



GARDERIE
Les Premiers Pas

Educational program

 *Because every great journey
begins with the first steps.*

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Introduction to our educational program

This document presents the educational guidelines that guide all staff at the **Les Premiers Pas daycare** in their educational mission.

Our daycare applies the **Accueillir la Petite Enfance educational program** , which guides early childhood education services in Quebec.

This document was developed to meet the requirements of the Ministry of Families and also serves as an information tool for parents. You will discover **the principles, values, and resources** implemented by **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** to provide a stimulating, safe, and caring environment that fosters the overall development of each child.

Our educational program



At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** , we believe that children learn primarily through exploration, play, and interaction with their environment. Our educational program is based on the principle of **active learning**, fostering the overall development of each child rather than a rigid academic approach.

We also implement **promotional and preventative actions** to provide a living environment conducive to the development of **healthy lifestyle and eating habits** , as well as the adoption of positive behaviors influencing health and well-being.

Living in a group setting offers children countless opportunities to learn to **share, exchange ideas, and discover themselves** . These enriching experiences help build their **personality** , strengthen **their self-esteem and confidence** , while developing their daily **autonomy** .

Our vision

Thanks to the involvement and commitment of the entire team, as well as the invaluable collaboration of the families, the **Les Premiers Pas daycare** carries a common vision, centered on the respect, fulfillment and harmonious development of each child.

The **Les Premiers Pas daycare** aims to offer parents a high-quality educational childcare service that meets their expectations for the education and well-being of young children. Children are welcomed into a warm and safe environment where their individual pace and needs are fully respected.

Our daycare stands out for its caring approach, concrete actions, and commitment to a stimulating and safe learning environment. We aspire to be a place where every little step counts, where curiosity, joy, and discovery guide children's daily lives, while positively impacting our community.



Our educational values

Every great journey begins with first steps , and our mission is to accompany each child on their journey of discovery, growth, and happiness.

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** , we draw inspiration from the values of the ***Accueillir la petite enfance educational program*** to create a warm, caring and stimulating environment, where each child can flourish at their own pace.

- **Respect for the child**

Every child is unique. We recognize their pace, needs, interests, and personal way of discovering the world. Respect is shown in our words, actions, and expectations, so that every child feels heard, understood, and valued.

- **Play as a means of learning**

Play is at the heart of our educational program. It is through play that children explore, imagine, experiment, and learn to interact with others. Free and guided play fosters a love of learning and supports their overall development.

- **Collaboration with parents**

Parents are their child's first educators. We believe in a partnership based on communication, trust, and information sharing to ensure continuity between home and daycare.

- **Inclusion and openness to diversity**

We value a welcoming environment where every child, regardless of their background, culture, or abilities, feels welcome. This openness to diversity fosters mutual respect, curiosity, and kindness towards others.

- **The overall development of the child**

Our goal is to support the child in all dimensions of their development — physical, motor, cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional. Every daily experience contributes to strengthening their confidence, autonomy and joy of being.



*Every child has the right to be different.
Every child has the right to be respected.
Every child has the right to be loved.*

Every child has the right to develop harmoniously.

Excerpt from the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, 1959

The objectives of our educational program

The **educational program** aims to ensure the quality and consistency of early childhood education services in Quebec. At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare**, it guides our approach to offer children a stimulating, safe, and respectful environment that supports their overall development.

They reflect our commitment to providing children with a caring environment where every experience contributes to their development, autonomy, and joy of learning.

- **Promoting educational quality**

The educational program's main objective is to **promote quality early childhood education services** in Quebec.

It is based on **solid theoretical principles** and **five essential foundations** that guide educational practices.

The basic principles of the educational program

- The partnership between the childcare service and parents is essential to the child's harmonious development.
- Children learn through play.
- Children are the primary agents of their own development.
- Every child is unique.
- Child development is a global and integrated process.

Early childhood education is based on **respectful approaches adapted** to each child's pace and learning style.

The **Welcoming Early Childhood program** promotes an approach focused on **holistic development** and **active learning**, where the role of educators is recognized as **essential to the quality of interventions** and the well-being of children.

- **Promoting consistency in educational practices**

The application of the educational program ensures **consistency of practices** across all childcare services in Quebec.

It allows children to have **comparable and harmonious educational experiences** , promoting continuity and stability in their journey, regardless of the environments they attend .

- **Promote continuity of interventions**

The educational program aims to ensure **continuity in the educational interventions** offered to young children.

It aligns with the **educational vision of preschool and early childhood support services**, in order to support each child consistently throughout their developmental journey.

- **Preventing and promoting healthy lifestyle habits**



From a young age, children develop **lasting lifestyle habits** through consistency, by following the example of adults, and through the enjoyment of movement. A good balance between **quiet activities and active play** , especially outdoors, promotes their physical and social well-being.

A **healthy diet** also contributes to this balance. It respects the principles of **Canada's Food Guide** , hygiene and safety rules, while offering variety and the pleasure of eating. At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** , we draw inspiration from the **Gazelle and Potiron framework** of the Ministry of Families, which encourages healthy eating, active play, and motor development to support the **overall development** of each child.

- **Promoting educational success**



At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** , we see the transition to school as an **exciting time** when children open a new window to the world. Our role is to support this process gently, confidently, and with kindness, so that each child experiences this transition harmoniously and positively.

We support educational success by offering rich daily experiences filled with discovery, social interaction, and the joy of

learning. Through **free and guided play** , children naturally develop their curiosity, creativity, self-confidence, and ability to connect with others. These solid foundations foster a **positive attitude toward learning** .

To facilitate a smooth transition to school, we emphasize:

- **Autonomy** (doing it alone, trying, persevering)
- **Self-esteem** (feeling capable, important, and recognized)
- **Social skills** (waiting one's turn, sharing, cooperating, expressing oneself)
- **Communication** (asking questions, telling stories, listening)
- **The joy of learning** (being curious, wanting to discover)

Our educators create warm environments where every child feels **welcomed, encouraged and valued** . They observe, support and guide each stage of development, respecting each child's unique pace.

We work in **close partnership with parents** , as they are their child's first guides. Together, we build continuity that helps the child move forward with confidence into this new adventure that is school.



