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Macomb Child Care is NAC Accredited
NAC Accreditation means PACT/WIU Child Care Center meets NAC’s characteristics of excellence in early childhood education. Programs that meet these characteristics provide a safe and healthy environment for children, have teachers who are well-trained, have access to excellent teaching materials, and work with curriculum that is appropriately challenging and developmentally sound. These programs are continuously improving themselves to provide the best possible educational opportunities for children.

PACT/WIU Child Care Center meets the following characteristics, as outlined in the NAC Accreditation system:

- Devote the highest priority to the sound and appropriate development of individual children
- Adopt and implement curricula that promote cognitive, language, motor, social, and emotional development of children in a creative and explorative manner
- Foster curiosity, self-esteem and positive outlook in all children in the program
- Demonstrate appropriate attention to the areas of health, safety, and nutrition
- Conduct ongoing and continual assessment of the progress and needs of children
- Promote and welcome parent participation and involvement
- Demonstrate that the staff relate professionally and comfortably with parents and children
- Plan and implement the professional development of the staff based upon needs, interests, and abilities as identified by ongoing evaluation and assessment
- Articulate, adopt, and implement appropriate goals that are utilized in program planning and evaluation and that reflect multi-cultural sensitivity
- Operate in a professional and ethical manner with accountability to its governing body, families, staff, and the public
- Demonstrate best practices in leadership and management
- Manifest a superior degree of compliance with applicable state and local licensing requirements
- Maintain interior and exterior premises in a sanitary, attractive and safe manner.

See NAC Manual – Classroom Observation Checklist (All staff will be asked to self assess their knowledge of NAC, every three years.)

Staff Resource Library:
The early childhood resources are available in the individual classrooms, center, or central office. A wide variety of resource materials includes, but not limited to: The Creative Curriculum, Infants, Toddlers, Twos, Celebrate: An Anti-Bias Guide to Holidays, Anti-Bias Curriculum, The Multicultural Principles for Head Start Programs etc. are available to staff to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum.
Child Care Recordkeeping

DCFS files located at centers are the responsibility of the Assistant Site Supervisor. The teacher is responsible for the children’s classroom education records. The children’s education records are confidential and they are maintained in the classroom locked cabinet. The children’s portfolio collections and the children’s education records are limited to the teacher or Site Supervisor.

The Child Care Education file will be labeled with child’s name, parent/guardian name, birthdate, and Date of enrollment. This is part of the enrollment process.

Enrollment Paperwork - The Assistant Site Supervisor is responsible for completing the Child Care enrollment paperwork for the teacher.
1. DCFS Individual Checklist
2. Income Worksheet - to determine child care payment
3. Application for IDHS Child Care Assistance (DAP3455) - if eligible
4. Certified copy of Birth Certificate
5. Enrollment Application.
6. Health History
7. Certificate of Child Health Exam - DCFS Form
8. DCFS Booklet - Child Care Choices
9. Verification of Receipt - DCFS Form
10. Emergency Care Information Form
11. Release of Children
12. Permission for Consent from Parents
13. Application for USDA Food Program
15. Child Care Parent Agreement
16. Announcing New Arrival Information (for teacher’s information)
17. Education Survey for School Readiness
18. Child/Family Cultural Survey

Child’s Education File in the classroom - Teacher is responsible for the education file.
1. copy of Child Care Enrollment Application
2. copy of Health History
3. Education Survey for School Readiness
4. Child/Family Cultural Survey
5. On-Going Assessment Portfolio
6. Developmental Screening Records ASQ-3 or DIAL
7. Child Care Education Conference Reports - completed every 3 months
8. Behavioral Plan, if applicable.

Classroom Health & Safety Notebook.
1) Emergency Care Information
2) Release of Children
3) NO to for Permission for Publicity
4) Medical Alert, Medication, Dietary Forms
5) Crisis Management Manual
**Child Care Forms/Record keeping**

**Announcing New Arrival - C. C. Form**
This form is used to assign a Primary Caregiver to the family and enrolled child. Education paperwork is listed on this form. The teacher is responsible to review all forms before child begins class.

**Child Care Enrollment - C. C. Form**
This form contains enrollment information for DCFS and teacher.

**Emergency Care Information - Head Start Form**
The Emergency Care Information form is placed in the classroom Health & Safety Notebook.

**Release of Children - Head Start Form**
This form is completed on enrollment. The Release of Children form is placed in the classroom Health & Safety Notebook. Only the people listed on this form will be authorized to pick up the child from the center.

**Permission for Consent from Parents - Head Start Form**
This form is completed on enrollment. “No” to permission or consent is placed in the classroom Health & Safety Notebook.

**Arrival & Departure Log -Head Start Form**
The time of children’s arrival and departure from the classroom, will be noted on the Arrival & Daily Departure Log and signed by the parent.

**Child/Family Cultural Survey – Head Start Form**
This form is completed during enrollment for the teacher. The parents are the resource for integrating cultural activities into the classroom. This information will help Child Care teachers to individualize classroom activities.

**Language Acquisition Survey - Head Start Form**
The survey is designed to gather cultural and linguistic information about the child and family. The teacher use the information to develop a plan for children’s continued use of the home language and a plan for children’s acquisition of English.

**Education Survey for School Readiness - Head Start Form**
This information is from the parent’s perspective about their child. The information will help Child Care teachers to individualize classroom activities.

**Child Care Daily Attendance Report- C. C. Form**
The teacher indicates the number of days the children are absent and present. This information will be used when the assistant Site Supervisor completes the CC Billing Report.

**Staff Schedule - Head Start Form**
This schedule should reflect teacher’s Timesheet Report. Any time worked not listed on the Staff Schedule will need a prior approval from Site Supervisor. Leave Sheet must be attached to the time sheet, if staff works fewer hours than on Staff Schedule.
Outside Training Summary – Adm. Form
This form is used by staff to document training hours received outside the agency. DCFS requires a minimum of 15 training hours per year in topics related to child development. NAC requires a minimum of 20 training hours per year. Staff will turn in training hours to their supervisor, prior to end of program year.

Child Care Developmental Summary Report - Child Care Form
The Child Care preschool teacher completes this form prior to a HS child’s First Parent/Teacher Conference, in November. The developmental information collected by the Child Care teacher will be shared with parents of children enrolled in Head Start.

Substitute Teacher Information - Head Start Form
This form is completed at the beginning of each year by the classroom teacher. This form is posted on the Health & Safety Bulletin Board.

Infant Care Daily Report - Head Start Form
This form is completed by 0-3 classroom teachers for children under 15 months to report daily food intakes, nap, and mental health.

Classroom News - Preschool - Head Start Form
This form is used to communicate weekly classroom activities to parents. A copy is forwarded to Site Supervisor.

Individual Planning Form - EHS FORM
The current information (interest, ability, development, goals, assessment, etc.) section on the Individual Planning form may come from parents at arrival, daily classroom observation, or planned goals and objectives. The teachers use their daily assessment notes with parent input to plan for each child. Each week, the teachers takes a few minutes to review their observation notes, examine portfolio samples, think about recent events and interactions, and analyze the information they have about their children. The teachers individualize and plan for their assigned children for the coming week.

Group Planning Form – EHS FORM
The Group Planning Form is used by teachers to individualize and plan for the children in the classroom, and to document changes made to the environment, schedule, and routines. It also helps teachers to plan what experiences to offer during the week. It gives teachers an overall sense of direction for the week and a list of the materials teachers want to have available.

Child Care Parent/Teacher Conference Form
The teacher will schedule the first parent/teacher conference within 3 months of enrollment to discuss child’s progress. The child’s on-going portfolio file are reviewed with parents. Individualized goals are written on the Child Care Education Conference Report form. A copy of Child Care Education Conference Report form is given to the parent, and the original stays in the child’s file. After the first parent/teacher conference, follow-up conferences are held approximately every three months with parents, to review the individualized goals.
Toddlers, who are age 30 months of age, will begin a transfer phase due to DCFS regulations. The phase allows children, age 30 months, to visit a new classroom at least monthly.

The child care teacher will complete a *Transfer Plan* with the family who has a 30 month old child enrolled during their parent/teacher conference. The completed form will be forward to the Site Supervisor for assistance. The Site Supervisor will read and follow procedures in HS workplan.
PACT CHILD CARE EDUCATION APPROACH

The approach to child development and education will focus on individual children’s progress, interest, temperament, language, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles. The teachers use the information from the Education Survey for School Readiness, the Child/Family Cultural Survey, and the children’s daily assessment to understand children’s developmental needs. The on-going assessment system helps teachers gain perspective on how children learn by evaluating and documenting all areas of growth and development.

The Child/Family Cultural Survey is used for integrating cultural activities into the classroom. Our families will be used as a resource for information about their family culture. Their ideas and interests are integrated into children’s individual routine and experiences. With the help of the family and observation skills, a teacher can learn about a child’s family and culture, temperament, special interest, likes and dislikes behavioral challenges and learning style.

The Infant/Toddler teachers use the Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers Second Edition and an on-going assessment and portfolio system that document the performance and progress in children’s social & emotional, language, cognitive and physical development. The assessment helps teachers gain perspective on how children learn by evaluating and documenting all areas of growth and development.

The Preschool teachers use the Creative Curriculum for Preschool, 4th Edition and on-going assessment and portfolio system that tracks each child’s performance and progress. The assessment helps teachers gain perspective on how children development by evaluating and documenting all areas of growth and development.

Listed below are Inappropriate Practices:
The list below describes inappropriate practices and less effective practices for children. The revised edition of Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs (1997) is available to all teaching staff at the center staff resource library.

> Learning materials such as workbooks, ditto sheets, or coloring pages. They do not engage children in problem solving and other higher order thinking skills.

> The teacher does much of the activity for the children, such as cutting shapes or performing steps in an experiment. Children only watch and they are not allowed to touch or be involved with the experiment.

> Art during small group consists of copying an adult-made model of a product or following other adult prescribed direction. Adult model is used to show and encourage children to copy the sample model.

> Find motor activity is limited to handwriting practice, dot to dot, maze, coloring pre drawn worksheets.
Identification of Special Needs - DCFS Licensing Standards 407.200 (n)(1,2,3,4,5) (o)

Rules & Regulations:
n) When a specific plan is developed to meet a child’s individual needs, the record shall include:
  1) Any assessments by center staff or resource personnel;
  2) Written program recommendations and goals for the child;
  3) A written plan for implementing those recommendations within the program;
  4) Periodic written evaluations of whether goals are being met;
  5) Adjustments to the program plan as indicated by the evaluations.

o) Staff shall consult with parents before implementing any special procedures required to meet a child’s individual needs.

When a screening identifies a delay or a developmental concern the teacher will alert the Site Supervisor. The Site Supervisor will notify the Disabilities/MH Coordinator. The Disabilities/MH Coordinator will assist to locate additional services or equipment needed to permit the child to participate to the maximum extent feasible.

