PRACTICUM GUIDE

For Practicum and Student Interns

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PRACTICUM GUIDE

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

This classroom manual is designed to give Practicum Students and Interns an overview of classroom practices while providing information about how to carry out teaching duties and improve teaching skills. It is my hope that this manual will provide some direction for students who are new to preschool teaching as well as some helpful reminders for more experienced students. Please read it when you begin work at the Center and refer to it as needed throughout the quarter.

This manual is not designed as the final information piece on all practices at the Center. Teaching is an art that develops and improves with time, patience and effort. And, like all good artists, teachers are always in the process of growing, changing and becoming better and better at their profession. It is my hope that you will grow as a teacher while you are at the Anna Bing Arnold Children's Center and that you will find nurturing for your creative spirit and share that creativity with us all.

Enjoy the process!

Director

I've come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my personal approach that creates the climate. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or de-humanized.

- Haim Ginott

CENTER-WIDE PROCEDURES

CLASSROOM ORGANIZATION

We have six classrooms for the children's program. New groupings are formed in June and September as the Kindergarten-age children leave the program. Children are placed in each group based on development (physical, social, emotional, and cognitive), chronological age, and available space. The daily schedule for each group provides the consistent framework necessary for children to feel secure at school. It gives the child reference points that he or she can rely on and function creatively around. Within that framework there are many avenues for creativity and choice for both adults and children.

Within the classrooms we have both full-day children and children enrolled in our state funded preschool program. All children participate in the same curriculum, which meets all of the criteria for state preschool curriculum.

General Schedule

Infant Program Schedule:

Morning Arrival	greetings and indoor free play
Breakfast	Infants are fed throughout the day, on demand, as their needs require.
Morning naptime	younger infants sleep, older infants go outside
Morning choice time	indoor special time with peers and caregivers
Lunchtime	
Afternoon nap	after lunch rest time
Afternoon snack time	eat snack and go outside
Afternoon choice time	indoor free play
End of the day goodbyes	parent's reconnect and view the story of infant's day

Toddler Program Schedule

7:30- 8:30	Greetings: daily health check, diaper/potty upon arrival. Indoor choice time
8:30- 9:30	Breakfast; diaper change/ Potty
10:00-11:30	Indoor and outdoor choice time
11:45-12:30	Diaper changing/Potty
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:45-2:30	Naptime (caregivers rub backs and read stories)
2:30-3:00	Cuddle as children wake up and diaper change/potty.
3:00- 4:00	Snack available, indoor choice time
4:00-5:00	Outdoor play
5:00-5:30	Diaper changing/potty, clean up and get ready to go home

*These schedules are flexible and may change according to a child's individual needs as well as the group's needs and interests.

Preschool Schedule:

7:30 – 8:30	Children arrive, check in, indoor planned activities, free play
9:00 – 9:30	Breakfast
9:30 – 11:30	Group time, stories and music, indoor and outdoor curriculum activities
11:30 – 12:00	Arrival of afternoon preschool children, prepare for lunch and nap
12:00 – 12:30	Lunch
12:30 – 2:15	Naptime
2:15 – 3:00	Wake-up, indoor activities
3:00--3:30	Snack
3:30 – 4:00	Group time, stories and music, indoor curriculum activities
4:00 – 5:00	Outdoor play and planned activities
5:00 – 5:30	Clean-up, small group activities and free play
5:30 – 6:30	Evening program – 4-5 year olds move to Maple room.

Bonsai Room- (infants 4 months- 17 months)

Infants grow at a tremendously fast rate. By the end of the first year, they will have tripled in birth weight. By their first birthday, most infants will be crawling or even taking their first step!
Because infants are changing and developing so quickly it is important to have a daily schedule that is individually planned for each child and flexible to meet their changing needs. Within the structure of consistent caregiving follow these guidelines for daily routines.

The most essential ingredient in infant care is a warm, responsive and dependable adult caregiver. During infancy, children need deep connections with each person who cares for them; connections with both their parents and their caregivers in group care settings. All the learning and loving that follows in children's lives builds on these early attachments with special people.

Caregivers help infants develop a sense of trust and security by responding to their cries. Feeling secure encourages infants to try new things. Be consistent so they will know what to expect. Babies have many ways of telling us what they need. Being a careful observer and consistently responding to a baby's needs will help a baby feel secure.

Young infants have their own natural schedule for routines. Most babies settle into a regular routine for eating, sleeping and diapering, but the schedule will vary depending on the baby. Some babies need to eat more frequently than others. Some will sleep more and take longer naps.

Hold and cuddle infants when feeding them. Even infants who hold their own bottles need to be held. Being held and cuddled frequently is extremely important in the development of a baby's sense of self-worth and security. Do not prop infants while drinking a bottle as this may cause choking.

Talk to infants often. Face infants when you talk to them so that they may see you and smile with you. Talk to them about things you are doing, familiar objects, or people. You may even want to babble back or echo sounds your baby makes much as you would in regular conversation. Even though and infant cannot understand everything you say, he/she will be learning many words that will form the basis for language later on. Babies enjoy cuddling on a caregiver's lap, looking at colorful picture books, and hearing the rhythm of their voice. With time they begin to understand that words have meaning and can be used to identify objects.

Babies have their own curriculum. No matter what infants are doing, they are taking in information. They uncover the mysteries of the world hundreds of times a day, learning from what they see, hear and touch. Providing an environment rich with experiences will give babies opportunities to explore. Expose babies to colors and objects to look at. Provide interesting objects for babies to feel, touch, mouth, and explore. Square nylon scarves, cold metal bowls, wooden spoons and washable toys are interesting toys for infants. Babies should not be allowed to play with anything smaller than a half a dollar (about 1-1/4 inch).