In everyday terms, this translates to:

- Active games, both indoors and outdoors, that allow children to move, have fun and explore the world at their own pace.
- Balanced, tasty and colourful meals and snacks, prepared to awaken curiosity and the pleasure of eating well.
- Daily outings outside (as soon as the weather permits) to breathe, run, jump and enjoy the fresh air.
- Moments to learn simple hygiene practices : washing hands, sneezing into the elbow, blowing the nose, etc.
- A gentle period of rest, in a calm and reassuring atmosphere, where each child is gently guided towards relaxation.



*Because for us, every little moment counts...
And every small step helps you grow.*

The theoretical foundations

The educational program **"Welcoming Early Childhood"**, developed by the Government of Quebec, is based on **four main theoretical foundations**.

- Humanism
- The ecological approach
- Attachment and meaningful emotional connection
- Active and guided learning

Humanism

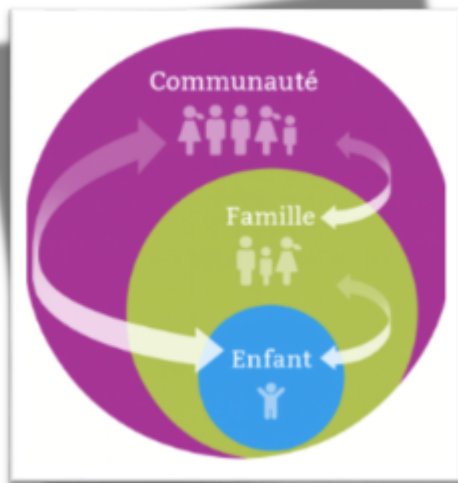


This approach recognizes the child as a **person in their own right**, driven by a **natural curiosity** and a **desire to learn**. The accompanying adult gives them **trust and support** to allow them to fully develop their potential.

At **Les Premiers Pas daycare**, our humanistic approach is reflected in every daily action:

- We take a **positive view of each child**, always listening and being fully available to them.
- We distinguish **the child from their actions** and welcome them in their emotions with kindness, helping them to understand and express them.
- We offer him **varied experiences and choices** that foster his confidence and sense of accomplishment. We respect his pace and interests, and encourage him to learn through trial and error, and through his discoveries.
- We prioritize **soft skills over hard skills**, giving her small responsibilities suited to her age — such as bringing her cuddly toy or distributing washcloths.
- Finally, we **facilitate learning** by carefully observing each child, in order to better support them in their challenges and celebrate their progress, even the smallest.

The ecological approach



According to this approach, a child's development is influenced both by their personality and by the environments they frequent: their family, daycare, neighborhood, and community.

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare**, we recognize that each child develops within a network of relationships that support their growth and well-being. That's why we focus on the **quality of our services** and on ... **educational practices imbued with warmth, consistency and**

sensitivity, in order to offer a safe and caring environment where each child can fully flourish.

We remain attentive to the family reality of each child — a birth, a move, a separation — in order to adapt our support to their needs and offer them constant support.

Our ecological approach into practice, we work closely with parents to establish **a strong and respectful partnership** focused on the child's well-being. We strive to create a **stable and secure relationship** where each child feels valued, understood, and supported.

Our **educational practices** are characterized by warmth, consistency, and predictability, while remaining sensitive to each child's individual needs. Finally, we implement **protective measures** that strengthen their well-being, emotional security, and confidence on a daily basis.

Attachment and meaningful emotional connection



The quality of the bond between the young child and the adults who care for them which forms the very basis of its development.

Stable, warm and caring relationships , as well as an attentive response to his needs and emotions, nurture his **sense of emotional security** , which is

essential to allow him to explore the world with confidence.

At **Les Premiers Pas daycare**, we place great importance on the relationship of trust, gentleness, and consistency that develops between the child and the educator. This secure bond allows the child to grow up in a stable and caring environment.

Throughout the day, caregiving moments—meals, naps, hygiene, diaper changes—are experienced as **special opportunities for interaction and emotional connection**. We support each child in their discoveries by respecting their pace, encouraging **autonomy, free play**, and the **joy of exploring** their environment.

At **Les Premiers Pas daycare** , we put this approach into practice through simple and consistent daily routines. We encourage a **gradual integration** so that each child can smoothly adapt to their new environment. We ensure **stability** by prioritizing the presence of familiar people and a **close partnership with parents** , through daily interactions and open communication.

In the **nursery** , care is provided by the assigned educator, according to each child's individual pace and observed needs. During **group changes**, the educators accompany the children to facilitate the transition and maintain their **emotional security** .

Active and guided learning



This concept is based on the idea that the child develops and learns by **actively interacting with their human and physical environment**.

At **Les Premiers Pas daycare**, the educational staff plays an essential role in this support.

Each child is observed, listened to and supported according to their pace, needs and areas of interest, in order to help them progress with confidence and pleasure.

We observe and document each child's development to better understand their progress and adapt our interventions. We support them within their zone of proximal development, helping them take their next step or overcome their next challenge.

Children are encouraged to **choose their activities** from a **variety of safe and suitable materials**, fostering exploration, creativity, and independence. The **day's schedule** is planned in a **predictable and flexible way**, allowing everyone to feel secure while enjoying rich and stimulating experiences.

The educational staff act as a **positive role model**, embodying the values of respect, curiosity and kindness that guide the daycare on a daily basis.



*"Children don't play to learn, but they learn because they play."
- Inspired by the work of psychologists Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky -*

Democratic-style intervention in support of emotional security and active learning



The democratic style intervention is not a theoretical foundation, but it supports the principles of the child's **overall development and emotional security** .

It is based on the **sharing of power and responsibility** between the adult and the child, taking into account the child's age, abilities, circumstances and context.

At **Les Premiers Pas daycare** , children learn to **express their needs, interests, and limits** , while working together to find solutions or choose an activity. This approach fosters **self-confidence, autonomy, initiative** , and the development of **harmonious and respectful relationships** .

Daily life is full of small choices, and each one becomes an opportunity to learn. Through this approach, we guide children to make **thoughtful choices** , understand **their consequences** , and gradually develop their sense of **responsibility** . Through their experiences, they learn to know themselves better, to collaborate with others, and to thrive within a group.

Understanding what a child is – The contribution of affective and social neuroscience

According to Dr. Catherine Gueguen, the child is born with an immature brain which develops thanks to the caring relationships he experiences on a daily basis.

