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PHILOSOPHY

Children are special gifts. They need love, care and guidance. Families are being challenged to adjust to differing expectations in meeting their child’s needs. Cultural and economic changes are causing the home environment to change and increasing the demand for outside care for children. The Children’s Center prides itself on providing quality care that helps parents meet these needs.

Childcare at the Children’s Center is not intended to replace parental care and interest but to enhance the child’s life experience while separated from the parents. Our environment will provide experiences so that each child can grow in inner discipline, independence, self-worth, and respect for others. Learning and exploring should be an enjoyable adventure within safe and caring bounds. The Children’s Center provides that planned climate for adventure.

At St. Norbert we believe in a “hands-on” approach to learning. Children and adults learn best in an environment that is set up to foster curiosity and to provide challenges without fear of failure. There will be an emphasis on the total learning environment which includes a variety of activities both inside and outside on a daily basis. The research and works of great child study specialists such as Piaget, Montessori, Erikson, Gardner, and Vygotsky inspire the St. Norbert College Children’s Center program.

We focus on teaching children how to learn, how to be inquisitive and find their own answers with adult facilitation, and heavily on making sure they are emotionally safe which insures a wonderful and successful experience. We meet your child where they are personally and take them where we think they can go versus working with the entire group with the same goals. We use peer mentoring and every child gets a chance to mentor as they all have gifts to share.

The program was founded on the following beliefs about children and childhood:

• Parents are the most pervasive and influential teachers of their children.

• Curriculum is everything that a child experiences, from the time they get up in the morning until the time they go to bed in the evening.

• Each child’s uniqueness must be respected and fostered.

• Children grow and develop at individual rates that are often unique and unrelated to their calendar age.

• Children need an individualized curriculum that begins with what they already know and moves slowly from the concrete to the abstract.

• Children learn best through direct involvement with the environment

• Play enables the learner to make sense of their environment and is the essential ingredient in the work and learning of young children. Licensing rule DCF251.04 (2)(i)
POLICIES

ADMISSION

The St. Norbert College Children’s Center will admit any child, regardless of race, sex, ethnic background, or religious affiliation. The Center offers a variety of services to meet each family’s childcare needs. The Center accepts children from 30 months through 9 years of age. Children can attend the Center on a full or part-time basis. The Children’s Center also offers a 4K program for children 4 and 5 years of age. **A child must be 4 by November 1st to enroll.** Tuition rates for all services are listed on the tuition schedule which can be found on the Children’s Center website. Any changes in parent’s work schedules throughout the year will be accommodated, however this will be dependent on staffing, enrollment, and will be at the Director’s discretion.

The Children’s Center is dedicated to the total growth and development of each child and has a child-centered approach, designed to provide a nurturing atmosphere. Through competent teacher guidance, and carefully selected programs, children are able to develop socially, cognitively, emotionally, and physically. There will be a trial adjustment period for all children. If the Children’s Center is unable to fulfill the needs of your child, placement will be recommended elsewhere.

Once you enroll your child, but before their first day, you are encouraged to visit the program as often as possible to help transition the child to their new setting. Families are welcome for inside time, playground time, lunch, and are also encouraged to come view a naptime. These visits provide talking points for your family and ease the child’s anxieties about a new school environment.

All procedures listed under licensing rule DCF251.04 (2)(i) 1-Admission are followed.

REGISTRATION & TUITION

To enroll in child in the 2/3 year-old classroom a family must fill out all of the required forms and pay a $50.00 **annual** registration fee, which is non-refundable. For current families, the **annual** registration fee is assessed in September and is automatically billed on the family’s account. A $50.00 registration fee and an additional $200.00 deposit will be charged at the time of 4K enrollment. The $200.00 deposit will be credited in April of the following year. Failure to continue with enrollment or failure to complete the academic school year (Sept-May) will result in the forfeiture of this $200.00 deposit. When enrolling, you will be given a packet of forms to fill out. All forms must be returned to the office in order to meet our State licensing requirements. The forms are:

- Child Enrollment
- Documentation Verification
- Emergency Card with Child’s Picture
- Family Directory
- Immunization
- Parent Handbook Receipt
- Payment Agreement
- Payment Policy
- Health History
- Positive Guidance Policy
- Tuition Policy
- Website/Video/Photo Permission
*Please make sure you notify the Center staff if there are any changes in your child’s information, especially emergency contact phone numbers. It is critical for the safety of your child that this important information is kept current. Licensing rule DCF251.04 (2)(i) 1

