

Inventory List for Nicole Rabner

Early Childhood Development Conference Background

9 of 14

ENCLOSURES FILED OVERSIZE ATTACHMENTS

14383

NARA 11728

Child Care

The Federal Aviation Administration



Child Care

The Federal Aviation Administration

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is a dynamic organization charged with providing the safe and efficient use of the Nation's airspace. Highly qualified, technical employees protect national security, promote air commerce, and ensure aviation safety 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Attracting and retaining a highly skilled and talented technical work force is a continuing challenge for the FAA. Today, approximately 54,000 FAA employees located within nine regions, the Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center in Oklahoma City, the Technical Center in Atlantic City, New Jersey, and the Washington headquarters represent a diverse work force.

Work force diversity, together with job characteristics unique to the FAA such as 24-hour operations, creates a challenge for employees trying to balance their work

and family lives. Employees are the agency's most valuable resource, and the FAA is committed to providing a work environment that is supportive of their dependent care needs.

A pressing need for many FAA employees is child care. Finding high-quality and affordable child care, available during unusual work hours, is a constant challenge. As part of the agency's commitment to work force excellence, the FAA has established several onsite or nearby child development centers

for FAA and other Federal employees, and more are planned.

First authorized by the Tribble Amendment in 1986, onsite child care programs for Federal employees have dramatically increased in number. Since the enactment of this legislation, over 80 child development centers have been established in Federal buildings. As a recognized leader in Federal child care, the FAA is continuing to develop programs which promote balance in the lives of FAA employees.

In support of the FAA child care initiative, a national program manager and 12 regional child care coordinators oversee the development and implementation of child care policy and programs. Under their guidance, FAA sites nationwide are actively establishing high-quality child development centers designed to meet their employees' needs.



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PRESERVATION**

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For information regarding the FAA Child Care Program contact the Child Care Coordinator through the Human Resource Management Office number listed below:

Telephone Numbers

Human Resource Management Division

Washington Headquarters
202-267-8916

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

Alaskan Region
907-271-5747

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
222 West 7th Avenue #14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513

Eastern Region
718-553-1905

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
JFK International Airport
Jamaica, New York 11430

Central Region
816-426-5488

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
601 East 12 Street
Kansas City, Missouri 64106

Great Lakes Region
312-694-7316

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
2300 East Devon
Des Plaines, Illinois 60018

New England Region
617-273-7343

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
12 New England Executive Park
Burlington, Massachusetts 01803

Northwest Mountain Region
206-227-2010

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
1601 Lind Avenue, S.W.
Renton, Washington 98055-4056

Southern Region
404-763-7512

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
3400 Norman Berry Drive
East Point, Georgia 30344

Southwest Region
817-624-5010

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
4400 Blue Mound Road
Ft. Worth, Texas 76193-0016

Western-Pacific Region
310-297-0087

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
15000 Aviation Blvd.
Hawthorne, California 90261

Technical Center
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Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
Technical Center
Atlantic City International Airport,
New Jersey 08405

Aeronautical Center
405-954-3501

Human Resource Management Division
Federal Aviation Administration
Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center
6500 S. MacArthur Blvd.
P.O. Box 25082
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US Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
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PRE

FAA CHILD CARE CENTER PROGRAM STATUS - AUGUST 1996

<u>CENTERS CONSTRUCTED BY FAA</u>	<u>DATE OPENED</u>
FAA Technical Center Atlantic City, NJ	1989
FAA Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center Oklahoma City, OK	1990
Oakland Air Route Traffic Control Center Fremont, CA	1991
Jacksonville Air Route Traffic Control Ctr	1993
Southern California TRACON San Diego, CA	1994
Kansas City Air Route Traffic Control Ctr Olathe, Kansas	1994
Minneapolis Air Route Traffic Control Ctr Farmington, MN	1994
Memphis Air Route Traffic Control Center Memphis, TN	1995
Houston Air Route Traffic Control Center Houston, TX	1995
Denver Air Route Traffic Control Center Longmont, CO	1995
Salt Lake City Air Route Traffic Control Center	1996

Jeanine,

If this is too much - let me know & I'll
scale back. Believe it or not. This is
a fraction of our worklife material - I
selected representative samples.

I'll get as many packets together
as possible! Most likely I'll have a
messenger drop them off to your office
the day before if that's OK. Love Batt

FAA CHILD CARE CENTERS IN GSA SPACE

<u>CENTER</u>	<u>DATE OPENED</u>
FAA Great Lakes Regional Headquarters Des Plaines, ILL	1985
Alaskan Regional Headquarters Anchorage, AL *Consortium center - FAA Lead Agency	1990
Southern Regional Headquarters Atlanta, GA	1993
Northwest Mountain Regional Headquarters Seattle, WA	1995
Western-Pacific Regional Headquarters Los Angeles, CA	1996

FAA CHILD CARE CENTERS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

<u>CENTER</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE</u>
Atlanta Air Route Traffic Control Center Hampton, GA	1996
Boston Air Route Traffic Control Center Nashua, NH	1997
Chicago Air Route Traffic Control Center Chicago, ILL	1997
Miami Air Route Traffic Control Center Miami, FLA	1997
Los Angeles Air Route Traffic Control Center Palmdale, CA	1997

A Visit to Parkside Children's Services at the Lake

DES PLAINES, ILLINOIS



“Working here in the building, I can stop in and see
my child whenever I wish during the day.”



Federal Aviation Administration
Great Lakes Region
Human Resource Management Division
2300 East Devon
Des Plaines, Illinois 60018
312-694-7316

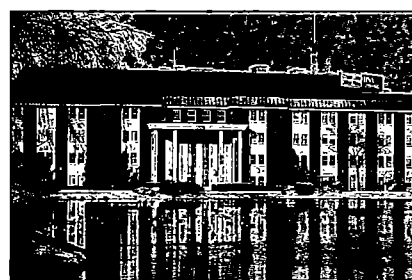
The FAA Great Lakes regional office has 750 employees located at the O'Hare Lake Office Plaza in Des Plaines, Illinois. It is home to the FAA's first onsite child development center, which opened in May 1989. The center is now an integral part of the complex. In fact, a moment or two of watching children play is a recommended stress reducer used by those who work in the office park.

The opening of Parkside Children's Services at the Lake fulfilled the dream of a group of FAA employees who gave hundreds of volunteer hours to the project. Volunteers continue to serve on the board of directors of the Illinois not-for-profit corporation that was formed to develop and oversee the management of the child development center.

The 5,000-square-foot facility is conveniently located in Chicago's

northwest suburb of Des Plaines, nestled next to Rosemont, Franklin Park, Park Ridge, and O'Hare International Airport. Sixty-eight children of FAA and Defense Contract Area Service Region employees and children from neighboring homes share their days growing and learning in a warm, nurturing environment. The setting encourages interaction with the larger community beyond its doors –

"The emphasis is always on creating a positive attitude toward learning, on exploring and discovery, and on challenging the children to think and solve problems for themselves..."



including visitors to the Office Plaza and those who work there.

The easily accessed complex is situated on a lake surrounded by corporate office buildings with residential areas nearby. It is a scenic and tranquil setting that is perfect for active babies, exploring toddlers, and curious preschoolers.

Parents and employees are welcome at the center anytime and tend to stop in whenever the spirit moves them. Mothers and fathers join their children during breaks or for lunch. Field trips include visits into the "world of work"

and the offices of parents. Visitors to the "neighborhood," such as delivery, mail, and repair people, stop to say hello and talk awhile when they pass a group of children on a lakeside path. Office workers stop by the center on holidays to share in the spirit of a child's view of celebration. The cafeteria activity quiets to a hush when toddlers are escorted through the hall.

The child development center is managed by Parkside Children's Services, Lutheran General Hospital, a company that has been serving the needs of working parents in the area for 13 years. A variety of programs at multiple locations are available to parents. These include infant/toddler programs, preschool programs, a full-day kindergarten, summer day camp, performing arts camp, before- and after-school care, holiday programs for school-age children, intergenerational programming, and the mainstreaming of children with special needs. Each of the four Parkside locations and the two summer camp sites offers unique programs, providing rich opportunities for families to access state-of-the-art early childhood programming directed by a highly experienced and educated staff.

