Planning or preparation time should not be scheduled (done) in the nap room. Teachers in charge of a group of napping children are responsible for the children. On any given day, there is no guarantee that all the children will nap or rest quietly. However, if children are sleeping a staff person can prepare for the next activity or day (for example cutting up paper for a collage or working on a bulletin board) as long as the staff person walks around the classroom and checks children periodically.

Best Practice: Build time each day for staff to have planning time away from the children. Create a staff room or planning area with current resource books, adult size tables and chairs, and supplies and materials for staff to use in their planning and preparation work.

WAC

WAC 170-295-2020
How long can a child be at the center?

- The child may remain in care a maximum of ten hours or less each day. If needed, you may extend the time based upon the parent's typical work schedule and travel from and to the center.

WAC

There may be an exception when a parent needs more than 10 hours of child care for their work or school schedule. Keep written documentation in the child's file stating that the parent has informed you that due to their work, school, and/or travel time it is necessary for their child to remain in care for over ten hours. Problem solve with the parent to see if there are any other arrangements (relatives, friends, or neighbors) who could pick up the child earlier on some days to reduce the long hours the child is in care.

WAC

WAC 170-295-2030
How should staff interact with children?

To facilitate interactions between the staff and children that are nurturing, respectful, supportive, and responsive, you must:

- Ensure staff interact with children using positive communication (for example, giving children options of what to do rather than being told what not to do).
- Support the child's development in understanding themselves and others by assisting the child to share ideas, experiences, and feelings.
- Provide age-appropriate opportunities for the child to grow and develop intellectually. Examples include:
  - Reading readiness skills
  - Language skills development
  - Encouraging the child to ask questions
  - Counting
  - Matching objects
  - Differentiating between large and small, and sorting
- Help each child solve problems with intervention as necessary.
- Encourage children to be creative in their projects.
- Allow independence in selecting routine activities and projects.
- Show tolerance for mistakes.
- Encourage children to try new activities, and
- Honor all children's race, religion, culture, gender, physical ability and family structure.

WAC

Staff-child interactions are the heart of your program. Research shows that strong positive relationships between children and caregivers are the keys to positive outcomes for children. Part of building these healthy relationships is for staff to know and understand each individual child in their care. Communication skills can be enhanced by ongoing professional development through classes and continuing education.

Positive communication

Positive communication helps ensure that children are treated in a nurturing, respectful, supportive and responsive way. Communication is more than words. It is also tone of voice, facial expressions and body language.

- Positive communication includes:
  - Smiling
  - Touching
  - Holding and speaking to children at their eye level
  - Listening to what children have to say with attention and interest
  - Seeking meaningful conversation
  - Making eye contact (for some children making eye contact may not be culturally appropriate)
  - Asking children for their opinions or suggestions
  - Giving children choices when possible
  - Observing children's play with interest and occasionally offering suggestions, and
  - Honoring children's home languages.

Pleasant conversations, excited sharing, spontaneous laughter and frequent displays of affection are signs that positive communications are happening in your center. Observe your program in action, and ask yourself these questions:

- Do caregivers listen and respond to all children with warmth and respect?
- How do caregivers respond to behavior problems? Do they use positive guidance techniques? Are they teaching children what to do to get along with others?
- Do caregivers encourage children to talk about what they are doing?
- Do caregivers encourage children to treat each other with respect and to solve problems using their words?
- Are mistakes treated as teachable moments?

If you find yourself answering yes to these questions you will know that you are creating a warm and loving child centered program through the use of positive communication.

Examples of positive communication

Telling Children What TO Do

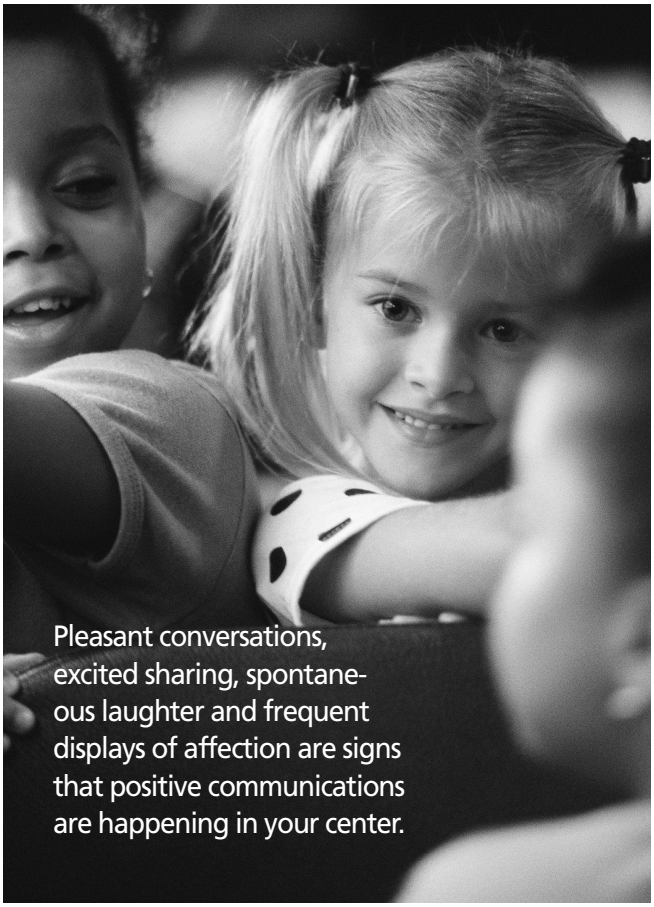
An important part of positive communication with children is teaching them what TO do instead of what not to do. Often when children are told what not to do, they do not know what positive alternatives they can do to successfully navigate the situation. You should use these opportunities as teaching moments to help children develop positive behaviors.

Rather than: "Don't run."

Say: "When we go down the hall we use our walking feet." This statement allows children to know what the expectation is and how to do it.

Rather than: "Don't ruin that book."

Say: "Wash your hands before looking at the book and remember to turn the pages carefully."



