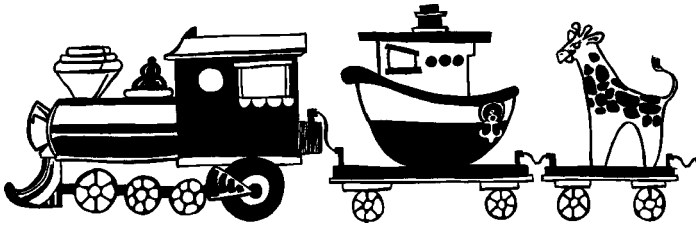


Furnishings & Equipment Guidelines for Licensed Child Care Facilities



BCHealthPlanning

Furnishings & Equipment Guidelines for Licensed Child Care Facilities



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Copies of this publication may be obtained from
your local Health Authority or at the following website:

<http://www.hlth.gov.bc.ca/ccf>

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Introduction

Adequate furnishings and equipment are essential components of quality child care. Child care providers and licensing officers need to share an understanding of the program requirements for basic and enhanced levels of furnishings and equipment. They need to work in partnership to ensure that all child care programs provide adequate environments that support all areas of children's development and meet the requirements of the *Child Care Licensing Regulation*. These guidelines were developed in order to support this partnership.

These guidelines recommend both basic and enhanced furnishings and equipment to meet children's needs in the areas of physical, intellectual, language, emotional, and social development. They also address the need for toys and materials for tactile, visual and auditory development.

Checklists

In addition to the guidelines, a number of checklists have been produced to help identify basic furnishings and equipment needed for each type of licensed program:

- All Licensed Child Care Programs: Routine Care Checklist
- Group Child Care Under 36 Months
- Group Child Care 30 Months to School Age
- Preschool Care
- Family Child Care
- Child Minding, 18 Months to School Age
- School Age Care (also known as Out of School Care)

These checklists are available from your local licensing officers, or on the Community Care Facilities website: <http://www.hlth.gov.bc.ca/ccf>

Using the Guidelines and Checklists

Together these guidelines and checklists will:

- provide new applicants and licensed child care providers with clearly defined expectations regarding furnishings and equipment;
- enhance the quality of child care through well equipped and furnished licensed facilities; and
- serve as an educational resource for licensing staff, child care providers and others.

This booklet is a companion guide to the publication *Program Standards for Early Childhood Settings*. (See Additional Resources)

A. Equipment for Developmental Needs

Setting Priorities

Care providers need to set priorities when choosing furnishings and equipment. What equipment does a program really need to be effective? Or, to put it another way, how can child care providers choose equipment which will support children's development in all areas?

Licensing Requirements: An Overview

The *Child Care Licensing Regulation*, which outlines basic requirements for child care programs in British Columbia is available on the Community Care Facilities website: www.healthplanning.gov.bc.ca/ccf You may also contact your local licensing officer for help in obtaining a copy or for clarification of the *Regulation*. The *Regulation* states:

The licensee shall provide, for children enrolled in a facility, a comprehensive and coordinated program of activities that:

- (a) is designed for the development, care and protection of children,
- (b) is appropriate for the age and development of the children in each group in the facility, and
- (c) meets the standards set out in Schedule D.

Schedule D outlines the required program standards to support children's physical, intellectual, language, emotional and social development. An accompanying document entitled *Program Standards for Early Childhood Settings* (1991) more fully explains the standards, and suggests a number of program activities to support each one. (To obtain a copy, see page 44 of this booklet.)

This booklet provides guidelines for furnishings and equipment to support development in five areas: physical, intellectual, language, emotional, and social. By thinking about equipment from a developmental perspective, child care providers can make choices and set priorities which ensure that children in their care will have equipment and furnishings to encourage development in all these areas.

Creating Environments for Integrated Learning

The *Child Care Licensing Regulation* defines program standards for meeting children's needs in five areas of development. This booklet uses the five developmental headings as a way to organize the lists of recommended furnishings and equipment.

Many of the activities referred to in this booklet may involve more than one area of children's development. For example, **music** can cross over many developmental areas. It can be **intellectually** stimulating, as children learn to recognize rhythms and tunes. Children may learn the words to songs which will support their **language** development. Music is often very enjoyable, providing children with an **emotional** sense of well-being and competency. Music can be a **social** activity where many children sing or play instruments together, interacting with one another. Children's music is often accompanied by **physical** activity or movement, through which children can learn coordination, dances or a series of actions. While music may be classified under **Intellectual Development** in the *Child Care Licensing Regulation*, it can encompass all areas of development.

The furnishings and equipment in a child care program should stimulate all aspects of children's development in a variety of ways. For example, a climbing structure will encourage children to use their large leg, arm and back muscles. If the structure has a platform that more than one child can stand on, then children will be encouraged to socialize. The way in which the environment is set up will influence how children respond to their environment and the kinds of activities they will engage in, and will thus influence their development.