Give babies the freedom to move around. Young infants enjoy being on their backs so they can kick, wiggle and look around. Mobile infants need space and time to practice crawling, creeping, pulling up, and walking.

Bamboo Room (18 months -30 months)

Sometime around eighteen months, the experienced explorer becomes increasingly independent. Toddlers take charge by choosing for themselves what to do and by trying out their expanding abilities. Children at this age are developing their sense of identity, as both a social and independent self. They are experiencing the power of being their own person.

Toddlers often assert themselves by being resistant or saying no. Their resistance in various situations represents an attempt to establish their own identity. Children this age are trying to gain a little control over what happens to them. By supporting individuality, by giving choices whenever possible, and by introducing social guidelines, teachers can help toddlers find appropriate ways to assert themselves.

Taking a toddler's resistance personally, or too seriously, will often make the situation worse for the caregiver and the child. Sometimes a playful response from the caregiver will lead to cooperation from the child. What is often most important to toddlers is having the opportunity to make choices on their own.

A well-designed environment gives toddlers a chance to be in control. The children will feel they have choices if there are areas for independent activity, social play, toys for small-muscle activities, books, and a selection of materials for fantasy play and creative expression. Areas should be set up for children to explore on their own. Independent play helps toddlers to develop feelings of competence and confidence, as well as a sense of self.

Sometimes toddlers need assistance as they play. Rather than taking over an activity, help them just enough to continue the activity on their own. When needed, a limited amount of assistance from a caregiver will best support a toddler's growing independence.

Mulberry Room - Young Preschoolers (two's and three's)

Two-year-olds and young three-year-olds are developing important independence skills, including personal care such as toileting, feeding, and dressing. The most appropriate teaching technique for this age group is to give ample opportunities for children to use self-initiated repetition to practice newly acquired skills and to experience feelings of autonomy and success. Two and three-year-olds are also learning to produce language rapidly. They need simple books, pictures, puzzles, and music, and time and space for active play such as jumping, running, and dancing. While children in this age group are acquiring social skills, when they are in groups there should be several of the same toy because their egocentrism makes it difficult to understand the concept of sharing.

Children of this age are developing autonomy. They are concerned with their ability to establish themselves as independent beings. They are interested in gaining control over their bodies and activities. Teachers recognize the importance of this stage and provide opportunities for children to gain self-care skills and body awareness, while keeping in mind that younger children still need assistance with many of their physical needs.

Another important development at this stage is the need to test one's information, skills and feelings against the limits of the world and society. The proper balance of freedom of activity and adherence to appropriate limits set by staff is critical to the successful development of self-esteem. Providing a variety of choices in activities and increasing responsibility and involvement within the classroom encourages independence. Two and three year olds feel good about themselves when they are able to take care of their own bodies, dress themselves, make choices about how to spend their time and are learning how to direct their impulses in a positive manner.

The focus of this group is language development, self-care skills, body awareness, and physical and social development. Communication skills and good language development are encouraged through the use of stories, songs, and teacher/child dialogue. Physical development is stimulated through a challenging environment and complex large and small motor activities. Social development focuses on small group interactions, parallel play, imitation, and teacher-assisted interactions. Cognitive development is facilitated by providing opportunities for classifying and ordering, (grouping, sorting, and identifying). Basic concepts such as direction, position, and labeling are developed.

Maple, Magnolia and Eucalyptus Rooms - Older Preschoolers (3-5 year olds)

Children at this age are actively integrating all areas of development. They are able to use and master a wide variety of materials. The program provides them with a variety of structured and non-structured activities, encouraging choice and independence. Activities are designed to enhance social, motor, cognitive, emotional and language development.

Four-year-olds enjoy a variety of experiences and more small motor activities like scissors, art, manipulatives and cooking. They are able to concentrate and remember as well as recognize objects by shape, color, or size. Four-year-olds are developing basic math concepts and problem solving skills.

Some 4's and most 5's combine ideas into more complex relations (for example, number concepts such as one-to-one correspondence) and have growing memory capacity and fine motor physical skills. They display a growing interest in the functional aspects of written language, such as recognizing meaningful words and trying to write their own names. Curriculum for 4's and 5's can expand beyond the child's immediate experience of self, home, and family to include special events and trips. Five-year-olds are developing interest in community and the world outside their own. They also use motor skills well, even daringly, and show increasing ability to pay attention for longer times and in larger groups if the topic is meaningful.
Social skills are being refined and peer relations become very important. Their play is characterized by their growing involvement with other children and sorting out fantasy from reality. Social-dramatic play engages children in real concerns within the context of the unreal and helps them distinguish between the two. Social play experiences expose children to others' points of view, wishes, and ideas, providing a contrast to the child's own unique perceptions and feelings.

Organizational and problem-solving opportunities are provided through block play, the use of manipulatives, and sorting, classifying and measuring activities which are carried out at increasing levels of complexity. Language development experiences continue on a more sophisticated level during such activities as group time, story writing, and cooking. Depending on each child's interest, reading and writing skills are encouraged.

Films, books, walks, and visits from community workers (Fire, Police, etc.) all add to the four and five-year-olds widening world and need for more complex information.

Daily Schedule

Morning

7:15 – 9:00: Arrival

- Prepare daily activities (mix paints, set up easel, etc.)
- Greet children and parents as they arrive. One teacher performs health check.
- Set up and supervise morning activities – play dough, manipulatives, table top games, puzzles, dramatic play, blocks and books may be used.
- Sliding door between B & C groups remains open. Children may be in either room.
- Clean up before breakfast – have children help.