Pleasant conversations, excited sharing, spontaneous laughter and frequent displays of affection are signs that positive communications are happening in your center.

Praise and Encouragement
Another important positive communication technique is to offer praise and encouragement. You can describe to the child exactly what they have done well. Words like "good job," "good boy," or "nice picture," lack the descriptive words that allow children to understand what they can do.

Rather than: "What a good girl you were today!"

Say: "You remembered to clean up your place at the table today."

Rather than: "What a beautiful picture. It's the most beautiful picture I've ever seen."

Say: "I noticed you working hard on your picture. The blue color you used is very bright."

Offering Information
Offering more information and a brief explanation rather than just stating a rule helps children understand the reason and encourages cooperation.

Rather than: "Hang up your coat!"

Say: "If you hang up your coat, people won't walk on it and get it all dirty."

Rather than: "Put the markers away."

Say: "When the caps are put back on the markers they will not dry out and we will be able to use them again."

Focusing on Individual Positive Behavior
When you state the positive behavior you want to see rather than the negative behavior that is happening, you redirect the child to do something good rather than condemn the child for something bad.

Rather than: "Stop running around the room!"

Say: "Oh, I see that you're not busy right now. Come and help me set up snack."

Focusing on Feelings and Actions Rather Than Undesirable Behavior
By focusing on feelings and actions rather than on undesirable behavior you help the child identify the strong emotion that prompted the behavior. This is a chance to help the child learn positive ways to express emotions. This can discourage inappropriate ways of acting out.

Rather than: "Don't hit. Bad boy!"

Say: "I see that you are very angry with Patrick. Next time use your words to tell him that you want the ball."

Focusing on What is Going to Happen Next
By focusing a child's attention on a positive event to come rather than on the present disagreeable task, you gain the child's support and cooperation.

Rather than: "Hurry up and pick up those blocks!"

Say: "As soon as you pick up the blocks you were playing with, you can go outside."

Rather than: "Go wash your hands."

Say: "After you have washed your hands, please come to the table and have snack."

Focusing on Group Positive Behaviors
When you focus on the positive behaviors of the group instead of the negative misbehaviors of one or two children, you are stating the expectation and reminding them of what they should be doing.

Rather than: "Some people are still forgetting to push in their chairs!"

Say: "Almost everyone remembered to push in their chair today!"

Rather than: "Some people haven't got their coats on yet."

Say: "Gee, almost everyone has their coats on and we're ready to go outside."

Responding to Damage of Materials or Equipment

When there is damage to program materials or equipment, focus on how it affects the group rather than looking for the culprit. This helps children to understand how their behavior affects others.

Rather than: "Okay, who tore up the snack mat?"

Say: "Oh dear. One of the snack mats has been torn. That's sad. Now only three people will be able to sit at the snack table instead of four."

Rather than: "Who left the lid off of the playdough?"

Say: "The lid was left off of the playdough. Now it has dried up and cannot be used. We won't be able to play with playdough until we make more."

Responding to Feelings Rather Than Threats

When children's feelings are acknowledged, their strong emotions are diffused and they are able to calm down. Respond to the feelings underlying children's threats and not the threats themselves.

Scenario: Child says, "If he doesn't give my picture back right now, I'm going to hit him!"

Rather than: "Don't you DARE hit him!"

Say: "You're feeling so mad at him for taking your picture you feel like hurting him. Let's try trading him this toy for your picture."

Scenario: Child says, "It's my turn and I'm going to punch you!"

Rather than: "You stop that right now!"

Say: "You've been waiting a long time and you are running out of patience. Let's ask her if you can have it in two more minutes."

Books, seminars, and classes will help you learn more positive communication techniques. These are available through:

- Local community and technical colleges
- Local Resource and Referral agencies
- Libraries
- Individual STARS trainings, and
- Local affiliations of Washington Association for the Education of Young Children (WAEYC).

Language as a teaching tool

Language can be used as a teaching tool to help children expand their intellectual and social development. Look for opportunities to pose problems, ask questions, and add information to stimulate children's thinking and extend their learning. The following examples demonstrate how providers can use words to expand concepts.

- A caregiver and young toddler are reading a book together and the child points to a picture and says "dog." The caregiver responds by giving the child more information, "Yes, that is a big, brown dog. He is wagging his tail. The dog says, "arf."
- A three-year-old is playing with cars and trucks. The caregiver asks if the child can line them up from smallest to largest, then takes the opportunity to describe in detail what each car and truck looks like and what it does.

Note: *If you know a second language, use it frequently with children. Also encourage parents for whom English is a second language to use both languages at home. Reassure parents that their child will benefit from using two languages. Talking to their child in their native language helps the child learn to speak two languages fluently.*

Encouraging self-esteem, independence and creativity

Self-Esteem

You help children develop self-esteem by:

- Giving them responsibilities
- Using their names
- Respecting their opinions
- Arranging activities and your environment so children can succeed, and
- Celebrating children's cultural and family backgrounds.

It is important to help children notice what they can do and help them understand that everyone is good at different things. Projects should be open-ended so everyone can experience their own version of success. If children get stuck in one area of play, support them in trying new areas.

Foster children's self-esteem, ability to think, and willingness to stand up for themselves and others. Do this by allowing them to use their intelligence and power. Caregivers should encourage children to:

- Ask questions about any subject
- Use their own ideas in problem solving
- Express their feelings and emotions
- Make choices, and
- Have an active role in their daily life at the center.

Independence

Children like to be able to do things for themselves rather than have someone do things for them. They love to wipe up their own spills and make their own snacks. They also like to draw and cut out their own designs. When they solve their own problems, they become more independent. Children also like to have control over their own bodies. Teach them how to wash their own hands, wipe their own bottoms, blow their own noses, comb their own hair, put on their own coat, change their own wet clothes and tie or buckle their own shoes.

Giving children jobs and responsibilities increases their feeling of competence and helps them to develop their self-esteem. Organize tasks so children can do jobs successfully. For example, have the children take turns helping to set the table each day for lunch.