FAA parents of children at Parkside enjoy a quarterly newsletter, the annual dinner meeting, parenting workshops, and regular parent-teacher conferences. Children can take advantage of special workshops. When a new brother or

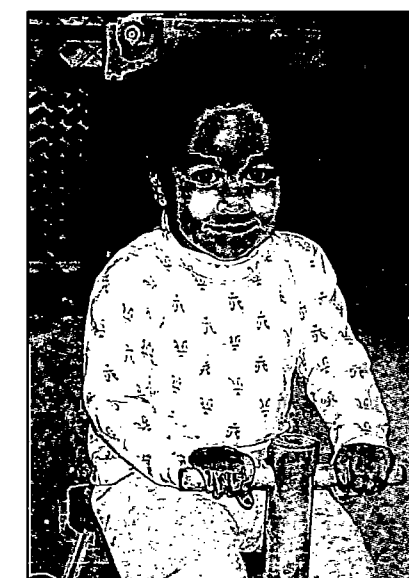
"We have the comfort of knowing that our children are receiving the best possible care...our children have really thrived... the center is really a part of our extended family."

sister is expected to join the family, they are invited to attend "Sibling Class." Three-to-nine-year-olds talk about the ways of the newborn baby and practice holding, feeding, and diapering their own dolls or stuffed animals. They tour maternity areas, watch a slide show, and leave with a "Big Brother/Sister Certificate." This program is made possible through Lutheran General Health Care System, which is the parent corporation of Parkside Children's Services, Lutheran General Hospital.

The space where the FAA child development center is housed was carefully designed with children primarily in mind. It is open and airy, with furnishings that are comfortable and appealing; age-appropriate equipment and materials stimulate interest and challenge the children physically and intellectually; indoor areas encourage socialization and quiet time alone as well as quiet and noisy play; the outdoor environment invites active participation in a variety of activities. This is community-oriented child care of the highest quality. Licensed by the State of Illinois, the staff is working toward accreditation by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, a program that provides recognition for centers which meet the criteria for high-quality early childhood programs.

Quality is also evident in interactions between staff and children. The

adults understand how children grow and learn, and they are carefully chosen for their ability to nurture young children. Employees with children at the FAA child development center count this as one of the most significant reasons they are able to work free of concern about how the day is going for their children. It is the most significant factor they cite as influencing improved work productivity. Knowing that their children are being cared for close by in a model child care environment, where love and respect for children include respect for individual differences, brings immeasurable peace of mind. This peace of mind is evidenced in the words of FAA employees, parents, and supervisors when they talk about the benefits of the onsite center.



PROGRAMS

Great Lakes Region-Parkside Children's Services at the Lake:
Serving 68 children

Hours: 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Infants: 6 weeks to 14 months

Toddlers: 14 to 26 months

Preschoolers: 2 to 5 years

Kindergarten

Additional Programs:

- Special needs
- Intergenerational activities
- School-age programs
- Summer camps
- Holiday school-age programs

WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS

A Visit to D.O.T. Day Care

WASHINGTON, DC



“I was feeling guilty about coming back to work, but the center
has given me a real peace of mind.”



**Federal Aviation Administration
Washington Headquarters**
Human Resource Management Division
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591
202-267-8916

The Nation's capital, with its Federal buildings, monuments, and museums, is a dynamic environment in which to work. FAA Washington headquarters, on Independence Avenue just a short distance from the National Mall and the U.S. Capitol, is where national program management, policy development and implementation, and procedures for air traffic and related systems are managed. It is in Washington where key relation-

ships necessary to the ongoing progress of the FAA are maintained with the Secretary of Transportation, the Congress, and other agencies as well as the public.

Among those arriving for work at FAA offices on a daily basis by bus, car, van, and subway are FAA employees in the Washington area who are juggling their young children along with their briefcases. The children are on their

way to the Department-sponsored child development center, D.O.T. Day Care, which is located within the FAA headquarters building. The parents go to their offices knowing that their children are nearby in a quality child care setting.

The D.O.T. Day Care center at FAA is a model of metropolitan downtown child care. While it is still unusual to see young children in groups in many

D.O.T. DAY CARE

“Convenient location and a good staff – that’s the combination I need to come to work and not worry about my children. It is very reassuring!”



cities, the Department’s child development center has been effectively, efficiently, and open-heartedly caring for children in a quality program since 1985. The center has been able to combine the benefits of a warm and homelike space scaled for children, with the benefits offered by a city environment. Washington is right there for the children to experience – from green parks and open spaces to the Smithsonian and the White House

D.O.T. Day Care is operated by an 11-member volunteer board of directors. The board, parents, and staff strive to maintain a child development center of the highest quality. A parent association meets once a month to organize fundraising projects, purchase

equipment and materials for the center, and serve as a support in a number of other ways. The association has sent all of the center’s staff to important training conferences, donated a computer and a television, and arranged holiday bonuses for staff members.

The center provides a safe, caring, educational environment for the children of working parents. Safety is apparent in features like the key card security system. Caring is evident as teachers work with children through a philosophy of praise, understanding, trust, and love. The total educational environment is designed around sound early childhood principles for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. The staff is highly professional and committed to the guidelines of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and its accreditation process. Additionally, there is low staff turnover, which contributes to the atmosphere of community among parents, teachers, and children.

The developmentally appropriate curriculum provides for all areas of a child’s growth – physical, cognitive, social, and emotional. Activities designed for each age group are age appropriate, and teachers respect the individual personality of each child. Children romp and play outdoors on the adjacent playground, a desirable feature often not available to child development centers in large cities.

WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS

“Onsite child care really brings families closer together. It is true shared parenting when both Mom and Dad can participate in center activities and stop by for visits.”

While weekly themes and daily activities are the core of the curriculum, there is always something additional going on at D.O.T. Day Care. For example, six times a year the Richmond Theatre Group performs for the children. The group’s renditions of favorite fairy tales and stories for young people delight and fascinate the children. When the performance is over and the troupe leaves, the effect on the children can be seen in the dramatic and theatrical playing going on in the puppet theater, the block area, and in all corners of the center.

Enriching events like theater, museum visits, picnics on the Mall, and visits from prominent people such as the Secretary of Transportation and Miss America are an integral part of the experiences children share at D.O.T. Day Care. However, while a trip to the Smithsonian for the Giant Lego Exhibit is something children will talk about for hours on the way home at the end of the day, it is just as fulfilling and exciting for them to have had lunch with mom or dad in her or his office. Opportunities for parents to visit during the day, go for a walk, read a story, and have lunch or snack together makes onsite child care a meaningful experience for families.

The child development center offers opportunities for parents who both work in the city or both work at the FAA to share with their children events such as Valentine’s Day, Halloween,

and family activities. Many families commute together, meet for lunch, have picnics, and celebrate birthdays. The peace of mind that comes when parents know that their children are safe with trained caregivers in a secured environment and that they can see their children and be with them in a few minutes enhances the quality of the hours parents spend at work. They work with better concentration, less distraction, and more focus.

Whether arriving by car, bus, van, or subway, FAA employees who have children in the child development center find that juggling work and family life is made a little easier because of onsite child care. The FAA’s commitment to families contributes both to the productivity of employees on the job and their ability to be effective parents. This is a combination that energizes and vitalizes both the workplace and the home. Thanks to the Department’s child development center at FAA headquarters, juggling child and briefcase is natural and rewarding!



PROGRAMS

Washington Headquarters–D.O.T. Day Care Center:
Serving 70 children

Hours: 7:15 a.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Infants: 3 months to 2 years

Preschoolers: 2 to 5 years

Kindergarten

Additional Programs:

- Special needs
- Drop-in program/emergency care
- Summer school-age program/6 to 10 years



A Visit to the Technical Center's NAFEC Association Child Care Center

ATLANTIC CITY, NEW JERSEY



"A hug break with my child
can make my day."



