



What is Raising the Bar?

Raising the Bar is a program designed to help families ensure their children are receiving high quality early learning and child care services. The presence of a Raising the Bar certificate is a sign that the program is committed to maintaining provincial regulatory standards as well as local community standards.



Raising the Bar participants voluntarily submit to an annual review to ensure they meet community standards. After one year of participation in Raising the Bar, programs are expected to achieve bronze level and may progress further in subsequent years.

- **Bronze level** programs follow fundamental quality indicators and are also in full compliance with Ontario's Day Nurseries Act.
- **Silver level** programs have additional strategies to enhance quality.
- **Gold level** programs demonstrate a long-term commitment to high quality in early childhood education.

Quality Assurance:

- Quality is monitored through frequent on-site observations.
- Parent and/or Caregiver feedback is collected each year.
- Action plans are developed to address areas of need and to plan for improvement.
- In addition to annual provincial licensing reviews and local public health inspections, Raising the Bar programs undergo site visits by Early Childhood Education Consultants.

Best Practices:

- The program offers information for parents and promotes opportunities for community involvement.
- There are detailed policies, procedures and management practices to guide day-to-day operations.
- Specific strategies are in place to support optimal child health and development. Resources and information about child development are provided to parents.

Professional Development:

The team of Early Years professionals in Raising the Bar programs maintain credentials and commit to additional training each year.

- First aid and CPR are kept current.
- Cooks have Food Handler's Certificate training.
- All directors and staff attend workshops and conferences to enhance their understanding of early childhood education and care.
- Raising the Bar programs support teacher training through mentorship and by providing practical training opportunities for cooperative education students.

How will I know whether my child's centre is Raising the Bar?

- Raising the Bar was developed and introduced in Hamilton Ontario to promote and support observance of community standards in:
 - Licensed, centre-based early learning and child care programs
 - Licensed school-age child care programs
 - Special needs Resource Agencies
 - Licensed Home Child Care Agencies
 - Ontario Early Years, Early Learning and Parenting Centres.
- Participating programs receive a certificate each year and are encouraged to post it in a visible location.
- Hamilton's participating programs are identified on the Coordinated Access for Child Care website, www.cafcc.on.ca.
- The program director will be pleased to tell you about "Raising the Bar".

Is Raising the Bar a guarantee of quality?

- Participation in Raising the Bar indicates a commitment to supporting healthy, high quality environments for the children in our community, but it is not a guarantee or endorsement.
- The Ministry of Children and Youth is responsible for the regulation of child care in Ontario.
- The peer review process is an annual review of documentation submitted by the child care program. Peer reviewers do not conduct site visits to assess the quality of service.

Important Note:

A number of communities across Ontario have adopted Hamilton's Raising the Bar process as a strategy to promote and support observance of their local standards. Regulatory standards of the Provincial Day Nurseries Act apply to all programs in Ontario, however, as each community may modify or adapt the model for their local area, some Raising the Bar Standards may vary.



Hamilton

Raising the Bar is endorsed and financially supported by the City of Hamilton, Community Services Department



Raising the Bar

Early Childhood Education

An ASCY Community Initiative

Raising the Bar was developed in Hamilton and is a community project coordinated by Affiliated Services for Children and Youth (ASCY). Find out more by visiting us at www.ascy.ca

ASCY

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Information on
Raising the Bar in other areas can be found
at www.ascy.ca

Parent Brochure



Assuring High Quality
Early Learning and Child Care

A guide for families



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