



For Immediate Release:

Discovery Child Care Launches The First Licensed Forest And Nature School In Barrie & Simcoe County

The forest school concept is quickly being adopted around the world offering enormous benefits to young children as they naturally explore the nature around them

BARRIE, Ontario, Canada – 24th September, 2014 - (www.discoverychild.on.ca)
Discovery Child Care, an award winning child care centre, focused on connecting children with nature using unique award winning nature-focused programs, has opened its newest initiative, The Discovery Forest School – www.forestschool.ca

Forest School is an educational approach that has existed worldwide since the late 1950s, with over ten thousand Forest School programs in the UK alone. In a Forest School, children spend anywhere from a half day to a full day outdoors in various urban and near-urban parks, natural spaces adjacent to, or on school grounds, or natural playgrounds and outdoor classrooms.

The activities that happen in a Forest School also vary, depending on the season, climate, landscape, animals that have visited the night before, trees that have blown down in the wind, the kinds of provocations elicited by the educator.

Discovery Child Care Centre offers an educational program as an alternative to the Ministry of Education Full Day Kindergarten Program. As children are not required to

attend school until grade one, children have the option to be enrolled full-time in our Kindergarten program.

Our curriculum is child-directed, hands-on, play based, emergent, and inquiry-based. A growing body of research has emerged that affirms that children ages birth through eight years learn most effectively through this approach to education.

“We’re very excited to bring this new nature program into our child care centre and offer it as a legitimate and licensed alternative to regular kindergarten,” says Karen Eilersen, President of Discovery Child Care and a certified forest school practitioner. “There are 2 certified teachers (in training) working in our Forest School program. We have a 1 to 4 teacher / child ratio while in the forest, and a 1-8 teacher / child ratio while in the indoor/outdoor classroom. The Forest School Program (9am-12pm daily) is taught by two Level 3 certified Forest School Practitioners and 2 classroom teachers and we follow the Ontario Early Learning Framework, Continuum of Development so your child is well prepared for grade one.”

Discovery Child Care has already developed its own nature program bringing nature into the classroom and taking the classroom into nature, offering an environmentally aware foundation of early learning for children, from infants to school-age.

“We believe that being outdoors in beautiful, natural environments is an essential experience for all children. Research continues to show that nature reduces stress, increase attention span and foster healthy brain development. It is critical to a child’s health and to the healthy development of the whole child,” added Karen. “Children are given the opportunity to interact daily with materials found in nature and in the process become thoughtful stewards of the earth we share.”

The Discovery Child Care Forest School Program follows the Emergent Curriculum philosophy which means, children will be provided with hands-on, play-based learning opportunities that will encourage active exploration, autonomy, choice, problem solving and plain old fun! A child’s individual interests, abilities and needs will be considered when planning our indoor and outdoor programs.

"We’re very excited for our child to grasp the elements of nature, what an astounding experience!" says Cynthia Nontell. "This program will help our children to have the opportunity for more well rounded education inside and outside of the classroom."

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About Discovery Child Care

Barrie Based Discovery Child Care brings nature into the classroom and takes the classroom into nature, offering an environmentally aware foundation of early learning for

children, from infants to school-age. We follow an Emergent Curriculum philosophy which means, your child will be provided with hands-on, play-based learning opportunities that will encourage active exploration, autonomy, choice, problem solving and plain old fun! Your child's individual interests, abilities and needs will be considered when planning our indoor and outdoor programs. For more information, visit <http://www.discoverychid.on.ca>

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