**Federal Aviation Administration
Technical Center**

Human Resource Management Division
Atlantic City International Airport, New Jersey 08405
609-484-6681

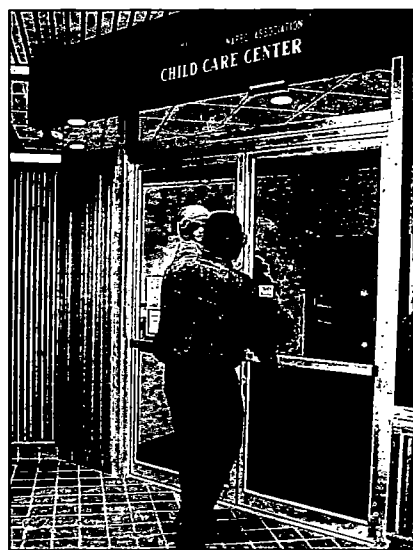
The FAA's Technical Center in Pomona, New Jersey, is the largest aviation research facility in the country. It is the national scientific test base for FAA research, development, and acquisition programs. At the Technical Center, testing and evaluation are carried on for air traffic control, communications, navigation, airports, and aircraft safety and security. FAA employees develop

long-range systems and concepts, modify existing systems, and develop new equipment and software.

On the grounds of the Center's 5,059 acres are laboratories, test facilities, support facilities, hangars, and the Atlantic City International Airport. Of the approximately 2,300 FAA employees and contractors arriving each day, those who have their children with them are most likely first

stopping by the Technical Center's onsite child development center. Housed on the ground floor of the main building near the employee cafeteria and the credit union, the center is open and cares for children Monday through Friday, 7:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Originally established under NAFEC, a Federal employee association, and through the efforts of employee volunteers, the center

"I have really gotten to know the people at the center, and I believe I am more productive because my son is here and I know he's safe."



provides child care for 35 children ages 18 months to 5 years and is fully licensed by the State of New Jersey.

Children's artwork, goldfish bowls, and toys embellish the 2,500-square-foot space that was thoughtfully designed for children. There are spacious areas for toddlers and 3- and 4-year-olds, a kitchen, a quiet room where a sick child can rest until a parent arrives, a staff lounge, a parent sign-in area, and an office for the director. The wooden tables and cubbies used by the children were handcrafted with care and the outdoor play area fashioned to include tree-lined knolls, tot-sized picnic areas, and age-appropriate equipment.

Computer specialists, mathematicians, electrical engineers, Federal contractors, members of the Air National Guard, and many other FAA employees bring their children to the worksite child development center. The convenient location makes it easy to

check on a child if he/she becomes ill, and parents enjoy visits during the day for lunch, special programs, or a quick hug.

Onsite child care for FAA Technical Center employees is much more than a convenient place to leave a child for the workday. The child development center is a high-quality, bright, and pleasant learning environment. With a curriculum dedicated to the development of the whole child, children are involved each day in hands-on learning experiences through a variety of activities. Music, movement, arts and crafts, and indoor and outdoor play all contribute to emotional, social, physical, and cognitive growth.

Daily activities are enhanced with special events scheduled throughout the year. On Family Day, families visit the school for an outdoor picnic. On Halloween, children parade through the Technical Center's atrium past hundreds of FAA employees. On FAA's International Day, children and their teachers participate in a variety of multicultural activities. And, during the Thanksgiving and December holidays, there are special feasts and programs for all.

Visitors such as firefighters from the onsite fire department and nearby Atlantic City's "Freddy the Fire Engine" play a role in enriching the daily curriculum. They come to the center to spend time with the children and to present special programs. Onsite

"The program has been a hit with parents. People who have been here only a week say that they see such a difference."

emergency medical technicians are not only available to visit with the children but can be reached within minutes via special "red phones" in the event of an emergency.

Field trips also enrich the program. A visit to the FAA mailroom to personally mail cards to their parents results in much delight and learning for the children as they experience the process of the delivery system. Annual trips taken off-site have included a visit to Storybook Land and the Cape May County Zoo. These trips are always eagerly anticipated by the children and the parent volunteers who go along.

Recognizing that parents are the primary influences in the lives of their children, the child development center encourages close communication between staff and parents. There is a team approach that results in a sense of community at the center. Parents are involved as volunteers, attend frequent parent conferences, and feel as much at home at the center as their children do.

Active volunteer efforts are evident in the parent advisory board that meets to raise funds for materials, equipment, and field trips and to provide assistance to the center whenever it is needed. A major goal of the advisory board is to respond to the specific needs of the Technical Center parents and their children. This may involve future expansion of the child development center by the FAA in order to enhance current programs and services.



Onsite child care is a new experience for many employees who are a part of the FAA Technical Center child development center. The once strict lines between work and family blur as parents, staff, and children develop relationships in a common community that includes the workplace. Children grow in their understanding of what it means for their parents to "go to work," and parents experience more of the children's everyday world. Children are cared for in a stimulating environment, parents experience less stressful work/family situations, and employees report a higher level of productivity and efficiency on the job. This could easily be termed a triple-win situation – good for children, good for parents, and good for the FAA's Technical Center – in immeasurable ways.



PROGRAMS

FAA Technical Center—The NAFEC Association Child Care Center: Serving 35 children

Hours: 7:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Ages: 18 months to 5 years

Drop-in program



**FAA
GUIDE FOR
QUALITY CHILD
DEVELOPMENT CENTER
CURRICULUM**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) are committed to quality programming in DOT/FAA child care centers consistent with the national accreditation standards established by the Academy of Early Childhood Programming. ***The FAA Guide for Quality Child Development Center Curriculum*** is designed to help achieve that goal.

The purpose of ***The FAA Guide*** is to provide information and guidance to child care center boards of directors. It is essential that child care center boards, who are fiscally responsible for their respective centers, understand the critical components of developmentally appropriate curriculum so they are better equipped to contract for or manage center operations and provide oversight to all aspects of child care center functions.

The FAA Guide for Quality Child Development Center Curriculum:

- Explains how children learn
- Defines the components of quality early childhood programming
- Provides specific criteria to help evaluate quality programming
- Describes what quality programming looks like from the perspective of infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-agers

The quality programming detailed in ***The FAA Guide*** is achieved gradually through a carefully orchestrated process of collaboration between the board of directors and the child care center administration and staff. ***The FAA Guide*** is meant to be a reference for those involved in the ongoing process of providing quality care and educational experiences to the children of working parents.

FEATURES OF A QUALITY CURRICULUM

Because a child care center provides for the supervised care as well as the educational needs of children, it is essential that every aspect of the program be designed to provide a nurturing and stimulating experience for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-agers.

All aspects of center life in a quality program - including the physical space, materials and equipment, staffing and formal programming - are predicated on the belief that every child is worthy of love and respect and the opportunity to develop in accordance with his or her developmental needs, interests and personality.

IN A QUALITY CENTER. . . THE CHILDREN are respected and loved.

IN A QUALITY CENTER. . . THE ENVIRONMENT is inviting for children, staff and parents:

- The environment is friendly and well organized.
- Children's work is on display.
- Bulletin boards provide relevant information for parents.
- Staff have designated places to take breaks from children.
- Each age group (infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-agers) has its own home base.
- Rooms are organized for the developmental needs and interests of the respective age groups with clearly designated **Centers** for such things as active play, block construction, open-ended art experiences, reading, sensory experiences, puzzles, dramatic play and woodworking.
- Materials are organized on low, open shelves easily accessible to children.
- There are spaces where children can be alone and in small groups, yet under adult supervision.

IN A QUALITY CENTER. . . THE STAFF are sensitive and responsive to individual children:

- Staff have formal training and/or experience in early childhood education.

- Staff are respected as professionals.
- Staff are involved in continuous professional development.
- Staff work together as a team.
- Staff turnover is low; there is continuity of care.

IN A QUALITY CENTER . . . THE PARENTS are involved in Center activities:

- Parents are made to feel welcome.
- There are opportunities for parents to participate in Center activities as board or committee members or as volunteers.
- Parents are informed about the Center's program and about their child(ren).
- Parents and staff have frequent opportunities to talk informally.

IN A QUALITY CENTER . . . THE ACTIVITIES are child directed:

- Children can select activities from a variety of choices.
- Activities are open-ended to encourage creativity, problem-solving, social interaction and success.
- Children are encouraged to focus on the process of activities not the product; teacher-made models and work sheets are *not* appropriate for children under seven.
- Activities are relevant to the lives of the children.
- Activities are planned on the basis of children's interests.
- Experiences involve children's senses: touching, smelling, seeing, hearing and tasting.

IN A QUALITY CENTER . . . LEARNING IS INTEGRATED throughout the day:

Specific concepts (such as shapes, colors, parts of the body, the physical properties of sand, the sequence of a story, or one-to-one correspondence) are taught through child-directed, play-based activities such as:

- Language experience stories.
- Labeling of items throughout the room.
- Cooking experiences.
- Measuring experiences with sand and water.
- Setting the snack table with napkins and cups corresponding to numbers of children.
- Block construction.
- Dramatic play.
- Woodworking.