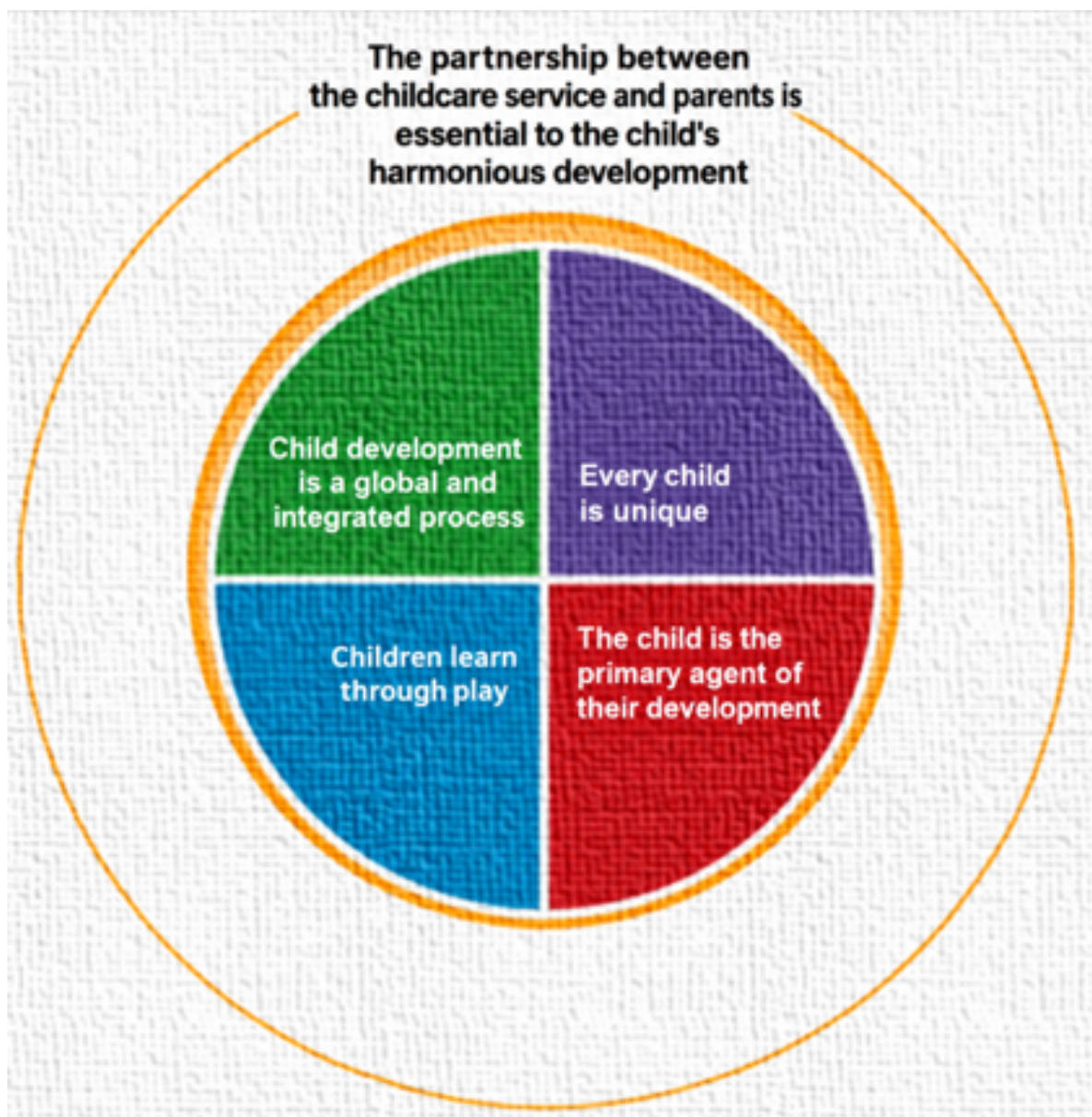
Affective and social neuroscience shows that interactions characterized by listening, Empathy and respect promote brain maturation and the harmonious development of the child. In their early years, children cannot regulate their emotions alone and need an adult present to comfort them and help them understand them.

Understanding this immaturity allows us to take a more accurate look at his behavior and to respond with kindness rather than judgment. Positive emotional bonds directly influence a child's memory, learning, and ability to relate to others. A child learns and grows fully when they develop in an atmosphere of trust, gentleness, and emotional security.

The basic principles

Quebec's early childhood education program, *Accueillir la petite enfance (Welcoming Early Childhood)*, is based on **five fundamental principles** that guide educational interventions with young children. These principles guide educators in their daily actions and ensure respectful, caring, and consistent support tailored to each child's needs.

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare**, these principles are reflected in our overall approach to development, our way of interacting with children, and the relationship of trust we build with families.



The partnership between the SGEE and the parents is essential for the harmonious development of the child.



A **child's development** relies on close collaboration between the family and the daycare. This support is a **joint project**, based on **mutual trust and respect**.

Harmonious and open relationships between parents and educators create a secure environment for the child and

foster the development of **strong emotional bonds** with the adults who care for them. Together, we form a cohesive environment where the child feels understood, supported, and valued.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- We take the time to discuss the general condition with the parents of their child: their sleep, appetite, mood and emotions.
- We remain present, available and reassuring, both for the child as well as the parent, in order to create a climate of trust and collaboration.
- When unique characteristics or challenges arise, we value the expertise of parents and work together to find the best ways to support the child's development and well-being.



"Around each child, a family, a daycare, and a community come together to support their development and unlock their full potential."

Children learn through play



Play is at the heart of life at the daycare. It is through play that children express themselves, learn and develop. By playing, they explore their environment, make discoveries, practice new skills, and learn to solve problems while expressing their emotions and concerns.

Play meets a **fundamental need** of young children: to act, to imagine, to create and to understand the world around them.



In everyday terms, this translates to:

In the kitchen area, the children are having fun "playing restaurant".

One prepares the meals, another takes the orders, and a third serves the plates. By imitating adults, they enrich their language, stimulate their imagination, and learn to cooperate and share. roles and to wait their turn.

The educator supports the game by introducing new vocabulary, encouraging interaction, and valuing each person's initiatives: "You thought to ask what your client wanted to eat, well done!"

Through this symbolic play, the child expresses their emotions, explores social roles and develops their autonomy in an environment that is playful, safe and rewarding.



"Through play, children discover the world,

But above all, he discovers himself.