**TUITION PAYMENTS**

The Bursar prepares and mails invoices on a monthly basis, in 4-5 week cycles. Payment is required by DATE DUE on the invoice. Any payment not made by this date is considered PAST DUE. A $25.00 Late Pay Fee will be assessed. If payment is not made, childcare services can be discontinued. Payments must be made directly to the Bursar’s Office. Please refer to your Tuition and Payment Policy for further details (Licensing rule DCF251.04(2)(h)1). At no time will payment be accepted at the Children’s Center.

**HOURS OF OPERATION/HOLIDAYS**

The Children’s Center operates from 7:15AM. to 5:30PM Please refer to the annual calendar for holiday closings. Center closings beside those listed will be decided by the President of the College or the Director and could include days when the attendance drops due to illness, inclement weather, or building and maintenance emergencies, etc. These days will be considered regular tuition days.

**VACATION/ILLNESS TUITION POLICY**

Vacation and sick day credits have already been figured into the price of tuition each year. Additional credits for vacation days or illness will not be given.

**ORIENTATION**

Each family will have a brief orientation during a tour of the facility. On Open House night each family will receive an extended orientation to the Center and its policies. Once enrolled, a family will be continually familiarized with the Center customs and traditions as well as on its business practices. Families that enroll mid-year will receive a full orientation prior to their child’s first day of attendance.

**DROP OFF/PICK UP**

Children are not to be dropped off in the cul de sac or at the entrance of the Center, or are they allowed to enter the Center alone. An adult must drop off each child with a Center staff person. This allows the staff person to greet you and your child (ren) each morning and to conduct the daily pre-admission health check that is required by licensing. If your child appears ill, care will not be provided on that day.

A child shall be released from the Center only to the child’s parent or guardian or to persons designated in writing by the parent or guardian. Children's Center staff shall refuse to release a child to any person, whether related or unrelated to the child, who has not been authorized, in writing, to pick-up that child. Persons unknown to the staff are required to provide a current photo ID (issued by the Secretary of State) to establish their identity, before release of the child.
REPORTING OF ABSENCES

If your child is going to be absent, please notify the Center as soon as possible. If your child is ill, you should notify us as to the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious. The staff also uses this information in their classrooms in order to build a community of caring among the children.

LATE PICK-UP

Charges of $1.00 per minute will be assessed to families that leave their children beyond their regular scheduled pickup time or after closing time. This applies to all types of care; full-time, part-time, and 4K. Please refer to your Tuition and Payment Policy for details.

When a child is repeatedly picked up late, care will be discontinued.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Children’s Center staff shall respect the confidential nature of each child, the child’s family, and personal records. Information pertaining to admissions, progress, health, or discharge of an individual child shall be limited to facility staff. If an outside agency or person requests information, a written request will be obtained and the parent will be notified. The school districts often ask for report cards if your child is headed to kindergarten and they do not need parent approval to do so. The Center Director will however let a parent know if these requests come in.

CHILD ABUSE

The staff and student workers at the Children’s Center are mandated reporters. This means that they must notify the state officials if they suspect that a child has been abused, either at home or in the Center. All students and staff will make the Director aware of their suspicions before making the call.
TEACHING & LEARNING

CURRICULUM

The curriculum is constructed to meet the needs of each individual child. The educational and instructional materials are selected to foster healthy physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development. Learning experiences are carefully chosen to stimulate imaginations and foster creativity. Broad, interactive activities are provided for the children to enable them to form healthy attitudes toward themselves, others, and the world around them. While the Children’s Center believes in an ‘emergent’ curriculum Creative Curriculum is used as a framework. Curriculum is also aligned to the Wisconsin Early Learning Standards (WMELS). The following websites might be helpful. There is also a copy of the standards in the back of this handbook.

Vygotsky http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNFYF5a0720
Creative Curriculum http://www.creativecurriculum.net/is

DAILY SCHEDULE

Children’s activities and programs will be consistent throughout the week, while still allowing for a certain amount of flexibility. A specific daily time schedule for activities such as meals, snacks, outdoor periods, etc. will be posted in each childcare classroom.

