

Schedule A

# **The Nova Scotia Before and After Program**

Let's Get Moving Program and Delivery Standards

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# 1. Introduction

Nova Scotia is committed to providing a universal Pre-primary Program for all four-year-old children across the province by 2020. Families in Nova Scotia have expressed a need for high quality, affordable, conveniently located before and after programming which would allow families to fully benefit from and access Pre-primary. These programs need to be offered in safe and nurturing environments.

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) and the Department of Communities, Cultures and Heritage (CCH) are collaborating to implement the Nova Scotia Before-and-After program (NS-BAP) that is supportive of Nova Scotia's Let's Get Moving Action plan and guided by the following key guiding pillars:

- 24-hour movement guidelines
- Outdoor Play
- Physical Literacy
- Inclusive and culturally responsive practices

Let's Get Moving Nova Scotia is the provincial government's action plan to increase physical activity in Nova Scotia. This action plan strives to make daily movement a cultural norm in spaces and places where we live, work, learn and play. The NS-BAP provides an opportunity to reach many children in a space in which they will spend a lot of time. To align with the intent of this action plan, the before and after programming will encourage energetic play in both indoor and outdoor environments. In addition, sedentary time will be limited, and screen time will not be offered.

The NS-BAP will be offered on school sites, using existing indoor and outdoor environments in its program delivery. This approach provides an opportunity to maximize the use of existing infrastructure and causes the least amount of disruption for children and families. In response to the needs of families it is important to build on and leverage the expertise and experience of existing licensed child care and recognized community-based recreation organizations, who will lead the delivery of program provision across Nova Scotia.

Using an outdoor play, movement and physical literacy-based framework will contribute to better health for children, the acquisition of lifelong skills, and quality early learning experiences.

Outdoor play is a very effective approach to encourage physical activity in children; it facilitates cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. Child-initiated outdoor play contributes to the development of problem solving and critical thinking skills, which improves executive function and supports self-regulation. Recent evidence is showing the incorporation of open-ended loose parts in child-directed play contributes to physical literacy development. While play can contribute to reduced sedentary time, it is also important to consciously limit screen time. Screen time negatively impacts cognitive, psychosocial development and possibly body composition.

These program and delivery standards, grounded in outdoor play, physical literacy and movement evidence, will be used by all providers involved in the NS-BAP regardless of whether the provider is licensed under the *Day Care Act* or unlicensed. In addition, all program sites and

operators involved in the program will be monitored and supported to ensure quality program and adherence to the standards.

## 2. Objectives

**These standards will accomplish the following:**

- Increase access to affordable, safe, quality active play programming for children and their families.
- Increase physical literacy and movement in program participants
- Increase opportunities for ECEs and recreation practitioners to enhance their awareness and skills related to movement, physical literacy and outdoor play.
- Establish requirements for NS-BAP Programs provided through recreation organizations and consistent shared standards for these organizations and for regulated childcare providers.

## 3. Scope

- These standards apply to sites at which a program operator offers NS-BAP from September 2022 – June 2023.
- Pre-primary children have first priority in accessing the NS-BAP. It is also open to other children in the school, up to Grade 6.
- The program will be offered on school days; therefore, PD days, storm days, etc., will not be included in the Before and After Program unless pre-existing programs already accommodate these additional days and this was previously agreed upon by provider and Regional Centre for Education (RCE)/conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP).

## 4. Accountability and Monitoring

- Program operators will be accountable to the Departments of Communities, Culture and Heritage and Education and Early Childhood Development.
- NS-BAP program operators will self-report twice during the program period, commencing in September and ending in June to confirm that these standards are met.
- Program operators will allow the monitoring team to:
  - access the program to confirm these standards are being adhered to;
  - validate the self-assessment information; and
  - provide support as required to meet the objectives of the project

- Program operators will consent to the sharing of self-assessment information for the purpose of evaluation of the project

## 5. Evaluation

EECD and CCH will evaluate NS-BAP and its delivery by Program operators during the program period. Sites are expected to participate in this process.