The child is the main actor in their own development



Children learn primarily through their **natural curiosity** and **inner motivation**.

He explores, observes, touches and experiments to understand the world around him.

By acting, he develops his knowledge and skills, makes discoveries and learns from his own experiences.

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare**, we recognize the child as a curious explorer of their world, learning through their experiences and initiatives.



In everyday terms, this translates to:

At mealtime, a child decides to pour himself his glass of water.

The educator lets him try, encourages him, and praises him for his efforts. Through this simple gesture, the child learns to trust to his abilities, to manage his mistakes and to become more autonomous.

By encouraging initiative, active participation and Learning through experience, the daycare accompanies each child in acquiring essential skills for his daily life, his upcoming entry into school and his personal development.



*"The child is not a vessel to be filled, but a spring to be released."
— Maria Montessori, physician and educator*

Every child is unique



Each child has their own personality, needs, interests, and talents that make them unique. They develop at their own pace, according to their curiosity and discoveries.

At **Les Premiers Pas daycare**, we adapt our interventions and educational activities to respect

each child's **developmental pace**, **encourage their autonomy**, and **nurture their joy of learning**.

We believe that when a child feels respected and understood in their uniqueness, they develop **self-confidence**, a **love of learning**, and a **desire to explore**.



In everyday terms, this translates to:

During a drawing activity, some children prefer to use pencils, others paintbrushes, or even their fingers.

The educator values each of these approaches, encourages the individual creativity is encouraged, and the pace of the activity is adapted to individual needs.

of the group: some children take more time to observe, others quickly get started on their creation.

Thus, each child has the freedom to express themselves in their own way, in a climate of respect and trust.



*"Behind every smile, there is a story, a rhythm,"
A world to discover: the world of every child.*

Child development is a holistic and integrated process



A child's development is built on several dimensions simultaneously — **affective and social, physical and motor, cognitive and linguistic** . These areas are closely linked and mutually enriching, even if each evolves at its own pace.

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** , we recognize the importance of supporting the child in **all areas of their development** .

Every activity, every interaction becomes an opportunity to learn, grow and flourish in a caring and stimulating environment.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

During a cooking activity, the children prepare a salad of fruit.

They count the pieces (cognitive development), name the fruits and colors (language development), cut the fruits with care (motor development), and share the equipment in collaborating (social and emotional development).

Through a single activity, the child learns to observe, communicate, manipulate and cooperate.

Each area of its development is naturally involved. in pleasure and discovery.



"Emotions are the driving force behind a child's development, not an obstacle."
— Isabelle Filliozat, psychotherapist

The process of educational intervention

This process aims to provide each child with the necessary conditions to **grow up in harmony**. It is based on four complementary steps, applied both in daily actions and in the planning of activities.

Step 1: Observation



Observation allows us to get to **know each child better** — their tastes, interests, needs, abilities and current level of development. It helps us understand where they are in their development and **support their progress**.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- During free play, the educator observes how a child interacts with their peers: Do they share toys? Do they wait for their turn? Do they try to imitate others? These observations allow the educator to better understand the child's social and emotional development.
- During a drawing activity, the educator notices that a child is having difficulty holding their pencil properly. She records this observation and later suggests fine motor activities to help support the development of this skill.

Step 2: Planning and organization



This step involves planning, based on the **observations gathered**, the actions and activities that will support each child's **overall development**. The planning aims to meet their needs, nurture their interests, and foster their growth in all areas of their development.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- After observing that several children showed great interest in insects, the educator planned an exploration activity. The next day, she suggested an outing with magnifying glasses and observation jars.

- A child is having difficulty waiting their turn. The educator then plans simple cooperative games where they can practice patience and collaboration, while having fun.

Step 3: Educational action



This step involves **implementing the actions and choices planned** based on observations. The educator supports the child in their discoveries and learning by creating a stimulating, safe, and caring environment.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- During a motor skills activity, the educator encourages the children to jump from one hoop to another. She supports those who hesitate, praises their efforts, and adjusts the distance according to their abilities.
- During free play, she intervenes kindly when a conflict arises. She helps children find solutions, listen, and express their needs.

Step 4: Reflection and feedback



This step involves **analyzing and evaluating the educational actions** implemented, in order to retain those that promote children's development and adjust those that require improvement. Reflection is an integral part of educational practice and allows for continuous improvement.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- After a group activity where several children struggled to wait their turn, the educator took a moment to reflect. She wondered if the game was too long or too complex and decided to make adjustments for next time.
- After observing a more reserved child, the educator consulted with her colleagues and the parents to better understand his needs. Together, they decided to introduce small group activities to help him express himself more.

The four dimensions of educational quality

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare**, we place great importance on educational quality in all its forms.

It manifests itself through four dimensions of educational quality:

La qualité de l'interaction entre le personnel éducateur et les enfants:

- Le soutien affectif
- L'organisation de la vie collective
- Le soutien à l'apprentissage
- Soutenir l'interaction du personnel éducateur avec les enfants

La qualité des expériences vécues par les enfants:

- Horaire adapté au rythme des enfants
- Des jeux amorcés par les enfants
- Des activités proposées
- Des routines et des transitions
- Soutenir la qualité des expériences vécues par les enfants

La qualité de l'aménagement des lieux et du matériel:

- Espace de vie confortable et chaleureux
- Lieux et matériel sains et sécuritaires
- Variété, polyvalence et accessibilité
- Espace de travail adapté aux besoins du personnel
- Soutenir la qualité de l'aménagement et du matériel

La qualité de l'interaction entre le personnel éducateur et les parents:

- Soutenir l'interaction entre le personnel | éducateur et les parents



"Early childhood is that precious time when every experience, Even the smallest thing builds the child's future."

The quality of the interaction between the educational staff and the children

The relationship between the educator and the child is at the heart of educational quality.

Kind and respectful interactions foster **emotional security** , a **sense of belonging** , and **motivation to learn** .

Each interaction becomes an opportunity to create connections, support trust, and foster the joy of learning.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- **Emotional support**

When a child arrives in the morning a little sad to leave his parents; the educator welcomes him gently , **crouches down to his level** and speaks to him calmly. She suggests he choose an activity he likes to start the day, such as drawing or looking at a book.

This simple and caring gesture helps the child feel understood, reassured and ready to integrate into the group.