9:00 – 9:30: Breakfast

- Set up for breakfast. Clean & disinfect tables.
- Staff and children wash hands.
- All teachers eat with children and serve food family style. Take meal count.
- Clean up after meal, wash tables and chairs, sweep floor if necessary.
- Begin set-up of planned activities.

9:30 - 11:00: Mulberry – indoor planned activity time.

- Circle time. This may consist of stories, songs, fingerplays, discussions, games, etc.
- Small group and planned activities. Activities are provided as planned by staff. Indoor and outdoor side yard are used.

11:00 – 12:00: Mulberry– outside time.
- Check playground for unsafe objects. One group assigned to rake sand and sweep before children go out to play.
- Children have choice of free play and activities set-up by teachers (obstacle course, painting, tumbling mats, etc.)
- Assist with yard clean up before coming in.

9:30 – 10:30: Magnolia/Maple & Eucalypytus groups – outside time.
- Check playground for unsafe objects. One group assigned to rake sand and sweep before children go out to play.
- Children have choice of free play and activities set-up by teachers.
- Assist with yard clean up before coming in.

10:30 – 12:00: Maple/Magnolia& Eucalyptus groups – indoor planned activity time.
- Circle time.
- Small group and planned activities. Indoor and outdoor side yard are used.

11:30: Cots
- One staff member sets up cots while children are outside.
- Count the number of children that will be napping. Get cots from the outside patio closets. Put children's sheets and blankets on the cots.
- When finished go outside to help supervise the yard.

12:00 – 2:00: Lunch and Naptime

Afternoon

2:00 - 2:30: Wake-up
- Have quiet activities available for children as they transition from napping to active play.
- Lead Teacher dispenses medicines and sends children to bathroom upon awakening.
- Change all sheets on cots used at naptime. Put all blankets and stuffed animals away. Straighten room.

2:30 – 4:00: Circle and activity time. (Ggroup may use this schedule or alternative schedule below)
- See morning description for *Indoor Planned Activities*.
- Serve afternoon snack and clean up after.

4:00 – 5:00: Outside play
- Merge with other classrooms.
- Clean up yard before returning to classroom.

5:00: Inside – self-select activities
- Teachers assist parents in picking up their children. Find coats, backpacks, deliver messages, etc.

Alternative schedule*
2:00 – 3:00: Outside free play
3:00 – 3:15: Snack
3:30 – 5:00: Circle time and planned activities
5:00 – 5:30: Outside play

*Schedules are chosen based on weather, daylight, and curriculum plans.

Play Yard

A staff person must be on the playground at all times when children are present. If the only adult has to go inside, a replacement must be found or all children must also go inside.

All areas of the playground need supervision. Positioning on the yard must be in a spot where all areas are visible. When more than one staff member is on the yard they must position themselves at spots around the yard for best use of equipment and supervision of children. If leaving a supervision area for any reason the staff person must notify other teachers on the yard that they are leaving their area so that it may be added to the remaining teacher's field of supervision.

Procedures

- All rooms are to be cleaned before going out to the playground. Turn off all lights when rooms are not in use.
- Maintain supervision ratio of 1:6.
- If yard is not set up when you go outside, feel free to do it! Take out large snap blocks on grass. Get balls, shovels, mats, easels, etc. Be creative! Set up an obstacle course. Take out chalk for kids to draw on concrete.
- Take out mats for tumbling. Bring the "inside" out: Playhouse, furniture, radio and music for movement activities, markers and papers for drawing on table. Set up things on mats, such as Lego's, doll house, books, and etc.
- Use hose to set up water play in water table, troughs, and sand area. Children may use the hose for specific activities with adult permission and supervision.
- Children may help with setting up the yard and bringing sand toys and bikes out of the storage area. Children should also assist with returning the toys and bikes to the storage room at the end of the play period and help with general yard clean up.
- Children should be taught where the drinking fountains are and how to use them. In the event that a child is too young to master use of the fountain, care should be taken to provide that child with opportunities for drinking water from a cup.
- Swings and climbing structures must be supervised closely. Children may experiment with different swinging styles but do not allow them to swing so wildly that they are a danger to themselves or others.
- Always be aware of children walking in and out of classrooms, around side of yard, outside Maple and Magnolia Rooms, and hanging out near hallway door. Know where your kids are!
- At any point, when a teacher feels that what the child is engaging in is unsafe, it is okay to redirect the child.

- Use outside time to observe and interact with children while always watching for safety concerns
- **Do not stand or talk with other adults**---go to where the children are playing and move as they change areas.
- If you leave the yard for any reason, inform the teacher that you are leaving. It may be necessary to stay on the play yard until there is sufficient coverage for you to leave.
- Make sure specific play tasks stay in their area. (Ex. Sand stays in sandbox. Bikes on bike path).
- Remember practicum and student teachers are not to be left alone with children.