Site Supervisor or teacher will consult with parent before implementing any special procedures required to meet a child’s individual needs

English Language Learners
In the event that a child is enrolled that speaks another language, every attempt will be made to provide a volunteer who speaks the child’s language. Classroom environment, materials and supplies will be provided for a bilingual program. The parents are a resource for integrating cultural activities into the program. The teachers can requests ideas from parents for cultural activities and activities specific to family customs.
**Infant/Toddler Program** - for Infant-Toddler classroom staff.

The Infant & Toddler Room environment will be safe, healthy, and nurturing at all times. The Site Supervisor will make every effort to allow the same staff member to feed, diaper, and play with the children every day. PACT/WIU Child Care believes in establishing interaction and continuity in the child’s relationship with as few adults as possible.

**Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Program**
The resource manual is available in the infant/toddler classroom. Teachers are responsible for the procedures described in the manual. The topics cover:
- Infant Development and Feeding Skills
- Feeding the Breastfed Baby
- Feeding Infant Formula
- How to Feed a Baby Using a Bottle
- Preventing Tooth Decay
- Feeding Solid Foods
- Drinking From a Cup
- Choking Prevention
- Sanitary Food Preparation and Safe Food Handling
- Commercially Prepared Baby Food

**The Creative Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers Second Edition**
The Creative Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers 2nd Ed is a “scientifically based” model that describes the theory and research that form the foundation of our infant, toddler, twos curriculum. The comprehensive curriculum applies theory and research to everyday practices, giving teachers a roadmap for teaching. The framework outlines the theory and research that explain the curriculum’s focus on the importance of meeting basic needs, fostering social/emotional development, developing, secure attachments, and supporting cognition and brain development.

The framework (5) of the Creative Curriculum

1. **Knowing Infants, Toddlers and Twos** describes individual differences such as temperament, dual language and the social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development of children.
2. **Creating a Responsive Environment** offers a model for setting up the physical environment and creating a structure for each day.
3. **What Children Are Learning** describes language and literacy skills, mathematical relationships and science exploration for young children.
4. **Caring and Teaching** describes the importance of building relationships and promoting children’s self regulation.
5. **Building Partnerships with Families** by exchanging information on a daily basis, involving families in all aspects of the program, and communicating in respectful ways.
The Creative Curriculum framework also indicates two important areas for The Creative Curriculum Infants, Toddlers, and Twos: **Routines and Experiences**

The **Routines** shows how daily routines are an important part of the curriculum and important times to put research and theory into practice. Routines are opportunities to build relationships with children that promote the development of trust. The one-on-one time is easing a child and family through:

- hellos and good-byes
- diapering and toileting, feeding
- eating and mealtimes
- sleeping and nap time
- getting dressed

The **Experiences** offers guidance about providing appropriate materials and interactions.

- Playing with toy
- Imitating and pretending
- Enjoying stories and books
- Connecting with music and movement
- Creating with art
- Tasting food
- Exploring sand and water
- Going outdoors

The curriculum explains how to provide responsive care for children in four age groups. The four overlapping groups in The Creative Curriculum are:

- 0-9 months – Young Infants
- 8-18 months – Mobile Infants
- 16-25 months – Toddlers
- 24-36 months - Twos
Curriculum Management
In the 0-3 child care classroom, the teacher is responsible for observation, assessment collection, individualization and curriculum management to meet the needs of the NAC Standards.

The challenges for many teachers are curriculum management problems. To overcome the challenges, each teacher must develop a systematic way to track the individual needs of every child, to plan activities to meet individual needs, and to document when, where, and how often they work with each child.

Linking Curriculum and Assessment
The systematic approach relies on multiple methods and sources of information, (such as daily observation notes, photos, work samples etc.), can be used to determine which children are meeting key benchmarks, which children are in the process of developing these skills, and which children are not making adequate progress.

No matter which strategies are used, every teacher must find a way to ensure that each child gets individualized attention based on the needs found in his/her assessment. While individualizing should be done spontaneously as teachable moments arise in the classroom, this strategy alone does not ensure that each child will receive equal & fair attention based on the specific needs found in their assessment.

Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) describes two levels. The lower level is a child’s independent performance, what a child can do alone. The higher level is the best the child can do with maximum assistance. The Ounce Scale Standards is the resource used by teachers to understand each child’s developmental level.

Teachers need to use their observational skills to look for developmental and learning that are in a formative stage and give prompts, suggestions, models, and hints to see what a child does with such help.
Recording information in a systematic way helps teachers to focus attention on each child’s development, on goals and objectives, and on the way authentic assessment and good planning are linked. Teachers cannot rely on memory to recall children’s learning and accomplishments.

The purpose of on-going assessment:
- To monitor children’s development
- To guide individualized planning and decision making
- To identify children who might benefit from special help
- To report to parents

Teacher’s documentation and assessment are used:
- To provide evidence of learning to parents
- To guard against assumption that children have learned the skill
- To make needed changes in response to what children have or have not learned.

Assessment helps decide:
- Individualized planning,
- how long to work on a set goal or objective,
- when to make changes to help children learn.

Responsive Planning
The importance of building responsive relationships is emphasized throughout *The Creative Curriculum*. Teachers must observe children purposefully, think about what they learn about each child, and respond in supportive ways. Even though teachers develop a plan for each day, teachers must always be open to following children’s interests and addressing their needs.

As teachers care for and teach infants, toddlers, and twos, teachers balance planning, thinking, ahead about what to do during a week or a day, with following the child’s lead at particular moments. Teachers need to know when to watch, when to step in, and how to extend each child’s learning. When teachers know individual children’s interests and developmental levels, they can offer experiences that engage and delight children and build their competence.

Using Observations to Respond to and Plan for Each Child
As teachers work with infants, toddlers, and twos, they continually observe what children are doing and saying.

In the *Creative Curriculum* chapters 11-18, teachers will see examples of how to observe children at different points during the day, what they think about, how they respond at the moment, and their ideas for incorporating the information into weekly plans.

The teachers must observe and document what they see and evaluate their weekly plans. For an individual child, the teacher must ask “What can I do to help this child? For the whole class, the teacher must ask “What is working and what is not” The teachers also evaluate themselves and the classroom environment. The teachers will then formulate a plan, implement the plan and observe and document children’s learning.
For very young children, learning depends on the trusting relationships they build with the important adults in their lives. The research on relationships, especially the importance of secure attachments, explains how young children develop strong social and emotional skills when their needs are consistently met by trusted adults and when they have positive interactions with those adults. When they know that they are safe, loved, cared for, children are ready to venture out to explore everything around them. When adults encourage these explorations and share children’s excitement about new discoveries, children gain confidence in themselves as learners.

ZERO TO THREE: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families identifies seven social/emotional characteristics that are essential for school-readiness. These traits are more fundamental to children’s success than knowing letters and numbers.” They are listed here with definitions and examples of how children show these characteristics.

1. **Confidence**: Children with confidence are eager to try new things; show pleasure when they make a discovery or complete a task by clapping their hands, smiling, etc.
2. **Curiosity**: Children demonstrate curiosity when they actively explore and investigate objects and materials using all of their senses, notice new things in the environment, etc.
3. **Intentionality**: Children show intentionality when they choose what they want to play with, take an interest in sounds and sights around them, stay with an activity for a period of time.
4. **Self-control**: Children demonstrate self-control when they are receptive to redirection, increasingly behave in ways that are expected by adults, and manage their feelings.
5. **Relatedness**: Children who trust familiar adults and have secure attachments, enjoy playing games such as peek-a-boo, & take an interest in what other children are doing.
6. **Capacity to communicate**: Children communicate first through crying, coos, gestures, and facial expressions, and eventually with words or signs.
7. **Cooperativeness**: Children who are cooperative may imitate others and join in, participate in small-group activities, begin to follow simple classroom rules, etc.

Young children develop these characteristics when they are with adults who genuinely care about them, talk with them in calm and respectful ways, take joy in their discoveries, have appropriate expectations about what they can do, and guide their behavior in positive ways. Every interaction teachers have with a child is an opportunity to nurture these seven characteristics that are essential to children’s success as learners.

In the Creative Curriculum, refer to “Caring and Teaching,” this section offers specific strategies for helping every child build a strong foundation for learning.

**Primary Care**
In a primary caregiving system, each child is assigned to one teacher who is principally responsible for that child’s care. The consistent attention from a primary care teacher goes a long way toward meeting the child’s need for stability and familiarity. When children spend a longer day in care than their primary care teacher, a second primary care teacher will be assigned. To make the transition from the morning shift to the afternoon shift as smooth as possible, the two teachers share information and concerns about the children.

Primary Care works best when teachers team up and give each other help. Example: One teacher prepares the food while the other teacher sits with both her children and co-teacher’s children.
In this training, we will focus on two of the PITC’s six recommended program policies for infant/toddler care, individualized care and small groups. Young children’s development flourished when they have close, supportive, and trusting relationships with a primary care teacher in small groups.

Teacher and Child Interactions
A crucial part of caring for infants and toddlers is the interaction between adults, the caregiver, and the children. Within the PACT program, the teachers will encourage social emotional growth by practicing the following:

- Teacher will talk to each infant and toddler during play and routines about child’s activities.
- Teacher giver will repeat what toddlers say, adding words and ideas when appropriate.
- Care giver maintains a good balance between listening and talking.
- Each teacher will be responsible for a small number of children.
- Teacher varies interactive style to meet children’s individual needs.
- Teacher is sensitive about children’s feelings and reactions.
- Each teacher shows much holding, patting, and physical warmth throughout the day.
- Teacher reinforces positive social interactions.
- Care giver points out and talks about instances of positive social interactions.

Health Activities
Healthy Habit activities are planned monthly. The activity can be a reinforcement of daily routine of healthy habits, as well as materials added to the classroom to promote an understanding of good health care, reading books, singing songs, etc. The children are taught the proper procedure (use soap, rub, rinse, dry) to wash hands and rules on when to wash hands.

Dental Education
Tooth brushing after meal service will create a desire in the children to have a clean and healthy mouth. The teachers make tooth brushing a part of the daily classroom routine and provide supervised and educational experiences for children.

Nutritional Education – Go, Slow, Whoa Foods
Nutritional Education will be on-going informally. EHS teachers will use meal service for nutritional education. Teacher will describe food by name, color, taste, etc, when foods are placed on children’s plates. Other experiences such as counting food, talking about full and empty when pouring milk, counting during handwashing and toothbrushing, and modeling social meal time behavior.

Other positive ways the primary teacher can help infants/toddlers develop habits through eating experience would be:

- while feeding an infant a bottle, the teacher comments on how hungry the child is, talks to infant while looking directly into his/her eye, or sing to infant,
- allowing children to explore their food with their fingers and or a spoon and letting children spend unhurried time feeding himself and babbling to his/her food
- allowing toddlers to serve meals family style.
**Physical Activity – IMIL**
In PACT programs, the classroom routine will provide periods for (MVPA) moderate to vigorous physical activity to support the movement to stop childhood obesity. As part of our daily routine, children and staff move with music. Classrooms will plan a minimum of 20 accumulated minutes per day. (10 minutes at home with family.)