IN A QUALITY CENTER . . . PLAY is central to children's experience and is respected by center staff:

- Children have long blocks of time for uninterrupted play.
- Staff arrange play spaces by adding increasingly complex materials and props to help expand children's play experiences.
- Fantasy or dramatic play is encouraged to stimulate children's social, language and cognitive development.
- Staff facilitate children's play without dominating it.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Developmentally Appropriate Practice is based on two dimensions: age appropriateness and individual appropriateness. This means that an early childhood curriculum has to consider:

- ✓ the typical sequences of growth that occur in a given age group (age appropriateness), and
- ✓ each child as a unique individual with his or her own learning style, growth pattern and personality (individual appropriateness).

Child directed and teacher supported play is integral to Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

Child-Directed Programming

Research clearly indicates that young children learn best in play-oriented environments that are both age and individually targeted. Quality environments have many opportunities for children to make choices about what they play with, how they play, and with whom they play. Child-directed programming is responsive to the interests of children.

A risk free, open-ended environment designed for children stretches their imagination, encourages their thinking skills and enhances their social development. In a child-directed program, teachers facilitate children's explorations and investigations, helping them develop a positive attitude toward learning as they acquire new skills. Learning emerges as children are actively engaged with materials, teachers and peers. When children feel good about themselves, they are more likely to take risks in learning which ultimately results in both academic and social success.

Teacher-Supported Programming: The Teacher's Role

Staff in a quality child care center are responsible for designing and orchestrating programming based on the developmental characteristics of the age group (infants, toddler, preschoolers or school-agers), and the interests and personalities of the individual children in the group. Staff who are sensitive and responsive to individual children can extend, expand and facilitate their play and therefore stimulate their social, emotional, cognitive and physical development.

It is the responsibility of the teaching staff to:

- ☐ Nurture warm, respectful relationships with individual children.
- ☐ Prepare the environment so that it provides stimulating and challenging activities for a wide range of developmental interests. Teachers attend to all aspects of the curriculum - children's play space, materials, equipment as well as formal activities - and make modifications according to the changing needs and interests of the children.
- ☐ Set up Learning Centers which provide opportunities for children to explore with a variety of materials.
- ☐ Provide real choices for children.
- ☐ Observe and monitor the whole group.
- ☐ Interact with individual children to ensure that each child is engaged in the program.
- ☐ Engage all children (infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-agers) in meaningful conversations.
- ☐ Provide blocks of uninterrupted time, space and materials for children to explore freely and creatively with materials.
- ☐ Extend and expand children's learning by providing increasingly more complex experiences, adding a play prop or questioning reasoning.
- ☐ Develop themes and projects based on children's own interests.
- ☐ Manage children's behavior through positive guidance, so they can ultimately manage their own behavior. Positive guidance strategies include:
 - ✓ setting realistic expectations;
 - ✓ respecting children's emotional needs;
 - ✓ redirecting children to successful experiences;
 - ✓ reinforcing positive behaviors;
 - ✓ encouraging children to solve their own problems;
 - ✓ encouraging children to understand how their actions affect others; and
 - ✓ modeling prosocial behavior.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN EVALUATING CURRICULUM

- ☛ Does the curriculum reflect the latest research in early childhood education? Are learning objectives met through child-centered play? Are children encouraged to actively explore with materials? Is the process of learning more important than specific products? Do teachers facilitate children's play instead of directing their play? Do teachers respect individual differences between children?
- ☛ Does the curriculum address the cognitive, social, emotional and physical needs of children?
- ☛ Is learning integrated throughout the curriculum? Do children learn math and physics concepts in the block center? Do children learn principles of measurement during cooking activities? Do children learn to read by being read to? Does learning emerge as children play?
- ☛ Is the curriculum relevant and meaningful to the children? Do themes and projects reflect children's interests? Are children actively involved in activities or are they being told to sit, listen and follow teacher directions?
- ☛ Does the curriculum allow children to work at different developmental levels throughout the day? Are activities open-ended to ensure that children can stretch their learning experiences without becoming frustrated?
- ☛ Does the curriculum reflect cultural and social diversity?
- ☛ Does the curriculum invite children to make choices? Do children of all ages select their own materials, toys, activities and play mates?
- ☛ Does the curriculum provide a safe and healthy environment for children and staff?
- ☛ Are parents involved in the program?
- ☛ Are children and staff enjoying themselves?

ACROSS THE AGES

Incredible Infants

Introduction

During the first three years of life, changes take place more rapidly than at any other time. Although children go through predictable stages of development, the time and rate of development are unique to each child. A particular child may be going through a growth spurt of motor skills, arduously working at sitting, crawling, or grabbing objects. Another child, the same age, may be going through focused development of language skills, vigorously babbling, cooing, and imitating sounds.

Programming for infants, therefore, has to be attentive to the natural developmental sequence, as well as the child's individual rate of development. This is best accomplished by providing infants with a range of experiences and materials which can stimulate each child to develop at his or her own rate. Since all areas of development are interrelated - cognitive, emotional, social and physical - it is critical that experiences for infants also be integrated. Activities designed to encourage physical exploration, for example, have to be presented in the context of an emotionally secure and safe relationship.

The most critical component of an infant curriculum is the relationship between the caregiver and the child. Infants develop the all important sense of trust and security from their relationships with their parents and with their caregivers. Essential to a quality infant program is a nurturing, consistent, and loving staff who help infants develop a sense of trust and provide for their basic needs in a safe, secure, and trusting environment.

The routine care that infants receive from responsive caregivers is the heart of a good infant curriculum. Professional infant caregivers recognize that diapering, feeding and napping are opportunities to build feelings of trust while stimulating language, and motor development; all learning is interrelated.

Infants learn through. . .

- ✓ trusting, secure and consistent relationships with caregivers;
- ✓ having their basic needs met quickly, positively and according to their own schedule;
- ✓ sensory experiences: touching, seeing, hearing, smelling and tasting;
- ✓ physical exploration: crawling, reaching, grasping, pulling, standing, balancing, and walking;
- ✓ continuous and meaningful language experiences; and
- ✓ many and varied opportunities that invite play, discovery and exploration.

Basic Elements of an Infant Curriculum

- ✓ Caregivers have general knowledge about infant development.
- ✓ All programming is individualized. Caregivers follow the individual schedules of each infant.
- ✓ Caregivers talk in soothing voices. They sing, talk and read to children.
- ✓ Caregivers hold and carry infants before they are mobile.
- ✓ Routine care such as feeding and diapering are used as opportunities for one-on-one interactions between the caregiver and infant.
- ✓ Caregivers listen and respond to the sounds the infants make.
- ✓ Caregivers respond quickly to individual needs of infants.
- ✓ Caregivers encourage physical activity, exploration and play.
- ✓ Caregivers model appropriate reactions and behavior.
- ✓ The infant room is cheerful and bright with a variety of surfaces and play equipment.
- ✓ Caregivers take necessary health and safety precautions to provide a sanitary and safe environment. They are trained in CPR and first aid.
- ✓ Parent involvement is encouraged.

A Window Into An Infant Room

If you could peek into a quality infant program, you should see...

The infant room is bright, busy and cheerful but not cluttered. Pictures on the wall show family, friends, pets and samples of children's own creations. Music plays in the background - at the moment a favorite tape of African folk songs. There are clearly defined areas for sleeping, eating, diapering, climbing, reading and playing. Soft pillows, adult rocking chairs, mirrors and low, open toy shelves surround the room.

The sleeping area is separate from the main play room, but within sight and sound of caregivers. Mobiles or favorite cuddly toys personalize each crib. The open play space has a reading area, designated by soft pillows and a box of cardboard books, an active play area with low foam rubber climbing structures, and open toy shelves with busy boards, bells, shape sorters, snap-together beads, balls of assorted sizes and push-and-pull toys.

A caregiver giving a young infant her bottle, sits in the rocking chair near the book area so she can watch and chat with the older infants who are alternatively reading and eating the books while babbling meaningfully to each other.