Encouraging independence does not mean abandoning the child. Caregivers should carefully observe children as they do activities and be available if a child needs help.

Another important step towards independence is teaching children problem-solving skills. Children need help learning how to:

- Cooperate
- Share
- Compromise
- Take turns
- Let others know how they are feeling
- Use words to solve problems
- Express anger in acceptable ways
- Keep their promises
- Apologize, and
- Walk away from a bad situation.

Creativity

Children in a supportive environment show a marvelous ability to do things in new and different ways. Each of us has creative abilities. To encourage children's creativity:

- Ask open-ended questions
- Encourage children to ask questions
- Encourage children to guess and value close answers or inventive ones as much as exact ones
- Treat mistakes as valuable learning opportunities
- Structure activities so there are multiple ways to do things or more than one correct answer
- Point out and appreciate how different children in the center come up with different solutions to the same problems, and
- Do not rush to correct or expand everything children tell you or show you. Their excitement in what they have done or learned is more important than perfection.

If children ask questions and you do not know the answers, tell them you do not know, but you will find out. If children want you to show them how to do something you do not know how to do, be honest with them and explain that you do not have the expertise to do it. This openness helps children see that learning is a lifelong process.

Note: *Freely admit the mistakes you make when you are working with children. Your willingness to do so models for children that making mistakes is okay. Once children understand this concept they are free to be more creative.*

Helping children grow and learn

Children are born with the ability and desire to learn. Research concludes that quality child care programs can significantly increase the emotional, social, intellectual, and physical outcomes of the children in care. The more providers know about the development of children, the more prepared they will be to meet the emotional, social, intellectual, and physical needs of the children in their care.

Emotional Needs

Children need opportunities to:

- Feel loved and respected, without having to earn it
- Feel safe and secure (if they have a problem too big to handle they must be confident that help will be there)
- Feel powerful, independent, and comfortable with their own limits
- Be treated fairly
- Be listened to with respect
- Make mistakes without feeling shamed or embarrassed.
- Feel secure in what is expected of them and what they can expect from others, and
- Learn how to do things for themselves as much as possible.

Social Needs

Children need opportunities to:

- Feel pride in themselves, their families, and their cultures
- Interact frequently and comfortably with adults
- Have opportunities for time alone and time with others, depending on their moods and interests
- Organize their own activities, and at other times have activities organized for them
- Learn how to solve problems with other children without using aggression
- Learn how to cooperate and take turns
- Observe others and what goes on around them
- Learn to respect individual, family, and cultural differences
- Learn about their cultural heritage and the cultures of others through toys, pictures, foods, books, and positive presentations
- Learn that rules exist so people can live together comfortably and fairly
- Learn to accept limits, and
- Learn what it means to be a friend.

Intellectual Needs

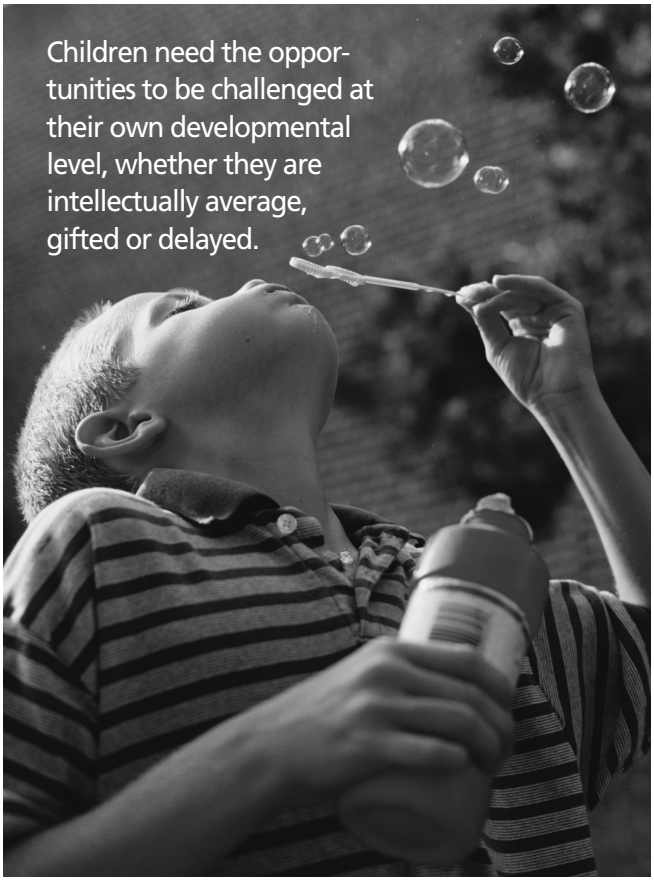
Children need opportunities to:

- Explore and ask questions
- Come up with their own answers, in their own time
- Learn about their world through all their senses
- Create things and think of ideas
- Explore the world of fantasy and make-believe (and learn the difference between pretend things and things that are real)
- Use real-life materials and tools in appropriate and constructive ways, and
- Be challenged at their own developmental level, whether they are intellectually average, gifted, or delayed.

Physical and Health Needs
Children need opportunities to:

- Move about freely in a safe environment in order to experience their world
- Practice newly developing small muscle and large muscle skills
- Learn how to take good care of their bodies, so they can keep themselves strong and healthy
- Have active times and quiet times, depending on their mood and energy level
- Learn how to recognize, avoid, and respond to dangerous situations, and
- Sit, play, and lie down in a variety of positions and on a variety of hard and soft surfaces.

The following developmental profiles will help you to provide age-appropriate opportunities that will support children from birth through school-age in all areas of their growth and development. It is important to provide the children in your center with the skills necessary to understand themselves, get along with others and to be successful in school.


Children need the opportunities to be challenged at their own developmental level, whether they are intellectually average, gifted or delayed.

Developmental profiles

Infants (1 to 12 month-olds)

Emotional Development
Infants are developing a foundation for trust and attachment. When babies have their needs met they learn to trust. When adults respond quickly and appropriately to infants' cries of distress or signals for play, infants learn that they are important. They learn that what they do makes a difference. They learn that they can express their emotions, whether pleasant or unpleasant, and that someone understands how they feel.