The classroom curriculum is set up to encourage play and active exploration for infants and toddlers to support the development of motor skills which enhance self-confidence, independence and autonomy. The teachers will encourage the physical development by:

- allowing infants and toddlers to play with and explore objects in a safe environment,
- providing open accessible indoor and outdoor space for children to practice skills.
- providing classroom activities and materials that involve grasping, dropping, pulling, pushing, throwing, touching, and mouthing, etc.
- a safe place for mobile infants to crawl and explore, and a surface to pull upon as well as adequate areas for toddlers to run and climb
- encouraging movement and playfulness;
- moving non-mobile infants from one area and/or position to another;

**Mental Health – Social Emotional Development - Responsive Caregiving**
Understanding of three stages of infancy (birth to around 8 months, around 8 months to around 18 months, and around 18 months to 36 months) will help teachers attune their nurturance of infants and toddlers.

Children’s social-emotional development is strengthened through secure relationships with their families and teachers. Your secure relationships with individual children help them learn acceptable social behavior. The social skills children gain as infants and toddlers are a foundation for their success in school.

Responsive caregiving leads to trust, which is the foundation for social development. Social development begins at birth. Children’s early experiences with their families and teachers are the foundation for building positive relationships throughout their lives.

When teachers are responsive, it is like dancing or moving in rhythm with the child.

In this training, we will learn children’s social-emotional development is strengthened through secure relationships with their families and teachers. Secure relationships with individual children will help them learn acceptable social behavior. The social skills children gain as infants and toddlers are a foundation for their success in school.

Responsive group care:
  a. Low 1 to 4 child-to-teacher ratios and small groups
  b. Primary caregiving
  c. Continuity of care
  d. Responsive routines
2. Responsive with physical interactions:
   a. Vocabulary through responsive dance
   b. Observe and document to individualize
   c. Respect their curiosity
   d. Facilitate, make it easier, prep the environment

The stages of emotional development, defined by PITC

**Birth to 8 months** - sense of trust, in the environment, family, caregiver
   Need Responsive caregiver to meet their needs.
   Consistency is needed to meet emotional needs of infants.

**8 to 16 months** – mobile infants, busy children jumping, exploring
   Caregiver should be like a “good waiter.”
   To set up the environment, gives choices, takes a step back and check- in on children.
   Allow children space to explore, and join.

**16- 36 months** – Independent. I can do it.
   Teachers become cheerleaders (metaphor), coach sets things up (metaphor), conflicts, and needs a mediator (rules needed).
   Teachers demonstrate simple ways to do things.

We know that children need the teacher’s help as children move through the various stages of emotional development. Separation anxiety is a natural part of the attachment process and children’s development. Separation anxiety starts when children are about 7 months old and peaks between 9 and 18 months of age. The video, *First Moves* illustrates some practical steps teachers can take in introducing a child to a new setting.

Key Points:
   • Distance - Teachers can set-up a distance or barrier such as basket of blocks.
   • Indirect contact - Use of blocks to focus on to avoid face to face contact with infants.
   • Time, to allow time for child to warm up. Individual plan to begin entry into classroom slowly.
   • 7- 9 months - developmental stage of separation anxiety.
   • Arrival & departure are very special times for children and families.

(Additional Resource: PITC DVD - *First Moves: Welcoming a Child to a New Caregiving Setting*)
In this training, we will learn the three stages of infancy (birth to around 8 months, around 8 months to around 18 months, and around 18 months to 36 months) will help teachers attune their nurturance of infants and toddlers.

*AVOID SWOOPING-UP!* - Respect the child. Talk to and alert young infants before lifting him/her. Interact and have fun with child while changing their diaper.

The teacher will ensure that each infant who cannot move about the room, is held, rocked, and/or carried at least every 20-30 minutes. Other infants and toddlers will be held or rocked throughout the day.
Safety Education - see Safety Training Guide
Safety activities are integrated into the curriculum as appropriate for this age group.

Daily Routine
The daily routines are opportunities to build relationships with children and promote learning. The activities planned will respond to the growing interests and abilities of the children. When planning these activities, the teacher must consider the children in their group, the age of the children and how each might respond. With young infants, teachers are building a relationship of trust. Mobile infants are learning they can explore and reach the objects and that fascinate them. Activities for toddlers should build on their many interests and their new skills.

Children need to know what is going to happen next. A daily consistent routine gives children a sense of safety. Children need to be aware of the daily routine.

While completing daily routines, the teacher provides the following for each child:
- Naptime is personalized; there is a crib/cot in same place, familiar practices.
- Toddlers are eased into a group schedule.
- Children are taken out of cribs or allowed to leave cots when awake and ready to play.
- Children are helped to relax: soft music, back rubbed, rocked, etc.
- Quiet activities are provided for early risers and non-nappers:
- Diapering/toileting is used as time to talk with and relate warmly to children.
- Diapering/toileting of toddlers used to promote self-help in cleanliness and dressing skills, example, hand washing, using toilet paper, buttoning and snapping.

Planning for Transitions between Daily Schedule
Every day is filled with transitions, the periods between one routine or experiences and the next. Transitions are more apparent for toddlers and twos than for infants, because the older children have a more structured schedule. The most important transitions and often most difficult, are at the beginning and end of the day. This is discussed in the Creative Curriculum chapter 6, Hellos and Good-byes.

However, any transition can be a problem if children do not know what to do or if they are required to wait too long. When children have to wait while teachers get organized, disruptive behavior such as pushing and hitting often occurs. Because waiting is not easy for young children, teachers must plan meaningful wait time activities. Children also need to be given sufficient warning before the transition period begins to allow children to complete what they are doing. For infants and toddlers, it is best to use very minimal transitions.


In this training, we will learn caregiving routines take up to 80 percent of a caregiver’s time. The infant/toddler curriculum lies in the daily caregiving routines. The daily routines offer rich opportunities for engaging the child’s attention and cooperation for learning, and for deepening teacher-child relationships.
In this training, teachers will understand the responsive approach with infants, one in which the teacher follows the lead of the active learner and enhance the experience based on the child’s interests. The ten strategies presented in “Early Messages” offer specific practices that infant care teachers can use to facilitate oral language and vocabulary development.

(Additional Resource: PITC DVD – *Discoveries of Infancy: Cognitive Development and Learning* 
In this training, teachers will learn how their relationships with children and the experiences they provide to children build the foundation for school success. Researchers have grouped all of the learning that takes place in the first three years of life into Six Discoveries of Infancy. The knowledge about these discoveries will give teachers an idea of what to watch for and to prepare the environment with materials that will expand upon infant learning.

**Responsive Environment - The infant and toddler environment**

The physical environment promotes the developing abilities and interest of infants, toddlers, and twos. The arrangement of the classroom has a definite effect on the overall smooth-running of the program and the atmosphere in the classroom.

The teachers organize the classroom environment to support children’s social-emotional development. A new environment can be unsettling for infants and toddlers. Infants and Toddlers will be most comfortable when they are in a place that feels “homelike.” A familiar environment produces the same feeling of safety and security they experience when they are at home with their own families. The environment should reflect each child’s background and any special needs.

The classroom settings will need a minimum of four (4) experiences: such as imitating and pretending, enjoying stories and books, art, sensory, and having fun with music and movement. The classroom materials will reflect the developmental levels of the enrolled children.

The toddlers will experience guidance from the teacher as they begin to develop their autonomy and self-expressions. The toddler being confidently mobile will have the freedom to explore many different experiences within the areas. To engage children in the use of verbal and nonverbal methods of communication, the teacher will:

1) display & label pictures and photographs of infants and toddlers with their families;
2) respond to children’s behaviors associated with fears or needs;
3) respect each child as an individual;
4) respond to a child’s simple pleasure in his or her own success;
5) establish face to face contact and engage in playful exchanges or sounds and
6) provide activities that match children’s developmental level and honor their preferences.
7) encourage and support interaction between the children;
8) build a foundation for the use of language by using descriptive language and behaviors during daily routines such as diapering, snack time, etc.
9) respond to the children’s first attempts at conversation by expanding on their vocalizations or gestures;
10) read stories, sing song, recite rhymes and encourage children to hold and manipulate books.
As the child’s dependency decreases and the child is more and more able to provide self-help, the teacher must stay alert to the need to provide opportunity for the child to learn to do for her/himself. The toddlers begin to maintain long term fascination with various sized and textured balls, blocks that can be carried or pushed, soft baby dolls, play telephones, etc. The toddlers will need to have opportunities to hold fat crayons and to practice stacking and re-stacking of graduated sized rings and cups. Social interactions and appropriate emotional responses are practiced with dolls, purses, baskets, and the modeling during free play.

Along with these activities, the teachers will provide children with a variety of age-appropriate eye-hand materials of different type, color, size, shape, texture. These activities will be accessible to children daily for independent use. Each teacher will help children develop these skills by playing with infants and using appropriate toys; helps toddlers with crayons, puzzles, peg-board, etc. The eye-hand materials are rotated to provide a variety.

How to integrate diversity and culture into the curriculum
The analysis of family data collected from the child’s enrollment paperwork and the family’s visit to the classroom are critical to the process in multicultural education. The data from our parents will form the framework to help teachers establish the instructional content and processes for multicultural curriculum.

The Child/Family Cultural Survey and the Language Acquisition Survey is used to support the culture of each child and family. The information is used to individualize services and implement culturally relevant programming in the classroom. This information is documented on the Weekly Planning form.

According to the Anti Bias Curriculum, the knowledge to be built in multicultural teaching includes concepts about oneself and others in the context of diverse society. Parents and other community members need to be regularly involved in the classroom, and not just on special occasions.

Note: See Head Start Standard (1304.21 (a) (1) (iii)) – Holiday Policy

Parent-Child Activity, Prop-Box, and Inventory
One night per month, (at parent night) the EHS teacher provides hands-on learning experiences and opportunities for Early Head Start and Macomb Child Care families to get together with their children in their classroom.

Here is a list of Creative Curriculum Experiences planned by EHS Teachers.
- Exploring with toys and materials
- Art experiences - finger paintings, markers, crayons, paint, scissors, pencils, etc.
- Imitating and pretending - Home Living area, puppets, blocks, dancing, etc.
- Stories and books - children will have books read to them, make books tell stories
- Music and movement - singing, fingerplays, dancing, instruments, etc
- Gross Motor - Inside/Outside - running, crawling, climbing, etc
- Fine Motor - Stacking, pouring, writing, etc.
Curriculum Planning
A copy of the Group and Individual Planning forms are due to supervisor prior to implementing in the classroom. The original Individual Planning form is in the Teacher’s Assessment Notebook and the Group Planning form is posted in the classroom. Any changes to the lesson plans are made to the original copies and forwarded to supervisor at the end of the week.

Individual Planning Form - FORM
The Individual Planning form is used on a weekly basis to record current information about each child. This form is used to plan experiences that support each child’s development and learning. The current information (interest, ability, development, goals, assessment, etc.) section on the Individual Planning form may come from parents at arrival, daily classroom observation, or planned goals and objectives.