STAFFING/VOLUNTEERS/SNC STUDENTS

All staff, student workers, and volunteers will fill out all paperwork required by Wisconsin Department of Children and Families listed on form DCF 251.04(2)(i) 8, in addition to all paperwork required by St. Norbert College and state and federal agencies.

It is a Center policy to welcome and utilize the talents of parents, grandparents and significant others in as many areas of the Center program as possible.

Students using the Center for coursework will check in with the Director prior to working with children. Students will pass a background check before coming to the Center. The Director or the lead teachers will know each time students are working with children. AT NO TIME ARE STUDENTS ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE PREMISES WHEN WORKING WITH CHILDREN.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

The Children’s Center has a birthday gift program which helps add books and other materials to our library and classrooms. You may check the Wish Tree at any time to find the current needs of the Center. We feel that this is a special way to celebrate birthdays, and children will enjoy knowing that they were able to contribute something to their classroom.

We ask that birthday ‘parties’ be reserved for family and friends at home.
FIELD TRIPS (4K ONLY)

Field trips represent an integral part of the curriculum. 4K teachers will plan informative and educational field trips, which will be correlated with classroom studies. These social and cultural experiences are to enhance the academic program.

Parents will receive notification of all field trips as they coincide with the teacher’s lesson plans. Included will be a permission slip and the cost, if any. Lamer’s bus lines will provide transportation for all field trips other than those where walking instead. Children will be counted before boarding busses and again once on the bus, both traveling to destination and returning to the Center.

DISCIPLINE

Each class has a basic set of ground rules with regard to safety, personal dignity and use of materials. All of the children will be advised of these ground rules in an appropriate manner. Most important is the provision for positive guidance, redirection and the setting of clear-cut limits for children, and for developing self-control, self-esteem, and respect for the rights of others. Fussing and crying will be dealt with on an as-needed and individual basis that insures that each child’s emotional needs are met. Please refer to St. Norbert Children’s Center Positive Guidance Policy included in your enrollment packet. Licensing rules DCF 251.07(2)(b), DCF251.04 (2)(i) 5

Some unacceptable behavior is within the normal learning process and will be handled with redirection in order for the child (ren) to learn that there are always consequences for their actions. Some behaviors need parental involvement and will be communicated as such. We will discuss inappropriate behavior with parents before it becomes a pattern. All significant incidents will be documented and reported to the parents. Behavior that disrupts the class environment, indicates a lack of parental cooperation, or poses a safety risk after verbal and/or written communication, will constitute grounds for dismissal from the Children’s Center at the discretion of the Director. Licensing Rule DCF251.04 (2)(h) 3
LEARNING EXAMPLES

SELF-MOTIVATED ACTIVITIES

* LARGE MUSCLE - promotes balance, coordination, strength, and a kinesthetic awareness of self.

* SMALL MUSCLE - improves eye-hand coordination, dexterity, and provides experiences in matching, sequencing, and patterning.

* SENSORIAL - allows for experiences in texture, weight, and volume.

* ART EXPERIENCES - allow for creativity and expression of self, while giving an appreciation for beauty.

* SCIENCE, NATURE, AND COOKING - develops thinking, reasoning, curiosity, and promotes an understanding of cause and effect.

* DRAMATIC PLAY/HOUSEKEEPING - stimulates communication, imagination, and social skills.

SEMI-DIRECTED DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES

* WRITING CENTER - develops an appreciation for the alphabet, dictation, and the written word.

* STORY TIME - improves listening skills, stimulates imagination, and promotes literacy.

* GROUP TIME - promotes social-Centered activities which teach sharing and the understanding of taking turns.

* MUSIC - enhances rhythmic movements, freedom of expression, and listening skills.

* INNER-DISCIPLINE - taught through example of a positive tone of voice, praise, cause and effect, and conflict resolution.

Licensing rule DCF251.04(2)(l)3
FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

St. Norbert Children’s Center staff recognizes parents as the child’s first and most influential teacher. The staff believes that the needs of young children can best be met when the parents participate in the on-going experiences of their children in the Center. You are always welcome to share and participate. All of you have interests, hobbies and expertise that could enrich the Children’s Center programming. Please consider staying with your child as your time allows.