- **The organization of life in a community**

When it's time to tidy up, the educator invites the children to participate by turning this step into a **group game**. She assigns them small responsibilities: putting away books, picking up blocks, wiping the table; all while encouraging them and praising their efforts.

When a disagreement arises, she guides the children to find **a solution together, helping them express their emotions** and listen to those of others. These moments foster **cooperation, respect for shared rules, and pride in contributing to the group**.

- **Learning support**

During a building activity, the educator observes a child trying to build a tower of blocks that keeps falling over. She approaches, **encourages him to think** about what might help, and then gently shows him how to place the blocks to balance the structure.

The child tries again, succeeds, and their face lights up with pride. Through this simple support, the educator fosters **perseverance, self-confidence** , and an understanding of the **concepts of balance and cause and effect**.

- **Supporting the interaction of educational staff with children**

During free play, an educator notices two children trying to build a castle but disagreeing on how to do it. She calmly approaches them, listens, rephrases their ideas, and helps them find common ground.

By valuing everyone's words and proposing a simple solution, she transforms **the conflict into a moment of collective learning** .

This intervention promotes communication, listening and cooperation, while strengthening the relationship of trust between the educator and the children.

The quality of the experiences children have



The educational program begins as soon as the child arrives at daycare and unfolds throughout the day. Every moment — games, routines, meals, and transitions — contributes to their **overall development**.

The quality of these experiences is reflected in a **day adapted to the pace of the group** , rich in

discoveries, interactions and varied learning.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- **A schedule adapted to the children's rhythm**

During meals, the educator takes the time to let each child eat at their own pace.

Some finish quickly and head to a quiet corner with books or gentle games, while others savor their meal without being rushed.

Later, at nap time, she waits until the group is ready, creates a peaceful atmosphere with soft music and accompanies each child according to their needs.

By giving everyone time and avoiding rushed transitions, **the day becomes smoother, more harmonious and more respectful** of everyone's well-being.

- **Games initiated by the children**

One morning, some children spontaneously decide to build a “house” with chairs and blankets. The educator observes from a distance, lets them organize their space and invent their roles: one becomes the parent, another the baby, another prepares the imaginary meal.

She only intervenes to support their discussions, answer their questions, or help resolve a minor disagreement.

This free and creative time promotes **cooperation, the expression of emotions, problem-solving, and the joy of learning through play.**

- **Activities offered**

During a painting activity, some children rush enthusiastically to the table, while another prefers to continue playing with the blocks. The educator lets him **choose freely**, while also inviting him to observe the others if he wishes.

Later, she entrusts him with the responsibility of distributing the paintbrushes and aprons—a small gesture that allows him to participate in a different way and feel valued. By **respecting each child's pace, choices, and motivation**, the educator fosters **autonomy, self-esteem, and the joy of learning.**

- **Routines and transitions**

Before the meal, the teacher announces handwashing time by singing a little song the children love. They go one by one to the sink, in a calm line, while she encourages them with smiles and kind words. Some children wash their hands on their own, others receive a little help, each at their own pace.

This simple routine becomes a **moment of learning and autonomy** : children develop good hygiene habits, learn to wait their turn and enjoy participating in the life of the group.



- **Supporting the quality of children's experiences**

Every day, the children enjoy the park near the daycare. Even though it is a daily activity, the educator renews the experience by offering varied games: observing birds, collecting leaves for a collage, running in teams or inventing motor skills courses.

It values **spontaneous discoveries** — an ant on a tree trunk, a friend who learns to jump further — and supports exchanges between children.

By transforming a familiar moment into a rich and meaningful experience, the educator **supports curiosity, motor skills, socialization, and the joy of playing outdoors.**

The quality of the facilities and equipment



At **Les Premiers Pas daycare** , the layout of the spaces and the choice of equipment are designed to encourage children's **autonomy, curiosity and creativity** .

The spaces are designed to allow them to explore freely, take **calculated risks** , and make choices suited to their abilities. Every play area, every object becomes an opportunity to learn, collaborate, and grow in confidence.

In everyday terms, this translates to...

- **A comfortable and welcoming living space**

The children play in a bright and tidy room, where toys are accessible and play areas are clearly defined.

Books, family photos, and soft decorations make **the space welcoming and reassuring**. In this gentle and warm environment, children feel comfortable, free to explore and express themselves at their own pace.

- **Safe and healthy premises and equipment**

The spaces are carefully designed to offer children a **clean, safe and suitable environment** .

The equipment is chosen to encourage **autonomy and discovery** , while minimizing risks.

Each object, each play area is designed to allow the child to explore freely, confidently and safely.

- **Variety , versatility and accessibility**

The layout of the play areas is designed to **awaken curiosity and encourage** a wide variety of activities.

Each play area—construction, arts and crafts, reading, symbolic or board games—is organized to be easily accessible and inviting.

Materials can be moved from one area to another, allowing children to enrich their play and develop their creativity.

Quieter areas are set aside from dynamic spaces, in order to offer a balanced and harmonious environment.

- **A workspace adapted to the staff's needs**

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** , we recognize the importance of a comfortable and functional work environment for our educators.

The layout of the premises is designed to facilitate their daily work: furniture at the right height, secure storage spaces, and appropriate equipment to support routines and activities.

A well-organized environment contributes to the **well-being of the team** and, consequently, to **the quality of interventions** with children.

- **Supporting the quality of the layout and equipment**

The quality of the layout and equipment is the result of **teamwork between management and educational staff** . The educators choose the equipment best suited to the needs and age of the children, while management ensures a safe, pleasant and well-equipped environment.

The use of durable, recovered or reused materials also helps to create a **warm, stimulating and responsible environment** .

The quality of interactions between the educational staff and the parents



The **relationship** between parents and educational staff is based on trust , **respect and open communication**.

This bond is built gradually, especially during the first few weeks when the child and their family are adapting to a new living environment.

A caring collaboration between home and daycare promotes a **smooth transition and supports the child's well-being on a daily basis**.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- **Supporting interaction between educational staff and parents**

At **Les Premiers Pas daycare** , collaboration with parents begins from the very first contact.

The management and the educational team **work together** to establish a relationship of trust, encourage communication and value the daily participation of families.

Areas of child development

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** , we offer a variety of age-appropriate experiences every day, both indoors and outdoors.

These activities support children's learning in the four main areas of development: **physical and motor, cognitive, language, social, and emotional.**

Every experience, whether planned or spontaneous, aims to promote overall, harmonious and joyful development.