Note: Writing general information on the lesson plan such as “Sam loved playing with the water” doesn’t give us much information to engage with to deepen the teaching and learning process.

Capturing the specific details of what you hear and see, documenting with a clipboard and pen, a sketch, tape recorder, or camera can help you learn more about individual children, and see the complexity of the unfolding moments. You also get ideas about additional things to offer to extend their interest for further learning.

Group Planning Form - FORM
The Group Planning Form is used by teachers to plan for all of the children in the classroom, and to document changes made to the environment, schedule, and routines. It also helps teachers to plan what experiences to offer during the week. It gives teachers an overall sense of direction for the week and a list of the materials teachers want to have available.

Use the Group Planning Form as planning for possibilities. Teachers prepare for routines and meaningful experiences and then follow each child’s lead. All of the teachers in the classroom are involved and must think about the following questions, prior to completing the Weekly Planning Form.

• What experiences interest the children now?
• Which material are the children using most?
• What skills are children developing?
• What is working well? What is not working well?
• How are we involving family members who visit the program?

Answers to the above questions will help teachers make decisions about their classroom curriculum.
The Group *Planning Form* includes five main sections:

1. **Changes to the environment** – Teacher will record the changes to the environment for the next week. Teacher’s observations guide the changes. Examples: If the puzzle pieces were often scattered on the floor, teacher might decide that the puzzles are not stored so that children can use them independently, and teacher might decide to put them on a lower shelf. Or rotating toys, add new labels, etc.

2. **Changes to daily routine** – Record changes to the routines for next week. For example, a daily walk before lunch or after lunch, to meet the needs of the children.

3. **Family Involvement** – Include ideas about involving family members next week. These may include asking for their help in making materials and inviting them to visit the classroom.

4. **Special experiences planned for the week** – List experiences to offer and support children’s exploration and discoveries. List experiences for indoors and outdoors. Teachers do not have to plan different experiences every day or offer every kind of experiences every day. Infants, toddlers, and twos master skills through repetition, and they take delight in repeating the same thing again and again.

According to the PITC and the Creative Curriculum, being responsive is more important than sticking to the written plan. Always keep in mind that positive interactions with children are more important than particular activities. Teachers may need to adapt the plans to respond to the children’s changing needs and interest. Here are some steps to follow.

- **Review your weekly planning forms.** Think about the day before the children arrive. Try to imagine how all the parts of the day will fit together.
- **Assess the realities of the day.** Will a new child need extra time and attention? Are you feeling a little tired and not up to taking the walk you planned?
- **Remain flexible and adapt your plans as necessary.** – No matter how carefully you prepare, you must always be ready to change your plans. For example: a toddler might throw a tantrum and need some extra attention, requiring you to postpone the large chalk activity you had planned.
Infant- Toddler Screening

**Developmental Screening** - Infants & Toddlers
The Assistant Site Supervisor explains the purpose of the screening and obtains a written permission from the parents. The developmental screening cannot be administered without a written parental consent. The screening information is in the Child Care parent handbook.

The teacher is responsible for completing the developmental screening and the communication with parents. This may occur during class, so check the staffing pattern. The dates of completed screening are tracked on the EHS *Education Contact and Screening Record*. The first developmental screening should be completed within two weeks of enrollment into the classroom.

**After the screening**
The child care teacher scores the ASQ screening forms. The *Ages & Stages and Ages & Stages Social-Emotional Screening* score is documented on the classroom staffing pattern grid provided monthly by the Assistant Site Supervisor. Screenings with concerns are forwarded to the Site Supervisor to review and follow-up. The Site Supervisor will contact Head Start Disabilities/MH Coordinator for assistance. The screenings are filed in the child’s education file.

All children with screening scores in the GRAY shaded area or BLACK area will be discussed with the Site Supervisor, prior to meeting with family. Teacher with parent input may choose to plan classroom activities to improve the low scores. At the next planned screening date, if the score is still in the GRAY or BLACK shaded areas, the Site Supervisor will be contacted. The teacher and Site Supervisor will determine if the child needs further evaluation.

The results of the Developmental Screening will be discussed with parents after the screening or during parent-teacher conference.

See Screening and Assessment Training Guide for ASQ-3 scoring.
Infant-Toddler
On-going Assessment

**Linking Curriculum and Assessment:** The Ongoing Cycle

**Planning for Assessment**
- Become familiar with Illinois Early Learning Guidelines – Birth to Three
- Set up a systematic way to observe, document, organize your notes
- Set up a portfolio for each child

**Collect Facts**
- Observe and document children’s learning
- Observe children with Standards in mind
- Document what you see and hear
- Collect portfolio samples

**Analyzing & Evaluating Facts**
- Sort observation notes into the Portfolio
- Label portfolio sample with date and anecdotal notes
- Evaluate children’s progress
- Review daily notes

**Planning for Each Child and the Group**
- Ongoing planning
- Review ongoing observations, keeping the Standards in mind
- Enter information on the Individual Planning Form

**Sharing Children’s Progress With families**
- Summarize each child’s progress on the conference report
- Meet with families to share information and jointly plan next steps

**How To Observe and Collect**

The teacher observes, takes photos, documents, and interacts with infants and toddlers during their daily routine. The information and knowledge of each child’s development will help teachers, with parent input, to plan a curriculum that facilitates individualized planning for children to improve their skills.

Observations are documented either when the event occurred or after the fact. Since it is impossible to document everything that children do, it is a good idea to establish a routine of brief, focused observations. To maximize the effectiveness of your observation, it is best that they be planned & focused. Devising a plan about whom, what to observe makes the task of observation more systematic.

Observation occurs in the context of the ongoing daily routine. Teachers observe in 3 different ways.
1. Participating in the action - Teachers are actively involved with one child.
2. Stepping out of the action - Teacher watch & focus on how a child’s approach a learning task.
3. Reflecting - Reviewing photos or taking a moment after an event occurred.
**Infant- Toddler Portfolio Collection**

Portfolios are purposeful collections of children’s photos that illustrate children’s efforts, progress, and achievements. The collection of items should reveal different aspects of the individual child’s growth and development over time. This may be a purposeful collection of photos of experiences that illustrates children’s efforts, progress, and achievement.

To begin the Portfolio Collection, it is best to set up a folder for each child. The folder should be readily available to you in the classroom. Keep children’s portfolios in a locked cabinet. All entries in the collection should be dated. The portfolio folder is shared with each family at parent/teacher conferences and given to them at the end of the child care service.

**Documentation:**
Teacher will document the ”process” of learning or photos & include fewer actual examples of the child’s work. In order to document this process, teacher records “word pictures” of a child’s participation in daily activities. A teacher might describe how a child interacts with objects, with adults, other children, or moves around the classroom.

Ways to document learning:
1. Anecdotal notes
2. Photos.
Preschool Program - for 3-5 year olds

The approach to child development and education will focus on individual children’s progress, interest, temperaments, language, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles. The teacher use the assessment checklist that documents the performance and progress in children’s social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth. The Cultural Survey, Education Survey for School Readiness and the assessment checklist helps teachers gain perspective on how children learn by evaluating and documenting all areas of growth and development.

The Creative Curriculum the 4th Edition is a “scientifically based” model that describes the theory and research that form the foundation of our preschool curriculum. The comprehensive curriculum applies theory and research to everyday practices, giving Teachers a roadmap for teaching. The Creative Curriculum provides teachers a clear guidance on how to plan lessons and at the same time allows room for Teacher creativity.

The basic approach of the Creative Curriculum is that teachers must use a variety of strategies to meet children’s social, emotional, physical, cognitive, and language developmental needs. A vital strategy is to become a good observer of children. This allows teachers to assess children’s needs, interests, and abilities in relation to specific developmental goals, and to plan meaningful learning experiences that build on children’s interest and knowledge.

The essential elements of the Creative Curriculum:

- A foundation of research and theory of child development, including the ideas of Maslow, Erikson, Piaget, Vygotsky, Smilansky, and Gardner, as well as recent information on brain research and resiliency research.
- An understanding of how children develop and learn.
- An emphasis on setting up the structure of the learning environment, including setting up and maintaining interest areas, establishing schedules and routines, organizing choice time and small and large group times, and creating a classroom community where children learn how to get along with others and solve problems.
- Content areas literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology discussed in Head Start Child Outcomes Framework and State Standards.
- A range of instructional strategies for teachers to use in large and small group times and long term studies.
- The teacher’s role that include becoming a careful observer and using a variety of instructional strategies and interactions with children to guide their learning. A system for ongoing, authentic assessment, based on observations made during everyday classroom activities, enables teachers to plan for each child as well as the group.
- The importance of creating partnerships with families, with emphasis on communicating ways families can support children’s learning at school and at home.
The Creative Curriculum framework indicates the 11 interest areas considered important for a Creative Curriculum preschool classroom: Blocks, Dramatic Play, Toys and Games, Art, Library, Discovery, Sand & Water, Music & Movement, Cooking, Computers, and Outdoors.

The children are encouraged to make their choices from the abundance of appropriate materials available in our classroom. The classroom offer messages of welcome to diverse families. The classroom provides opportunities for children to function independently. The children are active and engaged in the Creative Curriculum classroom. Content is learned through investigation and play, as well as focused, intentional teaching to build on prior learning experiences.

Staff Resource Library:
The resources are available in the individual classroom, center, or central office. A wide variety of resource materials includes, but not limited to: The Creative Curriculum, 4th Edition, Project Approach, The Power of Projects, The Young Child and Mathematics, Second Step Curriculum, STEP Literacy Training Manual, High Scope Letter Links, Celebrate: An Anti-Bias Guide to Holidays, Head Start Dental and Health Curriculum, Anti-Bias Curriculum, Chef Combo Kit, etc. are available to staff to provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

*Daily routine to support letter knowledge.*

- The children will wear name badges/tags each day with their name and icon on the badge. (Icons may be removed in the middle of the year)
- Each day a child will self-select own name or be the badge/tag distributor (giving each child their badge/tag) to wear during the day. This allowing all children to see others names besides their own.
- Children will sign-in each day upon arrival – find their name and icon on a name card and write (or attempt) to write their name – in the middle of the year, icons may be removed
- Children will go to the attendance chart – find the ir name and icon – put their name by the school for attendance (middle of the year – icons may be taken off)
- Teachers will use name cards with icons for transitioning activities (middle of the year – icons will be taken off)
- Literacy Link is a strategy used by Teachers to be more literacy (print) focused

The Goals for Children’s Development and Learning
The approach to child development and education will focus on individual children’s progress, interest, temperament, language, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles. The teachers use the information from the Education Survey for School Readiness, the Child/Family Cultural Survey, and the children’s assessment collection to understand children’s developmental needs.

The Child/Family Cultural Survey is used for integrating cultural activities into the classroom. Our families are used as a resource for information about their family culture. Their ideas and interests are integrated into individual and small group activities and community field trips.