Infants need a continuing relationship with a few caring people. Young children thrive when they share a strong bond with a person who cares for them day after day. Consistent attention from the same caregiver helps to meet an infant's need for stability and familiarity.

To meet the emotional needs of infants, make sure you:

- Hold, touch, and cuddle them, making frequent eye contact and talking with them (especially during routines such as feeding and diapering)
- Encourage them to develop their physical abilities such as rolling, sitting, and walking
- Provide time and space for movement and play
- Spend time interacting with them, holding them, rocking them and sitting on the floor with them in your lap
- Talk to them often in loving tones using descriptive words (make this part of your routine care)
- Respond to and expand on cues coming from the child ("Are you getting hungry? Let me get you a bottle")
- Interpret their actions to other children to help them get along in the group ("Anthony has the ball and you would like one too. Here's another ball for you.")
- Encourage contact between infants, but be careful to protect younger infants from the explorations of older, mobile ones, and
- Give them hugs, smiles, and laugh with them.

Social Development

Newborns arrive with their own set of personal social skills. In order to encourage these social interactions, communications and relationships, caregivers should:

- Respond promptly in a gentle and reassuring way to infants' various methods of communication (smiles, cooing, eye contact, body language, crying, etc.)
- Initiate interactions with infants to encourage communication
- Reinforce infants' responses by showing interest and delight
- Take cues from infants to avoid over and under stimulation, and
- Make eye contact, while talking and singing to them during care routines and play times.

Intellectual Development

Babies are born learning. Infancy is a time of rapid brain development. They are totally dependent upon the important adults in their lives, including caregivers, to provide the right experiences at the right times to reach their optimal intellectual development.

Infants learn through their eyes, ears, noses, mouths and fingers. They need lots of opportunities to explore their world. Daily routines, including feeding, dressing and diapering, are the most important teaching moments.

Talk to infants. Tell them what you are doing and why. Explain to them what is happening; laugh and play with them. Celebrate life together. Even though they cannot talk yet, they are learning language, the meaning of words, and beginning to understand and read faces and body language.

As children approach their first birthday, they love to put things into containers and then take them out. They love to stack things and then knock them down. Keep older infants' play equipment down low and in familiar places.

To meet the intellectual needs of infants, make sure you:

- Provide an appropriately challenging, safe environment for them to explore and manipulate
- Provide light, colorful objects for babies to look at, reach for and grasp
- Play naming and hiding games such as peek-a-boo and pat-a-cake
- Provide simple toys
- Talk to them, make eye contact, point out familiar objects to them
- Engage in many one-to-one, face-to-face interactions with them
- Share lullabies and music from around the world
- Respond to sounds they make, occasionally imitating the infant's vocalizations
- Describe the infant's and adult's actions and the events that occur in the environment ("Oh, you like that song. Shall I sing it again?")
- Display interesting things to look at
- Sing to them and appreciate their vocalizations and sounds
- Place pictures and photos in their cribs and along the bottom of the wall at their eye level
- Play games pointing out their body parts and naming familiar objects in their environment, and
- Read picture books (both non-fiction and fiction) daily.

Physical Development

As infants grow, you will notice their periods of alertness getting longer. The time they are awake between sleeping and feeding increases.

Infants need a chance to exercise their arms and legs. They need to experience varying body positions. They may enjoy massages and soft tickles. They need brief periods of "tummy time" on the floor to raise their heads, strengthen their backs, push up on their arms and later to rock from front to back and begin crawling.

Older infants become more mobile, exploratory, and social. They begin to pull themselves up on furniture. They crawl, climb small stairs, and go up low ramps. They also begin walking with assistance.

To meet the physical needs of infants, make sure you:

- Support infants' attempts to roll, sit, walk and grasp
- Provide open carpeted space as well as hard surfaces for crawling
- Provide low sturdy furniture for children to pull up and hold on to while learning to walk
- Provide accessible outdoor activities daily
- Provide simple objects for infants to reach for, grasp, and explore
- Allow non-mobile infants to move comfortably, lying freely on their backs while looking about, kicking, reaching, practicing eye-hand coordination, and
- Allow mobile infants to move about freely, exploring in a safe environment.

Toddlers (1 to 2 ½ year-olds)

Emotional Development

Warm, accepting, close relationships provide the foundation for healthy emotional development for toddlers. Your sensitive and responsive interactions with a child are more important than any toy. Toddlers need opportunities to explore, be responsible and make significant choices. This promotes mastery over their environment and confidence in their abilities.

You should encourage them to do things for themselves, such as feeding and dressing. Plan activities that allow for independence, yet be careful not to frustrate them with an activity that is still too difficult.

Toddlers often respond to situations without being aware of their emotional state. You should help toddlers sort out their feelings by giving words to them when they are scared, angry, or excited. Helping toddlers identify their emotions and use language is an important part of your job. For example, some toddlers may bite their playmates when angry or frustrated. Their verbal skills are not developed enough to respond with words, so they resort to biting.

To meet the emotional needs of toddlers, make sure you:

- Allow them to feed and dress themselves and encourage the development of self-help skills when they are ready
- Encourage and support their developmental achievements such as walking, talking and climbing, and
- Listen and expand toddlers' emerging language. An example of expanded language is:
  - Child says, "Truck!"
  - You say "Yes, it is a big blue truck that makes a lot of noise."

Social Development

Toddlers' speech is developing rapidly. They are learning up to nine new words a day. Caregivers should listen carefully and with interest to what toddlers have to say, repeating and expanding their messages. You should realize that toddlers do not always understand verbal messages. They depend more upon modeling, practice, and familiar routines to understand appropriate behaviors and expectations.

Toddlers are increasingly interested in their peers and often play beside their friends rather than with them. You will need to teach and model the interactions with the others that you want them to develop, like sharing and taking turns. It is not developmentally appropriate to expect toddlers to actually share or take turns. Nevertheless, your job is to model, model, model.