## 6. Inclusion Statement

All children will be supported to meaningfully participate in NS-BAP

The defining features of effective inclusive NS-BAP programs are:

**ACCESS** – Leadership that supports inclusion, staff who believe in inclusion and policies that promote inclusion. All children and families have access to NS-BAP.

**PARTICIPATION** – Programs that are designed to meet all children and family's needs (environments, schedules/routines, relationships, responsiveness, expectations). The program's planning is tailored with the aim of maximum participation for each child. Some program adaptations and accommodations may be required to ensure children fully participate in play and activities with their peers.

**SUPPORTS** – An infrastructure is in place to strengthen a program's effort to provide inclusive programs. NS-BAP inclusion infrastructure provides for access to ongoing professional development of staff, consultation supports and resources to ensure all participants can meaningfully participate. Further, program standards require communication and collaboration of all partners involved in creating an inclusive program. Collaborations between families, administrators, staff and professionals are the cornerstone for success to ensure consistency and cohesion.

# Standards for Program Delivery

## 7. Definitions

“**Active play**” is play that involves moving the body at any intensity.

“**Child-initiated experience**” refers to activities in which children follow their own interests (e.g., children have opportunities to play with open-ended materials and to make their own choices for play).

“**Culturally responsive practices**” refers to practice that reflects and celebrates our pluralist society and which allows children to develop and learn while experiencing a sense of belonging and respect.

“**Developmentally appropriate practice**” refers to a framework used to create early learning environments that are respectful of children’s emerging competencies and foster children’s optimal development in all domains. Developmentally appropriate programs recognize that activities and materials in the learning environment reflect the competencies and interests, cultural background and experiences, of the children present. Embedded within this framework is an understanding that the development of positive relationships between families, children, child care staff and communities, is a key factor in creating optimal early learning environments. Individual personality, learning style, family background and health history all affect the rate of development for children (NAEYC, 2009).

“**Early Childhood Development**” is the growth that takes place between birth and age eight.

“**Energetic play**” is contextualized for the early years and refers to activities for young children that get them working hard, breathing heavily and feeling warm (e.g., ball games, riding a tricycle, tag etc.).

“**HIGH FIVE**” is Canada’s only comprehensive quality standard for children’s sport and recreation programs. It is based on five Principles of healthy child development that are essential for quality programs including: **A Caring Adult, the opportunity to make friends, the opportunity to participate, the opportunity to play, and the opportunity to master skills.** These program principles are described in more detail at: <https://www.highfive.org/what-high-five/mission-vision-and-principles>

“**Inclusive Practice**” is a practice based on the belief that all individuals have equal worth and rights, and which actively promotes acceptance and participation of all children and families in a program. This type of practice provides different and appropriate learning support according to children’s strengths, needs, interests, and backgrounds.

“**Key Pillars**” of the program are the core areas of focus and include outdoor play, physical literacy, 24 Hour Movement Guidelines and Inclusive and culturally responsive practice.

“**Lead Staff Member**” is the staff member designated by the program operator to oversee supervision, management and implementation of the program.

“**Let’s Get Moving Nova Scotia**” is the Province’s action plan to reduce sedentary living and encourage physical activity. This action plan strives to make daily movement a cultural norm in spaces and places where we live, work, learn and play. <https://novascotia.ca/letsgetmoving/>

“**Loose parts**” means open-ended, natural or synthetic materials that can be used and manipulated in different ways such as wood, metal, plastic, fabric, or paper, or they can come from nature so that children can then experiment and invent through play

“**Movement**” in these standards, refers to breaking up sitting time, and encouraging a range of intensities of physical activity (from walking slowly while exploring nature to running and jumping).

“**Notable Situation**” is an accident, communicable disease or other situation that affects or could affect the health, safety or well-being of a child in attendance at NS-BAP, but that does not meet the criteria set out in the definition of “Serious Incident” below.

