



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE

LOS ANGELES AIR FORCE BASE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER CURRICULUM

The content of our early childhood curriculum is developmentally appropriate for the age and ability of each child being served. Our program components encompass language concepts, fine and gross motor skills, perception, self- help and social skills, a curriculum which included these components recognizes and addresses the many facets of the developing child.

Knowledge of growth and development of children is the essential base on which a curriculum must be established and implemented. Therefore, the physical, intellectual, social and emotional growth of each child in the classroom is the overriding objective. Our program is flexible enough so that sequence and content meet specific needs and situations, and yet structured enough to include all curricular areas, appropriate to the ages, interests, and abilities of individuals in the group.

Infant, toddler and preschool care must be holistic; it must consider the whole child. Physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development are all vitally important during these early years, so balance is needed to help the child properly develop. Overemphasis in one area or limited involvement in another may create unnecessary stress or it may delay development for the child.

All children need to experience nurturance, love and consistency, touch, movement, exploration, interaction with others, comfort, challenge, and stimulation. These help develop the child's feelings of security and trust, self- worth, curiosity, creativity, and captive involvement with people and the world.

Our program focuses on developmentally appropriate practices for each child in our care. We feel that each, child, parent, and caregiver involved in child care are developing naturally. They do not need, nor is it helpful for anyone to push, prod, or pressure them to develop before they are ready. Adults can enhance, encourage, and nurture children's development in a variety of ways by taking cues from the children to provide the appropriate "match" of materials and experiences to fit the children's observed needs, interests, and behavior.

Each caregiver is developing as both a person and a caregiver. Caregivers who view themselves as learners continually discover things about themselves; they came to know more about others; and they increase both their skills as caregivers and the roles they assume as caregivers.

Each day of a child's life is viewed as a progression toward the growth and development of healthy, intelligent and contributing member of society.

Areas of Learning

Language and cognitive/ thinking skills and concepts:

Language, thinking skills, and concept development are closely related. Language is the communication system we use to relate ideas and thought through the understanding and usage of words, phrases, and sentences. Thinking skills involve the child's ability to solve problems, share ideas, evaluate and organize experiences, generalize concepts, and recall information.

The content of the cognitive curriculum includes such skills as naming objects, colors and shapes, and directional- positional concepts. Other example of cognitive skills are being aware of the function and use of objects, and answering questions, building vocabulary, and developing verbal reasoning skills.

Perception:

Perceptual skills are those related to the senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. The word perception does not refer to how the brain processes the experiences. Perception applies to just about every experience a child has because the senses are an integral part of learning.

The content of the perceptual curriculum includes such skills as assembling puzzles, copying designs, patterns and drawing a person. Other examples include experiences which enable the child to identify and compare sights, sounds, textures, and odors in the environment.

Motor Skills:

Motor skills are generally classified as either of two types: fine motor, which involves small muscles, and gross motor, which involves large muscles. Most fine motor skills relate to the hands. They usually include finger dexterity and the coordination of the hands with the eye movement. Activities designed to build these skills include building with blocks, stringing beads, cutting with scissors, doing finger-plays, lacing, buttoning clothes, printing, and strength and coordination of the muscles so that the child can walk, run, skip, catch a ball, and climb.

Self-help Skills:

Self-help skills are all the different tasks a child learns in order to care for himself/ herself independently. Holding a cup, using a spoon, and holding out arms and legs while being dressed are some of the first self-help skills a young child learn. As the toddler reaches preschool age, and self-help skills become more complex. Feeding, dressing, and toilet training are important achievements in a preschooler's development. As children learn to care for themselves, they develop a sense of pride and confidence that motivates them to try new skills. If children are never given opportunities to care for their needs or if their attempts are criticized, they are deprived of a chance to achieve on their own and feel good about themselves. Children with special needs might take a longer time to learn how to dress, feed and take care of themselves, but they still feel the same pride and sense of accomplishment that are vital part of a young child's development.

Social Skills:

Social skills include interaction with others and interaction with objects. Interactions with others include the child's ability to greet others appropriately, deliver simple messages, take turns, share work and play materials, request and offer help, attempt to follow directions, and accept praise and suggestions. Interactions with objects include: child's ability to handle

materials with care, put away objects when finished, and play and work independently and appropriately with materials.

Readiness:

Readiness skills are the prerequisite building blocks for future success in reading and other academic areas. Abilities, skills and understanding grow at an individual rate. The content of the readiness curriculum includes following directions, listening comprehension sequencing, expanding expressive language and categorizing.

Pre-Math:

Math incorporates the experiences, ideas, and skills to help children organize their world. Exploratory activities and interactions with materials lay the ground work for the development of mathematical concepts. The content of the math curriculum may include matching, sorting, patterning, comparing, classifying, ordering, measuring and graphing. Other examples of math skills include understanding of quantitative concepts, shapes, space, numbers, numbers symbols, one-to-one correspondence, and calendar activities.

Music:

Music activities help the child to develop movement skills and spatial awareness by providing opportunities to respond through bodily movements. Children are encouraged to move to the music and express what they think the music says. Children can learn parts of the body more easily when the learning is incorporated with games and songs. In other singing games, children can learn to hop, skip, run, walk, and balance. They use their eyes, hands, fingers, and arms to develop fine motor coordination.

Music in the class need not to be set apart from other curricular areas in the room. Many songs can be used to enrich the learning experiences in area such as concept and language development. The children can sing about, safety, weather, animals, birds, and community, helpers while they are learning about them in other classroom activities. A learned concept reinforced by a song is remembered more easily and longer. Associating songs and factual content reinforces new learning and can be the stimulus for the child to understand. Carefully planned music activities are particularly helpful for the exceptional child.

Dramatic Play:

Dramatic play is an individual or group experience in which every child has the opportunity to express himself/ herself as he/ she works and plays. It is an ideal way to provide socialization and language expansion for the preschool child. Books, props, guest speakers, field trips, stories, and language expansion for the preschool child. Acting out familiar or new experiences provides the child with an opportunity to assimilate and accommodate these events. Children's ability to express themselves in both word and action, the creation of a social awareness, and the encouragement of cooperative play can be the outcome of dramatic play in the early childhood classroom.

Art:

Art activities for young children should be a process rather than project oriented. To foster creativity in children, it is important to avoid using patterns and models for them to copy. The art experience should provide opportunities for learning and discovery through many mediums. The teacher must respect each at their own pace and developmental level. This will

encourage them to become spontaneous, imaginative, and creative. In addition, art experiences enhance learning and skill development in other curricular areas including fine motor, visual perception, concept development, and socialization.

Cooking Activities:

In planning snack and cooking activities, the teacher must focus on learning experience, exploration, and manipulation. Sensory experiences, including touching, smelling, tasting, and comparing, are basic at this age. These kinds of opportunities provide exposure to a new knowledge about, food. When the teacher relates curriculum experiences with food selection and preparation, it complements a unit approach. Fine motor manipulation skills, pre-math, language, and concept development as well as socialization skills are all encouraged through cooking and snacks experiences.

Should you have any questions regarding the curriculum please feel free to speak with our training and curriculum specialist at (310) 653-6800.