Another caregiver is preparing for lunch while talking and listening to a 10-month-old who is proudly demonstrating his just-mastered skill of opening the jack-in-the-box. They both squeal in delight each time 'Jack' pops out! She tells him that in just a few minutes it will be time to eat. Two infants are already in high chairs, facing each other, eating cheerios while waiting for the main course.

The third caregiver, wearing a cowboy hat graciously supplied by one of the children, sits on the floor surrounded by stacking toys and two infants in sassy seats. She is gently rolling a large ball to an active 8-month-old who crawls to capture the ball with determination if not success. She hears an infant waking from his nap and tells the children that Joshua is crying. She walks over to the crib and picks him up attentively talking to him: "Joshua, you had a long nap. I'm glad to see you. Let's look out the window at the trees before we change your diaper." She continues talking to him as he gradually grows comfortable being awake, and then proceeds to change his diaper. He smiles at his reflection in the mirror next to the changing table, as she talks to him about his bright red buttons on his overalls.

The sound of falling (cardboard) blocks startles Timothy who has been playing with a squeeze toy in his sassy seat. A caregiver responding quickly, says, "That loud noise startled you, I'll hold you for a while." She picks him up and reassures him. He soon becomes interested in the older infants playing on the climbing structure and begins to pull away from the caregiver. She settles him near the climbing area.

The mother of a newly enrolled four-month-old comes into the room to nurse her son. She is warmly greeted by the staff. A caregiver tells her details about her son's morning - the fussy times as well as the happy times.

The basic sounds of the room are pleasant and comfortable. Babies are not left crying or unattended in cribs, sassy seats or swings. Staff are caring for and interacting with individual children. The infants are easily comforted by the caregivers and seem secure, busy and happy.

Terrific Toddlers

Introduction

Toddlers - and Twos - typically approach life with an enviable sense of abandon, eagerly reaching out with their growing sense of physical competence - walking, running, touching, poking and tasting all that they can. Toddlers' thinking is grounded in action and sensory experiences. They take on experiences energetically and impulsively - often on their own terms and at their own speed, and often without the help they happily relied on during infancy. Babyhood is behind them.

Toddlers' newfound sense of themselves requires that they flex their muscles and spirit. This emerging independence is not without its struggles. The feelings of independence, omnipotence, confidence and initiative that a toddler experiences is accompanied by equally strong feelings of dependence, fear, doubt and passivity - all of which can be terrifyingly confusing.

Programming for toddlers, therefore, has to provide many opportunities for children to practice their independence in the context of an understanding and caring environment. This is best accomplished when teachers encourage children to do things by themselves (dressing, toileting, eating, washing hands, fixing a puzzle or telling a story) and at the same time support them in the face of likely frustration. It is important to give children lots of opportunities to practice - and master - the many skills that lead to independence. It is only through repeated trial and error that young children develop those skills which result in increased independence. During the process, teachers need to give toddlers the constant message that they are confident in their success.

Quality toddler environments are active, messy places in which children have time and opportunities to play and explore independently or in small groups. It takes time for toddlers to learn how to dress themselves; it is messy for two-year-olds to learn how to pour. Professional early childhood educators expect toddlers to take lots of time and make a lot of mess while they're learning-by-doing. They understand that toddlers develop that all-important feeling of competence and confidence as they master self-help and communication skills.

Toddlers learn through. . .

- ✓ trusting, secure and consistent relationships with caregivers;
- ✓ many and varied opportunities to practice self-help skills;
- ✓ making real choices about how, when, where and with whom they play;
- ✓ continuous and meaningful language experiences;
- ✓ sensory experiences: touching, seeing, hearing, smelling and tasting;
- ✓ many and varied experiences that invite play, discovery and exploration; and
- ✓ imitating adult behavior.

Basic Elements of a Toddler Curriculum

- ✓ Teachers have general knowledge of toddler development.
- ✓ Teachers actively play with toddlers, modeling positive social interactions.
- ✓ Teachers do not expect toddlers to sit in a large group.
- ✓ Teachers read, act out stories, sing and do fingerplays with toddlers.
- ✓ Teachers create opportunities for toddlers to explore creatively with materials; they do not expect toddlers to produce a finished art product based on an adult model.
- ✓ Teachers talk meaningfully to toddlers taking advantage of all opportunities to expand their language.
- ✓ Teachers respond to cues from individual children about when and how to teach them new skills such as toileting, dressing or riding a bike.
- ✓ Children have daily outside activities including sensory experiences with sand and/or water.
- ✓ Teachers provide duplicates of popular toys; toddlers are not expected to share because they do not know how to share.
- ✓ Teachers praise children for their accomplishments.
- ✓ Teachers take necessary health and safety precautions to provide a sanitary and safe environment. They are trained in first aid and CPR.
- ✓ Parental involvement is encouraged.

A Window Into A Toddler Room

If you could peek into a quality toddler program, you should see . . .

The toddler room is bustling. At first glance it is difficult to locate the teachers, who are on the floor in different parts of the room, talking to, observing or holding children. In one corner, two toddlers at the water table are concentrating with riveted attention as they fill a huge plastic container using several brightly colored funnels. A teacher sits near them talking about the cool water and wondering out loud how many drops of red food coloring will change the water. They experiment and then proudly - and possessively - announce to anyone who will listen, that they made red water! Others flock to see first hand and a few join the red-water-makers; pouring, splashing and conversation, guided and encouraged by the teacher, continue.

The library area - on the other side of the room - is clearly defined with soft, colorful pillows and two shelves filled with books. The shelf units form a walled off area to help create a private space away from the noisier parts of the room. Comfortably settled with a toddler on each knee, a teacher is doing an animated reading of Goldilocks. It is a favorite. The children join in during familiar lines anticipating the plot as it unfolds. One toddler in particular is excitedly - and somewhat impatiently - waiting for "the chair to break!" Children come and go during the reading as their interest and/or attention span permits.

Across from the library area is a dramatic play corner equipped with child-sized kitchen equipment. A shelf with hats, scarves and purses sits near a full length mirror. Three children tug at a coveted felt hat with yellow ribbons. The reading of Goldilocks is momentarily stopped while the teacher moves to the dramatic play area and strategically places herself near the coveted hat. "Everyone wants this hat. Let's find more hats with yellow ribbons." She unearths more hats, which satisfies two of the three. Rachel however still "needs the other hat". The teacher gently, but clearly gives her a choice of one of the available hats . . . or would she like to sit on her lap and find out what will happen to Goldilocks? Rachel eventually - but reluctantly - joins the group in the library area as the teacher admires the hat-wearers who are dramatically posing in the mirror.

Two of the children at the water table are splashing a bit too enthusiastically for others' comfort. The teacher successfully redirects them to the play-dough table where they pound large mounds of green play-dough with mallets. At the teacher's suggestion they make green cookies and a green birthday cake.

The teachers tell the group to prepare to go outside. "It's almost time to clean up." A few minutes later, the teachers begin singing "The Clean Up Song". Most children join in the singing . . . and a few actually put away some toys. Two children help the teacher wash the play-dough table. Others head for their cubbies to find hats and jackets. The teachers patiently help children get dressed for the playground, talking about blue jackets, orange hats and purple buttons.

Playful Preschoolers

Introduction

Having successfully mastered many significant self help skills of toddlerhood, preschoolers (threes, fours and young fives) focus their considerable energy on playing as they build important friendships and work on the social, cognitive, language and physical skills which will give them the necessary background and confidence for academic and school success.

Programming for preschoolers, therefore, has to provide a rich and varied selection of materials and activities designed to stimulate children's learning in all developmental areas. This is best accomplished when learning is *integrated* throughout the play environment. In open-ended Learning Centers, children can be encouraged to explore with materials, language and social interactions as they develop needed skills.

For learning to be meaningful, it is critical that preschoolers be truly engaged. Activities, themes and projects need to be based on children's own interests. Children need many opportunities to select their own materials and activities and to work at their own pace. Uninterrupted blocks of time is essential for effective programming.

Preschoolers need opportunities to develop problem solving strategies. Preschool teachers help children learn how to generate alternative solutions to everyday problems such as fixing a puzzle, constructing a bird house or taking turns with peers.

A risk-free and open-ended environment stretches preschoolers' imagination, encourages thinking skills, and enhances social development. Teachers interact actively with children while they play to help them expand and extend their experience and their thinking. Preschoolers learn best in small groups. Whole group teacher-directed activities should be brief and infrequent. By taking advantage of teachable moments throughout the day, teachers can naturally build on children's interest and knowledge.