“**On-site**” in these standards, refers to anywhere inside the school (e.g., the gymnasium) or outside on the grounds of the school within which the Pre-primary classroom is situated.

“**Physical literacy**” is the motivation, confidence, physical competence, knowledge and understanding to value and take responsibility for engagement in physical activities for life.

“**Potable drinking water**” means water that is suitable for human consumption.

“**Pre-primary child**” means a child who attends a PPP.

“**Pre-primary Program**” or **PPP** means a universal, play-based program established under the *Pre-Primary Education Act* offered to four-year-old children in the year before they start school.

“**Recreation**” is an experience that results from freely-chosen participation in physical, social, cognitive, creative and spiritual pursuits that enhance individual and community well-being.

“**Recreation Programming**” programming that develops and implements quality recreation experiences that result in social, cognitive, emotional and physical benefits.

“**Serious Incident**” means any of the following:

#### **Serious incidents**

A “serious incident” means any of the following:

- (a) the death of a child while the child is attending a child-care program;
- (b) any injury to a child that occurs while the child is attending a child-care program and that requires emergency medical attention;
- (c) a fire or other disaster on the premises of a facility, agency, play group space or family child-care home;
- (d) a concern or an occurrence relating to an element of the physical environment or an operational or safety practice in a facility or a family child-care home that poses a risk to the children’s health, safety or well-being;

- (e) a child is not accounted for during any period of time – this means a missing child, a child who has wandered, a child left outside while the rest of the group is inside.

**“School-age child”** means a child who is attending school or a Pre-primary Program and is not older than 12 on December 31 of the school year.

**“Screen time”** means time spent sitting in front of screens such as televisions, video games, hand held devices and computers.

**“Transition”** refers to the period of time during the daily routine when children move from one activity to another. For example, the transitions from indoor play to outdoor play.

## 8. Staff Qualifications, Training & Orientation

- 8.1 Each program operator must designate a lead staff member to be on site to oversee the supervision, management and implementation of this program.
- 8.2 Qualifications for the lead must include a degree or diploma in an area that qualifies them to work in an early childhood education or organized recreation setting. A combination of education and experience may be considered, at the discretion of the employer.
- 8.3 Before working with children, all program staff, including the lead, must have proof of the following minimum qualifications and record checks including:
1. Valid First Aid Certificate (with a minimum of Emergency First Aid) and CPR C from a recognized provider
  2. Vulnerable Sector Check
  3. Child Abuse Registry Check

If an individual is not eligible to get a vulnerable sector check, due to age restrictions, they may submit a criminal records check.

A new employee must provide the results of all required record checks to the provider before the date that the employee begins work, and the record checks must have been conducted less than 6 months before that date.

Vulnerable sector checks are required pre-employment only, after which a criminal record check will be required for staff every 5 years. A new criminal check must be obtained and provided to the employer no later than 5 years after the date of the most recent check, and every 5 years after that.

A new child abuse register check should be provided to the employer no later than 3 years after the date of the most recent check, and every 3 years after that.

Individuals must have no contact with children attending the program or until



- (a) the employer has received the results of all required record checks for the person; and
- (b) the employer has determined that the results of the record checks for the person disclose no evidence of any conviction for child abuse or another offence respecting children and generally do not raise any issues concerning the appropriateness of employing the person.

8.4 Program staff must meet the following minimum requirement:

- “High Five Principles of Healthy Child Development” AND experience working with children

OR

- Partial training and coursework in early childhood education or a field that qualifies a person to work with children and families AND experience working with children. Fulfilment of this requirement will be determined at the discretion of the employer.

8.5 Program staff must complete training in NS-BAP Training and Development Program within 8 months of hire or have acquired comparable training, which will be approved on an individual basis by the CCH and EECD.

8.6 Program staff who have completed NS-BAP Training and Development Program must complete 3 to 6 hours per school year of professional development relevant to the key pillars in subsequent years.