To meet the social needs of toddlers, make sure to:

- Talk, sing, and play with each child daily on a one-to-one basis and in small groups
- Respond and expand upon emergent language coming from the child
- Interpret their actions to other children to help them get along in the group ("Gloria had it first. Would you like this one?")
- Assist toddlers in social interactions. ("Tyrell is playing with the blue ball; let's play with the red one until he is finished.")

- Step in quickly when there are disputes to provide information, solve problems, or redirect children to new activities
- Display the play materials down low to encourage the development of independence and competence
- Show toddlers how to clean up after themselves
- Model taking turns (make sure you provide more than one of many play materials and equipment).

Intellectual Development

Toddlers view the world with wonder and look to caregivers for explanations. Play is toddler's important work. They need hands-on experiences and opportunities for climbing and moving. They also need plenty of interesting things to look at, touch, and manipulate.

Toddlers do things for the sake of doing them, not to get them done. Once they complete a task, they often start all over again. Scooping and dropping things into containers and then dumping them out is one of their favorite activities.

Toddlers love books and songs, especially old familiar ones. Read to toddlers daily with them on your lap or gathered close around you. Discuss pictures and expand their understanding and language by providing additional information. Sing to them and with them, teaching them simple songs and nursery rhymes.

Toddlers learn through their five senses. They learn by doing. They explore the environment through sight, touch, smell, sound, and taste. They use art materials for the physical and sensory experiences. Asking toddlers to explain their drawings is inappropriate because most likely they were drawing for the experience of drawing with no intent to represent anything through their artwork.

Toddlers enjoy lots of cheerful pictures hung at their eye level. Realistic pictures of animals, people, and familiar objects will interest them and encourage language development. Displaying pictures of the toddlers and their families in the classroom helps them to feel more at home.

To meet the intellectual needs of toddlers, make sure you:

- Provide an appropriately challenging, safe environment for them to explore and manipulate
- Provide large containers full of objects for them to carry, fill, dump, and refill
- Provide opportunities for making choices without interfering with selections
- Avoid interruptions of their activities, as much as possible
- Engage in many one-to-one, face-to-face interactions with them daily
- Look at simple books and pictures with them, pointing out objects, discussing them and reading with them
- Verbally label objects and events within their experience (use expanded language: "It's a big white fluffy cat with a long tail.")
- Describe children's and adults' actions and the events that occur in the child's environment ("She is sad, her mommy just left. Her mom will be back in a while to get her.")
- Respond to their attempts at language in supportive ways, by answering their questions and engaging in meaningful conversation about everyday experiences, and
- Build their confidence; "You did that all by yourself."

Physical Development

Toddlers are always on the move. They move themselves up, down, and through anything. They also delight in moving anything else they can. They need suitable objects and furniture to practice their rapidly developing large and small motor skills. Toddlers enjoy sitting at tables and using chairs for activities and meals using child-sized equipment.

To meet the physical needs of toddlers, make sure you:

- Support their self-initiated motor development such as climbing, stacking, filling containers and dumping them out
- Provide accessible outdoor activities for them
- Provide simple objects such as small blocks, puzzles, push together beads, and cars and trucks for them to manipulate
- Allow them to move about freely and to explore in a safe environment
- Do creative art activities such as brush painting, drawing, collage, and playdough
- Provide time and space for dancing, movement activities, and creative dramatics
- Do musical activities such as singing, listening to recordings, and playing instruments
- Avoid adult-made models, patterns, and pre-drawn forms, and
- Provide materials representative of a variety of cultures.

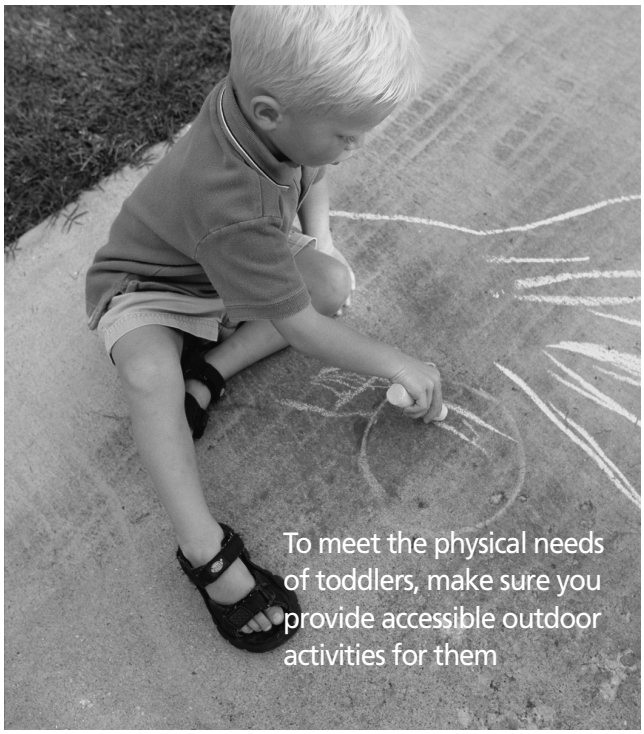
Preschoolers (2 ½ to 5 year-olds)

Emotional Development

Preschoolers need to be surrounded by caring, responsive and loving providers. A positive, close relationship with the preschoolers in your program is needed to promote their emotional development. This will provide the security they need to develop relationships with others in their ever expanding world.

Preschoolers are beginning to learn about feelings. You can help them be aware of what they are feeling and give their feelings names. Help children feel comfortable with their feelings and find positive ways of expressing them.

Many preschoolers develop fears. Typical fears at this age include the dark, animals, imaginary beings, sounds, and new situations. You will need to acknowledge these fears respectfully and help the child to understand them. You can use children's books to facilitate discussion about these normal fears.


To meet the physical needs of toddlers, make sure you provide accessible outdoor activities for them

Preschoolers enjoy surprises, jokes, and celebrations of all kinds. In general they are purposeful, outgoing, friendly, and a joy to be around.