Preschoolers learn through. . .

- ✓ trusting, secure and consistent relationships with teachers;
- ✓ making real choices about how, when, where and with whom they play;
- ✓ many and varied opportunities to be involved in meaningful activities and projects;
- ✓ opportunities to explore freely with materials;
- ✓ opportunities to develop and use problem solving strategies;
- ✓ opportunities to work and play at their own pace; and
- ✓ opportunities to work and play with small groups of peers.

Basic Elements of A Preschool Curriculum

- ✓ Teachers have general knowledge of preschool development.
- ✓ Teachers prepare the learning environment with developmentally stimulating and varied materials.
- ✓ Teachers integrate science, math, language and social experiences throughout the day in play-based interactive experiences.
- ✓ The curriculum reflects children's varying abilities with activities and materials.
- ✓ Teachers view each child as an individual with his or her own rate of development, interests and personality.
- ✓ Teachers provide opportunities for success.
- ✓ Teachers provide many choices for children.
- ✓ Children have opportunities to use all of their senses and actively manipulate things in the environment.
- ✓ Teachers provide materials, equipment, time and space for children to actively explore the surroundings.
- ✓ Children do **not** use dittos or worksheets.
- ✓ Reading and writing are taught through a print rich environment and meaningful experiences with books and language.
- ✓ Teachers take necessary health and safety precautions to provide a sanitary and safe environment. They are trained in first aid and CPR.
- ✓ Parental involvement is encouraged.

A Window Into a Preschooler Room

If you could peek into a quality preschool program, you should see. . .

The room is noisy and active as children move from their large - but brief - group time, where they sang songs and talked about the choices available for the day. They are in the process of selecting Centers. Three four-year-olds are purposefully heading for the wood working table where they don safety goggles before beginning work on their bird house, a project they have been working on all week. There is a lengthy discussion about where to place the perches. Thomas, self designated bird expert, insists that the perches "need to be on top of the food holes, 'cause birds bend down to eat". The teacher, overhearing this discussion, suggests they walk over to the Book Center to look at a special book she got from the library, which has photographs of birds and bird houses. After consulting the book and making detailed observations about how birds actually perch, they agree to place two perches above and two below the "food holes". The teacher tells them how impressed she is that they successfully found a solution they all agreed upon.

A small group of three- and four-year-olds, have spread out in the Block Center, building a train station inspired by the one they visited yesterday on a field trip. Rebecca becomes quite frustrated because she can't seem to make the tracks curve. Imani finds a curved block which does the trick. Rebecca, relieved and impressed with Imani's skill, briefly builds a clock tower, before leaving the block area for the Writing Center, where children are writing letters and cards to Jason who moved to a new city last month.

Jason's letters are variously peppered with drawings, carefully scribbled lines to denote Jason's name and in some cases clearly written words. The teacher has offered to write any messages children wish to dictate. They will walk to the corner mailbox at the end of the week to mail the finished letters. The Writing Center has a variety of paper, pens, and pencils. Some children are working on their journals, telling stories with pictures, letters and in some cases creatively spelled words.

A teacher is surrounded by a small group of preschoolers in the Art Center where she is demonstrating how to make wax-relief paintings using crayons and water colors. Some of the children experiment by scratching the crayoned designs to see if the paint shows through, while others are focused on making free form designs. They work independently, occasionally showing each other their creations and commenting about the beaded paint as it skirts away from the crayoned areas.

Next to the painting activity is an open art shelf with assorted collage materials. Four children are making three dimensional creations using empty egg cartons, feathers, popside sticks, cotton balls and whatever else they discover. Carlos who has been carefully selecting objects for his sculpture decides to paint each of the cotton balls a different color; the teacher agrees that this is a wonderful idea, and moves some paint and brushes onto the collage table.

In the Book Center there is a small group of children clustered around a child who has successfully assumed the role of teacher as she reads a familiar book with a great deal of interpretation and drama. The children dutifully answer her questions like attentive "students". The group reading gradually dissolves as children select their own books and read quietly or to each other. A teacher joins them, settling on a large pillow, and is soon reading to an appreciative audience. She stops the reading to invite Jeremy over who is wandering around the room - seemingly unable to find a Center to join. She continues reading, asking occasional open-ended questions about particular characters, which inspires much lively discussion.

It is time to clean up and prepare snack. Several children are already helping a teacher wash the art tables. Soon they will slice some apples to pass out to others. After snack they will play outside. Children seem happy and involved. The room has a pleasant buzz of voices and activity.

Skillful School-Agers

Introduction

School-agers are eager for new experiences and have enormous curiosity. They are open to opportunities to apply their many newly mastered skills. School-agers focus much energy on their peers - wanting to belong and to please others. Friendships are extremely important. They are full of energy which can build up during their often sedentary school day.

Programming for school-agers, therefore, has to provide a wide variety of materials - and time - for children to structure their own activities. This is best accomplished when children have free time to make friends, establish small groups, work on projects of their choice and talk with adults. Children should have a major say about the substance of their program - the kinds of activities and clubs that are available.

Child care programming for school-agers is different from school! Staff play an important role in orchestrating the space and in setting a comfortable out-of-school tone. The environment should be home-like with defined areas for a range of quiet and active activities. It is important that the expectations for school-age child care be realistic and based on the varied developmental needs of children.

School-age staff provide support, nurturance, reassurance, encouragement and limit-setting to help children feel safe and secure. It is important that staff understand the unique needs and interests of school-agers. . . and that they enjoy working with them.

School-agers learn through. . .

- ✓ trusting, secure and consistent relationships with teachers;
- ✓ making real choices about how, when, where and with whom they play;
- ✓ many and varied opportunities to be involved in meaningful short and long term activities and projects;
- ✓ opportunities to apply skills to new situations and experiences;
- ✓ opportunities to be independent within the structure of the program;
- ✓ opportunities to develop and maintain friendships with peers; and
- ✓ opportunities to informally talk to staff.

A Window into a School Age Room

If you could peek into a quality school-age program, you should see. . .

Children rush into the Center dropping book-bags and coats in the general vicinity of their designated cubbies. Some are involved in vigorous - and often loud - conversations with each other. Others meander into the room slowly. They are greeted by teachers as they check the Daily Calendar which details special projects, events and clubs. They gradually settle into various parts of the room which is divided into clearly defined areas.

The Homework Center is adjacent to the library which is outfitted with a wide selection of books including references, 1001 jokes and riddles, and fiction. Several children have camped in the library comfortably sitting on the couch or large pillows to continue their somewhat heated conversation about how unfair it was to have been denied recess earlier that day! A staff member joins them, listens and agrees that it must have made them angry to miss out on recess. She suggests that they should be sure to spend time on the playground during the afternoon. They soon refocus their attention on how hungry they are and head for the snack area where others are already in the process of preparing vegetable sticks and muffins. Children will rotate through the open snack area as room and appetites permit.

There is a computer station near the library with specially selected software - math and problem-solving games and writing and graphic programs. Three children are intently - and secretly - creating birthday party invitations. They are hurriedly working on their project before eating snack because they know that the Newspaper Club meets today, and will need the computer.

A Game Center is on the other side of the room where several children have gathered to play in or watch a continuing checkers competition. There is evidently an undefeated champ who is playing a new challenger. Nearby is a small group of children who, with a teacher's assistance, have retrieved their three-story lego construction from the top of a cabinet. They decide that today is definitely the day it will be finished!

In the Art Center, a teacher is setting up a new project. They will make piñatas using paper mache. Five children have selected this activity. The teacher has several samples of piñatas hanging from the ceiling and some books with photographs for the children to peruse as she explains the multi-stage process involved. Others painting at easels nearby want to join, but because of limited room and materials they will have to wait until tomorrow.

After the snack area is closed and cleaned up, the teacher joins several children at the Homework Center who have been asking for help. Once they are successfully working, she checks in with the Newspaper Club which is preparing the layout for this month's edition. There is space for one more article, and they can't agree on what to put there. The teacher listens to their suggestions and tries to focus the discussion so they consider all options. They ultimately decide to use a cartoon drawn by José - a third grader. He is delighted with the wisdom of the group's decision.

Outside play is now an option. Half the group selects to go. Basketball and jump ropes - in addition to the standard playground equipment - are available. Children clean up and get their jackets. The Newspaper Club and pi-nata makers stay in to complete their projects before joining the group outside.