Curriculum Management

Systematic Approach
The systematic approach relies on multiple methods and sources of information, (such as observation, curriculum-based assessments, checklists, work samples, etc.), can be used to determine which children are meeting key benchmarks, which children are in the process of developing these skills, and which children are not making adequate progress.

No matter which strategies are used, every teacher must find a way to ensure that each child gets individualized attention based on the needs found in his/her assessment. While individualizing should be done spontaneously as teachable moments arise in the classroom, this strategy alone does not ensure that each child will receive equal & fair attention based on the specific needs found in their assessment.

Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) describes two levels. The lower level is a child’s independent performance, what a child can do alone. The higher level is the best the child can do with maximum assistance.

Teachers need to use their observational skills to look for developmental and learning that are in a formative stage and give prompts, suggestions, models, and hints to see what a child does with such help.
During an average class time, teachers have many interactions with children, and teachers cannot rely on memory to recall children’s learning and accomplishments.

Recording information in a systematic way helps focus attention on each child’s development, on important educational targets, and on the way authentic assessment and good instructions are linked.

Much of the curriculum can be individualized through careful attention to the classroom setting and the materials offered in each learning center. However, some children may not always use the centers or materials that will help them improve in the necessary skill area.

To ensure that every child’s needs are met, the teacher can individualize through (1-2 children) small group experiences, either as part of child-initiated time or as a separate segment in the daily schedule.

Daily assessment will identify children who need special help in the classrooms. Children need challenges to continue to build on their skills. Other children may be falling behind and need more help in class.

The purpose of assessment:
- To monitor children’s development and learning
- To guide classroom planning and decision making
- To identify children who might benefit from special help
- To report to parents

Teachers documentation and assessment is used:
- To provide evidence of learning to parents, teachers, and outcomes
- To guard against assumption that children have learned the skill
- To make needed changes in response to what children have or have not learned.

Assessment helps decide
- where and how to begin,
- how long to work on a set goal or objective,
- when to make changes to help children learn.
Teacher’s Role in Helping Children Achieve Their Goals

**Teacher’s Role:**
- The Teacher develops a long range plan that reflect the Illinois Learning Standards.
- The Teacher uses the anticipatory planning web to brainstorm children’s interests.
- The Teacher use the planning web to list materials needed for the planned study.
- The Teacher document emergent ideas when possible (such as ideas of interests, spontaneous classroom activity, etc).
- The Teacher document ideas & suggestions from parents.
- The Teacher designs their Daily Routine to meet the needs of the program & classroom.
- The Teacher plans individualized activities to meet ISP goals on the Activity Plans.
- The Teacher uses the Individualized Summary Sheet to create a classroom profile.
- The Teacher provides daily opportunities in the classroom to see meaningful print, math in action, to predict, to observe, and to write.
- The Teacher integrates Mental Health, Health, Hygiene, Dental, Safety, and Nutrition activities into the classroom routine.

The classroom plans support and encourage various ways and means for children to express themselves through music and movement, creative art, songs, finger plays, puppetry, dramatic play, and other avenues for communication and expression.

**STEP Early Literacy (C.I.R.C.L.E.) - school readiness skills**
Educational research tells us that if language, literacy, and other cognitive factors are provided to children through quality programming in early childhood settings, children’s school readiness is optimized. Research describes key components of quality programs for reading and academic success. These include a strong foundation in language development, phonological awareness, letter knowledge, written expressions, book and print awareness, read aloud, and early math.

**DAP - Understanding the Development of Language and Literacy**
Literacy is not choosing a letter of the week. Literacy enhancement requires building an inviting and exciting environment and activities that build literacy into the fabric of everything that is done in the classroom in a meaningful way. It is much more exciting to learn about the letter “p” as a part of an exciting, in-depth investigation on popcorn than to have a new letter for the focus each week.

According to NAEYC, the early learning standards and child outcomes include specifics on literacy skills and knowledge. So, Teachers must have knowledge of inappropriate academic methods and should not apply them in the preschool classrooms. The early literacy approach recognizes the need to offer children abundant experiences to help them develop the various components of literacy. But literacy activities must not be conducted in isolated skills, such as letter sound drills, printing a row of “a”, alphabet letter of the week being drilled, name writing practice, and rote counting to 100.

Teachers must use enjoyable texts of children’s literature to introduce children to meaningful print and continue to use print as it functions in daily life and routine of the child. Reading and writing are important parts of daily activities. Equally as important are the other play materials and experiences that bring children into dialogue and interactions with others, while they use the materials in a natural setting or routine of the day.
Literacy Link – Means every center and activity has some connection to developing literacy skills. Literacy must be at the foundation of the classroom and all tasks must be anchored to it. Literacy Link is planning for literacy across and throughout the day. The goal is to help Teachers plan an integrated literacy curriculum by putting literacy at the foundation of everything they teach.

Purposeful planning ensures that Teachers address all areas of literacy development, the areas that are too important to leave to chance. Teacher must continuously assess where children are and in what ways they need support. That does not mean administering test to young children. It means carefully monitoring the language use, their ability to retell stories, and the many ways they use and produce text.

Teachers need a strong understanding of young children and literacy. By weaving literacy into the curriculum Teachers provide children with solid beginnings for literacy success.

**DAP - Symbolic Representation – Writing**

The stages of early writing occur over a long stretch of time and after many, many experiences with putting marks on paper in an informal and undirected manner. The Teacher needs to provide a variety of materials for use in writing and give children many opportunities to practice writing throughout their day. All writing opportunities take place in every area of the classroom learning environment.

**Components of Literacy:**

- **Vocabulary and Language** – written language requires rich vocabulary and an understanding of the rules of speech. Vocabulary is learned through every day experiences and conversations.

- **Phonological Awareness** – includes a continuum of skills in hearing and understanding the different patterns of spoken language. Children begin with listening to the sounds in the environment. This is followed by learning the skills of rhyming (recognizing the sounds in the ending of words) and alliteration (hearing similar initial sounds). A later skill is learning to hear the separate syllables in words. Phonological awareness is promoted with the classroom use of songs, stories, rhymes, as well as nonsense language games. Phonemic awareness is the most important prerequisite to understanding the relationship between letters and sounds.

  NOTE: Phonological Awareness is an auditory skill that DO NOT involve print. Activities are auditory.

- **Knowledge of Print** describes all the ideas related to how print is organized and used. This includes understanding the functions of print, including all the purposeful ways in which print can be used. It also includes understanding the various forms of print and the distinct appearance of specific letters and words. Exposure to print in the environment is the way that children learn about print.

- **Knowledge of Letters and Words** – Children who learn to read have to understand that letters are symbols representing a sound in the language that symbols are grouped together to form words, and that words have meaning. Far more than learning to recite the ABCs or recognizing letters, this understanding allows children to match spoken words to written
words. The concept that written letters correspond to spoken words is called the alphabetic principle. Children develop this as they learn to recognize and then print their names, as they look at alphabet books, as they explore the sensory attributes of magnetic or foam alphabets letters.

The STEP Early Literacy manual is used by teachers as a resource to implement school readiness skills. A professional development plan will be ongoing to assist teachers in teaching early literacy skills, including a strong foundation of language development.

Concepts about Print
During read aloud, the following concepts about print can be taught directly to children:

- Text carries meaning (we read words, not pictures).
- Reading of text goes from left to right, top to bottom.
- Text goes from the left page, then proceeds to the right.
- Letters are the black squiggles on the page.
- A word is composed of letters and is surrounded by white space.
- Punctuation marks inform inflection and meaning.
- A book has a front, and back cover, a title page, an author and an illustrator.
- A story has a beginning, a middle, and an end.

Teachers use big books, posters, sentence strips in pocket or velcro chart, songs, poetry, or any text that is large enough to share with children to reinforce print concepts. Here is an example of questions to ask children about print before a read aloud.

- Who can show me…..
  Where the cover of the book is?
  Which way is right side up?
  Where I should start to read?
  Where a word is?
  Where the end of the story is?
  Where a capital (or lettercase) letter is?

Health Activities
Healthy Habit activities are planned monthly along with the health education. The activity can be a tour to a local community health care center, role-playing with props in the classroom, reinforcement of daily routine of healthy habits, as well as materials added to the learning centers to promote an understanding of good health care. The children are taught the proper procedure (use soap, rub, rinse, dry) to wash hands and rules on when to wash hands.

Health activities in our classroom include:
-- routine handwashing & toothbrushing
-- daily movement and exercise with Choosy - MVPA
-- planned structured physical education -MVPA
-- books about doctors, nurses, dentists, hospitals, etc.
-- puzzles about doctors, nurses, dentists, hospitals, etc.
-- inviting Health Professionals to our center
-- prop-boxes to stimulate children’s dramatic play, such as doctor/nurse bags, scales, etc.
-- community field trips to a hospital, dental clinic, health departments, etc.
**Dental Education**
The teachers make tooth brushing a part of the daily classroom routine and provide supervised and educational experiences for children. The tooth brushing activity will be limited to two children per sink. Each sink will be provided with a tooth timer to encourage brushing and to make tooth brushing fun. The Teacher will use the tooth brushing time to individualize and teach proper brushing techniques.

**Physical Activity - 45 accumulated minutes for preschool**
In the center-based program, the classroom routine provides scheduled periods for physical activity to support the development of competence and confidence. As part of our daily routine, children and staff move and exercise.

Scheduled and planned indoor and outdoor activities include stop and go games, balancing, running, jumping, and other vigorous movements to enhance physical growth, stamina, and flexibility.

Children are encouraged daily to participate actively in movement and other forms of exercise that enhance the children’s ability to move in ways that demonstrate control, balance, and coordination.

Equipment to promote gross-motor skills will include, but not limited to, a balance beam, hoops for jumping, jump ropes, bean bag toss, scooter boards, a parachute, riding toys, balls, tumbling mats, walking cups, etc.

Group activities may include exercise, parachute games, hoop activities, ball games, an obstacle course, or group games.

**Nutritional Education – Go, Slow, Whoa Foods**
Nutritional Education will be on-going informally on a daily basis during meal time. The teachers will use each meal time to help the children develop good nutrition skills. The teachers will utilize the outdoor garden, daily menu words, books, and songs to promote the importance of healthy food choice. Teachers will avoid talking about likes and dislikes of food.

- Strategies to use when talking about food and questions to ask during meal service.
  - Talk about how food tastes, smells and feels.
  - Ask simple questions about his/her food.
    - What color is it?
    - How does that taste?
    - How does it smell?
  - Ask difficult question about his/her food.
    - Is an apple a fruit or a vegetable?
    - What else tastes sweet?
    - Talk about where foods come from and how they are made.
    - Encourage children to describe food with more than one word (Orange, juicy and sour).
    - Have the child practice counting peas or raisins.
    - Comparing sizes (big, little) and quantities (more, less).
The **Chef Combo Curriculum is now on the web**. The Chef Combo can provide Teachers a variety of nutritional activities. Other resources include, but not limited to: books, pictures, songs, props, and field trips relating to food and its sources. Community field trips can include, but not limited to: bakery, grocery store, farm, plant nursery, cultural restaurant, etc.