To meet the emotional needs of preschoolers, make sure you:

- Create a positive close relationship with each child in your care
- Provide structure and routine throughout the day and allow plenty of time for transitions
- Allow time for children to talk about their interests and what they see and do
- Use children's names frequently in songs and games
- Display children's art work and photos of children and their families
- Encourage children to draw pictures and tell stories about self, family, and cultural practices
- Provide many opportunities for children to initiate activities, develop and demonstrate control of their bodies and self-help skills, and
- Help children deal with feelings and strong emotions in positive ways. Say "It's okay to be angry but it's not okay to hurt people. Use your words to tell me about it, or perhaps you would rather draw a picture or be alone for awhile."

Social Development

Socially, preschool children begin playing with each other instead of alongside each other. This is called cooperative play. A major component of cooperative play is dramatic play. Dramatic play is pretending or making believe. This type of play occurs when children act out roles themselves and when they manipulate figures such as small toy people in a dollhouse. Dramatic play is enhanced by props that reflect cultural diversity.

Provide many dramatic play materials, including:

- Dress-up clothes with shoes, clothing, and hats for both men and women
- Work attire such as hardhats, transportation worker caps, western hats, running shoes, clip-on ties, and jackets
- Props such as clothing and plastic foods representing a variety of cultures and equipment used by people with differing abilities, and
- Props to support dramatic play themes such as restaurant (old menus, paper and markers for taking orders), grocery store (empty cereal boxes, soup cans, egg cartons, milk cartons, etc.), and fire fighting (fire hats, old rubber boots, sections of hose, etc.).

There are endless possibilities for creating dramatic play props for children.

In addition, to enhance the dramatic play area:

- Provide a clearly defined dramatic play area with space to play and organize materials
- Ensure that dramatic play materials are accessible throughout most of the day
- Rotate materials for a variety of themes, and
- Provide props for active dramatic play outdoors.

Some children need help developing the social skills necessary for cooperative and dramatic play. They may need practice taking turns and the "me first, then you" patterns involved in this play. Remember that children are not born with these skills; they are learned. Teachers need to model and teach the desired social skills.

Preschoolers are learning to respect the rights of others and to use words to settle arguments. Once again, these skills take time to learn. Quarrels and fights are a normal part of the preschool years. It is important to help children work through their own solutions rather than stepping in and solving problems for them.

To meet the social needs of preschoolers, make sure you:

- Provide opportunities for children to work together to complete a task like cooking, woodworking, gardening, or creating a mural
- Encourage positive interactions between children
- Allow preschoolers to engage in small group, whole group, and individual activities throughout the day
- Provide opportunities for sharing, caring, and helping, such as making cards for a sick child, caring for pets, or watering plants
- Provide activities to promote understanding and appreciation of diversity (such as encouraging parents to share family customs), and
- Provide activities to help children understand social skills. For example use storybooks and discussion to work through common conflicts.

Intellectual Development

Preschool children are natural explorers and are still learning about their world through their five senses. They are eager to find out how things work and why. They ask endless questions and want to share their new knowledge with you and with each other. Be careful to let children discover information on their own and at their own pace. Avoid supplying answers and correcting mistakes. Take the opportunity to expand children's knowledge by asking open- ended questions and giving new vocabulary words, "I wonder what would happen if…?" "That's called an igneous rock. It comes from a volcano."

Preschool children can become experts on topics of interest to them such as dinosaurs, insects, or the latest action hero. Make sure the environment is rich in both written and verbal language. Label

important things in the environment so children can see how words look and hear how they sound. Label the items in different languages, especially the ones children speak in the classroom. Write the children's names for them and help them learn to identify their own names.

Preschoolers are amazingly aware of their physical surroundings. They enjoy puzzles and blocks. They have lively imaginations and love to pretend and to dress up. They love songs and finger plays and rhyming words. They enjoy listening to pattern books with repeating phrases that they can say with you as you read to them.

Preschoolers' drawings and other creations begin to be image-oriented and purposeful, often with an underlying story or theme. Encourage children to talk about what they have drawn and give them space to display their work. You can also take dictation, writing down what the children say about their pictures and artwork.

Preschoolers are actively engaged in learning as much as they can about the world around them. Have individual as well as small and large group conversations throughout the day. Ask questions to encourage them to give longer and more complex answers. Younger children are asked "what" or "where" while older children are asked "why" or "how." As you talk and share with them you can expand their knowledge by providing new vocabulary words and giving information regarding the topic at hand.

To help preschoolers meet their intellectual needs, make sure you:

- Read both fiction and non-fiction books (including poems and nursery rhymes)
- Work with them individually and in groups throughout the day
- Encourage them to dictate stories as you write them down
- Provide time for conversation
- Ask children open-ended questions that encourage them to think and require more than a one-word answer
- Answer children's questions
- Add more information to what a child says
- Label things in the room in several different languages
- Use written words with pictures and spoken language to provide a print-rich environment
- Use flannel board stories, puppets, songs, fingerplays, and rhymes
- Encourage children's emerging interest in writing (scribbling, drawing, and forming letters)
- Plan activities for labeling, classifying, and sorting objects by shape, color, and size
- Discuss daily and weekly routines in terms of time concepts and seasons of the year
- Extend children's thinking and learning during activities by adding new materials, offering ideas or suggestions, joining in their play, and providing assistance in solving problems
- Observe natural events such as seeds growing or the life cycle of pets
- Help them to sequence first, next, and last
- Provide materials representative of a variety of cultures
- Create opportunities to use numbers and count objects
- Take walks in the neighborhood to nearby parks, grocery stores, post office, or library
- Plan trips to provide new learning experiences for preschoolers
- Encourage water and sand play
- Do creative art projects including painting, drawing, and collage
- Provide time and space for dancing, movement activities, and creative dramatics, and
- Plan musical activities such as singing, listening to recordings and playing instruments.

