



PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Googols of Learning Child Development Center is a full time child care facility located at 500 Rockledge Road in Lawrence. The purpose of Googols of Learning is to provide a high quality developmentally appropriate educational experience for young children. Googols of Learning Child Development Center uses Developmentally Appropriate Practices, which is an approach to education focusing on the child as a developing human being and a lifelong learner. Googols of Learning strives to offer a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment for children between the ages of one- and twelve-years-old in the Lawrence, KS area.

Googols of Learning believes that each child is a unique individual and has the right to be treated as such. Children are seen as being in the process of developing as human beings. Each child is to be treated with respect and provided with the support and experiences necessary to help them reach their potential. Each child is an individual of worth. Because of these beliefs, children will be provided with many and varied experiences and encouraged to progress at their own pace. Children with special needs will be integrated into the program at their own level. Because children are seen as individuals, all children will not be expected to perform the same activity in the same way. A child's unique ideas of thought, creativity and problem solving will be encouraged. The age level, characteristics, and developmental tasks of the children enrolled in the program, as well as their family and cultural background will be taken into consideration as activities and experiences are planned. All children and families are welcome, though we do not have special needs nurses or teachers on staff we are happy to work with special needs children to the best of our ability. Children from bi-lingual families and those that may not yet speak English are also welcome.

Our children gain experiences in Spanish and American Sign Language each day, based on their weekly theme. Students also learn proper public behavior skills through our Social Etiquette Program, such as learning to introduce yourself, how to behave on a play date and table manners, just to name a few.

The curriculum at Googols of Learning is planned to be responsive to the needs and interests of the child. Children will choose their activities within the framework of a structured environment and activities will be planned around weekly unit themes. The Cognitive Developmental Theory of Jean Piaget, the Psycho-Social Theory of Erik Erikson,

and Sara Smilansky's beliefs about the importance of Socio-Dramatic Play serve as foundations of our curriculum. Play is important in the development of a child as it is the means by which cognitive learning is gauged, socialization takes place and creativity is developed. Active and direct learning on the part of the children as they interact with their environment through key experiences planned by the teacher is central to the program. The teacher is seen as a facilitator and a supporter of the child's learning and development. The child is an active participant in the learning process and constructs meaning and knowledge from interactions, educationally planned activities, and play. We provide learning experiences which are both "developmentally and age appropriate," as defined by the National Association of Early Childhood Education 2 for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We provide meaningful and relevant learning experiences and use Creative Curriculum's portfolios to evaluate each child's individual progress. We observe and record our findings and share them with families during Parent/Teacher conferences which occur two times a year during fall and spring semesters. Children will have many opportunities for practical life experiences and will be encouraged to develop their own basic life skills. In meeting the purpose of Developmentally Appropriate Practices, Googols of Learning will strive to understand three main things, child development generally, each individual child in our classrooms, and each child's family and cultural background. A curriculum is provided that enhances the social, intellectual, physical, and emotional development of each child. Googols of Learning will provide an environment where there is acceptance, respect, caring, and encouragement. In the warmth of this setting we hope to help the child develop a positive attitude toward learning, responsibility, self-discipline, self-regulation, and self-esteem. We show respect for the child and the child's family always. We cooperate with and support the educational efforts at home.

In addition, we may also use any of the following methods to promote behaviors that are beneficial to the child's development including: inductive guidance; which would explain their behavior, ask them to take responsibility for their own actions, encourage empathy, and learning rules; suggestion or redirection; encouraging positive behaviors/reinforcers; modeling; setting limits; use of logical and natural consequences, ignoring harmless behaviors, and help with problem solving. The goal is to help teach waiting and patience and by extension, selfregulation.

The idea is that this option helps the child learn to 'self-regulate' when they have feelings of frustration or anger and are still learning the various coping mechanisms. We understand children are still learning to use their words and learning problem-solving techniques to use for conflicts with peers. The use of a 'safe-zone' is completely dictated by the child.

Lawrence is a diverse community and as such Googols of Learning welcomes the sharing of customs and activities of all cultures. We encourage families to share their traditions with our enrolled students. Our center teaches acceptance of diversity and respect for all people regardless of race, nationality, family type, disability, or religious or non-religious preference. Staff will plan activities especially for major holidays, such as Halloween,

Thanksgiving, and Valentine's Day. We also explore a variety of winter holidays. If there are children or staff members, who do not participate in specific holiday traditions due to custom or belief, they may choose to participate in another center based activity or keep their child home from the program for that particular day or activity. Googols believes there is a difference between learning about a holiday and celebrating it in a spiritual way. Our focus is to expose the children to the world around them and make these learning experiences. Please feel free to bring in items to share, help our teachers label areas in the classroom in your child's native language, or share food, music, and other traditional objects with your child's class. We would Googols of Learning Philosophy of Early Childhood Education 3 encourage and welcome it! Learning about the world around us is not limited to holidays, so please help us teach your children about all the daily customs and lifestyle details of the average person within your cultural background. Please speak with your child's teacher if you are willing to help us set up your child's classroom or share specific cultural objects in this way. It is much appreciated. We value learning about special and unique friends and ways of life.