



Brantford-Brant PARENT AND CHILD DROP-IN CENTRES

ourbeststart4brant.ca



Special
Pullout

You are your child's
first and most
important teacher.

Early Years Programs

“When my children were young, the Early Years program was an ‘out,’ a place where I knew I would get support and help with my young children. We would come for arts and crafts, games and socialization for my kids that never went to daycare. It was an easy transition for them. Now Early Years continues to be my ‘out’ and more socialization for me. My last child enjoys the games and crafts that we can’t do at home. The program was our home away from home and my daughter came to playgroup since she was two days old” (Jessica of Scotland, Ontario).

As a parent or caregiver of young children living in Brantford and the County of Brant we are very fortunate to have many parent and child drop-in centres throughout our community. The centres are run by multiple agencies but all have common elements. All parent and child centres are places that you and your children can come and play together in a friendly, safe environment.

Children’s brain development, especially in the first two years, is strongly influenced by you as the

A Parent’s Perspective

“We have seen many families come and go and have found some life-long friends along the way. We know that you have influenced the upbringing of many children in wonderfully positive ways through the programs provided and will continue to do so for many years to come. I have become a better parent through the lessons I have learned.” ~ Julie, mother of two, Brantford.

parent. By participating in a program, you have the opportunity to learn from Early Years professionals, other parents and even your child. A positive early childhood experience which includes loving relationships affects brain development which impacts health, learning and behaviour throughout life. What happens to your child today will matter to them in 30 years.





Where can we play together?

Different agencies work together through the Best Start Network to bring services to your neighbourhood schools and other community places.

Free parent and child drop-in centres can be found in your local school, library or church. These centres are called Best Start Early Learning and Parenting Centres or Parenting and Family Literacy Centres (new in 2013).

Inside the doors you will find basic services are the same. Each program offers something for everyone with children from infancy to age six. Program names may be different depending on the agency providing the program, but all centres offer:

- ★ A fun place for you and your child to enjoy learning through play together;
- ★ A place where you can learn new songs and stories to share with your children at home;
- ★ Help to build important skills through stories,

songs, music and play to build experiences in literacy and numeracy;

- ★ Early Childhood professionals to answer questions, provide information on community resources and encourage parent/child interactions;
- ★ A place to meet and talk to other families;
- ★ Connections to families and other services within the community;
- ★ Help for children to explore and gain understanding of their environment and the world around them; and,
- ★ A feeling of comfort for you and your child as they enter school.

Everyone is welcome to come and learn with their children through play. Children are curious and the parenting centres offer a place where parents/ guardians/caregivers and children can explore together. It is a place where everyone can truly take part in joyful play.

Community Resources

Best Start Early Learning and Parenting Centres are only one area of early years services available in your community.

Many other agencies also provide services from workshops to community kitchens. These services include the Ontario Early Years Centre: Brant main location, Kids Can Fly programs such as Parachute Program, and Children's Aid Society of Brant Family Resource Programs.

Find information about all Early Years services in Brant by visiting eycbrant.ca or call 519-759-3833. The website provides links to all agency websites, details of program locations and hours of drop-ins as well as information on parent workshops, parent and child workshops, events and many more fun activities you can do with your children.

Best Start Partners

The following is a list of Best Start community partners who provide services to drop-in programs.

- * Brant County Health Unit
- * Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board
- * Brantford Public Library
- * Children's Aid Society of Brant
- * Family Counselling Centre of Brant
- * Grand Erie District School Board
- * Kids Can Fly
- * Lansdowne Children's Centre
- * Ontario Early Years Centre: Brant

For a full list of partners, or to learn more about Best Start in Brant, visit www.ourbeststart4brant.ca

Kool-aid Playdough

What you need

- * ½ cup salt
- * 2 cups flour
- * 2 packages of kool-aid (the flavour depends on the colour or scent you want)
- * 4 tbsp. oil
- * 2 cups boiling water

What you do

Mix dry ingredients together. Add oil, then add water. Knead until well mixed. Store in an airtight container.

Finger Play Rhyme

Five Green and Speckled Frogs

5 green and speckled frogs, sat on a speckled log,
eating some most delicious bugs, yum, yum.
1 jumped into the pool, where it was nice and cool,
now there are 4 green speckled frogs.
(continue on with the same words, counting down to – no green speckled frogs, glub, glub!)