**Mental Health**
Children are encouraged to increase their problem solving abilities and flexibility through the experiences of making good choices. The classroom environment will be physically and emotionally safe for children & staff.

The children’s accomplishments and efforts, no matter how small, will be recognized by staff in order to affirm worthiness and potential. Children will be respected for who they are and their individual rights will be protected. Community people and parents will be used as potential resources for cultural, ethnic, and family pride activities.

**Safety Education** - see Safety Training Guide
Safety activities are integrated into the curriculum. Safety education topics includes, but not limited to storm/disaster, home safety, transportation/pedestrian safety, personal safety, gun safety, etc.

**Summer Curriculum**
The summer curriculum emphasize “outdoors” with science and physical health. The outdoor environment is arranged to provide many of the same learning centers provided indoors. The outdoor classroom should allow children to develop problem solving skills, to observe and compare, to sort, categorize and group materials, make predictions and draw conclusions, to develop communication skills, and to build self-esteem. The classroom study or projects, children’s work samples, etc. displayed in the classroom should reflect science and discovery.

The teachers should use the outdoor area as a literacy-rich environment where children can experiment with language, letters, and words:

- Play outdoor riddle games such as “I Spy”.
- Use nature materials as props for group storytelling.
- Read books about outdoor adventures.
- Practice letter writing with water and paintbrushes on the sidewalk.
- Build a garden for children to observe and explore.
- Act out favorite storybooks on play equipment.
- Take a letter walk to look for familiar letters on signs and walls.
- Invite children to label the outside environment.
- Listen to the sounds of nature and try to replicate them.
- Write about the outdoor experiences in the daily journal.
Teachers will provide a **cooler of water** for children to drink throughout the day. Also use the **sunscreen**. Teachers can set up a “sunscreen depot” with a safety mirror where children lather up before going outside. The travel first-aid kit should be within easy reach of the outdoor activities.

It is the teacher’s enthusiasm in the sights, smells, sounds, and tactile experiences of the outdoors that truly “rubs off” on children. If teachers like to be outdoors, the children will too. Here are some tips to consider when implementing the outdoor curriculum:

- Celebrate nature – Show children the pleasures of a puddle, the surprise of a seedling, etc.
- Group Meeting – Gather children to discuss the rules and boundaries of outside activities. Invite them to suggest their own rules.
- Be Observant – Watch for children’s interests and curiosities and use them to expand and create more outdoor experiences.
- Be Flexible – Change a plan quickly if children are not engaged or interested.
- Expand your time frame – Allow plenty of “messing around” time for children to make the activities their own through explorations.

Teachers will need to look at their outdoor environment and see what can be easily changed or added. What can be brought out from inside? What Teachers have inside can be moved outside.

- Water
- Blocks – washable type
- Art Easel & art materials – big brushes and mural paper
- Open ended props such as boxes, tubes, or crates,
- Growing Plants
- Old Sheets or strips of fabric to encourage creative thinking and problem solving
- A tablecloth or blanket for games or books.
- Self-Service water jug and cups for drinking

Summer Topic of Study should include Life Science:
- Explore Water – field trip to a pond
- Explore Shadows – field trip to a park
- Explore Plants – field trip to family garden / nursery / field
- Explore Bugs – field trip to a field/ park/meadow
- Build a Garden – field trip to a nursery
- Explore Worms – field trip to a worm farm

A curriculum is not just a collection of lesson plans and activity plans. A good curriculum looks at the planning, arranging the environment, interacting with children, as well as using strategies to observe and document learning.
According to Developmentally Appropriate Practice, the important component of the planning cycle is for teachers to learn about the questions and experiences that are interesting for the individual children within the classroom. Thematic/study planning offers an array of activities built around a central idea, so one advantage is that this related web of experiences allow children to make their own meaningful mental connections.

Play and projects centered on a particular theme/study may last weeks, or even months, depending on sustained attention. Studies provide a method to support Teacher organization and thinking around a particular topic. The best kinds of brainstorming and creative thinking can result when teachers are trying to web related ideas and activities to help children explore studies. Developmentally appropriate planning occurs as teachers identify and sustain children’s studies. The important component of the planning cycle is for Teachers to learn about the questions and experiences that are interesting for the individual children within the classrooms.

Themes/studies provide a method to support teacher organization and thinking around a particular topic. The best kinds of brainstorming and creative thinking can result when teacher are trying to web related ideas and activities to help children explore studies/themes. Developmentally appropriate planning occurs as teaches identify and sustain children’s interest.

(Center for Improving the Readiness of Children for Learning and Education

STEP Early Literacy Manual- Building the Classroom Community
A positive classroom environment:

- is conducive to learning.
- makes classroom management easier.
- gives children ownership of the classroom.
- gives children the power to manage themselves.
- respects each child’s individuality.
- recognizes and promotes children taking responsibility in the classroom community.

An added benefit of the positive interaction between Teacher and Co-Teacher is the kindness, respect, and cooperation it models for children.

Work smarter not harder! When teaching teams work together, they can:

- Share responsibilities - be involved with children at all times.
- Implement more small group instruction - one teacher can be working with a small group while the other staff is “walking around” interacting with children.
- Have smoother transitions - one Teacher leads circle and begins transition activity while the other staff monitor clean-up.
- Circle Time - one teacher directs the lesson and both staff monitor children’s behavior.
Classroom Charts used in our classrooms

• Classroom Rules Chart – promotes social responsibility and acts as a preventative for many behavioral problems.

• Classroom Helper Chart – allows children to experience responsibility.

• Home/School Attendance Chart – provides a quick check of attendance, while providing an opportunity for increased attention to print.

• Daily Schedule Chart - a predictable day helps children find a way to learn and manage time.

• Message Chart – promote language development while providing meaningful print in the classroom.

• Center Management System – encourages children’s decision-making and critical thinking skills as well as fosters language development.

• Feelings Chart – allows children to label their feelings and to promote social responsibility.

• The Letter Wall – develops vocabulary that exposes children to a variety of concepts throughout the study.

• Five-Minute Sign - use literacy to remind children 5 more minutes of play. Use print to alert children that a transition is coming and that they should begin to end their play before clean-up time. This is a literacy-focused approach to have an assigned child walk around with a sign that reads “Five more minutes to play,” showing to each child.

• Clean-up Sign – use literacy for clean-up. Use print to remind children what they should be doing after the five-minute warning. Five minutes after all children have read the sign, another child is assigned to walk around with a clean-up sign. This approach will help children to start to associate reading text with finding out information and following directions.

• Songs We Know Chart – A list of songs with icons on a chart as a resource for children and teachers to read and sing during transitions.

Four Basic Elements of Each Center.
1. Provide a variety of fun and purposeful activities.
2. Literary connection- to insure that children who do not choose to visit the library have an opportunity to read.
3. Writing materials - to insure that children who do not chose to visit the writing center have an opportunity to write.
4. Verbal communication with an adult or peer.
Before dismissing for home, a predictable closure:
- ask children to share “center time” with others.
- use daily schedule as a guide to lead discussion of the daily activities.
- chose a few children to share their thoughts.

DAP- Large Group Time
Group time may range from 5 to 20 minutes, depending on the experiences of the children, and may go even longer as children participate more. Group time is planned to balance quiet listening with active participations.

DAP - Show and Tell
Show and tell activities help children gain skills in communicating, listening, and group problem solving. However, children should be encouraged, but not required, to show or tell. There should be no show and tell based on materialism.

Go – Slow – Whoa (Menu Words)
Menu Words promotes language development while providing meaningful print in the classroom. Menu words are written in large print on sentence strips with photo on the right. Menu Reporter will read breakfast or lunch menu during group time. The children will label if the food item is Go, Slow, or Whoa Food. Nutritional education is planned as a daily activity.

Small Group (1-2 children) during center-time to individualize learning
The teacher is selecting the children to help them practice specific skills, based on their individual needs or Outcomes. Children will have this kind of one-on-one or small group experience regularly with children who are not developing as expected. The teacher chooses 1-2 children to sit with the teacher to practice a skill using DAP for about five minutes. This small group usually forms during (center-time), but it is the teacher who forms the group and decides on how long the activity will last.

Small Group after clean-up
Another type of small group is part of Head Start’s daily schedule when staff-child ratio is 1-6 or less. In this situation, which is also teacher directed, all children and adults in the classroom participate. Each staff member, including volunteers take a group of six or less children to a separate area of the room, such as housekeeping, the book corner, the circle rug, or table. All children are actively engaged, practicing a particular skill (DAP) for about 10 to15 minutes. Throughout the week, the teacher directed small group is rotated allowing all children to experience a different activity and skill.
The Materials Needed To Support the Implementation of the Curriculum

The curriculum also includes the physical environment of the classroom. The physical environment of the classroom has a definite effect on the overall management and climate of the classroom. The classroom environment is arranged for children to learn to be responsible, resourceful, and competent. The classroom setting provides materials and opportunities that encourage children to write, paint, count, categorize, label, sequence, measure, pour, and weight, and to explore concepts related to quantity and size and shape.

The classroom setting for children 3 to 5 years old will offer at a minimum the following learning centers: Art, Writing, Computer, Library/Listening, Music, Blocks, Discovery/Sensory, Manipulative, and Dramatic Play. Wood Working activities will also be incorporated into the curriculum throughout the year.

The teachers label children’s constructions in more than one language, if different languages are spoken in the center or community. We use different color for each language.

The learning centers will be inviting, organized, labeled, well stocked and the materials used will reflect the developmental levels of the enrolled children. Activities and materials should enhance a child’s independence and require a minimal amount of adult intervention or participation to reach success.

The learning centers will be arranged to support mathematics. The center management chart with numeral symbol will encourage children to count daily. The materials on the center shelves will be arranged by similar objects to encourage children to sort, classify, sequence, or categorize.

The unit blocks are standard equipment in a Creative Curriculum classroom. Everyday experiences with blocks offer children the opportunity to learn about each component of mathematics. When children discover math concepts on their own, the Teachers can extend children’s experiences by helping them identify and name many concepts they discover. As children handle blocks, they learn about number, patterns and relationships, geometry and spatial sense, and measurement. They also develop problem-solving strategies as they plan, build, and assess their structures.

Letter Link System – High Scope approach for teaching letters and sounds
For many years, Teachers used symbols with no representation or a picture with children’s name to help children locate their name. High Scope has a new approach, the letter link system, which involves using a picture icon that begins with the same letter as a child’s first name.

Letter links provide a way to introduce children to letters and letter sounds the moment they enter our classroom. Children begin to link letter names and letter sounds in comfortable and meaningful situations that don’t feel like drill and practice.

The resource book, “High Scope Letter Links: Alphabet Learning with Children’s Names” is available in the center resource library.
Print Rich Environment
The Classroom environment supports children’s emergent literacy. The print-rich environment, at child’s eye level, helps children understand that language, both written and oral, has a meaningful function.

Teachers add purposeful materials and writing tools to the learning centers to provide opportunities for children to write during play. (Example: measuring chart, making signs, sign-in sheet for taking turns, attendance, etc.)