Physical and motor development



The young child's body is the gateway to their **overall development and learning.**

It is through movement, the senses and manipulations that he discovers the world, **develops his perception and learns to interact with his environment.**

This area includes **health, safety, physiological needs** — such as food, sleep and hygiene — as well as sensory development, body schema and gross and fine motor skills.

Each experience, whether it be active play, exploration, or a daily routine, allows the child to better understand their body, refine their movements, and strengthen their confidence and well-being.

Physical development

This area encompasses health, safety, sensory development, and physiological needs such as food, sleep, and hygiene. It is influenced by **personal characteristics, daily experiences, and the quality of the environment.**

Respecting **each child's pace** promotes healthy growth and overall well-being.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- **Healthy lifestyle habits**

From a very young age, it is essential to offer children an environment that promotes the pleasure of movement, rest and a healthy relationship with food.

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** , we encourage physical activity, balanced meals and soothing sleep routines, in order to support the overall health and well-being of each child.

- **Health and safety**

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** , we strive every day to provide a clean, safe, and stimulating environment.

Our equipment is durable, age-appropriate, and regularly cleaned to encourage safe, unstructured play.

We follow rigorous protocols to ensure everyone's health and safety—from medication administration to allergy prevention. While protecting children, we allow them to take calculated risks , **which are essential for their independence and motor development.**

- **Food**

A healthy diet contributes to a child's physical, mental, and social well-being. From early childhood, it **supports growth, physical development, and the ability to learn.**

At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare** , we offer balanced and varied meals, inspired by *Canada's Food Guide* , as well as nutritious snacks that promote good eating habits. Our educators ensure that each meal takes place in a **warm, comforting, and respectful environment** , where children enjoy eating at their own pace.

Getting a child used to new tastes **takes time and patience** : sometimes you have to present the same food several times before the child agrees to taste it.

- **Sleep**

Sleep plays a vital role in a child's health, development, and learning. It promotes **emotional regulation, memory, and physical growth.**

Naps, especially before the age of 4, are part of a child's biological rhythm and complement nighttime sleep. At **Les Premiers Pas Daycare**

, each child is supported according to their individual needs, in a calm and secure environment that promotes rest and relaxation.

- **Hygiene**

Hygiene routines — such as handwashing, face cleaning, or diaper changes — are prime opportunities to create a **loving and caring relationship with the child** .

Through gentle gestures and a reassuring tone, the educator supports **the child's sense of security and confidence**. These daily routines also promote autonomy and body awareness in an atmosphere of respect and sensitivity.

- **Sensory development**

Sensory development allows children to **discover the world** through sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell. Colors, sounds, smells, flavors, and textures stimulate their curiosity and enrich their learning. **The interactions** , voices, and caring gestures of adults also enhance this exploration.

Gradually, the child becomes aware of their body, their movements, and their position in space, thus developing coordination, balance, and confidence. However, some children may react differently to sensory stimulation, and it is important to welcome these differences with sensitivity and respect.

- **The body schema**

Body schema refers **to the awareness a child develops of their body** , its movements, and its place in space.

Through sensory and motor experiences, they learn about their abilities, recognize the parts of their body, and name them. These discoveries allow them to better orient themselves in their environment, improve their coordination, and express their emotions through gesture and movement.

Engine development

Motor development encompasses gross motor skills—large body movements—and fine motor skills, related to the precision of movements. These skills develop through maturation, practice, and repetition of movements.

Through play, exploration and daily activities, the child **strengthens their coordination, balance and confidence in their abilities.**

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- **Gross motor skills**

Gross motor skills encompass the major movements of the body: running, jumping, crawling, throwing or catching.

During early childhood, these skills develop gradually and form the basis for fine motor skills and more precise movements.

By moving, the child strengthens their muscle tone, discovers their capacity for action, and learns to interact better with their environment.

Active play, whether low, medium or high intensity, is an essential way to support motor development and encourage healthy lifestyle habits.

At **Les Premiers Pas daycare** , active play is **encouraged** through adapted equipment, spaces that promote free movement, and educators who convey the joy of moving.

Movement is also integrated into daily transitions and routines — to expend energy, refocus, or simply experience the joy of moving.

Qu'est-ce que le jeu actif ?

Le *jeu actif* désigne toutes les activités où les enfants bougent : courir, sauter, grimper, danser ou même ramper.

C'est un moment de plaisir où ils dépensent de l'énergie, découvrent leurs capacités physiques et apprennent à coordonner leurs mouvements.

Le jeu actif aide aussi à développer la confiance, la socialisation et de saines habitudes de vie dès le plus jeune âge.

- **Fine motor skills**

Fine motor skills encompass everything that involves **moving the small parts of the body** , especially the hands and fingers. Grasping a toy, threading beads, cutting, drawing, or dressing are all opportunities for a child to practice their precision and coordination.

These everyday actions help him become **more independent, focused, and proud of what he manages to do on his own.**

Cognitive development



Cognitive development is the way in which a child **discovers, understands, and organizes the world around them.**

He learns by **observing, experimenting, asking questions, and seeking solutions through play and exploration**. Through attention, memory, reasoning, and curiosity, he gradually develops his

ability to think, make connections, and solve problems.

A child's development **is not linear**, but is built in layers that blend and evolve naturally, according to their experiences and discoveries.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- **Attention**

Attention is the **ability to focus on a person, object, or activity for a certain period of time**. It is essential for learning, because to retain information, one must first pay attention to it.

In young children, this ability **develops gradually**. They learn little by little to resist distractions and to stay focused for longer periods on a task or game.

To support this progress, it's important to provide a calm, tidy, and visually soothing environment. Too much noise or decoration can hinder concentration. Simple, colorful posters, well-organized spaces, and a peaceful atmosphere help children focus and learn while having fun.

Around the age of one, a child begins to share their attention with an adult: they look in the same direction, follow a finger gesture, or observe what is being shown to them. This ability, called **joint attention**, is **a key step in their social and language development.**

It is through these shared moments that children **learn to communicate, understand the intentions of others, and develop empathy**. A simple glance exchanged over a toy, a book, or a bird at the window becomes an opportunity for learning and connection.

▪ **Memory**

From a very young age, a child begins to remember what they experience. Their memory is built through the stability of their environment, the emotions they feel, and their active participation in activities.