There will be times throughout the year that classrooms events will be held and parents, grandparents, and younger siblings are always welcome. These include Trick-or-Treating, classroom parties on Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine’s Day, and field trips. There may also be events scheduled in the evening that include families.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Each family has a “Mailbox” in the front entry hall of the Center. Important information, forms, permission slips, etc. are placed in these mailboxes. Please check your mailbox on a daily basis. In addition, email is used for daily and/or weekly communications between staff and families. The staff and families will work together to make sure the most current addresses are used.

FAMILY CONFERENCES

Conferences and report cards will be made available twice a year in the fall and again in the spring. In addition, parents are welcome to request meetings with their child’s teacher or the Director at any time in order to insure that all expectations are being met. Teachers are trained in the use of the Children’s Center assessment tools upon their hire and can provide useful information should questions or concerns come up.

Portfolios are compiled for each child and will be sent home at the end of each semester for review. We ask that these be returned to the Center for the remainder of the year. These items will be used as talking points during conferences and informal conversations as needed throughout the year. Parents are welcome to look at portfolios at any time. Please see the article on the end of the handbook entitled The Power of Portfolios.

The WMELS (Handbook Page 5) are the backbone of our portfolios. You will see many of the milestone sheets in your child’s portfolio. These are used not only for the attainment of a goal but also for progress while they are attempting to obtain mastery.

FAMILY SURVEY

At the end of each academic year a survey will be made available in order for families to give much needed input into the Center. Please take time to complete this survey and share your ideas for improvement. If at any time before the end of the year, should you want to give input please feel free to speak with or email the Director.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

An Advisory Council made up of families from the Center will provide input on policies that effect teachers, students, and families at the Center.
HEALTH & WELLNESS

ILLNESS/HEALTH/EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE

In accordance with Wisconsin licensing rule, each child must provide a current immunization record and a physical examination report at the time of admission. **Please notify the Director each time your child receives immunizations.** The health exam does not apply to a parent of a child requests in writing that the department grant an exemption based upon a parent’s adherence to religious belief in exclusive use of prayer or spiritual means for healing in accordance with the teachings of a bona fide religious sect or denomination. Licensing 46.07(6)(k)4

Licensing rule states that any child who is suspected of having a communicable disease, or who develops a fever or symptoms of illness, shall be isolated from the other children and the condition reported to the parents. **The child must be removed from the facility within the hour.** Failure to pick up your child or failure to return phone calls will result in dismissal. Children removed due to illness shall not return to the Center until all signs and symptoms are gone. In the case of fever, diarrhea or vomiting the child cannot return for 24 hours after the fever, diarrhea, and/or vomiting have ceased. Antibiotics must be administered for a full twenty-four hours, in illnesses calling for them, before returning to the Center. The Director reserves the right to request a physician’s release.

A child cannot attend the Center with a fever of 101 degrees, diarrhea, harsh cough, discharge from ears, eyes, or nose, or an unidentified rash. **A child who is too ill to participate in outdoor activity should remain at home until able to participate in the Center program.** Please notify the Center if your child becomes ill with a communicable illness, for this condition will need to be reported to the Health Department and posted at the Center so that other parents can watch their child (ren) for symptoms.

If your child sustains a minor superficial injury (i.e. scrape, bump, or cut) while at the Center, the staff will administer first aid. This will consist of ice, soap and water, and a band-aid. An accident form will be filed. In case of serious accident, medical assistance will be secured immediately. The child will be transported by ambulance to your family’s choice of hospital and the parents will be contacted. If you cannot be reached, the alternate persons listed on the enrollment form will be called. Licensing 251.04(2)(l) 2

LICE

The Children’s Center has a no-nit policy when lice have been found on a child. This means that all lice AND eggs must be removed before a child will be readmitted to the Center. The director should be notified immediately if any person in your family has had lice. The other families using the Center will be notified and total confidentiality will be insured. Once this happens, the staff will do morning head checks. **Please allow extra time for these checks in the morning when you arrive for drop off.** Once your child has been cleared you will be free to leave the Center. If lice or nits are found you will be asked to leave the Center immediately. If you are called at any time to be informed your child has lice you will be asked to pick up the child immediately.
MEDICATIONS

The staff as directed by a licensed physician or dentist will administer prescription medication that has the original prescription attached. Written permission must be secured from the child’s parent or legal guardian for medication to be given. Medication will be kept in a locked area out of reach of children. **Please do not put any medication in a child’s mailbox or backpack.** If your child needs over the counter (OTC) drugs and the label reads, “Under age 3 or 4, consult physician”, then a release from your physician will be needed before the OTC meds can be administered.