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Professional Behavior

Work in a Children's Center is intensive and requires close cooperation with other staff members and families. Occasionally this working relationship causes us to become aware of the personal lives of families and staff at the Center. It is essential that we all work together as professionals to guard against misuse of this information. It is also essential that we treat all members of the Center community with respect and courtesy. Some important aspects to remember while at work are:

1) Practice confidentiality. Don't repeat information about children or staff to others while at work or on campus. It is important to remember that our parents are also part of the campus community and that they share classrooms and offices with other parents and staff. Personal information and opinions spread quickly and can be damaging.
2) The same is true of gossip. At no time is it appropriate to repeat gossip about staff or families. If you hear gossip you should make it clear that you do not participate in this type of discussion about others.
3) Be a good model. Teachers are always modeling – even if you are not aware of it. Take the initiative to be helpful to others, be courteous, and use appropriate language. Your behavior sets a tone at all times. Try to make it a positive one!
4) Remember the difference between professional relationships and personal ones. Try not to put your personal feelings into professional conversations with parents or other staff. Try to keep your professional life and personal life separate. Do not discuss personal business in the classroom – your attention needs to be on the children.
5) Respect the physical environment you work in. Keep it neat and clean. Show respect for other teachers by returning materials to the proper place and maintaining the order in storage areas and the classroom.

The Center as a Lab

The Children's Center is used by the University Community as a research, education and training site for several departments. Students log over 5,000 hours per year in observation and training time spent at our school. They look to us to demonstrate the

best in teaching practices. We view this as opportunity to positively affect the early childhood profession and make every effort to train future teachers well.

Practicum Students and Student Interns

Practicum students spend 3.25 hours per week working in the classroom. Interns may be in the classroom from 6 to 18 hours each week. Your role as a student is to learn about early childhood teaching from modeling, discussion and practice. You will function as assistants to the teacher but are not hired employees and are not allowed the same responsibilities as staff.

As a practicum or intern student you will primarily take direction from the Lead Teacher, however, all teaching staff are available to give direction and may ask for your assistance when needed. In general the duties of practicum and intern students are:

- ❖ Familiarize themselves with classroom practices
- ❖ Get to know children and practice appropriate interactions
- ❖ Participate in all activities with children
- ❖ Plan activities as requested by Instructor
- ❖ Take increasing levels of responsibility as the quarter progresses
- ❖ Must be supervised at all times
- ❖ Are not to be left alone with children
- ❖ Practicum are not to be sent into the class to take care of a child while all others are outside. That is the job of a Teacher or Teacher Assistant.

Observers

The role of observers is to watch without interaction or interference. Observers are to remain in the Observation Booth or to sit on the sidelines while observing outdoors. They should not be interacting with children or teachers. If an observer asks you a generic question about a child you may answer. You may also tell observers a child's first name. Do not tell observers children's last names or any other specific identifying information. If they need birth dates for their record they may come to the front desk for that or other specific information.

Social Media Policy

All practicum students, interns, and visitors to the Children's Center agree to follow our social media policy as stated:

- Do not disclose any confidential, defamatory or sensitive information about Children's Center staff, children, enrolled family members, students, interns or any other person connected to the Children's Center.
- Please use caution when using social media sites that allow sharing personal information or photos. Be aware of all times of how you are representing yourself. If the content seems questionable it is better to err on the side of caution and not post the information.
- No photos of children, enrolled family members, staff, practicum students, interns or any other person connected to the Children's Center without written permission of the person or parent/guardian.

PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

A good school respects the child.
A good school pleasurable challenges him.
A good school gives a youngster a chance to use his powers.
A good school fills a child's day with humans he enjoys.
A good school makes a child happier he is alive.
- James L. Hymes, Jr.[1]

The classroom practices at the Center are based on certain beliefs and principles about how children learn and should be treated, about the importance of families to a successful school environment, and about the role of teachers in carrying out these principles. These principles are based on our school philosophy, which is stated in the Staff Handbook but bears repeating here.

Program Philosophy

The educational philosophy of the Anna Bing Arnold Children's Center is based on the belief that each child is unique and deserves respect, consistency, caring and challenge as they grow. Further, we believe that:

- Children develop at their own pace. They do not acquire knowledge by force. They are motivated by their own desire to make sense of their world.
- Children learn through interaction with the materials and people in the environment. Play provides this interaction and is the natural mode of learning for the young child.
- Children learn self-discipline as they learn respect for themselves, others and their environment. Pride in their abilities, family and culture adds to their developing self-esteem.
- Children need a balanced program that fosters independence, choice, and challenge. They also need structure and well defined limits in order to feel secure.

Young children's developmental tasks are to build trust, learn social skills, begin mastery of academic skills, and develop positive self-esteem. These tasks are best supported by a program that provides developmentally appropriate activities, well trained and consistent staff, and a safe and healthy learning environment.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) is a concept based on the knowledge that a child's development and ability to successfully accomplish certain physical and intellectual tasks follow a set pattern. For example, we know that the infant learns to crawl, then stand before learning to walk. The pattern is the same for all children; however, the rate at which a child learns these skills may vary. Following his own individual path, a child's natural desire to learn coupled with an adult's attention and enthusiasm, motivates him to succeed. Therefore, guiding our work with children is the belief that given appropriate opportunities and adult interaction children learn and achieve skills when they are developmentally ready. If adults expect a child to acquire skills he is not ready for, he may comply,

demonstrating that he can follow directions. However, this does not indicate that the child has acquired the skills or understood the concept being introduced.[2]

In developmentally appropriate programs children have the freedom to choose, move about, and make personal contacts. Informal learning experiences and human caring is expressed and spontaneity is valued. Teachers make decisions about curriculum based on three important kinds of knowledge:

1) Age appropriateness – what teachers know about how children develop and learn in general.
2) Individual appropriateness – what teachers know about the strengths, needs, and interests of individual children.
3) Social and Cultural appropriateness – what teachers know about the social and cultural contexts in which children live.

The principles of developmentally appropriate practice are applied to our curriculum, adult/child interactions, school/home relationships, and child evaluation

Value of Play

Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood, for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child's soul."