Note: *Avoid adult-made models, patterns, coloring books, and pre-drawn forms.*

Physical Development

Preschoolers learn by using their bodies. A program based on worksheets and desk work is inappropriate. Preschoolers need a lot of active play. They work hard at learning new large motor skills like climbing, skipping, and catching a ball. They also spend much time and attention learning to cut with scissors and drawing. Preschoolers like to use their new skills to do things for themselves. They are learning to put on their own shoes and socks, zip coats, wash their hands, and set tables.

Because preschoolers are curious explorers, you can discuss with them safety rules and explain possible dangers. By helping them to understand why there are rules, they will find it easer to accept the limits placed upon them.

To meet the physical needs of preschoolers, make sure you:

- Provide equipment, time, and space for active play such as jumping, running, balancing, climbing, riding tricycles and playing with balls
- Provide creative movement activities such as using an obstacle course or music that promotes movement
- Provide complex manipulative toys, pegboards, puzzles, lacing cards and woodworking to help develop fine motor skills, and
- Provide art materials that allow for individual expression for drawing, painting, writing, gluing, cutting, etc.

School-age children (5 to 12 year-olds)

Emotional Development

While school-age children are increasingly becoming independent and looking to peers for acceptance, they still need caring, loving, and responsive caregivers for emotional support. Providers often see school-age children after they have put in a long day at school. They need opportunities to meet their physical needs for activity by running, climbing, and tumbling, as well as opportunities for rest, social interaction and food. To meet their personal growth needs, accepting adults must supervise but not overprotect or over-direct school-age children, even while encouraging their independence.

School-age children are old enough to have input on classroom rules and expectations. They enjoy planning some of their own activities. By allowing school-age children to give input and allowing them to plan, you will foster their self-esteem and feelings of self-worth and competency.

To meet the emotional needs of school-age children, make sure you:

- Create a positive, close relationship with each child in your care
- Provide opportunities for them to express growing independence and self-reliance (such as making choices, planning, and initiating their own activities)
- Provide ways to offer privacy (allowing them opportunities to work or play alone)
- Plan cooperative rather than competitive activities
- Recognize preference for self-selected peer groups
- Encourage them to draw and write stories about self, family, and cultural practices
- Display their work and photos of themselves and their families
- Help them to feel protected, but not controlled
- Have them create ground rules that are minimal in number and consistently applied
- Help them recognize their own strengths
- Provide learning experiences that respond to their individual differences in ability and interests, and
- Give them appropriate responsibilities such as caring for pets and plants, setting the table, and helping to prepare projects for group activities.

Social Development

While school-age children may have many friends, they are developing close relationships with one or two best friends whom they like to be with the most. Some children may feel excluded and need your support in making friends and being included in group activities. Provide activities that pair children with different members of the group. Allow time for friendships to develop. This requires unstructured periods of time throughout the day.

School-age children are very sensitive to what others think of them. How they dress, what they wear, and how they do their hair become increasingly important as they try to fit in and be accepted by their peers.

School-age children need a sense of belonging. Their sense of personal and cultural identity is becoming more defined, yet they are still highly vulnerable to each others' opinions. Peer approval can be more important to them than adult approval. You will need to help school-age children be accepting and respectful of individual differences.

School-age children like to be helpful and do real work. They like to plant gardens, do woodworking, cook, sew, care for pets, and collect rocks, stamps, etc.

To meet the social needs of school-age children, make sure you:

- Provide opportunities to encourage responsibility-taking, helpful behavior, and meaningful work, such as making cards for a sick child, caring for pets or plants, and preparing or cleaning up meals and snacks
- Provide opportunities to support children's friendships
- Arrange planned and spontaneous activities in team sports, group games, interest clubs, board and card games
- Allow unstructured time during each day to socialize with friends or adults
- Model respect for differences of opinions and honor diversity, and
- Help children resolve conflicts and solve problems by using their words and talking about the issues.

Intellectual Development

School-age children have a growing capability for thinking, reasoning and problem solving. They are developing their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. They are more capable of understanding the concepts of time, distance, and money. They like to play games with rules that require skill and strategy. They are developing a sense of humor, love to tell jokes and laugh.

School-age children enjoy learning how to make things. They enjoy opportunities to work on real projects with real materials and tools. They may be perfectionists and product-oriented. They enjoy using real paint brushes and paper, real modeling clay, and real tools.

School-age children are developing individual interests and skills. This is a time in life when children's special skills are emerging. Some children show a proficiency at sports, music, writing, art, or dancing. Some are interested in animals or machinery. Because the regular school day leaves little time to explore individual interests and develop skills, your center should provide time to do so.

To meet the intellectual needs of school-age children, make sure you:

- Provide opportunities to complete homework, including peer or adult tutoring for children who request assistance
- Provide opportunities to read books
- Encourage them to write and produce plays, publish newspapers, and write stories
- Provide space, materials, and activities to support children's interests and curiosity
- Encourage them to try, explore, and expand their interests
- Provide opportunities to learn basic science and math concepts
- Involve children in observing and investigating natural events and objects, sorting and classifying, searching for patterns, noting differences and similarities, and writing about what they see
- Involve children in cooking activities that include reading and following directions and measuring
- Engage children in sustained project work, seeking solutions to concrete problems, observing and recording changes in the environment, and working with tools
- Provide opportunities for them to read for information and reference
- Engage children in representing their understanding in various ways, including drawing, writing, speaking, and drama

- Plan trips to provide new learning experiences
- Provide many opportunities every day for children to write for reasons that make sense to them (such as making lists, labeling their work, and writing notes to their parents)
- Give children frequent practice and help in composing, editing, and revising stories and other written products
- Provide opportunities for children to be an active part of the community through activities such as tree planting, recycling, and clean-up projects, and
- Foster and encourage the development of children's sense of humor. Be sure to laugh with them at their jokes!

Physical Development

Most school-age children spend their day sitting in a structured classroom. Physical activity is important for their minds and bodies. It is important to give them lots of space and opportunities to play in areas where they can run, shout, and practice large motor skills. Give them a wide variety of outdoor equipment and organized games.

