algonquin College in a bilingual program; Seneca College in Parent Participation. Canadian Mothercraft Society also offers a recognized course in Infant Care.

Another special area of competence is private home day care and those persons who are responsible for home visiting. At the present time colleges are being encouraged to include this area in their Early Childhood Education programs and also to offer short courses of pertinence to the care-giver. Since this aspect of the day nursery field has only recently become incorporated into the Day Nurseries legislation, there is much work to be done to develop its potential as an alternative service to the working mother, especially when she is in need of financial assistance.

The role of the untrained assistant, the volunteer, the part-time student, the participating parent is also recognized. In-service courses can and do play an important part in orienting these persons, especially in remote areas of the province where Early Childhood Education courses are not readily available. In a parent co-operative nursery, operated by parents, and when parents participate as teachers, two parents are usually considered a replacement for an assistant at level 2.