- *Fredrick Froebel*

Play is the business of young children. It is the primary vehicle through which they learn. Opportunity to play freely is vital to the child's healthy development. Play fosters intellectual development and permits the child to assimilate reality in terms of his own interests and prior knowledge of the world. Through play children are free to experiment, try out possibilities and practice different roles. Play stimulates creativity. It is inherently a self-expressive activity that draws on the child's imagination. Play further develops children's language, physical and social development. Play is critical to all aspects of the child's learning and is an essential part of our program. By being a careful observer of children's play teachers have the opportunity to discover the child's interests and abilities. Beyond all these valuable reasons to support play is the fact that it is highly enjoyable. Children who are deeply involved in play are working at all the appropriate tasks for their development while they are experiencing joy and emotional well being. What could be better?

Emergent Curriculum

Awareness of alternatives and the basis of choices distinguish the competent teacher from the merely intuitive one.

- *Elizabeth Brady*

At the Children's Center we believe that children learn best when they are involved and interested in the topic. The best cognitive curriculum *emerges* from the child's interest – it is not solely dictated by teacher interest. Teachers build the curriculum "…experience by experience, idea by idea, as the topic evolves while the teachers and children investigate it together."[3] This does not mean that teachers just wait to see what the children want to do each day. They plan curriculum based on careful observation of what children are interested in and how best to extend their learning. Teachers build curriculum that explores

different topics in depth as children's understanding of the topic grows. Teachers set up experiences for children that require questioning, investigation and problem solving. Teachers believe it is valuable for children to be able to generate their own ideas, figure out answers for themselves, and try out a variety of solutions until they find one that works. Teachers act as facilitators of this process, aiding children in their discoveries and providing a wealth of experiences to add to the child's knowledge of the world. Teachers bring the world to children through their planning while allowing children to make discoveries for themselves and to take the project in a new direction as interest dictates.

One effective method to plan for in-depth projects that emerge from the child's interest is to use a curriculum web. Webbing is a way of organizing curriculum that addresses:

- What children need and/or are able to do
- What children are interested in
- What children "need to know" in order to explore the topic
- What experiences that children are having that can be expanded upon

For an example of how to use curriculum webs please see the appendix.

Anti-Bias Curriculum

There are only two lasting bequests that we can leave to our children;
One is roots; The other; wings.

- *Unknown*

"Multicultural education includes teaching children about their own culture – their ethnic heritage. It also means exposing children to other cultures and helping them to be comfortable with and respect all the ways people are different from each other. It is teaching children how to relate to one another and how to play fair. Multicultural education encourages children to notice and think about unfairness, and challenges them to do something about the unfairness toward people in their world.

Multicultural education is more than teaching information directly. It means providing a classroom that includes materials depicting people form many different places doing many different things. It's creating and maintaining an environment that says everyone is welcome here. It is also encouraging children to act, think, and talk like members of their own culture. It's helping children to like themselves just the way they are. It's encouraging children to actively explore a variety of materials and exposing them to experiences that might not be part of their daily life experience"[4]

Anti-Bias Curriculum focuses on classroom practices that help children to develop and strengthen their self and group identities, while interacting respectfully with others in a multi-cultural environment. Anti-bias curriculum is a proactive approach to reduce prejudice and promote inclusiveness. The anti-bias approach is a teaching strategy that values diversity and challenges bias, rather than ignoring and therefore reinforcing children's misunderstandings of differences. It further stresses the importance of bicultural, bi-cognitive education. This means that children learn the values, rules and language of their own culture in a teaching style appropriate to their culture AND they learn the values, rules, and language of the dominant culture. This practice is carried out in the following ways:

- Diversity is evident in all aspects of the environment (dolls, books, pictures, etc.)
- Materials are current and accurate
- Staff reflect diversity
- Learning about racial, cultural, gender, and disability diversity is on-going
- Activities foster appreciation of both differences *and* similarities among people.[5]

CLASSROOM PRACTICES

Role of the Teacher

At the core of all education that makes a difference in children's lives – beneath all the methods, materials, and curricula – is a teacher who cares about each child, who teaches from the heart.

- Mimi Brodsky Chenfeld

Your role as a teacher is essential to the quality of experiences children have in our program. As you carry out the Center's curriculum, keep in mind the following ideas:

1) Children learn by doing. Preschoolers construct their knowledge through their actions on objects. They learn not by being told, but through firsthand experiences.
2) Provide challenging activities. Create a comfortable amount of disequilibrium by challenging children to try to make sense of their world.
3) Allow plenty of time to explore, examine, and experiment. Children need time to ruminate, to tinker, and to try things in many different ways.
4) Provide information at appropriate times. Your role is not so much to tell children but to guide them to find answers for themselves. This requires careful listening and observation.
5) Extend children's learning. Your questions, comments, and suggestions are crucial in guiding children's learning. Questions such as "What will happen if…?", "Can you think of another way?" or "What's different about this?' help to focus children's attention on problems and alternative solutions.
6) Be a good model. Children love their teachers: they want to please them and be like them. They learn a great deal by imitation. You can show them how you try to solve a problem, explaining what you are doing and why.

Circle Time

Circle time provides an excellent opportunity to build language skills, to share information with the group, to discover what is interesting to the children in the group, and to share wonderful stories and songs. It also builds listening skills and knowledge of how to be part of a group experience. Circle time lasts longer for older groups. "A" group children may not be able to sit in a group for too long and are not expected to participate if it is difficult for them. Mulberry group may have small group times until children are ready for a large group gathering.