REST TIME

State licensing specifies that all children under 5 years of age that are in care more than 4 hours must have a rest time. Children who rest/nap are under the supervision of a teacher at all times. Children that rest but do not sleep after 30 minutes will be allowed to get up and participate in quiet activities.

OUTDOOR PLAY

The daily schedule provides a minimum of two outdoor play times each day, for a period of 30-60 minutes each. Children who are well enough to attend the Center must be well enough to participate in all activities, including outdoor play. Please ensure that your child has appropriate clothing to allow for this type of physical play.

Children will go outside when the weather permits. Each child should bring snow pants, gloves, hats and boots for winter play and bathing suits, water shoes, and towels for summer play. Children will be taken outside when winter temperatures are above 0° ‘wind chill’ and a ‘real feel’ of 90° in the summer. We may use the Campus Center gym in inclement weather.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

The Center provides breakfast from 8-8:50AM, snacks, and a hot lunch. Breakfast will not be served after 8:40AM. Please have your child (ren) at the Center prior to 8:40AM each day so they can enjoy a relaxed breakfast. Lunch menus are posted on the refrigerator for each week in advance. A variety of nutritious foods will be catered and served from the professional kitchen at St. Norbert College, giving your child a balanced meal each day. A dietician plans the meals. All meals are served family style to encourage children to develop self-help skills such as pouring milk, serving themselves, and cleaning up their own place.

Special meals due to religious beliefs, vegetarian or vegan meals, gluten-free meals etc., will be the responsibility of the parent. This could mean entire meals or additions to the food provided by the Center. Non-dairy milk such as almond, soy, coconut, or organic can also be provided by the parent.
If a special diet is needed for medical reasons, a physician’s written statement describing the reasons for the diet and its duration will be requested. The parent must provide all food for short-term special diets due to illness, etc. All food restrictions and allergies should be brought to the Director’s attention at the time of enrollment. The Director reserves the right to request written explanations about nutrition or health concerns, from the child’s physician, at any time.

All families that provide special dietary meals are given Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). These guidelines can be found at CACFP Guidelines.

Parents are urged to bring snacks on occasion. This promotes sharing, which is an important part of learning. All food brought into the Center must be purchased commercially. Cupcakes, cake, and other messy foods are not allowed. Please check with your child’s teacher if you have questions about what is appropriate. Homemade snacks are not allowed.

Please do not allow your child (ren) to enter the Center while eating. This can cause a problem with other children and can cause unsanitary conditions at the Center. That also will insure that children with allergies will not be affected by unknown food brought into the Center. When children have major allergies such as those associated with tree nuts or diabetes, all families will be made aware of the situation. Teachers will use these opportunities to teach the children about being safe while insuring their friend’s safety as well. Licensing rule 251.04(2)(i) 4

PERSONAL PROPERTY/CLOTHING

All personal property brought to the Center should be properly labeled with the child’s name. The Center will not be held responsible for lost or damaged items. A lost-and-found area for articles of clothing or items brought to the Center will be maintained. Articles not claimed within one month will be donated to a charitable organization.

Please ensure that your child is dressed for play. The staff provides a variety of experiences and some of these can be messy. It is difficult for young children to fully engage themselves in these types of activities when they are worried about soiling their clothing. Dress is expected to be casual and appropriate for daily plans. Parents will also need to furnish a labeled change of clothing to remain at Center for emergencies. Overalls and hard-to-open belts are discouraged when children are in the potty-training stage. Children that are potty training should have several changes of clothing including socks. Dress shoes without non-skid bottoms are not safe for Center use. Please provide shoes that are safe for running and climbing. Sandals, clogs, cowboy boots, or shoes with higher heels (girls), and non-fitting rain boots are not allowed.
SAFETY

FIRE, WEATHER, LOCK DOWN & CONTINGENCY PLANS

Fire drills are practiced on a monthly and St. Norbert also does regular testing of all fire systems. Fire evacuation routes are posted throughout the building. In an event of a fire in the Children’s Center or Sensenbrenner hall, the children will be taken to the Campus Center until families can arrive for pickup. If the children are unable to return to the Center for a length of time, days or weeks, a contingency plan will be decided upon by St. Norbert College by the earliest possible date following the fire. Information will be posted on the Children’s Center web site at www.snc.edu/childrensCenter.

