

5 ... call for more information.

... on Headstart. The website for the *Ottawa Carleton Headstart Association for Preschools* (www.ochap.ca) is an excellent source for more information on each individual Headstart program. Or call a Headstart program nearest you (see insert).

... on child care programs. The *Child Care Information Line* at (613) 248-3605 can help you look for a space by providing the contact information for centres and agencies in your area.

... on child care subsidies. Call the **Employment and Financial Assistance Branch of the City of Ottawa** at 560-6000, and ask for or an Advanced Eligibility Assessment for a child care subsidy. Or check out the city's website at: www.city.ottawa.on.ca. If you are receiving social assistance, speak directly to your case coordinator for **Ontario Works** or **Ontario Disability Support**.

... on other subsidy programs. You may also be eligible to receive child-care financing through The Ontario Child Care Supplement for Working Families. This provincial program helps support low-to-middle income families with children under seven with parents in the workforce, in school or in training. Families with one parent who stays at home to care for children under age seven may also qualify. To get more information, call the *Ministry of Finance's Information Centre* toll-free: English 1-800-263-7965 or French 1-800-668-5821

You may also be eligible to receive child care financing through the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services "special needs subsidy" if your child has a diagnosed/ and documented developmental delay or special needs. To get more information, call the Children's Integrated Support Services at 736-1913.

The ①②③④⑤ Steps to giving your child a Headstart

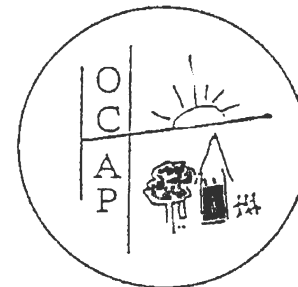
Early Enrichment Programs for 2 to 5 year olds

Prepared by the

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The ①②③④⑤ Steps to giving your child a Headstart

This booklet is intended to help parents decide whether a Headstart program is right for their child. Five basic steps are needed ...

- ① ... think about your child care options;
- ② ... decide if a Headstart program is right for you and your child;
- ③ ... find a convenient Headstart location;
- ④ ... apply for a Headstart or child care subsidy;
and
- ⑤ ... call for more information.

Please call or write us if you have any suggestions to improve this pamphlet. Thank you.

The Assessment Interview

The assessment interview will take about 1.5 to 2 hours. Make sure to bring the essential papers with you. If you are a two parent family, both parents must attend. During the interview, the Ontario Works Case Coordinator will determine whether you qualify for a subsidy by looking at:

- 👉 Your family's assets.
- 👉 Your family's total income.
- 👉 Your family's normal monthly expenses.

Yearly interviews are held, and must be booked before the end of the subsidy period so that the child care subsidy is not discontinued.

Here are some items you may need for the interview:

This list is only a guide to help you get ready for your interview. You may not need all of these, and you may be asked to bring in other papers. The following papers may be needed for all members of the family including children.

- 👉 **Identification** - such as driver's licence and birth certificates
- 👉 **Assets** - bank books, property ownership papers, investments, RRSPs
- 👉 **Income** - all monthly earnings such as pay stubs, employment insurance check stubs, pensions, child/alimony support payments, income tax assessment
- 👉 **Expenses** - lease showing rent/mortgage, utility bills (e.g. heat), debts, medical costs, car, insurance
- 👉 **Student status** - school registration, OSAP assessment
- 👉 **New Canadian status** - original immigration papers

care information, and finally 2 for the child care subsidy office. The phone line is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Ask for an Eligibility Assessment for a Headstart program. The telephone call takes about 15 - 20 minutes. A verification specialist will ask you to provide some basic information such as name, address, date of birth...

You will be instructed to gather and submit required documents within 10 days. You can either fax, mail or bring them to the Child Care Subsidy Office of the People's Services Employment and Financial Assistance Branch, located at 170 Laurier (at Metcalfe), 8th Floor. Once your documents are received you will be contacted.

You will then be contacted to make an appointment for an "assessment interview" to see if you qualify for the subsidy. The interview will be held within 2 to 3 weeks. You will be notified on the day of your interview if you qualify or if additional information is still required.

