

Creating Amazing Environments that Inspires Young Children's Creativity Learning

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Whole Child

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Importance of Environment

- Communicates to children
- Influences learning and choices
- Impacts behavior
- Builds confidence
- Encourages responsibility
- Establishes a sense of community

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Environment Matches the Children

- Cognitive level
- Personal experiences
- Group and individual interest
- Invites them to be involved
- Respects their culture

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Our Goal Is...



- To create places of freedom and delight where the enchantments and mysteries of childhood can be fully expressed.
- Dr. Anita Olds – Child Care Design expert

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Infants and Toddlers



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Children with Special Needs



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Preschoolers



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PreK and K



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Responsive Teachers



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Interactive Conversations



- Open ended questions
- Wait for a response
- Follow their questions
- Active listening
- Keep the conversation going

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**Practice:
Serve and
Return**

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Building a Community: A Safe Place for Taking Risks

1. A safe place for every child's belongings
2. A picture of each child
3. Attractive display of his or her work
4. Respect for all members of the group
5. Listening to voices, views, and ideas of all
6. Valuing their unique contributions

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Group and Individual



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Characteristics of the Environment

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Visual Element



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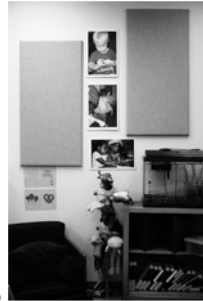
Lighting



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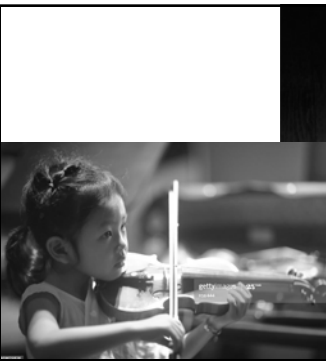
Auditory Environment



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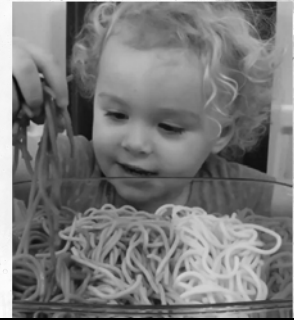
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Sound and Music



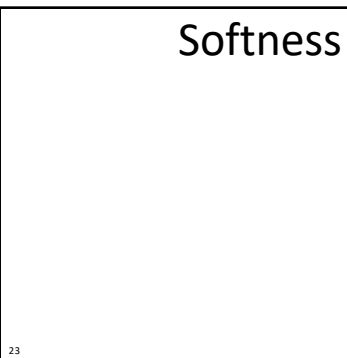
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Sensory/Tactile



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Softness



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Emotionally Safe



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Responsibilities: Problem Solving



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Home-Like



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Beautiful Place/Aesthetic



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Group, Quiet Areas, and Choices



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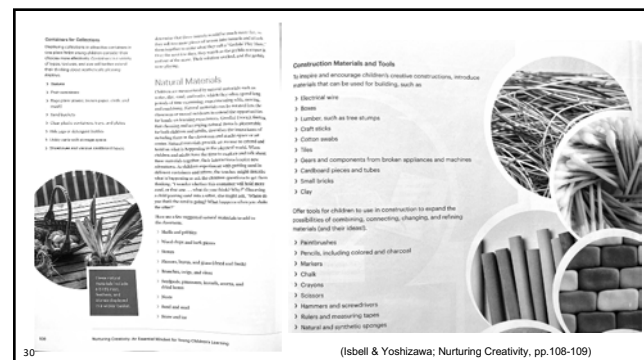
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Variety of Materials



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Organizing the Space

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I know it is here...
SOMEWHERE!!!



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Too much
stuff...

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Large Group Space

- Building Community
- Sharing Ideas
- Listening to Others
- Making Music
- Free of Distractions
- Emotionally Supportive

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Small Group Activity "Fewer is More" (Wasik, 2008)

- More language
- Collaboration on task
- Social competencies
- Varied levels working together
- Using learning meaningfully
- Integration of curriculum

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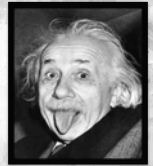
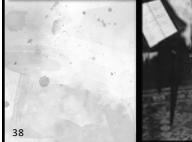
Value of Play

Exploratory Play	Socio Dramatic Play	Construction Play
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Manipulation ➤ Moving ➤ Feeling ➤ Tasting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Role Playing ➤ Sustaining ➤ Collaborative ➤ Sequence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Foundation ➤ STEM ➤ Collaborative ➤ Artistic ➤ Functional ➤ Scaffolding

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"My best ideas came in play..."



Albert Einstein (1879-1955)

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Social Skills: Working Together

- Using interactive language
- Collaborate with others
- Valuing other's ideas

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"In a high-quality program, children select activities and materials that interest them, and they learn by being actively involved."

Koralek, D. G., Colker, L. J., & Dodge, D. T., (1995). *The what, why, and how of high-quality early childhood programs: A guide for on-site supervision* (Rev. Ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

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Teacher's Role

- Determine designs to be used
- Select and set up areas
- Plan based on children's interest
- Teacher as a "floater" or "play tutor"
- Change, rearrange, and store



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Choice Board



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Library Center



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Benefits of Block Center

- Open-ended flexible material
- Use of oral language
- Solving problems creatively
- Collaborating on a structure
- Learning cause and effect

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**Author and
Illustrator Center**

Here, the child will be able to
work at his/her own level to
“write” and draw.

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Writing/Illustrating

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Recording Studio

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Music from Culture

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Research supports
socio-dramatic play is
a way of developing
and promoting
children's social skills

(Huges, McArdle, 2001)

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Socio Dramatic Center

- Play in a planned environment
- Appropriate props
- Meaningful to children
- Children select roles
- Collaboration
- Develop social skills
- Empathy for others

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Unique Centers
add Spice and
Creativity to the
Classroom

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Fitness Center

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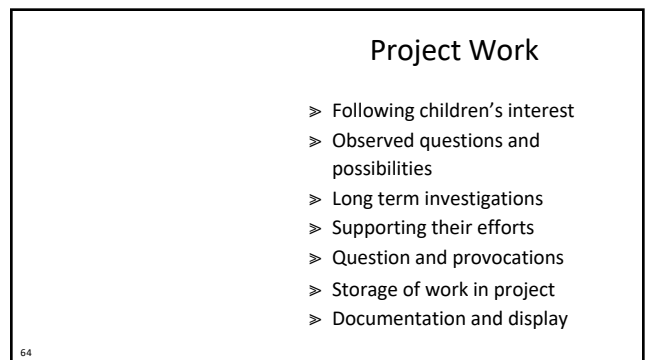
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DaVinci Bridge Project

2017 Little Bucs Summer Camp

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How can you add more creative
opportunities and possibilities to your space?

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References

- Isbell, R., & S.A. Yoshizawa. Nurturing Creativity the Essential Mindset for Young Children's Learning. National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Isbell, R., & Evanshen, P. *Real classroom makeovers: Practical ideas for early childhood classrooms*. Chicago, IL: Gryphon House.
- Isbell, R. T. . *The complete learning center book. An illustrated guide for 40 different early childhood learning centers*. Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House.
- Isbell, R. T., & Exelby, B. *Early learning environments that work*. Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House.

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