

TERMS OF REFERENCE
ILLINIAQTILAAK KATIMAJINGIT
(Working Together for Preschoolers)
Early Years Parent Council

Pilimmaksarniq: Concept of Skills and Knowledge Acquisition

To empower parents of children enrolled in OICC early years programs by giving them with the opportunity to provide input, solutions and direction to programs for their children.

Qanuqtuurungnarniq: Concept of Being Resourceful to Solve Problems

The role of the council will be:

- To guide the development and progress of Sivummut Head Start and Tumiralaat Child Care Centre and make suggestions for improvements;
- To be aware of how the six AHS components are included in early years programming (see appendix);
- To provide advice and input into how to further incorporate the six components into early years programming;
- To support and advise the Sivummut and Tumiralaat Coordinators in program development and evaluation;
- To participate in the hiring process of early years staff;
- To promote the inclusion of culture and language in early years programs;
- To provide input into the Sivummut Annual work plan; Early Years Strategic Directions
- To provide input into the development or revisions of operational policies.

The Terms of Reference must be approved by the OICC Board of Directors. Amendments to these Terms of Reference must be brought before the committee for discussion and must be approved by the OICC Board of Directors.

Pijitsirarniq: Concept of Serving

All members are parents/guardians of children enrolled in OICC early years programs (Sivummut Head Start, OICC Kindergarten, Tumiralaat Preschool and/or Tumiralaat Toddler programs) and all parent members are volunteers. Any parent/guardian is welcome to attend a Council meeting. The term for membership is one year, from September to September. Meetings will be bi-monthly with extra meetings added to facilitate other needs as decided upon by the council members. Meetings will start at 6PM and will not exceed 2 hours.

Parent Council members will be voted in by Early Years parents during the orientation BBQ for parents/guardians in September of each year. Interested parents can self-nominate or be nominated by other parents. OICC Staff who are Early Years parents can sit on the Parent Council as non-voting members.

The council will select a Co-Chair from Sivummut and a Co-Chair from Tumiralaat, to be decided at the first meeting. In the case where the Sivummut Co-Chair is not of Inuit descent, council members

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will also select a Sivummut parent of Inuit decent to be the Parent Representative at the OAHSA Inc. (Ontario Aboriginal Head Start Association Incorporated) meetings.

MEMBER ROLES:

The role of the Co-Chairs will be to alternately:

- Prepare the agenda with input from the members and Coordinators
- Chair the meeting, ensuring each agenda item is addressed
- Report to the OICC Board of Directors as requested

The role of the OAHSA Inc. Representative will be to:

- Attend all face-to-face and conference call meetings as required by OAHSA Inc.
- Present and report to the Parent Council on the results of OAHSA Inc. meetings

The role of the Tumiralaat and Sivummut Program Coordinators will be to:

- Attend all meetings
- Provide suggestions for agenda items to the Family Support Coordinator and the Chair
- Present and report on the annual and operational plans
- Report on the 6 components and seek input for improvement
- Support parents' role as members of the Parent Council
- Forward suggestions to the Director of Programs, the Executive Director and Board of Directors when needed
- Chair the meeting if one or both parent co-chairs are absent

The role of the Family Support Coordinator will be to:

- Take minutes
- Organize the meal
- Book space for the meeting
- Arrange child care based on the number of RSVPs
- Provide copies of meeting minutes, collect agenda items, and review minutes and agendas with members
- Send meeting reminders to members.

The role of the Members of Council will be to:

- Attend a minimum of 3 meetings per year
- Advise the Family Support Coordinator of their attendance prior to the meeting
- Advise the Family Support Coordinator of the number of children that will require childcare during the meeting

Piliriqatigiingniq: Concept of Collaborative Relationship or Working Together for a Common Purpose

The principles that guide the work of council incorporates Inuit values:

Sharing, generosity, family, respect, love, listening, equality, significance and trust. Volunteer, observe, practice, mastery, teamwork, cooperation, unity, consensus and conservation. Patience,

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endurance, improvisation, strength, adaptability, resilience, resourcefulness, moving forward, take the long view, survival, interconnectedness and honesty.

All members must review and sign the OICC Oath of Confidentiality and Code of Conduct. Members must declare conflict of interest when making decisions that may result in a gain or benefit to themselves, a relative or an organization in which they are employed or associated. If a member declares a conflict of interest during a meeting, he/she will be asked to leave during the discussion and decision making. Any committee member may declare a conflict of interest on behalf of another member who has not done so. Staff of OICC will be considered ex-officio members without voting privileges.