Things to Remember ...

... You may take your subsidy forms to the Headstart program to fax to the City of Ottawa.

... It is your right as a parent to appeal decisions about your subsidy. If you wish to appeal a decision, you should first telephone a supervisor or the district manager at your subsidy office.

1 ... think about your child care options

A parent's decision to leave a child under the care of another person can be difficult. Some parents may be able to leave the child with an extended family member like a grandmother. Others may opt for in-home care, where a nanny or sitter cares for a child in his or her own home. Parents may also use the services of home day-care wherein only a few children are under supervised care. For parents who believe these choices are not for them, group day care facilities may be the best.

Each family is different. Your needs and resources will determine what is appropriate for you and your child. Finding the right childcare for your child can depend on ...

- \$\$ Cost. Generally, child-care costs are the responsibility of parents. Cost depends on the age of your child and the type of child-care program you choose. For pre-school children between the ages of two and five, child care costs an average of \$30 per day in a centre and \$26 per day through a licensed home program.
- 🕒 Hours of Operation. Some parents may need a nursery school for only a few hours each day, while working parents or students may need a full day care program.
- 🚌 Accessibility. Parents may want a centre close to where they live, work or go to school. It might be important to go to a child care centre that has a bus or van service.
- 👥 Programming and Quality of Staff. What the centre offers is particularly important to the development of a child. Child care programs which are stimulating and loving are ideal.


As an option, we hope you consider one of the eleven Headstart programs in Ottawa.


② ... decide if a Headstart program is right for you and your child

Headstart programs are designed to serve the unique needs of children and their families. Generally, Headstart programs are for families with children between the ages of 18 months and 5 years of age. Special attention is given to families with limited financial resources, newcomers and children with special needs. Headstart differs from other child care facilities, in that ...

- ★ Each centre was officially designated as a Headstart program under the City of Ottawa.
- ★ Every Headstart facility is licensed by the Ministry of Community, Family and Children's Services under the Day Nurseries Act.
- ★ Program activities are focussed on preparing children for school through a stimulating and loving atmosphere.
- ★ Each centre offers special early literacy and numeracy initiatives and on-site speech and language assessments in English and French.
- ★ Headstart programs have low teacher to child ratios, and employ experienced, qualified and trained teaching specialists and early childhood educators
- ★ Each centre provides nutritious snacks or meals.
- ★ Most of the Headstart program provide transportation.
- ★ All Headstart programs welcome parental involvement.

Headstart programs take the extra step to help and advocate for families with young children. If you think Headstart is right for you, contact a program nearest you.

 **For Half-Day, Nursery School Programs:** If a parent is at home, he/she may qualify for a “Headstart Subsidy” if a child faces barriers to development and/or the child’s family is vulnerable to environmental stresses including those related to medical, family, social , economic or cultural circumstances. The parent does not have to be working, looking for work, or going to school.

 **For Full-Day, Preschool Programs:** Generally to be eligible for a full-day program, parents must be either working, looking for work, or attending school. Under special circumstances, if a parent is at home with documented medical, emotional or social problems, he/she may qualify for a Headstart subsidy for their child to attend a Headstart day care centre. In this circumstance, the parent does not have to be working, looking for work or attending school.

The Process to Apply for Subsidies

It is up to the parent to find a subsidized space at a Headstart program or other child care facility. Once you have found a space, here’s what you should do next.

If you are already receiving social assistance, you should speak directly with your Ontario Works case coordinator, who will help you through the process..

If you are not receiving financial assistance, call the Employment and Financial Assistance Branch of the City of Ottawa at 560-6000, press 1 for services offered, then 3 for child

④ ... apply for a Headstart or child care subsidy

Child Care Subsidies

The City of Ottawa offers “Child Care Subsidies” for families with children between 6 weeks and 10 years. A child-care subsidy is limited financial assistance available to Ottawa families with parents who are working, looking for work, or are going to school, but must also meet certain financial qualifications. You can use your child care subsidies at Headstart programs.