8.7 An Orientation process must be provided for all hired staff that includes an overview of the NS-BAP Standards, emergency and safety procedures, child abuse [Duty to Report](#), permitted behaviour guidance practices, communication with families, food safety and program planning. Records will be kept by provider to track orientation participation.

8.8 NS-BAP group size is 24. Where demand is greater than 24 at the NS-BAP site, and subject to approval by CCTH and EECD, additional cohorts of 24 may be created. Two staff must always be present with each cohort, regardless of the number of children in that group.

8.9 As programs grow beyond 24 spaces, additional space, beyond the Pre-primary space, may be required to support family and community need. Where more than 24 children are to be accommodated, programs will divide into multiple cohorts and utilize the pre-primary space as well as additional school spaces as determined by the RCE/CSAP.

8.10 Where there are multiple cohorts at an NS BAP site, a lead position will not be required in each group, instead the requirement is that at least one lead be on site at all times and all other staff members must meet minimum staffing requirements, including ensuring there are at least 2 staff present with each cohort at all times.

## 9. Program

- 9.1 The daily program plan must include an overview of the planned activities, informed by children, based on their interests, with opportunities for child-initiated experiences.
- 9.2 The daily program for children must be developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive and promote full participation of all children.
- 9.3 Program staff must role model and engage children in active play and physical literacy development.
- 9.4 Children should spend a total of 90 minutes moving actively, with emphasis on energetic play. This must include a minimum of 60 minutes outside (in the before and/or after time periods) all seasons.
- 9.5 Children must not participate in screen time during the program.
- 9.6 Children must not be sedentary for extended periods of time.
- 9.7 Engage school and the PPP manager to ensure a seamless day for children and support communication between program operators and teams.

## 10. Learning Environments, Materials and Equipment

- 10.1 Children's indoor and outdoor play spaces must be accessible, clean, in good repair and age appropriate
- 10.2 Children's indoor and outdoor play spaces must be equipped with materials and equipment to facilitate developmentally, age appropriate and inclusive experiences.
- 10.3 All materials, equipment and natural and manufactured loose parts are easily accessible in sufficient quantities based on the number of children present.
- 10.4 Children must play indoors in extreme weather conditions. For example, if the temperature falls below -25C with or without windchill or when windchill is -28.

- 10.5 Sun safe practices must be used when UV index is high (6-7) or very high (8-10), including but not limited to, access to shade.

## 11. Nutrition

- 11.1 Staff must create a relaxing and enjoyable snack environment including role modeling and engaging children in safe food handling and snack preparation.
- 11.2 Staff and children must wash hands before and after food preparation and eating
- 11.3 Children must have free access to potable drinking water during the day, including outdoors and outings.
- 11.4 Foods and beverages must not be used to reinforce positive behaviours, as a reward or withheld as a consequence of inappropriate behaviour.
- 11.5 Snacks must be provided daily and include servings from at least two of the food groups, one being fruit or vegetables.
- 11.6 Foods from home must be labeled with the child's name and refrigerated if necessary.
- 11.7 Allergy and anaphylaxis information on any child must be posted in food preparation area in consultation with the PPP.

## 12. Family and Staff Communication

- 12.1 A parent and staff communication plan must be developed annually that includes orientation procedures, feedback opportunities, and methods of communication.
- 12.2 Program plans and philosophy of the program must be posted or available in a visible location to all staff, volunteers and families.
- 12.3 A policy with respect to how staff will support children's social development and self-regulation skills must be available and shared with all staff, volunteers and families.

## 13. Health and Safety

- 13.1 Every child must be accounted for at all times during operating hours.