Procedures

- Children are seated or sit at designated area in classroom.
- Teachers call group to order in their own style.
- Teachers plan a variety of circle time curriculum to provide for learning experiences in the following areas:
  - Socializing – sharing, taking turns, discussion of important events. Opportunity for teacher to discover what is interesting the children.
  - Music – singing and playing instruments, rhythm, listening skills, patterning, repetition, rhyming, auditory dev., and appreciation of beautiful sounds.
  - Movement – physical development, rhythm, patterning, following directions, and fun.
  - Literacy – reading books (introduces print, appreciation of sounds and stories, illustrations, value of books), story telling, and flannel board stories.
  - Language development – all of the above.
  - Planning – introducing the day's activities
- Activities are being set up while Circle Time is being conducted. At least one other teacher needs to sit at Circle Time with the teacher leading Circle Time.
- Departure of Circle Time is handled by teacher dismissing children to planned activities.

Self-selected Activities

The universe is the child's curriculum

- Maria Montessori

Choice is a critical component of a good developmental preschool program. By providing for choice through self-selection of activities we allow children the opportunity to participate in activities that are interesting and challenging to them and are thus appropriate for the age and stage of the child.

In a center-based learning environment children's interests and choices drive the curriculum. Choice fosters independence, responsibility, time management and feelings of competence. What activity to play with, where to play, with whom to play, and when to play with a particular activity are but a few of the decisions a child will make on any given day. Decisions based on the child's interest ensure that the activity is meaningful and pleasurable. We offer a wide variety of centers, where every child can meet with success. Each room has a library, manipulative, art, block, dramatic play, science and writing center.

During the self-selection times of the day children are allowed to choose activities freely and are encouraged to clean up when an activity is finished. They may use any equipment or materials that are within their reach. Each classroom has child-accessible containers for independent activities such as Lego's, small vehicles, blocks, dinosaurs, etc. Also children can reach art supplies for drawing and cutting, or puzzles and books for quiet time or "reading." These can be done on a free table or on the carpet. The teacher's role is that of a facilitator. The teacher challenges children to think divergently, guides their creative growth and encourages competence through investigative play activities.

Discipline

Nothing I have ever learned of value was taught to me by an ogre. Nothing do I regret more in my life than that my teachers were not my friends. Nothing ever heightened my being or deepened my learning more than being loved.

\- *J.T. Dillon*

The word *discipline* comes from "disciple" which means, "to teach". In practicing discipline, our goal is to help them children learn to trust the people around them and the environment, to feel good about themselves, and to develop self-discipline. Our curriculum, classroom arrangement, developmentally appropriate activities and staff ratios are designed to promote these attributes. Teaching self-discipline is an integral part of our school program – it is not something that is just attended to when there is a problem. We are proactive in helping children learn the trust and self-control necessary to grow up to be self-disciplined human beings.

The key to effective discipline is consistency and setting clear reasonable limits. We set limits based on two guidelines: not hurting yourself or others, and respecting the physical environment. When disciplining a child, our goal is to guide the child in developing self-control as opposed to external or adult control. We believe that it is important for children to know that it is all right to have both negative and positive feelings. We help the child learn constructive ways to express emotions and settle conflicts with an emphasis on verbal problem solving.

Within the school program, we establish clear limits (or rules) based on respect for oneself, others and the environment. The child learns to trust these limits and finds security in them as he or she begins to see that the limits are for his or her protection as well as others. Rules and consequences are stated clearly. Choices are offered only when a choice really exists. If a child's behavior is inappropriate, a logical consequence that is appropriate to the child and the behavior is applied. Generally, this consists of redirection, talking about the problem, or removing the child from the situation. If necessary a "calming time" may be used -- asking the child to sit somewhere near the group while taking time to calm down and re-establish inner control. Calming time is never used to humiliate the child. The child is an active participant in the process and often determines for him or herself when he or she is ready to re-enter the group in an appropriate manner.

At NO TIME will any child be struck, handled roughly, or verbally shamed as a disciplinary measure. AT NO TIME will punishment be associated with food, rest or toilet training. Children are NEVER to be put in a room unsupervised or out of visual observation.

Teachers who are new to the program may feel free to ask more experienced staff for assistance when dealing with a difficult discipline situation. One important aspect of discipline is that children respond better to adults that they know and trust. It takes time to establish a good rapport with your group and during that time children are more apt to test you. It also takes time to become familiar and secure with the rules of the group. It is not unusual to need assistance during this period. Even seasoned staff occasionally experience difficulties with discipline. Please ask for assistance when needed and discuss any discipline concerns you have with the Lead Teacher.

Procedures

- Teachers give children verbal warnings of inappropriate behavior.
- Warnings usually are worded in a positive manner avoiding words with negative connotations like “no” or “don’t.”
- Use a positive and constructive approach to prevent difficulties so that desirable habits of conduct may be established with as little friction as possible. (Learning from satisfaction). Ignore undesirable conduct or suggest substitutes. Use positive suggestions rather than negative. Tell them what you want them to do instead of just telling them what they are doing wrong.

  Example: Child threatening another with a shovel, “We use shovels for digging. Could you find a good place to dig?"

