

Schedules & Routines – Small Group Activities

Summary

What is a Small Group Activity, anyway?

- Small group activities are defined as educator-guided learning experiences in which children engage with materials or in activities that is planned, focused on specific skills, needs and interests of children, and facilitated by educator.

What's the Point?

- Supports relationship building between small groups of children and educator
- Encourages creativity and exploration
- Supports language development
- Encourages social skills such as sharing and turn taking
- Supports emotional regulation and development of empathy
- Promotes teamwork and co-learning of educator and children
- Provides opportunities for children and educator to problem solve together

How Do I Do This?

- Observe children's play to determine interests
- Decide on focus for small group activities (provocations)
- Use engaging materials
- Focus on co-learning and ask reflective questions to support children's learning
- Notice, name and nurture children's discoveries and demonstration of social and emotional learning

How Will the Children Participate in This Practice?

- Children see their interests represented in the activity
- Children have the opportunity to make choices in activities
- Children explore the materials provided individually and together
- Children demonstrate their knowledge of materials and concepts

Checklist

<i>Task</i>	<i>Complete?</i>
Educator observes children's play for reoccurring themes and ideas	
Educator discusses observations with team as well as potential social and emotional learning needs.	
Educators decide on focus for small group activity (provocations)	
Educator gathers materials needed based on children's interests (e.g. loose parts, paint, clay, blocks, etc.).	
Present materials to a small group of children (number of children and participants may be pre-determined or not depending on needs of children in room)	
Educator facilitates children's exploration of the activity through reflective questions based on their observation.	
Educators plan for future provocations based on children's experience with the activity.	
Educator documents child(ren)'s positive engagement in small group activities, to share with families.	

As an educator, you guide, scaffold, nurture, model, and facilitate children's learning.

Makovichuk, Hewes, Lirette & Thomas, 2014, p. 53

Flight: Alberta's early learning and care framework.

Retrieved from www.flightframework.ca

