

## Finding and Listening to Children's Voices

The following questions can be used as a reflective tool to consider children's thoughts and feelings about your program, as well as to consider how their voices are invited and heard.

### Being able to reflect deeply on the below questions will require:

1. Active listening (listening to children's words, non-verbal actions, drawings, constructions, etc.)
2. Careful and consistent observations (of the children, program, environment, etc.)
3. Documenting observations (through photos, video, written notes, etc.)

### These questions, as they pertain to your program, could be reflected on:

1. Individually
2. As a teaching team
3. In a staff meeting

### Questions for reflection:

- How do the children use the materials in the program?
- What materials do children frequently gravitate to? What materials aren't used very often? Why might this be?
- What is the quality of relationships like between the children? Between the children and teachers? Between the children and parents? What evidence backs this up?
- What was the last thing that a child did and/or said that made me curious or inspired me?
- How do children respond during group gathering times? During transitions? During outdoor play?
- Are there any questions that children frequently ask, or statements they frequently make? What might this tell me about their thoughts or feelings?
- Have I invited the children's participation in the layout/design of the classroom environment? In the daily routine/schedule? If so, how? If not, what hinders me from doing so?
- Do I involve the children in decision making, problem solving, and idea sharing in the program? If so, how? If not, what hinders me from doing so?

*Thanks to **Milton Community Resource Centre** for developing this tool for the **Asset-Building Toolkit**, July 2013. For more questions about this tool, contact Victoria Armstrong, Early Learning Facilitator at (905) 876-1244 ext. 243 or [victoriaa@mrcr.on.ca](mailto:victoriaa@mrcr.on.ca)*