School-age children are growing and developing rapidly. However, they continue to have many of the needs of younger children for large motor experiences to explore and to learn through their five senses about the world around them.

They are learning to care for their bodies. They know safe ways of moving, jumping, and falling to minimize injuries. Discussions about hygiene, safety, and nutritious foods are important steps toward developing healthy habits and safe practices. Older school-age children may experiment with cigarettes, drugs, or sex. You will need to talk calmly with these children about the issues and share accurate information.

It is important to give school-age children space to play in areas where they can run, shout, and practice large motor skills.

To meet the physical needs of school-age children, make sure you:

- Provide equipment, time, and space for active play such as jumping rope, running, balancing and climbing
- Provide creative movement activities, music, songs and recordings
- Provide fine-motor activities such as puzzles, sewing, woodworking, and objects that can be taken apart and put back together
- Provide a variety of fine motor activities and daily opportunities for drawing, painting, cutting, writing, sewing, and carpentry
- Provide opportunities for developing hobbies such as sewing, pottery, woodworking, leather work, cooking, and bead working
- Encourage participation in group games and team sports, and
- Provide opportunities to get physical exercise and use a variety of outdoor equipment.

Honoring all children's race, religion, culture, gender, physical ability and family structure

All children develop within and are influenced by their social and cultural experiences. Because cultural diversity is the norm in America, children must learn to function in and appreciate a diverse cultural society. Young children need to develop a positive sense of their own identity. This identity is shaped by many factors including their gender, race, cultural and family background, language, religion, abilities, life experiences and circumstances. They will need to develop respect and appreciation for other people with ideas and experiences that are different from their own. Classroom materials and equipment need to portray diverse, non-stereotyping images of cultural, ethnic, racial, linguistic, age, gender, family structures and other ability differences.

Note: *Quality child care programs create an understanding of and responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity by providing an anti-biased curriculum (Derman-Sparks & ABC Task Force, 1989). An anti-bias curriculum and program actively promote the elimination of unfair beliefs, attitudes, and actions.*

Providing a Culturally Relevant, Anti-Bias Program

Children start developing their attitudes about others and themselves by the age of two. You can have a powerful positive influence on those attitudes. In your activities and classroom you must provide multicultural, non-stereotyping materials and activities that will:

- Support each child's sense of self and family
- Teach children to accept and appreciate differences and similarities between people, and
- Help children better understand the ways of others in their community and around the world.

The following principles form the framework for multicultural programming:

- Everyone has a culture
- Know your own culture first
- Provide authentic unbiased images
- Foster concrete experiences at the child's level
- Make the culture climate of the classroom and the home consistent
- Support and value the home language
- Staff should reflect the families they serve
- Expose the children to a variety of cultures in accurate ways
- Examine and challenge institutional and personal biases, and
- All staff should be involved in this effort.

Not all materials produced for children are appropriate. You should be especially careful with materials that are more than ten years old. Be a selective consumer. Throw out negatively stereotyped images and stories. To expand children's understanding, look for materials that correctly and appropriately portray people from diverse backgrounds.

Young children do not understand concepts like "in the past" or "a long time ago", so make sure the images of people from various cultures are still accurate today. For example, children's introduction to pictures of people who are Native American should be contemporary, not pictures of a person dressed in the native clothing of 75 years ago.

There are many types of learning materials that can help children to become more aware of other people and celebrate their own heritage. When you are setting up your classroom, think of it as the "home away from home" for your children and families. Ask yourself, "How can I make this a warm and welcoming place for myself and for our families?"

Examples of materials to help ensure your setting is sensitive and respectful to all people include:

- Books, pictures and materials accurately depicting men, women, and children of different family structures, races, cultures, ages, abilities, and occupations living their daily lives and solving problems (avoid any books that contain stereotyping roles and pictures)
- Puzzles, pictures, and toys representing various cultures and non-traditional male and female occupations
- Music from various cultures
- Pictures representing a diversity of cultures and gender roles. Pictures will mean more to children if you discuss them before putting them up
- Dramatic play materials encouraging a variety of gender play and role playing of persons in other cultures and with differing abilities
- Male and female dolls representing a diversity of races, cultures, and abilities
- Opportunities for children to experience a variety of languages in spoken, song, or written form, including Braille and sign language
- Foods of different cultures for snack, lunch, and special celebrations
- Activities to promote understanding, well-being and acceptance of others, and
- Activities to respect cultural and linguistic diversity.

Inclusion

Your program should be designed to be inclusive of all children, including children with identified disabilities and special learning and developmental needs. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), effective 1992, states that people with disabilities, including physical, mental, and/or medical impairments, are entitled to equal rights in public accommodations, including early childhood programs.

Necessary modifications will vary depending upon the type and number of children with differing needs and abilities who are served by your program. The inclusion of children with disabilities or special learning and developmental needs may necessitate lower staff-child ratios, specialized staff training, and special environmental arrangement and equipment. Staff should be familiar with available community resources and refer families for additional help when needed.

WAC

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What behavior management and guidance practices must I have in place?

You must:

- Develop and implement written behavior management and guidance practices for the center.
- Guide the child's behavior based upon an understanding of the individual child's needs and stage of development.
- Promote the child's developmentally appropriate social behavior, self-control, and respect for the rights of others.
- Ensure behavior management and guidance practices that are fair, reasonable, consistent, and related to the child's behavior.
- Prevent and prohibit any person on the premises from using cruel, unusual, hazardous, frightening, or humiliating discipline, including but not limited to:
  - Corporal punishment including biting, jerking, shaking, spanking, slapping, hitting, striking, kicking, pinching, flicking or any other means of inflicting physical pain or causing bodily harm to the child
  - Verbal abuse such as yelling, shouting, name calling, shaming, making derogatory remarks about a child or the child's family, or using language that threatens, humiliates or frightens a child
  - The use of physical restraint method injurious to the child, locked time-out room, or closet for disciplinary purposes
  - The using or withholding of food or liquids as punishment.