In the same manner tornado and severe weather drills take place monthly as well. Children will be taken into the main hallway of lower level Sensenbrenner. St. Norbert College handles all inclement weather via their emergency information system. All staff at the Center is kept informed via text, phone, and email as the situation changes.

St. Norbert college does have an emergency broadcast plan in place so that staff, faculty, and students are kept informed of emergencies on campus that would include but not be limited to natural disaster, loss of power or other campus services, medical emergency, or lock down. This again is done through the use of campus phone, email, and employee cell phone and text.

SAFETY/INSURANCE COVERAGE

The personal safety of each child is one of the most important considerations at the Children’s Center. Staff members are required to evaluate and improve safety conditions on a regular basis. Children are closely supervised at all times, indoors and outdoors, to ensure safe fulfillment of their need for physical and mental growth. Parents are encouraged to report to staff members any conditions or situations they consider unsafe.

The Children’s Center is covered under the insurance program of St. Norbert College. The Children’s Center children are covered while at the Center or at sponsored events. This insurance is a secondary level coverage. Your family insurance program is considered your primary coverage.

SECURITY ENTRY CARDS

All parents are required to enter the building using their security swipe card. While there is a doorbell available there may not always be someone to answer it if they cannot leave the children while teaching or if staff are in the part of the building where the bell cannot be heard. Swipe cards are program to allow access during the hours of 7:15AM-5:30PM. Before or after these times cards will not allow entry into the building.

3/25/2015 BJL
Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS)

1. Health and Physical Development
   • A. Physical Health and Development
     o 1.A.1a: Demonstrates behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs – Sleep
     o 1.A.1b: Demonstrates behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs – Dressing
     o 1.A.1c: Demonstrates behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs – Toileting
     o 1.A.1d: Demonstrates behaviors to meet self-help and physical needs – Eating
     o 1.A.2: Demonstrates behaviors to meet safety needs
     o 1.A.3: Demonstrates a healthy life style
   • B. Motor Development
     o 1.B.1a: Moves with strength, control, balance, coordination, locomotion, and endurance – Purpose and Coordination
     o 1.B.1b: Moves with strength, control, balance, coordination, locomotion, and endurance – Balance and Strength
     o 1.B.2: Exhibits eye-hand coordination, strength, control, and object manipulation
   • C. Sensory Organization
     o 1.C.1: Uses senses to take in, experience, integrate, and regulate responses to the environment

2. Social and Emotional Development
   • A. Emotional Development
     o 2.A.1: Expresses a wide range of emotions
     o 2.A.2: Understands and responds to others’ emotions
   • B. Self-Concept
     o 2.B.1: Develops positive self-esteem
     o 2.B.2: Demonstrates self-awareness
   • C. Social Competence
     o 2.C.1: Demonstrates attachment, trust, and autonomy
     o 2.C.2: Engages in social interaction and plays with others
     o 2.C.3: Demonstrates understanding of rules and social expectations
     o 2.C.4: Engages in social problem solving behavior and learns to resolve conflict
3. Language Development and Communication

• A. Listening and Understanding
  o 3.A.1: Derives meaning through listening to communications of others and sounds in environment
  o 3.A.2: Listens and responds to communications with others
  o 3.A.3: Follows directions of increasing complexity

• B. Speaking and Communicating
  o 3.B.1: Uses gestures and movements (non-verbal) to communicate
  o 3.B.2a: Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate. Language Form (Syntax: rule system for combining words, phrases, and sentences, includes parts of speech, word order, and sentence structure)
  o 3.B.2b: Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate. Language Content (Semantics: rule system for establishing meaning of words, individually and in combination)
  o 3.B.2c: Uses vocalizations and spoken language to communicate. Language Function (Pragmatics: rules governing the use of language in context)