Discussions with the educators, when we revisit a shared experience—an outing, a game, or a creative activity—help the child name, understand, and retain what they have learned. A child's memory develops gradually and takes three complementary forms:

- **Sensory memory** , which briefly retains what the child perceives through their senses — sounds, images, sensations.
- **Working memory** , used when one needs to remember an instruction or a step during an activity.
- **Long-term memory** , which permanently retains important learning and experiences.

Thanks to these three forms of memory, the child learns to remember, understand and reuse what he discovers each day.

▪ **The symbolic function**

Symbolic function allows a child to **mentally represent an object, a person, or a situation, even when they are not physically present**. Through this ability, they enter the world of symbolic play: a spoon becomes a microphone, a box transforms into a car.

This way of thinking opens the door to **imagination, language, and creativity** . By playing, drawing, or imitating adults, children express their ideas, explore the world, and learn to understand it in their own way.

It also allows the child to **remember past events and imagine those to come** . To support this ability, adults play a key role: by setting an example, using objects symbolically, and accompanying play with words and gestures. By sharing in the play and naming the child's actions, the adult fosters their understanding, stimulates their imagination, and enriches their language.

- **Categories and concepts**

The child learns to **organize the world around him by grouping objects according to their similarities** — shape, color, size or usefulness. Little by little, he moves from concrete notions to more abstract ideas: he first understands the "banana", then the "fruit", then the broader category of "food".

By classifying, sorting, and comparing objects, children **develop their logical thinking and memory**. These association games, which they often play spontaneously, help them recognize the differences and similarities between things, while also enriching their vocabulary.

Through these discoveries, he understands that several objects can have the same function—drinking from a cup or a bottle, for example—and that the same object can be used in different ways. This learning fuels **his curiosity, his reasoning, and his understanding of the world**.

- **The reasoning**

Reasoning is the **ability to reflect, make connections, and draw conclusions** from what the child sees, experiences, or lives.

Through it, the child learns to **solve problems, make decisions, and understand the causes and consequences of their actions**.

These skills develop through everyday experiences: by building a tower, by trying to figure out why an object falls, or by finding a new way to accomplish a task, the child learns to think, analyze, and adapt.

- **Awakening to mathematics**

From **early childhood**, children develop mathematical concepts through **their daily experiences**: counting steps, sorting toys, comparing sizes, or recognizing shapes. This informal learning forms the basis of their future academic knowledge.

Mathematics is not limited to numbers: it also encompasses shapes, measurements, space, time, and the language used to describe them. The role of the adult is to guide the child, to put words to their discoveries, and to help them delve deeper into their understanding—always at **their own pace and according to their interests**.

▪ Awakening to science

Young children are **naturally inquisitive** : they observe, manipulate, ask questions, and seek to understand the world around them. An introduction to science encourages them to explore, experiment, and discover for themselves, with the supportive guidance of adults.

When a child wonders why it rains or how a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, the educator guides them in their thinking—by observing, experimenting, or searching for answers together.

The important thing is not to know everything, but to **share curiosity, encourage exploration, and awaken the joy of discovery.**

Language development



Language is a faculty unique to human beings that **allows them to communicate, think, and connect with others.** From birth, a child enters a world of sounds and words: they listen, observe, imitate, and, little by little, build their own language.

Language learning is a complex process that mobilizes several skills at once — perceiving sounds, understanding their meaning according to the context, reproducing them and memorizing them.

It comprises two parts: **receptive language** (what the child hears and understands) and **expressive language** (what he/she says or expresses).

Without formal instruction, but through daily interactions—games, conversations, stories, or songs—children develop their oral language and then gradually awaken to reading and writing. Drawing, like early scribbles, also contributes to this development: it is a form of expression that prepares for writing and fosters creativity.

By the age of 5, a child has already mastered the basics of their mother tongue, whether spoken or signed. Language **is not only used for communication**: it also shapes their identity, fosters their confidence, and strengthens their sense of belonging to their family, culture, and community.

In everyday terms, this translates to:

- **Prelinguistic language**

Before speaking, young children already communicate : **they use their voice, expressions, and gestures to interact with those around them.** This is called prelinguistic language.

Even before birth, a baby hears and reacts to sounds—especially its mother's voice, which it learns to recognize and prefer. After birth, it gradually distinguishes the sounds of its native language through the rhythm, melody, and intonations that are familiar to it.

Long before understanding words, a baby recognizes certain familiar sounds, such as their name, thus laying the first foundations of communication. **They also express themselves through gestures :** they raise their arms to be picked up, point to ask for an object, or imitate social gestures like waving goodbye, nodding "yes" or "no," or clapping their hands to show joy.

- **Oral language**

Before speaking, a child already understands a large part of the words they hear. Around the age of 1, they begin to pronounce their first words, while understanding many more.

Over time, **he develops his vocabulary and learns to use language as a means of expressing his ideas, communicating, and understanding the world.**

Before speaking clearly, young children use sounds to communicate. These **proto-words** , like "tata" for *papa* or "woof" for *dog* , help them name objects or express a need. Gradually, they learn real words and initially use them broadly or in a limited way—for example, saying "cat" for all four-legged animals, or "cup" only for their own. Over time, they refine their pronunciation and enrich their vocabulary.

To support this development, **it is essential that adults speak clearly, use simple but varied language, listen attentively, and value the child's attempts.** Parents and educators play a key role in helping the child make sense of words and enjoy communicating.

- **Awakening to reading and writing**

Learning to read and write begins well before school. From early childhood, children develop the necessary foundations through their daily experiences with language. **When they listen to stories, look at books, or see an adult writing**, they discover that writing is used to communicate and tell stories.

His vocabulary expands **through conversation and shared reading** : he learns new words, better understands their meaning, and gradually associates sounds with letters. For example, a child who already knows the word "*helmet*" will more easily recognize the sounds of the letters that compose it.

Early literacy development also comes through play : scribbling, recognizing one's name, playing with sounds, observing words in the environment, or "reading" a picture book in one's own way are all valuable experiences. These discoveries, made in a **positive and stimulating atmosphere, awaken a child's curiosity** and give them a taste for reading and writing later in life.

The functions of writing correspond to everything that writing allows us to do in daily life. We read for entertainment — for example stories, tales, poems or comic strips — and to inform ourselves, by consulting newspapers, magazines or even posters and signs in the street.

