

## **CURRICULUM POLICY for the Early Childhood Center**

The curriculum framework used by ECC has evolved over several decades of teaching young children. From the earliest days at ECC, our school believed that children were the most open to learning within the world of play. Our ***Traditional Curriculum Guide*** provided the structure to develop ideas, activities, and needed materials to create a developmentally appropriate classroom.

***Creative Curriculum*** became an attractive addition to our planning framework because of their focus on learning centers, integrated assessment and individualizing children's experiences. We have been using a modified version, which allows us to take an eclectic approach to children's learning. We want each of our classrooms to be a unique learning environment that demonstrates a melding of developmentally appropriate practice and our teacher's own unique skills and temperaments.

We have also found the State of Connecticut's "*A Guide to Early Childhood Program Development*" to be a very helpful resource, that pulls from current research and helps to expand and further develop our curriculum. It offers a wide variety of ideas based on specific goals and is an aid to assessment and planning.

The daily schedule is planned to provide opportunities for both active engagement and quiet reflection in developmentally appropriate ways. Classroom activities are intentionally planned with specific goals in mind. Children are given opportunities throughout the day to make choices about what they want to pursue - art, reading, manipulatives (i.e. blocks, legos, puzzles, etc), science explorations, math games, dramatic play, etc. Learning experiences are provided in a variety of group settings - large, small and individual.

Circle time provides the opportunity for the class to come together for singing, dance, discussions about themes, letters, weather, etc. It also provides the opportunity to learn to take turns, to speak up, to listen to others and to share their ideas. The curriculum also extends to playground time, with ample opportunity to build large muscle skills, to play with sand, ride tricycles and explore nature.

Flexibility in scheduling and curriculum implementation is encouraged in order to capitalize on spontaneous events that provide opportunities to extend each child's learning. Children are taught by providing a wide variety of "hands on" experiences that encourage them to be active learners, to lead, to follow, to solve their conflicts, to listen, to appreciate differences, to count, to reason, to create, and to use their muscles.

Our aim is to help each child reach their highest potential and to foster a life-long love of learning. To do so, our teachers need to pay close attention to each child and to be attuned to their unique talents and abilities. By doing so, we can maximize the learning potential for each child. We strongly believe that the *process*, the actual act of doing and creating, is more important than the *product* that is created.

Assessment of children's progress is an ongoing process, incorporated into the daily routine, and aligns with the curriculum goals and objectives. The information from these assessments helps to guide both whole group and activities for individual children. The need to adapt and modify the curriculum to ensure that all children are receiving what they need to grow is an ever-present reality. A wide variety of materials at different skill levels are provided to ensure that all learners will experience success. The learning environments that we design are safe, predictable and supportive to the children that they will serve. Having limits and expectations that are clear and consistent is imperative.

At ECC, it is essential for teachers to model the behavior that they teach - we strive to respond respectfully & kindly through our words & actions. It is our aim that children will learn cooperation & compassion through their interaction with us & through our ability to express our needs & feelings in appropriate ways.