Homemade classroom books, message charts, letter wall, environmental print, signs, charts, graphs, murals, community map, and labels enhances children’s literacy skills. The print should to be bold, easy to read, and in lower case to facilitate literacy. Use shapes, pictures, words, etc. on shelves to help children and volunteers to return materials to the proper place. Place family photos, posters of buildings, books or magazines in centers that are appropriate to the activity taking place in that center.

The children’s art work, children’s names, photos of the children & families, etc. will be displayed at children’s eye level throughout the classroom in order to enhance self-awareness.

How to integrate diversity and culture into the curriculum
The data from our parent surveys will form the framework to help teachers establish the instructional content and processes for multicultural curriculum.

The Child/Family Cultural Survey and the Language Acquisition Survey is used to support the culture of each child and family. The information is used to individualize services and implement culturally relevant programming in the classroom. This information is documented on the Classroom Lesson Plan.

According to the Anti Bias Curriculum, the knowledge to be built in multicultural teaching includes concepts about oneself and others in the context of diverse society. Parents and other community members need to be regularly involved in the classroom, and not just on special occasions.

The classroom environment is another area to examine. Learning is not limited to what the teacher presents or asks the children to do. It also includes messages sent by the classroom environment. Therefore, it is necessary to detect the kinds of messages sent to the children through such media as pictures, manipulative, and literature. The anti-bias approach believes that the environment is a powerful knowledge-building instrument, so the first step to multi-cultural education is the classroom and center environment.
Guidelines for Avoiding a Tourist Approach to the Curriculum

- Connect cultural activities to individual children and their families.
- Although cultural patterns are real and affect all members of an ethnic group, families live their culture in their own individual ways.
- Connect cultural activities to concrete, daily life.
- Explore cultural diversity within the principle that everyone has a culture.
- Have cultural diversity permeate the daily life of the classroom through frequent, concrete, hands-on experiences related to young children’s interest.
- Avoid the editorial “we” when talking to children about culture.
- Explore the similarities among people through their differences.
- Begin with the cultural diversity among the children and staff in your classroom and then focus on the diversity of others.

If the children in your classroom or center have little exposure to diversity, the best decision may be to use the methods other than holiday activities to broaden their perspective and reinforce the concept of similarities and differences. In a fairly homogeneous classroom, it is critical to expose children to different cultures and ethnic backgrounds. The Teacher will need to look within the community and plan to celebrate various ethnic and cultural events throughout the year, but at the same time, we need to avoid the tourist type cultural activities.

Teachers will need to use the diversity that is in the classroom. There will be differences in any group of children or adults, even in seemingly homogeneous groups. Children will look somewhat different, live in a variety of homes, have different family configurations, like to do different things, and celebrate the same holidays differently. Build discussions and activities around these aspects of their lives to talk about similarities and differences. Children’s books are useful to introduce similarities and differences. Look for stories about characters who are different from the children in your classroom in appearance or family structure.

Sonia Nieto (1992), cited by “Teaching Young Children in Multicultural Classrooms,” considers that becoming a multicultural teacher means becoming a multicultural person. She also states that to become multicultural, you must be re-educated in three specific ways.

1. Knowledge. Learning more about pluralism and how it is reflected in people and in our interactions.
2. Honest assessment of our own biases. Accepting that we all hold biases, sometimes very well hidden inside ourselves.
3. Ability to view reality through myriad perspectives. Learning to approach reality from more than one way.

As an early childhood educator, teachers must feel comfortable with their own attitudes about families who are different from the ones we grew up with, or who are different from those of the traditional nuclear family.
Teachers use books that help children appreciate the diversity of the world. Teachers provide toys, materials and activities in every interest center that children can identify with and the represent the families in the classroom, the major groups in the community, and in the nation. Art materials, manipulative objects, music, doll, and dramatic play props, and circle-time activities should regularly celebrate diversity.

Teachers help by focusing on the people in the child’s world of today, not a historical world. The goal with preschoolers is not to teach history, but to expose them to differences and similarities.

According to Anti-Bias Curriculum, it is inappropriate to emphasize the exotic difference between cultures, creating a greater sense of separation, rather then helping children appreciate similarities and differences.

Teachers must become sensitive to opportunities to help children move from discomfort or prejudice to what is new or unfamiliar to them, knowing how to gently challenge ideas that could lead to bias development. Teachers intervene immediately with explanations that are appropriate to children’s developmental levels, not ignoring either questions or discriminatory behavior.

**Unsupportive practice according to Anti-Bias Curriculum and NAEYC**

- Teacher respond with discomfort to children and families whose racial/cultural backgrounds or family structure are different from their own
- Teacher fail to challenge, and help children challenge, biased remarks or actions in the classroom
- Teacher provide stereotypical materials, that do not convey respect for diversity
- Teachers offer a “tourist approach” that treats other cultural groups as if they were exotic and actually emphasize differences.
- Teachers ignore children’s cultural and linguistic backgrounds and other individual differences or treat them as “deficits to be overcome.”

Teachers can invite diverse individuals into our classroom as guest or volunteer. A volunteer who signs or uses cued speech can teach some basic communication skills to use with the deaf.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Easy to Make Multicultural Play Dough</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 cups corn starch</td>
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</table>

Mix all the ingredients. The amount of cocoa to add will depend on the skin colors you want to make. Place in microwave for 5 minutes, until it thickens. Remove from microwave. Cover the pot with a wet paper towel. When cool, knead for about 5 minutes, working on a surface covered with waxed paper. When making objects, allow time to dry before painting.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Easy to Mix and Make People Colors with Paint</th>
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Mix brown and yellow and white in this order. Use brown as the base and lighten with yellow and white. Experiment and share with others.
**Holidays** – from “Celebrate, Anti-Bias Guide to Holidays”
Introducing family holidays from the *Child/Family Cultural Survey* that is important to children and their families communicates respect and a commitment to be inclusive in classroom practices. Including these holiday activities in the curriculum will provide an avenue for other children and adults to learn about these important events.

**Note:**  See Head Start Standard (1304.21 (a) (1) (iii)) – Holiday Policy

**It is OK to just talk about holidays rather than celebrating each holiday listed on the** *Child/Family Cultural Survey.* Not every holiday activity has to mean a celebration. Sometimes it is more appropriate to hold discussions or read books about a holiday, or to have family members talk about how they celebrate at home. This approach works especially well when there is a holiday that requires attention but is not developmentally appropriate.

If a specific holiday activity from the *Child/Family Cultural Survey* hurts any one child or family in any way, or teaches hurtful information, the holiday will not be used in the classroom.

**Classroom Inventory**
Equipment and materials assigned to each classroom are listed on individual classroom inventory. The classroom inventory is updated by the teacher in January. The inventory is used to order replacements.
**Curriculum Planning**

A curriculum is not just a collection of lesson plans and activity plans. A good curriculum is a written plan that looks at each child’s goals and objectives, arranging the environment, interacting with children, as well as using strategies to observe and document learning.

Planning a DAP curriculum involves a cycle of teacher activity that includes:

- Observation and note taking
- Assessing children’s progress toward specific developmental goals and objectives
- Observing to learn children’s interests
- Identifying strategies, materials, and experiences that will support children’s progress
- Observing to evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson plans
- Starting the entire cycle over again

**The CB- Lesson Plan - FORM**

The *Lesson Plan* documents the class time, routine, and classroom materials planned for the week. The copy of the *Lesson Plan* is due to Supervisor for review, prior to implementing in the classroom.

**Activity Plan - FORM**

The *Activity Plan* contains children’s names, so the Activity Plan will not be posted in the classroom. The individualization begins after the developmental screening is scored. The copy of the *Activity Plan* is due to Supervisor prior to implementing in the classroom.

A good lesson plan documents what actually will happen each day. It documents all domains of learning, (language, literacy, math, science, physical health and development, creative art, etc.) A good lesson plan will show the individualized teaching that occurs each day, which children were involved in individualization, and whether the activity was spontaneous or planned.

To document that every child receives individualized attention, the teacher note each child's name next to the objective on the classroom Activity Plan. Because teachers are responsible to meet the needs of all children, every child's name should be somewhere on the Activity Plans by the end of each month. In this way, the teacher will ensure that over a three week period, every child receives one-on-one attention through an activity based on the child's needs. The teacher repeats the process, continuing the individualizing cycle throughout the year.

*Literacy Link* is documented on the Activity Plan. This means every activity planned on the *Activity Plan* has some connection to developing print awareness. Literacy Link is planning for print awareness throughout the day. The goal is to help teachers plan an integrated literacy curriculum by putting print awareness at the foundation of everything they teach.

Teachers need a strong understanding of young children and literacy. By weaving print awareness into the curriculum, the teachers provide children with solid beginnings for literacy success.
Teacher Anticipatory Web or Teacher Planning Web

Webbing is brainstorming about where a particular exploration might go and listing the potential related connections that could be made. PACT’s webbing centers on key questions or concepts to be learned, such as: What is…., Where do.., How do.., Why…. Next, the teacher plans activities to help children understand the concept and to answer the question.

One thing leads to another, one ideas to the next, like a big spider web. A web always include more possibilities than can be followed before other interests move the curriculum into other directions, as well as ideas that are ruled out due to lack of interest, lack of appropriateness for a particular group, or lack of appropriate resources or experiences.

The functions of the web are not to create an elaborate set of teacher planned activities or the curriculum plan for the month. The web serves as a starting place for teachers to focus their thinking.

The webs represent the teacher’s thinking about possibilities developmental learning or concepts as well as the potential activities and materials listed on the web. This is an important way for teachers to negotiate between following the children’s interests while ensuring that they are supporting their progress toward the defined learning goals and objectives.

Teachers must be realistic when setting expectations. Teachers must consider:

- What is developmentally sound for the group?
- What is meaningful to the group?
- What constitutes the children’s prior knowledge?
- What is culturally relevant to children?
- What is relevant knowledge versus what is trivial? (e.g., coloring eggs vs. learning about eggs.)

Look at the Anticipatory Planning Web and Brainstorm how to incorporate diversity into the topic of study. Begin by asking: What other views could help children expand their understanding of this topic?

I. Select the topic of study.
   A. List what concepts you plan to teach.
   B. List meaningful activities to teach the concept.
   C. Add activities to infuse activities related to self or family.

II. Review the classroom profile of children using the cultural survey and look for the traits that are descriptive of cultural diversity (ethnicities, religion, languages, social class, and exceptionality).

III. Begin first by incorporating those characteristics that are found in your classroom and then consider those of others.
Using The Weekly Planning Forms
The Lesson Plan and Activity Plan help teachers to implement the curriculum and individualization in a manageable way. The Lesson Plan provides the time structure for the daily routine and to document equipment & materials related to the topic of study. The Activity Plan is used to plan individualized activities that will help children gain a deeper understanding of the topic.

The Anticipatory Teacher Planning Web is used only at the beginning of a new study. The web is used as the anchor for the study and may be used for many weeks. The web assists teachers in evaluating the worthiness and practicality of a topic.

