

## About the *Let's Get Started* Program

The **Let's Get Started** program model emerged as a response to address the long waitlists for individualized diagnostic and intervention services for preschool children who have been identified with developmental concerns.

**Let's Get Started** is designed for staff of Ontario Early Years Centres, Child and Family Centres and other family-serving community services who want to implement a play group for children with developmental concerns and their parents/caregivers. The **Let's Get Started** program brings together health and social services to deliver an accessible 6-8 week parent-child social play group programs that respond to families' immediate practical parenting and child development needs.

**Let's Get Started** Program is designed to focus on a developmental domain e.g.: focus of week two is speech and language skills. Activities and materials are tailored to the individual needs, parents/caregivers are encouraged to actively participate in play activities while staff model play-based learning strategies.

### IDEAL MODEL FOR THE *LET'S GET STARTED* PROGRAM:

- \* Parent/caregiver and child program
- \* 6-8 families in the program
- \* 6 weeks in length (1 session per week)
- \* 1.5 hours per session
- \* Registration 1-2 weeks prior to start date of the program
- \* Facilitated by an Early Childhood Educator and co-facilitator
- \* Community professionals are invited into the program each week to provide formal and informal child development information and strategies to parents/caregivers

**Role of the Partner/Professional:** Each week a specialized professional from the community attends the program to provide practical child development information and everyday parenting strategies related to his/her area of expertise. Share his/her area(s) of expertise.

- Provide parents/caregivers with general information on strategies to help build developmental skills.
- Integrate themselves into the program and model development specific play-based learning.
- Provide OEYC staff and families with general resource information on child development topics
- Lead a *small* discussion regarding a given topic in his/her area of expertise and answers general questions from parents and caregivers
- Describe his/her work and how he/she supports families.
- Provide information through brochures and flyers on his/her agency, organization and/or services provided.

To find out more about the Let's Get Started Programs contact CITYKIDS at [citykids@mothercraft.org](mailto:citykids@mothercraft.org) or call 416 920-6543