  Use these techniques when needing to redirect children:

  a. statement. As a substitute for commands, this is apt to meet with less resistance. Example: "We are going to do this now.” "It is time to... etc.

  b. reason given whenever possible. Get child conditioned to responding to a reason. (The reasonable attitude.) Example: "It is very cold today, so you will need your sweater. "

  c. direct suggestion. Example: "Perhaps you could dig over here where there is more room."

  d. indirect suggestion. Example: "Can you reach up here to put your cap away?” (challenge) "Would you like to take this to your room?” (to be used only in cases of choice).
- Some phrases get over-used (i.e. “use your words” and “I don’t like that”). Try to help children find the words they need to more clearly express what they want or need.
- If the child is having a very difficult time in one activity, REDIRECT. Maybe the child needs to do an activity by him/herself, one-on-one with a teacher, or just play with another group. Otherwise, it’s OK to tell a child to sit for a little while to “take a break.” Let him/her know that he/she doesn’t look ready to be in that activity (at that moment).
- Never make a child say, “I’m sorry.” It’s better to instill empathy in the child (ex. When child hits another child…”That hurt her… See she’s crying. It’s never okay to hurt someone”)
- Encourage the child to help remedy the situation (ex. Helping to get ice for the child that was hurt. Actions speak louder than words.)
- Know the differences in age appropriate problem solving: Age (2-3) lengthy explanations are not appropriate. You will lose their attention quickly; Age (4-5) able to do or handle more complex problem solving (ex. Can help to think of alternative solutions, “There’s only one truck and both of you want it. What can we do?”)
- Use “Calming-Time” instead of using the term “Time-Out”. Allow the child to be responsible for his/her behavior and give the child the tools and power they need to control it.
- A child needs to calm down before s/he can listen.
- Be consistent in treatment so that the child will know that certain results will always follow a given action. It gives him a feeling of security. No second chances should be allowed. (They are temptations to a child to see how far he can go.) Example:

Child is told that lunch is over when he has dawdled over his food. "I can eat it very quickly now." Teacher should hold to her original decision.

Physical Care

Young children are learning about their bodies and gaining control over their physical selves. They are establishing identity and independence. It is important that teachers acknowledge this growing independence while recognizing that young children are also frequently in need of assistance from adults. When assisting children with their physical care needs teachers must approach each child with respect. Always remember that the child is ultimately in control of their body and should have decision-making power about their physical care. Always ask permission before touching a child. "May I help you with your jacket?", or "Would you like me to pat your back?" It is important that the child have the right of refusal when it concerns their body. As adults we expect that same right, but we sometimes forget to offer it to children.

Touch

Physical touching is an important part of the care and nurturing of young children. Children feel loved, accepted and supported through the sensations of touch by nurturing adults and peers. However, physical touch should be respectful of children's body cues and only occur with their permission. Examples of acceptable touch between teachers and children are listed below.

Nurturing touches:

* Hugging, holding on lap, rocking or holding hands.
* While tickling may be an appropriate form of playful touch, it is kept to a minimum because of its potential for getting out of hand.

Personal care touches:

* Cleaning, dressing, and nap time routines
* Patting or gently rubbing backs to soothe children at nap time.
* Face and hand washing, assisting with toileting, examining rashes and unusual marks.
* Touching to clean or dry a child, including cleaning genital area after toilet accidents if the child needs assistance.

Touches for restraint:

* To protect the child and any others from injury
* To facilitate separation from parent at arrival
* Holding tightly in arms.

Unacceptable touches:

* Touching without permission
* Excessive touching, holding or fondling
* Hitting, shaking, or slapping.

Suggestions for Teachers Working With Children

We have listed suggestions below in hopes that you may feel more comfortable and adequate in the nursery school situation.

1. Be sure that you are dressed for the job. A teacher who is worried about getting her clothes soiled is not relaxed with children.
2. Be on time. Five or ten minutes may make the difference between a well-planned day and one that is not.
3. Make use of available materials. Read carefully the material given you on safety, procedures, guidance principles, etc.
4. Do not play games with the children. When you do this, it becomes an adult-centered situation instead of a child-centered one. Move in slowly with children and make a practice of sitting back and watching so that you know what children's needs are.
5. Allow time for children to help themselves, to move from one activity to another, or to respond to your suggestions.
6. Learn techniques for smooth transitions. Warn children ahead of time, be sure the next activity is ready to go, and take a few children at a time.
7. Be alert to the whole group. Know where children are and what they are doing, even when they are not in your immediate area.
8. Stay in your assigned area. If for any reason you must leave the area, be sure to let the teacher in charge know.
9. Each person is responsible for helping to keep the nursery school (indoors and outdoors) neat and in order.
10. Set limits when necessary. Know what to expect of children and then let your voice and manner show conviction when you speak. Only in this way does the child feel secure in knowing what is expected of him.
11. Use a quiet voice. Go over to the child, get down on his level and speak quietly but distinctly.
12. Learn to use verbalizations to gain cooperation from the children as much as possible and avoid picking them up or shoving them in the direction that you want them to go.
13. Don't be afraid to ask questions. We want you to feel free to ask questions or to challenge what we are doing at any time. It is not always possible for us to know when you are having difficulty so some of the time you must take the responsibility of coming to us and asking for help.

General Method

1. See that learning takes place from consequences and situations RATHER than on a basis of personal approval. (Avoid "do it for me" etc.)
2. Let children fail occasionally, or find out that because of something they did it is too late for the thing they wish to do. See that the same situation arises repeatedly so that learning will be strengthened.
3. See that learning is accompanied by satisfaction. Give child commendation for new and difficult accomplishments. The child's own accomplishment should be the eventual satisfaction, however.
4. Guide situations so that the child will be apt to have success with materials, social contacts, and accomplishments. Example: When a child cries when he wants

something that another child has. Teacher might say, "He doesn't understand you when you cry. You could tell him what you want." When success follows, the child finds this mode of approach pays and will tend to repeat it. Care should be taken to allow no satisfaction to follow the crying.