During a study or unit, some children may not be interested in the topic. Teachers may want to plan several separate strands of interest at the same time. Examples: adding new materials to the writing and block areas.

The classroom environment should be designed so that children can discover what interest them, rather than having to study what everyone else is working on.

Teachers may adjust the weekly plan to accommodate the children’s changing needs and interests. Those changes should be documented on the Lesson Plan and shared with families as appropriate.

Teachers offer opportunities for children to actively investigate a topic over time. (Evidence of study is posted for children and families to view; children’s artwork reflects what they’ve learned, resources about the topic are readily available in the classroom; and some of the interest area activities and materials are related to the topic of study.)

Select topics that are more concrete than abstract and involve many first-hand, direct experiences with real objects that children can manipulate. Select topics that related to children’s interests and prior experiences. Asking and charting children’s knowledge, what they know about the topic is the first step.

Things to consider when selecting a Good Study Topic: See Creative Curriculum p191.

1. Can you connect with children’s prior experience?
2. Will you be able to revisit the field site several times?
3. Is the topic worthy to study?

Steps in Planning a Study – from the Creative Curriculum Framework
Step 1 Select a worthwhile appropriate topic.
Choose a topic for a study that will hold the children’s interest and has meaningful content worth knowing.

Step 2 Create an anticipatory planning web of (concepts) important ideas.
Use an anticipatory web to list concepts. List the concepts that describe the important ideas you hope children will learn. For example, in a study about insects, the concepts might include how insects move, what insects eat, where insects live, or how insects help us.

Step 3 Record the activities or strategies that will help children gain a deeper understanding of the topic under each concept on the web. Determine how content knowledge and process skills can be learned through this study. List the objectives/standards on the Activity Plan.
Step 4 **Discuss the study topic with children.** Create a second web with your children. Use the KWL chart or webbing. Find out what understandings children already have. Ask children what they want to know about the topic and make a list of their questions.

Step 5 **Involve families as active participants in the study.** Inform families of the proposed study topic and ask for involvement. Send the *Family Involvement with Classroom Study* letter. Encourage parents to discuss the topic at home with their children and to share any expertise they might have with the class.

Step 6 **Use the classroom lesson plans to record materials and activities.** Think about how children might investigate this topic in learning centers and group time activities. Record only the activities or strategies that will help children gain a deeper understanding of the topic. For example, in a study about cars, children will learn more about the topic by building a dashboard out of recyclable materials than by sponge painting car shapes on paper.

Step 7 **Assemble relevant materials and resources.** Think about what children need to conduct their investigations. Bring together the necessary research tools (books, materials, and technology) and arrange for field trips and invite experts to support children’s learning.

Step 8 **Facilitate investigations.** Plan for a Field Experience. Provide clip boards with pencil for sketching. String to measure, if applicable. Divide children into small groups to investigate particular research questions. Use open ended questions to encourage further discoveries. Observe how children are investigating and suggest additional materials and resources.

Step 9 **Document findings.** Encourage children to document what they have learned by making representations (drawing, writing diagrams, maps, graphs, collections, constructions, etc.) and displaying them around the room. Other ideas: child-made books, murals, clay models, exploring real objects. Raw documentation is on-going unfinished children’s work.
Developmental Screening
The Assistant Site Supervisor will obtain a written permission from the parent to complete children’s developmental screening during child care enrollment. The purpose of the developmental screening will be explained during child care enrollment, by the assistant Site Supervisor. The developmental screening will not be administered without written parental consent. The child care children will be screening at the center by PACT staff.

The teacher is responsible for scheduling the developmental screening appointment to complete the Parent Questionnaire with the parent. This may occur during class, so check the staffing pattern, prior to scheduling the appointment. The dates of completed screening will be tracked on the Education Contact and Screening Record. The first developmental screening should be scheduled within two weeks of enrollment into the classroom.

After the screening
The child care teacher scores the DIAL Record Form. All screening with “potential delay” in any area with the exception of Social Development and Self-Help Development scores will be tracked by the Macomb Site Supervisor until the completion of first Child Care Assessment. Approximately 8 weeks, after the developmental screening, the teacher and Site Supervisor will determine if the child needs further evaluation.

The screenings without concerns are filed in the child’s classroom education file.

The results of the Developmental Screening will be discussed with parents after the screening or during parent-Teacher conference.

See Screening and Assessment Training Guide for DIAL scoring.
On-Going Assessment

Observing is an ongoing learning process and no matter how many years we spend observing children, we will refine our methods continually. Over time, observing and recording will become more natural.

Observations are documented either when the event occurred or after the fact. Since it is impossible to document everything that children do, it is a good idea to establish a routine of brief, focused observations. To maximize the effectiveness of your observation, it is best that they are planned & focused. Devising a plan about whom, what to observe makes the task of observation more systematic. Since the ability to record something when it is happening is very important, materials needed for recording should be easily accessible.

Teachers need to continuously appraise children and revise procedures and interactions. Assessment is embedded in the interactive process of teaching.

The assessment is collected while a teacher is taking dictations from a child, listening to a child read a story he has written, assisting with paints, paper, or play dough, conversing during snack, leading a discussion, guiding playground activities, or working with manipulative materials.

**Focused assessment does not imply the need for testing.** The focused information gather takes place as part of classroom activities. Over several days, children may demonstrate their abilities to solve measurement problems in mathematics or represent ideas through construction.

Initial baseline assessment occurs at the beginning of the year or when a new child begins. The baseline assessment will provide basic information for planning classroom activities and experiences.

The primary purpose of recording observations and reviewing them later is to provide the teacher with data for reflection. Use sticky’s - Posit-It notes, matrix lists, spiral notebooks, mailing labels, index cards, calendars, etc. Teachers will need to spend some time filing notes weekly.

Teachers need to plan “whom, when, how, & what will be observed each week. Observation in the Work Sampling for Head Start occurs in the context of the ongoing classroom routines. Teachers can observe in 3 different ways.

1. Participating in the action - Teacher is actively involved with one child.

2. Stepping out of the action - a Teacher watch & focus on how one child’s approach a learning task.

3. Reflecting - Reviewing children’s art, or taking a moment after an event occurred.
About 2 weeks before the end of each reporting period, teachers make final evaluation ratings of children’s performance on the Assessment Checklist.

Ongoing continuous assessment keeps teachers sensitive and responsive to children. For example, a sensitive teacher leading a circle notices children not paying attention. The teacher’s assessment of her circle is to switch to something more appropriate. This in an example of a teacher’s assessment to enhance development and learning at its best.

**Portfolio Collection**
A Portfolio is an organized, purposeful collection of children’s work that illustrates children’s efforts, progress, and achievements over time. These collections are intended to display the individual nature and quality of children’s work and progress over time. The portfolio contains notes, drawing; work sample, etc. to show child’s learning.

The portfolio exhibits the child’s experiences, efforts, progress, and accomplishments. In the process, portfolios provide a basis for evaluation and a guide for further learning and development. The Portfolio Based Assessment holds evidence of children’s work and progress.

The Portfolio Based Assessment requires teachers to collect certain types of required things, such as a sample of creative art, a sample of child’s ability to represent events, objects, or action, a language samples, but leaves exactly what is collected up to the curriculum manager. The Core Plan lists what teachers will to collect.

Portfolio-based collection and assessment validate the teacher’s use of developmentally appropriate practice. Teachers collect children’s authentic work samples of children doing original work. **Worksheets, Dittos, and look alike craft projects are not samples of child’s original work.**

Note: To document the “process” of a child’s learning, the portfolio may include fewer actual examples of the child’s work and replaced with documentation of “word pictures” of a child’s participation in classroom activities. A teacher might describe how a child interacts with objects, plays with other children, or moves around the classroom.

**How to Document Children’s Learning**

Ways to document learning:
1. **Work out a system with their classroom team where one member of the team can sit on the side of activities for a brief period of time and take formal note taking or complete a checklist.**

2. **Anecdotal notes** - are often created by jotting down brief notes and adding details later. A detailed narrative accounts that describe a particular event factually.

3. **Take quick, brief notes to jog your memory later.**

4. **Take a photograph of the child engaged in activity, make diagrams, sketches to captures the details of certain types of activities and projects, yet do not require lengthy writing.**

4. **Use a tape recorder or video camera to capture what the child is saying or doing.**
5. Matrix grids – provides a way to write brief notes or make a simple rating of a skill for few children or for entire class.

6. Watch and take in the information visually, mentally reviewing how it fits in with other things

Annotate each Work Sample Saved for Portfolios
An annotation is a reflection, comment, or explanation that makes the significance of an item clear and adds relevant information not otherwise available.

Annotation might include:
1. Reason the work sample was selected for the portfolio.
2. written or dictated reflection
3. responses to questions
4. analysis of what the work shows about the child’s learning
5. explanation of why the item is significant

Annotations include observation by teachers. For example, in assessing fine motor skills and use of tools, teachers make observations about children’s grasp, strength, & coordination.

If you ask a child to draw a picture of self, ask him/her to tell you about the drawing and then to print his/her name. This activity collects picture, writing sample, coordination observation, ability to follow directions, etc.

Types of Items Appropriate for Portfolios

1. Work products done on paper: samples of cutting, drawing, writing, pasting, any art medium
2. “Journals” – children’s drawings, scribbles, collages reflecting their experiences.
3. Photos of a child engaged in significant work or play.
4. Participation Chart – what a child did on a given day or during a given period. Include qualitative information.
5. Logs of activities and results from parent involvement.
6. Structured observation, performance assessment. Do one or two children a day.
7. Anecdotal records or jotting notes. Use of Post-its, gummed labels, or quarter sheets of recycled office paper, etc.
Child Care
Pre-School Curriculum Time Table

August:
   Fire Drill
   Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.

September:
   Fire Drill
   Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.

October:
   Community Resource Visitor
   Fire Drill
   Tornado Drill
   Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.

November:
   Community Resource Visitor
   Fire Drill
   Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.

December:
   Community Resource Visitor
   Fire Drill
   Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.

January:
   Community Resource Visitor
   Fire Drill
   Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.

February:
   Community Resource Visitor
   Fire Drill
   Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.
March:
Community Resource Visitor
Fire Drill
Tornado Drill
Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.

April:
Week of the Young Child Celebration
Plan - Kindergarten Transition Visit with Head Start Classroom
Community Resource Visitor
Fire Drill
Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.

May:
Transition Activities
Fire Drill
Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.

June:
Community Resource Visitor
Fire Drill
Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans.

July:
Community Resource Visitor
Fire Drill
Integrate Mental Health (Self/Family), Health, Dental, Safety, Nutrition activities into curriculum on a regular basis on lesson plans
References


PITC Training Videos

PITC DVD - *First Moves: Welcoming a Child to a New Caregiving Setting*
PITC DVD – *Early Messages: Facilitating Language Development and Communication*
PITC DVD – *Discoveries of Infancy: Cognitive Development and Learning*
PITC DVD - *Together in Care: Meeting the Intimacy Needs of Infants and Toddlers in Groups*