



**Umbrella Family and
Child Centres of Hamilton**

2.5 GROUP GATHERING TIME POLICY

MANUAL	Child Care Centre Program Policy Manual
SECTION	2- Engagement
POLICY	2.5 Group Gathering Time Policy
LAST REVISED	June 19, 2024

RATIONALE

Children and staff are encouraged to act as co-learners. Large and small group opportunities allow children and staff to engage in exploring questions, deepen understanding, spark curiosity and support children's development (HDLH). When planning group experiences, staff listen and observe children closely to discover ideas and interests.

RESPONSIBILITY

All staff.

PROCEDURE

1. A group gathering time will be planned and implemented each day for toddler and preschool children. Depending on the interests of the group of children gathering times may include:
 - a. An introduction song
 - b. Several songs and/or finger plays
 - c. Materials such as books, flannel stories, objects to study and discuss, photographs and previous documentation of projects, props for games, puppets, etc. will be available
 - d. A closing song
2. Children will be encouraged to join the gathering time, but not mandated to participate.
3. Children will be encouraged to express their ideas and theories individually and staff will facilitate discussion.
4. Children will be encouraged to take turns listening and speaking.
5. Staff will employ techniques such as asking open ended questions, and active listening, reviewing and refining children's comments, etc.
6. The gathering time provides a good opportunity to document discussion. One staff member could act as a recorder while the other engages in the facilitation.
7. Staff will observe children for cues as to their interest in the circle and will be prepared with a backup activity or another plan if children are not participating.