We also write to remember: a shopping list, a diary, a to-do list, a birthday card, or a message for a friend. Writing also serves to learn and discover: reading a nonfiction book about animals, following a recipe, or observing a map or calendar.

Finally, **we write to express ourselves and communicate** : writing a letter to a parent, inventing a story, creating a song, a poem, or a comic strip. For young children, **this learning** happens naturally **through play** : pretending to write the day's menu, signing a drawing, preparing an "invitation" for a friend, or "reading" a sign in the park. All these experiences help them understand the usefulness and richness of writing in their everyday lives.

- **Spontaneous writing**

Before learning to form letters, young children experiment freely: they draw lines, loops, and shapes that resemble writing, sometimes inserting letters they already know. These attempts are invaluable—they **mark the first steps** toward mastering written language.

Through drawing, painting, coloring, or modeling, children **develop their fine motor skills and their enjoyment of writing** . These simple activities naturally prepare them for the formal learning of writing while nurturing their creativity and confidence.

Social and emotional development



A child grows through their relationships with others. Their social and emotional development is nurtured by the **bonds of attachment they first form with their parents, and then with the adults who care for them on a daily basis.**

In this process, the child learns about themselves, to recognize their emotions, and to interact with others. Their temperament, self-confidence, autonomy, and self-esteem are gradually developed. The child discovers that they are a unique individual, while also learning to be part of a group, to share, to cooperate, and to express their needs appropriately.

This development affects emotions — understanding them, naming them, regulating them — as well as the social skills needed to live in harmony with others.



Moral development begins to take shape in early childhood, but it becomes particularly clear around 6 or 7 years old, when the child begins to **understand the difference between good and evil according to the effects of their actions on others.**

Before this age, children act primarily based on the consequences for themselves—they seek to avoid punishment and obtain encouragement or rewards. This is not yet moral reflection, but these experiences help them gradually integrate the **rules of group living** and **social values** . By learning to put themselves in others' shoes, to share and to repair their mistakes, children develop the basics of empathy and respect, which will later form the foundations of their moral conscience.

▪ **Temperament**

Temperament refers to the **unique characteristics of each child that influence how they react, adapt, and manage their emotions.** It depends on both genetic factors and the environment.

Some children adapt easily to change, while others need more time. Some express their emotions strongly, while others are calmer and more reserved. **Each temperament has its strengths and challenges** —the important thing is to provide the child with an environment that **respects their pace** and values their individuality.

▪ **The concept of self**

The concept of self encompasses how **a child perceives themselves, their confidence, and their self-esteem** . By observing the reactions of

adults and experiencing different things, they discover their strengths, their limitations, and what makes them unique.

Self-esteem is the value a child places on themselves and is an essential pillar of their well-being and success. It **is built** through self-confidence, the supportive gaze of adults, and experiences adapted to their abilities.

By learning about themselves, recognizing their strengths and challenges, children develop a realistic and positive self-image. Autonomy plays a key role: each time they explore, make a choice, or successfully complete a task on their own—such as dressing, eating alone, or building a tower of blocks—they strengthen their confidence, pride, and sense of competence.

- **Identity**

Identity is how a child **sees and defines themselves**. It reflects both what makes them unique and what connects them to others. As they grow, children construct their identity through their relationships, experiences, and sense of belonging to different groups (family, friends, community). This identity is constantly evolving, changing with time, discoveries, and learning. It also encompasses their body perception, emotions, and the self-knowledge they develop.

Through the interactions and encouragement received, the child learns to recognize his uniqueness while finding his place among others.

- **Identity personal identity social**

Personal identity is built when the child discovers who he or she is as a unique individual.

From his earliest months, he learns to **distinguish himself from others, to express his tastes, choices, and emotions**. As he grows, he describes what he likes, what he can do, and what makes him special. Offering choices and valuing his initiatives helps him build confidence and get to know himself better.

Social identity , on the other hand, develops when a child understands that they **belong to different groups** —their family, their group at

daycare, their community. This sense of belonging brings them security and pride.

By sharing the values, traditions and culture of these groups, he learns to live with others and to find his place in the world.



Différence
essentielle

Personal identity is about **what makes each child unique**.

Social identity concerns **what connects one to others** and to one's community.

- **Emotional skills**

Emotions are **natural reactions to experiences**, whether pleasant or unpleasant. They inform the child about what they are feeling, help them understand their needs, and adapt to situations.

Between the ages of 0 and 5, children learn to **recognize, express, understand, and regulate** their emotions. This learning takes place through contact with adults and other children, through play, routines, and daily interactions.

Developing emotional skills allows children to communicate better, cooperate, ask for help, and maintain harmonious relationships. These skills form the basis of **healthy social and emotional development**.

- **Social skills**

Social skills encompass the abilities that a child develops to **interact positively with others** — sharing, cooperating, waiting their turn, resolving conflicts, or expressing their needs respectfully.

They help the child **adapt to different living environments and build harmonious relationships with adults and peers**. Their development depends on several factors: the child's temperament, self-image, personal and social identity, and ability to understand and manage their emotions.

Typical Daily Schedule at Les Premiers Pas Daycare

The schedule below is presented as an example to **help parents visualize their child's daily routine at daycare.**

It serves as a general guide, but remains flexible to respect each child's rhythm, needs, and well-being. Naps, personal care, and playtime are therefore adapted individually.

In addition, when temperature and weather conditions permit, children spend more time outdoors to enjoy active play and fresh air.

7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.	Children's arrival – Free play
9:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.	Hygiene – Snack
9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	Indoor play
10:30 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.	Outdoor play
11:15 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.	Hygiene – Lunch preparation
11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.	Lunch – Hygiene
12:30 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Free play – Storytime
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Nap or rest – Gradual wake-up – Quiet activities
3:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Hygiene – Snack
3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	Semi-directed play or free play
5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.	Free play – Staggered departure

In conclusion...

Les Premiers Pas Daycare , every day is an opportunity to learn, grow and flourish.

By focusing on play, curiosity and respecting each child's pace, we support their overall development step by step.

Our mission is to offer a safe, caring and stimulating living environment, where each child discovers the pleasure of being themselves and the joy of learning with others.

Because every great journey
begins with the first steps.



Child development is a holistic process: it arises from movement, emotion, and relationships.

— Henri Wallon, psychologist

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