To qualify for a child care subsidy, you must meet three criteria:

1. You must live in the city of Ottawa.
2. Normally, you must be working, looking for work, or going to school during the hours when your child would be in child care or you or your child have special needs or you qualify under headstart criteria.
3. You are eligible if your income is less than your allowable monthly expenses, or does not leave you enough for child care, and your liquid assets are within allowable levels (\$5,000 for a family of two). You are also eligible if you are receiving assistance through Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Supports Program.

Headstart Subsidies

You may qualify for a Headstart subsidy due to the special needs of your family or your child.

③ ... find a convenient Headstart location

There are 11 Headstart programs in Ottawa. Some operate a half-day Nursery School program, and others are full daycare centres. Contact information and hours of operation are provided below.

OTTAWA CENTRE	
<p><i>Nanny Goat Hill Nursery School</i> 755 West Somerset Street Ottawa, ON K1R 6R1 (613) 238-7561 / (613) 238-7595 fax Contact Person: Cori Thompson</p>	<p>Half-day program offered in the morning only; Nutritious snacks; No Transportation provided</p>
<p><i>The National Capital YMCA-YWCA Headstart Nursery School</i> 180 Argyle Avenue Ottawa, ON K2P 1B7 (613) 788-5004 / (613) 788-5052 fax Contact Person: Mona Rowland</p>	<p>Half-day program offered in the morning only; Nutritious snacks; Transportation provided within catchment area.*</p>
<p><i>Queensway Preschool</i> 429 Parkdale Avenue Ottawa, ON K1V 1H3 (613) 728-8055 phone and fax Contact Person: Kirsten Partanen</p>	<p>Half-day program offered in the morning only; Nutritious snacks; Transportation provided within catchment area.*</p>

OTTAWA SOUTH

<p>Hawthorne Meadows Nursery School 2244 Russell Road Ottawa, ON K1G 1B3 (613) 731-1507 phone and fax Contact Person: Nancy Rowley</p>	<p>Half-day program offered in the morning or afternoon; Nutritious snacks; Transportation provided within catchment area.*</p>
<p>Cornerstone Children's Centre Heatherington Nursery School 2330 Don Reid Drive, Suite 102 Ottawa, ON K1H 1E1 (613) 731-2440 / (613) 521-8356 fax Contact Person: Brenda Fick-Kahler</p>	<p>Half-day program offered in the morning or afternoon; transportation provided within catchment area.* Cornerstone is a full-day program with meals, but no transportation.</p>

OTTAWA WEST

<p>Pinecrest-Queensway Nursery School 2860 Ahearn Avenue Ottawa, ON K2B 6Z9 (613) 829-1125 / (613) 829-0052 fax Contact Person: Michele Hynes</p>	<p>Half-day program offered in the morning or afternoon; Nutritious snacks; Transportation provided within catchment area.*</p>
<p>Foster Farm Child Care Centre 1065 Ramsey Crescent Ottawa, ON K2B 7Z9 (613) 829-8939 / (613) 829-1533 fax Contact Person: Wendy Miron</p>	<p>Full-day program; Nutritious meals; No transportation provided</p>

OTTAWA WEST (CONTINUED)

<p>Esther By Child Care Centre 1550 Caldwell Avenue Ottawa, ON K1Z 8M7 (613) 729-3242 / (613) 729-6765 fax Contact Person: Beth Dewan</p>	<p>Full-day program; Nutritious meals; No transportation provided</p>
<p>West End Nursery School 1470 Raven Avenue Ottawa, ON K1Z 7Y7 (613) 728-6505 / (613) 728-2921 fax Contact Person: June Adamson</p>	<p>Half-day program offered in the morning or afternoon; Nutritious snacks; Transportation provided within catchment area.*</p>

* Transportation is provided to parents residing within specific geographical areas.

NOTE: The Children's Aid Society offers a Headstart Nursery School program to families under its care. The location is:

Children's Aid Society Headstart Nursery School
Pré-Maternelle Bon Départ
1602 Telesat Court
Gloucester, ON K1B 1B1
(613) 747-7800 ext. 2746 / (613) 747-4456
Contact Person: Janie O'Leary