- 13.2 Staff must manage the safety of children during transition times between indoor and outdoor environments as well as greetings and departures.
- 13.3 Program must have at least two First Aid Kits approved for emergency treatment that are adequately stocked.
- 13.4 First aid kit, list of children, emergency contacts must be taken on outings.
- 13.5 Prescription and non-prescription medication must be properly labeled, and safely stored.
- 13.6 When administering prescription and non-prescription medication staff must obtain prior written instructions signed by guardians and keep a written record of each dose, initialed by staff once given.
- 13.7 Prescription and non-prescription medication brought to the program by a parent must be in the appropriate container. Containers must be accessible but safely stored.
- 13.8 Program must have established emergency rules and procedures, and a fire safety plan.
- 13.9 Providers must be aware of school safety and evacuation plans as well as location of safe meeting space.
- 13.10 Dangerous/hazardous materials must be properly labeled, and safely stored as per OHS and RCE policy.
- 13.11 School based programs must follow pre-primary evacuation approaches. Childcare partners must have a monthly record of emergency evacuation drills.
- 13.12 When a Serious Incident occurs with a child, staff must report to the following within 24 hours:
- Guardians
  - Principal
  - PPP Manager (If those affected are in the PPP)
  - RCE/CSAP NS BAP staff
  - Provincial Monitoring and Support Contact
  - Program Operator/Director
- 13.13 Program must have established procedures for field trips and outings.
- 13.14 Staff must ensure children are appropriately clothed for outdoor activity.

- 13.15 When there is a reasonable belief that a child enrolled in NS-BAP has been abused within the meaning of the *Children and Family Services Act*, the provider and each staff member and volunteer must follow [Duty to Report](#) protocol.
- 13.16 If a Notable Situation arises, the provider or program staff must do all of the following:
- (a) Immediately secure any necessary medical assistance and make every effort to notify the parents of any child directly affected;
  - (b) Prepare a summary report, which must include all of the following:
    - (i) A summary of the situation and the action taken,
    - (ii) The signature of each staff person or care provider involved;
    - (iii) A place for the signature of the parent of each affected child;
    - (iv) Place a copy of the summary report prepared in the file of each affected child.

## 14. Children's Records

- 14.1 The Program Operator must maintain a record file for each child enrolled in the program which must include, at a minimum:
- (a) Child's name and date of birth
  - (b) guardians' name(s) and contact information (home address, phone number, email address)
  - (c) emergency contact name and contact information (phone number)
  - (d) physician's name and contact information (office address, phone number)
  - (e) health information including immunization confirmation (verbal confirmation with parents followed and recorded staff signature verifying conversation)
  - (f) emergency authorization form
  - (g) medication form (including authorization for medication administration, as applicable)
  - (h) outing authorization forms
  - (i) other requirements
  - (j) incident reports (as applicable)
- 14.2 A secure and accessible filing system needs to be in place on site for the children's files.
- 14.3 Program must keep each child's file confidential, complete, organized and secure.
- 14.4 Program must maintain daily attendance record of each child that indicates reasons for any absences.
- 14.5 Children's records must stay on file with the Program Operator for two years following their withdrawal from the program.

## 15. Resources

1. Bredekamp, S., & Copple, C. (Eds.). (2009). *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs, Serving Children Birth Through 8*. (Third Edition). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.
2. [Canadian 24-hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth](#)
3. [Canadian 24-hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years](#)
4. Canadian Pediatric Society Position Statement: Screen time and young children: Promoting health and development in a digital world.
5. Dietze, B., & Kashin, D. (2011). *Playing and Learning in Early Childhood Education*. Toronto: Pearson Canada. <https://www.cps.ca/en/documents/position/screen-time-and-young-children>
6. [Nova Scotia Day Care Regulations](#).
7. Nova Scotia Ministry of Education and Early Childhood Development (2018). *Capable, Confident, and Curious: Nova Scotia's Early Learning Curriculum Framework*. Government of Nova Scotia. <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/docs/nseicf2018en.pdf>
8. [Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play](#)
9. Province of Nova Scotia (2014) [Healthy Eating in Recreation and Sport Settings](#)
10. Province of Nova Scotia (2018) [Let's Get Moving Nova Scotia](#): An action plan for increasing physical activity in Nova Scotia.