5. Use a positive and constructive approach to prevent difficulties so that desirable habits of conduct may be established with as little friction as possible. Ignore undesirable conduct or suggest substitutes. Use positive suggestions rather than negative.
6. Do not encourage competition with others. It leads to antagonisms and arguments. Satisfaction for achievement is a higher and more permanent motive.
7. Never discuss a child in his presence.
8. Do not stand waiting for a child to respond after giving him a suggestion. Keep obviously busy about something, and he will be more apt to respond.

Specific Problems

Handling of refusals. Use simple phrases - short simple statements, questions, or suggestions, use complete sentence forms.

1) *2 Year Olds*
   a) Ignore verbal refusals. Do not argue with the child. The child's refusal may be a habitual "NO" response without meaning behind it, unless accepted as a refusal by the adult. Give plenty of time for comprehension - then if refusal, repeat suggestion in the same words. If refusal continues give suggestions in another way.
   b) Example – Child refuses to wash hands in bathroom:
      T: "It is time to wash your hands for lunch now."
      C: "No."
      T: repeats
      C: "No, I don't want to."
      T: "Here is a place where you can wash."
      C: child ignores teacher
      T: "You can turn the faucet and see the water come."
      C: child responds
   c) Keep interest by calling attention to different phases of the subject (e.g. soap, washcloths, etc.)
   d) Give suggestions involving action, “You could rub the soap on your hands.”
   e) See that you are close enough to give impression of being on child's level so that he will
      be very conscious of you. (Don't call to him.)

2) *3 - 4 Year Olds*
   a) Use more reason with child. Often let child take consequences of action.
      (1) Example – Child refuses to wash hands in bathroom:
      T: "It is time to wash your hands for lunch now."
      C: "No, I don't want to."
      T: "Lunch will be ready soon."
      C: "No, I washed my hands at home."
      T: "You see your hands are quite dirty from playing in your yard."
      C: "No, my mother doesn't want me to wash my hands here."

(An excuse rather than misunderstanding.)

T: "When your hands are washed you will be ready to come to lunch with the rest of us."

b) Leave the child alone, and let him miss part of the lunch if necessary. If child is known to be extremely negative it is sometimes advisable to give one very casual suggestion, then ignore completely, letting him fall into the routine unconsciously from observation of others. Avoid any urging.

3) *Shy Child*

a) In the effort to make the shy child feel at home, care should be taken not to make him self-conscious. He should be left to find himself in the new situation with occasional friendly remarks of the teacher in passing.

4) Establishing Emotional Control

a) The teacher sets the emotional tone.

i) Suggest child's response by teacher's attitude (relying on suggestibility of child).

Example – Mother leaving child at school:

Teacher suggests his saying good-bye to mother - ignores his tears, casually assumes he is going to like to stay. Attracts his interest to the next thing to be done.

Example – Child falling down:

Teacher, casual, "You had a bump, didn't you?" If child is really hurt - more assurance.

b) Ignore some emotional outbursts (lack of satisfaction).

c) Suggest substitution of speech, or thinking, or action, for emotional reactions.

Example – Child whines, or gives protesting cry when he wants play materials:

T: "Can you tell me what it is you want?"

C: Shrieking when he can't get wagon past post.

T: "Can you think of some way you could do it?"

d) Approval of good adjustments.

e) Removal from group for continued lack of control, such as crying so loud as to disturb others.

5) Establishing Social Conduct

a) Arranging environment.

b) Providing opportunity for social contacts according to age and level of development.

Example – Children should be protected from interference. Child is assisted in making place for self in group:

c) Suggesting an acceptable type of behavior to replace the unacceptable.

Example – Child grabbing pail:

T: "Mark, Patricia was using that pail. Can you find another one?"

d) Explain to child why his behavior isn't desirable in the group.

Example – Three children playing; a fourth wanting to take wagon from them:

T: "You left the wagon, you see. Dick and Allen and Linda are using the wagon to put dirt in. If you had a shovel too I think they would be glad of some help."

e) Use meetings to discuss problems of the group.
   Example: Children slow in getting off coats and getting to bathroom to wash for lunch. Children asked to discuss how they could get through sooner so that they won't delay others who are waiting to come in.

f) Remove child for continued negative behavior, after explanation of conduct that annoys group. Be careful to have child understand that there is no personal feeling involved, and that he will be welcome when he chooses to return without annoying others.

6) Establishing Independence

a) Attempt to give child a feeling of security without dependence. Guide by words rather than by leading by hand. Let him do as much for himself as he can.

b) Provide opportunities for mastering self care skills.
   Example: dressing oneself, learning to put on own socks and shoes, learning to tie shoes.

c) Encourage modeling of adult behaviors and praise new behaviors that add to the child's growing level of independence.
   Example: Child cleans table after lunch or helps to set out cots. Child is in charge of giving the bunny water for the day. These activities lead to self-esteem and the child's sense of himself as competent and in charge.

Whatever an education is, it should make you a unique individual, not a conformist;
it should furnish you with an original spirit with which to tackle the big challenges;
it should allow you to find values which will be your road map throughout life;
it should make you spiritually rich, a person who loves whatever you are doing,
wherever you are, whomever you are with.

\- *John Taylor Gatto*

[1] James L. Hymes, Jr. Teaching the Child Under Six
[2] NAEYC, Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs
[3] Joanne Hendrick, The Whole Child. pp. 551
[4] Stacey York, Roots and Wings, pp. 22
[5] Louise Derman Sparks, Anti-Bias Curriculum