

Developing Cognitive, Numeracy, Language and Literacy Skills

POLICY:

Teachers will provide for the development of cognitive, numeracy, language and literacy skills by designing a physical environment and schedule of activities which will include experimentation, prediction, observation, inquiry, play and exploration. Opportunities for self-expression, language use and emerging literacy and numeracy development will be documented in weekly lesson plans to ensure school readiness. Lesson plans will be inclusive of children with disabilities.

This policy relates to Head Start Performance Standard CFR Section 1302.30, 13.02.31, 1302.32, 1302.60

PROCEDURE:

1. Plan activities for labeling, classifying, or sorting objects by different attributes.
2. Read books and poems daily, tell children stories about real life experiences, talk about pictures and dictate experience stories children tell.
3. Provide a print rich environment and encourage children's emerging interests in writing (scribbling, drawing, copying).
4. All classroom print that children are exposed to should be in the same, basic font in order to keep from confusing children with different printing styles.
5. Use flannel board, puppets, songs, finger plays, etc.
6. Extend child's learning during activities by adding new materials, asking open-ended questions, offering ideas or suggestions, joining in their play and facilitating problem solving.
7. Observe natural events such as seeds growing, life cycle of pets and other animals, weather changes, etc.

8. The High Five Mathematize Resource Book will be utilized to create opportunities and events to introduce math vocabulary (sphere, cylinder, etc.) and use routine activities to introduce spatial sense.
9. Plan field trips to provide new learning experiences (*see Field Trip policy*).
10. Encourage water and sand play and other sensory activities.
11. Document cognitive, numeracy and literacy activities on lesson plans. (*see Lesson Planning policy*)
12. Establish a library/literacy area in the classroom using the following criteria:
 - a. Must be enclosed on 3 sides so that there is only one way into the center in order to minimize outside interruptions and foot traffic
 - b. Should be a quiet, comfortable area with soft furnishings for children to relax. Soft furnishings could include a couch, chair, bean bag, pillows, etc.
 - c. The library area should have at least 35 books accessible for children with many of them facing forward so the cover can be seen
 - d. Books in the library area should be age appropriate, in good condition, and cover a variety of topics such as differing abilities, cultures, health, jobs/work, math, people, nature/science, math, etc.
 - e. There should be at least 5 books displayed in the room (doesn't have to be in the library area) that relate to current classroom activities or themes
 - f. Books should be rotated monthly to maintain child interest
13. Provide a writing center in the classroom in the following manner:
 - a. This area can be placed at a table during free play or it can be a permanent interest area
 - b. There should be various types of writing materials in this area such as markers, crayons, pencils, stencils, lined paper, blank paper, construction paper, journals, tracing cards, etc.
 - c. The area should contain items that encourage the child's interest in learning to write alphabet letters such as a book with names of the children, alphabet in plain view, animal picture cards with names, dry erase word cards, etc.

14. Place appropriate children's books and other printed materials in all learning centers and throughout the classroom: books, magazines, charts, posters, writing utensils, paper, etc.
15. Provide lots of meaningful print: signs, directions, rules, messages, helpers' chart, etc.
16. A Word Wall will be posted in the classroom on the child's level. Words with pictures will be added weekly. Discussion of the word wall will occur weekly to ensure the letter/word/picture have a connection.
17. Ensure the print models used are representative of the different primary languages used by families of enrolled children.
18. Create a classroom environment which is rich with numeracy:
 - a. Models of numbers are displayed in various places around the room.
 - b. Puzzles, games, books have appropriate number concepts: counting, sorting, seriating, addition, subtraction, geometric shapes, time, etc.
 - c. Number charts and graphs are used to represent numbers.
 - d. A variety and appropriate supply of manipulatives are available for children to practice counting, sorting, seriating, etc.