

Ages & Stages in Arviat

Jurisdiction: Nunavut

Contact: Shared Care Child Care Program

Level: Early Childhood

Theme: Assessment

Description of Practice:

Ages & Stages in Arviat

This is a developmental screening program for children registered in one of the Early Childhood Programs in Arviat (daycare, Aboriginal Head Start, Healthy Babies & Healthy Moms). Parents fill out the questionnaires and return them to the program, staff input the data into the computer and the screening profile is assessed. Staff then provide learning activities to the parents and the appropriate program that help to enhance any areas that the child may be weak in. Health & Social Services are involved if there seems to be a significant area of need or delay.

Background:

Most children with developmental delays were not being identified until they entered the formal school system (kindergarten). Any assessment tools that were available were not language or culturally appropriate. Some children & parents were not familiar with some of the phrases and activities that were part of the Ages & Stages questionnaires, so the developmental profile may not have truly reflected the child's developmental stage.

Development:

Staff from licensed childcare facilities in Nunavut were invited to participate in an Ages & Stages Training Workshop. The staff from Arviat that attended felt there was a great potential for use with the children that attended the various early childhood programs. Early Childhood Staff from another Nunavut community also felt the same so they had the program translated into Inuktitut and had the questionnaires adapted to reflect the Inuit culture and life in Nunavut. Elders were involved in the adaptation process. The staff from Arviat had the translated version of Ages & Stages put into the Arviat dialect before using.

Evidence:

Kindergarten teachers in Arviat are noticing that the children from the early childhood programs are more prepared and ready for kindergarten. There are less noticeable minor delays due to the Early Childhood staff working with the parents & child to enhance any area that the child may have been delayed or weak in. Parents are taking a more active role in their child's development.

Adaptability:

It was extremely important for Arviat to have the questionnaires translated into their dialect. Even small differences could cause some confusion and not provide an accurate screening. This was just another example of how important it is to have materials and resources available in a language and culturally relevant way.

Further information:

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