

EARLY CHILDHOOD BLOCK GRANT

The Center: Resources for Teaching and Learning

Serving Children Ages 0-5 and their families living within School Districts 15, 23, 25, 26 & 57

Kristen Ford, Project Director

2626 S. Clearbrook Drive, Arlington Heights, IL 60005 / (224) 366-8629 / kford@cntrmail.org

FIND/PI for 0-3 year-olds - (224) 200-3211 / nrodriguez@ecdec.org ECDEC Preschool for 3-5 year-olds - (847) 963-3450 / nnova@cntrmail.org

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

OUR BELIEFS ABOUT CHILDREN

THAT IN ORDER FOR CHILDREN TO THRIVE, THEIR BASIC NEEDS MUST BE MET.

THEREFORE: We strive to provide for their physical and emotional well being by establishing a warm, caring, and consistent environment where children can feel safe and secure.

THAT CHILDREN NEED TO DEVELOP A SENSE OF SELF-ESTEEM AND A FEELING OF “I CAN.”

THEREFORE: We enthusiastically acknowledge their accomplishments, encourage their attempts at a new skill, and console their feelings when success is not attained.

THAT CHILDREN ARE UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS.

THEREFORE: We recognize individual strengths and weaknesses in each child and encourage each child’s growth. We support the development of the **WHOLE CHILD** and provide opportunities for learning which facilitate the child’s cognitive, emotional, communicative and motor development.

THAT CHILDREN HAVE IMPORTANT RIGHTS AS HUMAN BEINGS.

THEREFORE: Our approach to discipline and emphasis on interactive processes offers the children choices and reasons for setting limits. Since children need to learn self-respect as well as respect for others, cooperative, considerate and appropriate behavior will be afforded to and expected from each child.

OUR BELIEFS ABOUT FAMILIES

THAT PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IS CRITICAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF EACH CHILD AND TO OUR PROGRAM.

THEREFORE: We encourage parental input and participation in all aspects of our program. The assistance of parent volunteers in the classroom, participation in the parent support groups, and parent contributions to decision-making through site-based activities are all means of accomplishing this goal.

THAT OPEN COMMUNICATION BETWEEN FAMILY AND STAFF ENHANCES THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOTAL CHILD.

THEREFORE: Formal and informal communication between staff and families is accomplished through newsletters, progress notes, recall notes, parent-teacher conferences, frequent telephone contacts, and home and office visits. Open communication facilitates the carry-over of goals from school to home.

THAT WE RECOGNIZE, ENCOURAGE AND APPRECIATE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES.

THEREFORE: We provide opportunities for sharing cultural values, experiences and customs through classroom activities and family events.

OUR BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING

WE BELIEVE THAT CHILDREN LEARN BEST THROUGH ACTIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES.

THEREFORE: Our curriculum reflects the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards through an active learning and experience-based approach. We provide stimulating and varied experiences, encouragement for children to actively explore their environment, and ample opportunities for children to express themselves. These learning opportunities form a major part of the foundation for continued learning.

THAT LEARNING IS OFTEN THE RESULT OF A CURRICULUM THAT RESPONDS TO THE SPONTANEOUS, EVER-CHANGING ENVIRONMENT.

THEREFORE: Spontaneous events (i.e. a snowstorm, a child's birthday) are easily incorporated into the daily schedule of activities.

THAT CHILDREN NEED TO LEARN TO COMMUNICATE THEIR FEELINGS AND NEEDS.

THEREFORE: We facilitate their language and social interpersonal skills within the classroom (i.e. request help or verbalize feelings).

THAT CHILDREN NEED TO LEARN TO MAKE DECISIONS AND TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THOSE DECISIONS.

THEREFORE: We provide opportunities and experiences to help children make independent choices. By providing limits within the classroom and appropriate, natural consequences for appropriate behavior, children learn to become more responsible for their actions.

THAT CHILDREN NEED TO LEARN PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS RATHER THAN "CORRECT ANSWERS."

THEREFORE: We provide problem-solving situations in all aspects of our curriculum.

OUR BELIEFS ABOUT LANGUAGE

WE BELIEVE IN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CHILD'S FIRST LANGUAGE AND SUPPORTING FAMILIES USE OF THEIR HOME LANGUAGE.

THEREFORE: We accept and appreciate the benefits of developing more than one language. We create connections with families that encourage a child's language acquisition. We acknowledge an individual's home language(s) during planning, instruction, and assessment.

THAT TEACHERS AND FAMILIES SHOULD WORK IN A COLLABORATIVE AND PROACTIVE PARTNERSHIP.

THEREFORE: Families are the primary sources of knowledge and experiences who provide support for the development of languages. We strive for teachers and families to have a clear understanding of the inherent value of the home language and the role it plays in acquiring a second language. We identify the needs of families by creating a strong sense of community for a common purpose.