Soon parents will begin to come. The afternoon was relaxed but full of a range of choices. Some children were more involved in specific projects than others. Some spent time visiting and chatting with friends. There was a tone of warmth and respect throughout the program.

Basic Elements of a School-age Curriculum

- ✓ Teachers have a general knowledge of school-age development.
- ✓ Teachers prepare a home-like environment with clearly defined areas for short and long term projects.
- ✓ Children select from a variety of activities based on their own interests and skill levels.
- ✓ Teachers create opportunities for children to work independently (doing homework, reading a book, writing in a journal) or in small groups (working on a Newsletter, cooking project, art or craft project, playing board games or participating in sports.)
- ✓ Teachers include children in decision making about special projects, clubs and field trips.
- ✓ Teachers interact with children, offering suggestions, providing encouragement and praising their accomplishments.
- ✓ Teachers help children practice solving their own problems from identifying the correct ingredients for apple sauce to identifying agreed upon rules to a card game.
- ✓ Teachers take necessary health and safety precautions to provide a sanitary and safe environment. They are trained in first aid and CPR.
- ✓ Parental involvement is encouraged.

A Visit to Tot's Landing

OAKLAND ARTCC, FREMONT, CALIFORNIA



“Our daughter loves going to work with Mommy and Daddy.
We all talk about what we did each day on the way home.”



Federal Aviation Administration
Western-Pacific Region
Human Resource Management Division
15000 Aviation Blvd.
Hawthorne, California 90261
310-297-0087

The FAA's Oakland Air Route Traffic Control Center (ARTCC) in Fremont, California, employs over 400 air traffic controllers, 100 airway facilities personnel, and approximately 50 support personnel including Federal and contract employees. The ARTCC is open 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Air traffic and airway facilities personnel are at work on Saturdays and Sundays, and their shifts frequently

change on a week-to-week basis. For FAA employees with young children, finding competent, caring, and quality child care that accommodates work schedules has often been a difficult, if not impossible, undertaking.

Tot's Landing, like many Federal child development centers, had a “grassroots” beginning. FAA employees interested in quality child care formed a working committee to gather data

and review alternatives. The child care committee, comprised of employees from the Oakland Air Route Traffic Control Center and the Western-Pacific Regional Office in Hawthorne, California, was the driving force behind addressing the distinctive child care needs of the FAA Oakland work force. With employee and community surveys providing justification for a child care facility and with increasing

"Both of us appreciate knowing that if our child is mildly sick, we will both be able to go to work. The sick child care program is excellent."



support from management, the project was formally launched. The committee went on to incorporate as a not-for-profit corporation, begin design and development, and select a professional child care provider.

The board of directors of Tot's Landing – the first child development center to be established at an FAA air traffic facility – is composed of representatives from air traffic, airway facilities, FAA management, and the unions within the building. Children of FAA employees play, learn, and grow in a secure child development center with state-of-the-art equipment, materials, and toys. Separate playgrounds for the very young and the older children spur exercise and imagination with climbing equipment, trike tracks, a

mini-basketball court, airplanes, sand, and garden areas.

On their way to Tot's Landing, children and parents pass through the main security gate, and the parents must show appropriate identification before being admitted to the grounds. Once inside, children and parents are on their way to "work." Parents, after hugs and kisses, leave their children at the child development center, which is behind the main building – secured within an additional safety fence, before reporting to their jobs. They say good-bye knowing they are leaving their children nearby in a setting that is safe and healthy and designed especially for children.

Open since December 1991, the child development center is licensed by the State of California, County of Alameda, to accommodate 50 children ages 1 month to 6 years. Currently, Tot's Landing is open from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. It will, however, eventually be open from 6 a.m. until 11 p.m. 7 days a week, except on Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.

Perhaps the most important service the center provides for Oakland FAA parents is flexibility. Flexibility is a high priority because of work schedules that include evening and weekend hours. Employees are charged by the hour without needing to contract for a minimum amount of time. Rotating or erratic schedules are

"Our program of learning is designed to help children develop in stimulating, interesting, and fun ways. All activities are age-appropriate and geared to the individuality of each child."

accommodated at reasonable hourly rates, which are determined on a weekly basis. Drop-in care for a sudden shift change or for parents whose regular child care arrangements fall through is also available when the facility is open. Additionally, when children are ill, parents have the option of using the sick child care program at a nearby hospital at no additional cost.

Children at Tot's Landing thrive on the individual attention that caregivers lavish on them. Activities throughout the day include verbal interaction, smiles, and holding. There is always time for a teacher to give a hug, to read a book, to listen to a story, or to watch a child show off a newly learned skill.

For the staff and the children, there is always something to look forward to because of exciting events constantly being planned. Often, the plans include parents and families as well as children. Parents join in on field trips to the pumpkin patch or to the zoo. Potluck dinners and outdoor picnics include families of the children and families of the staff. Perhaps most exciting of all are the outings planned to visit mom or dad at a nearby work-site. To share the experience of learning about a parent's work with friends and teachers is invariably memorable for a child.

Tot's Landing reflects both the FAA's commitment to its people and the commitment of a diverse group of employees who made it all happen.

The primary beneficiaries, however, are the children. Children at Tot's Landing thrive on the consistency in their lives – consistency in caregiving and in the shared concern for them from the most important people in their lives – their parents and those who care for them while their parents are at work. The children thrive on activities that encourage learning through play – play is the work of childhood and is important business for the children at the center. It is how they learn cooperation, problem solving, language, self-direction, and coordination. It is how they grow physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

At Tot's Landing, this "work" of childhood brings much "job satisfaction" to the children. Job satisfaction is also enhanced for parents, knowing their children are close by in a quality child care setting. For busy FAA Oakland center employees and their children, going off to work as a family helps to integrate the workplace and child care and offers rich opportunities to share in one another's worlds.



PROGRAMS

**Western-Pacific Region–
Tot's Landing:** Serving 50 children

Hours: 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
(Eventually until 11 p.m.
7 days a week)

Infants: 1 month to 2 years

Toddlers: 2 to 3 years

Preschoolers: 3 to 5 years

Additional Programs:

- Special needs
- Sick child care
- Drop-in program

A Visit to Tundra Tykes

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA



“Employees are pleased. Supervisors
are pleased. The children are happy. This is success.”



Federal Aviation Administration
Alaskan Region
Human Resource Management Division
222 West 7th Avenue #14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513
907-271-5747

Federal agencies in Anchorage, Alaska, are accustomed to working together through the Federal Executive Association (FEA). A prime example of the effectiveness of this collaboration is the Tundra Tykes Child Care Center in downtown Anchorage. The FAA Alaskan Region, as part of the child care consortium project of the FEA, played the role of lead agency in orchestrating and developing the center.

The seeds that became Tundra Tykes were sown years before the center opened when the FAA Alaskan Region Human Resource Committee began to collect information about Federal support for child care. When a survey conducted by the Federal Executive Association determined that child care needs existed among Federal employees in the area, a child care committee was established. Led by a

group of dedicated FAA employees, this committee tackled the numerous tasks involved in establishing a brand new child care facility specifically for children of Federal and other employees working in downtown Anchorage.

Located just a few blocks from the main Federal office building where the FAA regional office is located, the first federally sponsored child care center in

"I taught first grade and kindergarten for eight years, but child care is my cause. I love working with toddlers, and I love being in Alaska."



Alaska is "home away from home" for children of many FAA families in Anchorage as well as for children whose parents are employed by other Federal agencies, the State of Alaska, the military, and oil companies in the area. Parents go off to nearby job sites free to bring a focused quality to their work while the children grow and learn in a quality child care setting that is safe, loving, and secure.

The FAA worked with the General Services Administration to design the 6,500-square-foot building and made certain that the center met all municipal, State, and Federal codes. A specially selected committee of child care professionals and Federal employees, headed up by the FAA, selected the child care provider, chosen for broad experience and knowledge of early childhood

principles. The FAA carefully oversaw the ordering of equipment and materials, unpacking of boxes, planning for enrollments, and arranging for a celebratory dedication ceremony in the fall of 1990.