Pilimmaksarniq: Consensus-Decision Making

A spirit of cooperation and mutual respect shall be fostered at all times during meetings. Different opinions will be respected during discussions. The council will work from a consensus basis and try to reach consensus on all recommendations that go to the Board. However, if decisions must be made in a timely manner, a vote will be held after full discussions. Decision will only be made when quorum is present (5 voting members). Decisions by vote will require a vote of 50% +1 to pass. Decisions can be made by an e-mail vote on urgent matters.

The composition of the voting council members are as follows:

- 9 members with at least 5 parents/guardians from Sivummut Head Start and 4 parents/guardians from Tumiralaat Preschool/Toddler programs.
- 3 non-voting members: Tumiralaat Child Care Centre Coordinator, Sivummut Head Start Coordinator, Family Support Coordinator.

Avatimik Kamattiarniq: Concept of Environmental Stewardship

Each member is responsible for cleaning their own dishes after the meal, putting the chairs and tables away and helping with clean up.

APPENDIX A

PROGRAM GOALS **(6 Aboriginal Head Start Components)**

Sivummut Head Start is one of approximately 126 Aboriginal Head Starts (off reserve) funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada. All of these programs are guided by the same six basic components to ensure quality programs across the country. The Sivummut Head Start aims to do so by the following methods:

1. EDUCATION

Goal: To prepare Inuit children for school.

Activities:

- Variety of child-centered activities: art, sand, dress-up, computer, games, blocks, puzzles, puppets, books, science, music, balls.
- Children's activities that will help develop basic concepts i.e. numbers, letters, syllabics.
- Monthly field trips.
- Circle activities in English and Inuktitut.
- Child assessment: observations, progress reports, parent-teacher interviews, and child development referrals, i.e. speech therapy.
- Weekly circles to the Family Literacy Program.
- Weekly book lending opportunities.

2. NUTRITION

Goal: To encourage healthy eating habits using a variety of nutritional foods, including country food.

Activities:

- Healthy Breakfast/ Lunch prepared on-site and served daily
- Nutritious snacks prepared on-site and served daily
- All foods are based on the required Food Groups in the Day Nurseries Act, Canada's Guide to Healthy Eating
- Quarterly menus sent home and are posted on the Parent Bulletin Board.
- Allergies posted and foods that trigger an allergy not served to that child
- Country food served as available
- Children's activities about nutrition and country food

3. PARENT/ GUARDIAN INVOLVEMENT

Goal: To have parents/ guardians involved, to the best of their ability, in all aspects of the program.

Parent/ Caregiver Activities:

- The Parent Orientation Night
- Early Years Parent Steering Committee
- Parent volunteers

- Doing crafts/sewing
- Ongoing communication via phone, parent letters, email, and communication book
- Monthly program calendars
- Special family events: parties, outings, field trips, lunches
- Parenting courses and workshops
- Parent-Teacher meetings
- Membership
- Board of Directors
- Participation/attendance at The Annual General Meeting

The foundation of success for the Sivummut Head Start is the involvement of parents and guardians in the program. Parents and guardians are the child's primary teachers and they have the most important influence on their child's development. It is the parents' right and responsibility to be involved in all aspects of the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the program.

4. CULTURE & LANGUAGE

Goal: To promote the retention of the Inuit culture and language.

Activities:

- Community sharing: Elders, storytelling, sharing traditional knowledge, sewing, etc
- Program for children based on Inuit culture
- Children's performances in community i.e. National Aboriginal Day
- Inuktitut language used daily
- Traditional play items: bone games, string games, ulus, drums, amautis, atigis, kamiks, Inuit dolls
- Development and use of culturally appropriate activities and materials.
- Cultural events such as the annual "Inuit Day" in February
- Circles in Inuktitut i.e. songs, games, books
- Use of syllabics in the classroom i.e. labeling pictures and objects

A key part of the Sivummut Head Start Program is the cultural and language component. Activities, materials, special events, food, and family workshops reflect the Inuit culture. Inuktitut is an official language of the program and used throughout the day. It is the policy of the *Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre* to employ Inuit staff whenever possible.

5. HEALTH PROMOTION

Goal: To promote and model healthy lifestyle choices for parents and children.

Activities:

- Focus on the development of the "whole" child.
- Workshops on health/nutrition topics
- Dental care program (screening and varnishing)
- Policies and procedures to ensure health and safety of everyone
- Smoke free environment

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- Children's activities promoting health and safety
- Regular outside play and physical activity for the children
- Monthly 'Well Child' checks
- Referrals when needed i.e. Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health

6. SOCIAL SUPPORT

Goal: To provide advice, support and information to parents. To strengthen a parents support network and provide information.

Activities:

- Regular contact with parents
- Informal one-on-one support
- Voluntary home visits
- Formal assessments on children when required or requested
- Individual program planning for children when required
- General referrals for parents
- Clothing/toy donations and exchange
- Parent support
- Ensured confidentiality