• C. Early Literacy
  o 3.C.1: Shows an appreciation of books and understands how print works
  o 3.C.2: Develops alphabetic awareness
  o 3.C.3a: Develops phonological awareness
  o 3.C.3b: Develops phonemic awareness
  o 3.C.4: Demonstrates the use of strategies to read words
  o 3.C.5: Uses writing to represent thoughts or ideas

4. Approaches to Learning

• A. Curiosity, Engagement, and Persistence
  o 4.A.1: Displays curiosity, risk-taking and willingness to engage in new experiences
  o 4.A.2: Engages in meaningful learning through attempting, repeating, experimenting, refining and elaborating on experiences and activities
  o 4.A.3: Exhibits persistence and flexibility

• B. Creativity and Imagination
  o 4.B.1: Engages in imaginative play and inventive thinking through interactions with people, materials and the environment
  o 4.B.2: Expresses self creatively through music, movement, and art
  o 4.B.3: Uses complex scenarios in pretend play
  o 4.B.4: Explores movement, music, and a variety of artistic media

• C. Diversity in Learning
4.C.1: Experiences a variety of routines, practices and languages
4.C.2: Learns within the context of his/her family and culture
4.C.3: Uses various styles of learning including verbal/linguistic, bodily/kinesthetic, visual/spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal

5. Cognitive and General Knowledge

• A. Exploration, Discovery, and Problem Solving
  o 5.A.1: Uses multi-sensory abilities to process information
  o 5.A.2: Understands new meanings as memory increases
  o 5.A.3: Applies problem solving skills

• B. Mathematical Thinking
  o 5.B.1: Demonstrates an understanding of numbers and counting
  o 5.B.2: Understands number operations and relationships
  o 5.B.3: Explores, recognizes and describes, shapes and spatial relationships
  o 5.B.4: Uses the attributes of objects for comparison and patterning
  o 5.B.5: Understands the concept of measurement
  o 5.B.6: Collects, describes and records information using all senses

• C. Scientific Thinking
  o 5.C.1: Uses observation to gather information
  o 5.C.2: Use tools to gather information, compare observed objects, and seek answers to questions through active investigation
  o 5.C.3: Hypothesizes and makes predictions
  o 5.C.4: Forms explanations based on trial and error, observations, and explorations
The Power of Portfolios
By Lynn Cohen

"I did this today!" Preschoolers and kindergartners take pride in date stamping each addition to their portfolios. Later these timely records provide easy reference points as children reflect on their growth.

As early childhood professionals, we know that the use of standardized assessment instruments, such as intelligence, readiness, and achievement tests, are not the best way to evaluate the progress of young children. Preschoolers vary from moment to moment and day to day in their ability to concentrate on what they are interested in. Because we want to understand the development of the whole child, your observations about children's growth provide a much more individualized, accurate, and up-to-the-minute picture. These insights, along with samples of children's work, can be used to create valuable portfolios. Portfolio assessment offers a variety of benefits, including:

A Record of a Child's Ongoing Development Over Time. Portfolios contain examples of children's work at different time periods in a school year. For instance, you can take a photograph of a child's completed block structure in the fall, winter, and spring. Or a child can draw and file a series of self-portraits.

Information to Help You Design Instruction. Portfolios help you begin to construct a well-rounded and authentic picture of each child so you are better able to plan your program to build on individualized strengths and support each child's growth.

Children's Involvement in Assessing Their Own Work. As children participate in the portfolio process, they begin to reflect on and understand their own strengths and needs. This, in turn, helps them feel responsible for their own learning. Children also enjoy comparing examples of their past work with what they are doing in the present. You can help your children recognize their own progress by asking questions and commenting as they compare such things as drawings or photographs of math manipulatives, block structures, or writing samples. You might ask: "What can you tell me about your work?" "If you were to build this again, would you do it differently? What might you change?" "What was the hardest part?" "What was your favorite part?"

A Method of Communication. Portfolios are a collaborative effort involving teachers, children, parents, and often other family members too. They are great to share at family-teacher conferences. (You might want to involve individual children in these sharing times and together use the portfolio to illustrate efforts, progress, and achievement.) Some early childhood programs sponsor "Portfolio Days," a special time when parents and other family members come in to look at and enjoy portfolios.

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