Now in full bloom at licensed capacity of 75 children, it's a little bit of a celebration each day for those who experience Tundra Tykes. Parents are pleased when they drop their children off in the morning, knowing that they can return to tuck their sons and daughters in at naptime or join them for a snack or a story. Children flourish in the tender care they receive from teachers who professionally organize the day for nurturing and growing. Staff, parents, and children share in experiences and communications each day that create bonds between home and child care center.

FAA employees, parents, board members, and staff work in integrated ways for the benefit of the children and the center as well as the FAA community. In addition to the board of directors, an advisory association of parents meets regularly. Four of the members of the association are also members of the board of directors. They have sponsored fundraising activities to raise money mainly designated for tuition assistance where it is needed. Every effort is made by those involved at Tundra Tykes to respond to the particular needs of Federal employees in the Alaskan Region. For example, special arrangements are

"We have had our son at Tundra Tykes since they opened. The facility is nice, and the people take very good care of him. I'm glad to have such a good facility located conveniently close to my job."

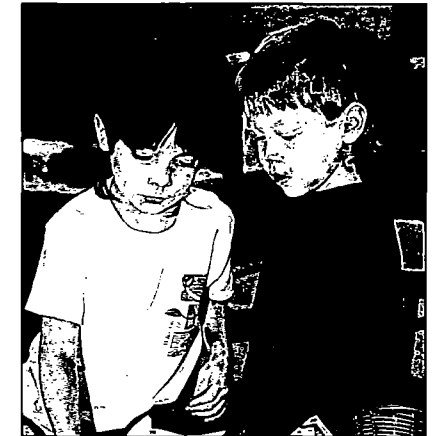
made for children of employees from outlying villages to be cared for at Tundra Tykes when the employees are in Anchorage on assignment. As another example, Tundra Tykes helped care for the grandchild of an FAA employee when the child spent the summer in Anchorage with her grandparents. These are just two of the ways Tundra Tykes works closely with FAA and other Federal employees.

Child care for FAA employees at Anchorage is based on guidelines and policies established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. There is a professional approach to caring for children at Tundra Tykes. One aspect of professional quality is a balanced day. For example, outdoor activities are as important to the growth and development of young children as are indoor activities. Even though there is snow on the ground from as early as October until as late as April or May and there are sometimes just 4 hours of daylight in winter months, the children love bundling up in their bright snowsuits to play outdoors on the playground. If the snow is very deep in the mountains, they may have an opportunity to watch a moose come down into the city streets. To prevent energetic children from climbing over the high mounds of snow that often collect against play yard fences and in anticipation of a "moose alert," the play yard fence was designed

at 6 feet instead of the usual 4 feet. This assures the safety of the children and keeps such interesting visitors at a safe distance!

In addition to balance between indoor and outdoor times, a typical day is balanced in other important ways. Daytime activities are carefully planned to balance quiet and active exercises, and projects encourage the development of both large and small motor skills. There are opportunities for social interactions as well as time spent playing alone. Problem solving and decisionmaking are encouraged, and music is often in the air. Children at Tundra Tykes grow physically, emotionally, cognitively, and socially according to their own special and unique timetables.

Another important aspect of quality is the interaction between child and caregiver. There is always a lot of warmth at Tundra Tykes in Anchorage. It is the kind of warmth and professionalism that nurtures infants, toddlers, and preschoolers toward daily positive experiences. It is the kind of warmth that helps parents manage responsibilities of the workplace and responsibilities to their families in a balanced way. Warmth, professionalism, and balance — key words that say a lot about quality child care and a lot about Tundra Tykes Child Care Center in Anchorage, Alaska.



PROGRAMS

Alaskan Region—Tundra Tykes:
Serving 75 children

Hours: 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Infants: 6 weeks to 12 months

Toddlers: 12 to 30 months

Preschoolers I: 30 to 42 months

Preschoolers II: 42 months to 6 years

Additional Programs:

- Special needs
- Extended hours arranged

A Visit to The Launching Pad

OKLAHOMA CITY, OKLAHOMA



“It’s wonderful to stop in during the day
and see how happy she is there.”



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Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center
Human Resource Management Division
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405-954-3501

The Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, provides a variety of support services for the FAA and the Department of Transportation. The Aeronautical Center issues paychecks for all DOT employees. It trains the agency's technical people, keeps records on civil aircraft, and conducts research on the human factors of aviation safety. At any one time there may be 6,500-plus

people on the grounds in 50 permanent buildings located on 250 acres.

In May of 1990, some new “little people” arrived – children of FAA employees enrolled in the recently constructed child development center named “The Launching Pad.” The first FAA child care facility of its kind to be built from the ground up, the 10,000-square-foot building was designed to provide care for up to 150 children ages

6 weeks to 12 years. The concept of onsite child care and the appealing open, flexible, child-oriented building was so well received by Aeronautical Center employees that the program quickly expanded from 75 to 150 children – unusually fast growth for a new center.

Dozens of FAA employees played a role in the development of The Launching Pad, and more continue to be involved. The center is

“Mothers and fathers are able to do their jobs better, knowing their children are safe, are nearby, and are learning.”



managed by the Aeronautical Center Employee Child Care Center, Inc., a not-for-profit organization made up of Aeronautical Center employees. Membership in the corporation is open to any FAA employee who wishes to become a patron. Numbers of FAA employees, many who do not have children of their own, have elected to join the corporation. Additional financial contributions have come from employee groups, including the Professional Association of Aeronautical Center Employees (PAACE), the Radio Club, the Credit Union, and the Employee Association.

Employees report that tuition costs are reasonable, and the center is

affordable for all Aeronautical Center employees. Parents new to the area find that The Launching Pad is one of the highest quality child care centers in Oklahoma City and has low tuition rates. This is a rare combination, but one of which the board of directors is especially proud. Scholarships are available based on need.

FAA employees with children in the center praise the convenience of onsite child care. In the middle of a demanding workday, lunch with a child is a refreshing and welcome change of pace. Parents visit during breaks, stop in to read a story, or attend planned events. They return to the job focused, relaxed, and more productive. If a child becomes ill, there is a comfortable area in the center where he/she is cared for until the parent arrives.

One of the most significant tasks of the board of directors was to find a professional child care provider to manage the center. It was a task they undertook only after learning everything they could about quality in early childhood education. Parents feel that the program reflects this attention to quality. Many of them stopped in frequently when the center first opened to assure themselves that their children were well cared for. They are now confident that the provider is doing a high-quality, professional job. Knowing that the door is always open to them and trusting that their

“Providing quality child care for our children is one of the most important contributions we can make to our nation’s future.”

children’s needs are being met, they visit informally at times that are convenient to their schedules.

The well-being of each child is the primary goal of the center’s staff. An emphasis on the positives – promoting positive thinking, rewarding positive behaviors, and communicating positive messages – permeates day-to-day routines and activities. Enthusiastic and committed teachers and enriching childhood experiences are important hallmarks of the program.

Another significant aspect of The Launching Pad is its commitment to providing programs tailored to the FAA community. Summer camp offers many opportunities for the children enrolled. Each day during the camp session there are outings such as skating, bowling, swimming, and field trips into the community.

Programs include before- and after-school care during the school year and transportation to and from public kindergarten. When there is the need, occasional evening care is offered. The center has a drop-in program for pre-registered students that parents can use if their regular child care arrangements fall through. The Launching Pad also reserves a number of spaces for the continuous stream of children of FAA students who regularly come for 6 weeks or more of training each year.

Success is evident at The Launching Pad on several levels.

It’s evident in the commitment and conscientiousness of the board of directors, the staff, and in the satisfaction expressed by parents. It’s evident in the state-of-the-art facilities and equipment and in the tuition program that maintains affordability for a broad range of FAA employees. It’s evident in the highly secure, safe, and nurturing environment that was designed especially for children. It’s evident in the role the center plays in the recruitment and retention of FAA employee parents. Perhaps it is most evident in the faces of the children, who are often not ready to leave at the end of the day and can’t wait to arrive in the morning. Children, parents, and supervisors in Oklahoma City are all in agreement ... FAA child care at work – works!



PROGRAMS

Mike Monroney Aeronautical Center–The Launching Pad:
Serving 150 children

Hours: 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Infants/Toddlers: 6 weeks to 23 months

Preschoolers: 2 to 5 years

Kindergarten

Additional Programs:

- Special needs
- Kindergarten transportation
- School-age programs
- Occasional evening hours
- Drop-in care
- Summer camp