A well-designed climbing structure supports social as well as physical development.



Developmentally Appropriate Practice

In order to meet children's physical, intellectual, language, emotional and social needs, early childhood programs must be **developmentally appropriate**. The National Association for the Education of Young Children describes a developmentally appropriate early childhood program as one that is both **age appropriate** and **individual appropriate** (Bredekamp, 1987, p. 2).

Age appropriateness:

Knowledge of typical development of children within the age span served by the program provides a framework from which [child care providers] prepare the learning environment and plan appropriate experiences.

Individual appropriateness:

Each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style, and family background. Both the curriculum and adults' interactions with children should be responsive to individual differences.

In order to work with young children it is important to understand the processes involved in their development. There are many excellent books which provide descriptions of typical developmental milestones, behaviours, needs and interests of children at different ages. (See Additional Resources) A course in child development is highly recommended to help child care providers understand children's development.

As well as being aware of general milestones in development, it is important to be sensitive to the uniqueness of each child. It may be true, for instance, that cutting with scissors is an age-appropriate activity for most 4-year-olds. However, Johnny, who is five, has a lot of difficulty with scissors. Six-year-old Lillian, who has cerebral palsy, can use scissors with the help of special grips. Meanwhile, Jessica, who is three, cuts with ease.

B. Using the Guidelines

How are the Guidelines Organized?

The guidelines for recommended furnishings and equipment outlined on pages 9 to 35 of this booklet are organized into six sections. The first section deals with furnishings and equipment that every child care facility must have in order to provide safe, sanitary and well-organized routine care for children of all ages. This is followed by five sections, each dealing with one of the five key areas of child development — physical, intellectual, language, emotional, and social skills.

At the beginning of each of these five sections, the relevant program standards from the *Child Care Licensing Regulation* are listed. Then each of the listed standards is dealt with separately, showing different types of equipment, and specific age groups (Infants & Toddlers, 3–5 year-olds, and/or School Age (5–12 years) these types of equipment are most suitable for. Some materials are shown as suitable for more than one age group.

Each example is marked with a • if it is a basic piece of equipment, or a ☆ if it is non-basic equipment recommended to enrich and enhance the child care setting. It is not necessary to have every item on the list, but it is required that programs have enough of each kind of equipment to support each area of children’s development.

How Much Equipment is Enough?

In order to support development, the care provider is responsible for making sure there are enough materials and equipment so that:

- a child is able to complete a fair-sized project;
- several children are able to work together or work at parallel activities without running out of equipment or supplies; and
- some can be rotated in order to create variety.

Children need enough equipment to work together, complete a project, and to have a degree of variation.



Applying the Guidelines

The pages which follow list furnishings and equipment which are age-appropriate for three different groupings: infants and toddlers, 3-5-year-olds, and school age children. Keep in mind the importance of individual appropriateness; children's development doesn't fall neatly into age-defined pigeonholes. Read the list as a continuum, rather than a set of distinct categories. Each section begins with equipment most suitable for the younger end of the age-range, and progresses into more complex and enhanced material.

Although we can predict to a certain extent the equipment which will be appropriate for a child of a certain age, each child has unique abilities and interests.



An adapted table enables a smaller child to play and eat with the rest of the group.

Equipment for Infants, Toddlers, and School Age Children

It is difficult to sort the equipment needs of a growing child into age categories or into areas of development. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the “Infants & Toddlers” category. Things that are developmentally appropriate for toddlers — large cardboard blocks or a cornmeal table, for instance — are chewable or edible by infants, while some equipment designed for infants has been largely outgrown by toddlers. Infants and toddlers, however, share a need for many of the same types of equipment, and are often cared for in the same program. In the guidelines on pages 13 to 35, [i] indicates those items in the “Infants & Toddlers” column which are suitable primarily for infants, and [t] indicates those items primarily appropriate for toddlers. A [t+] indicates equipment appropriate for toddlers and older children. When reading the list from top to bottom, the infant items will generally prevail at the top, and toddler items at the bottom.

Similarly, the term “School Age” spans the ages of five to twelve, and the grades from kindergarten to grade seven. That is quite a range of ages and abilities to plan for. While the actual equipment seems much the same, the degree of complexity will depend on the ages and abilities of the children in the program. Read the list of equipment for school age children from top (simpler) to bottom (more complex). Items such as games, puzzles, construction equipment, and art materials should contain more pieces and become more complex and challenging as children move from early to late school age.



Soft, washable blocks provide colour, texture, building and climbing experiences for both infants and toddlers.

C. Furnishings & Equipment Guidelines

Routine Care

All types of child care facilities must have basic furnishings and equipment to support a variety of routine care activities such as food preparation, cleaning and paperwork. Different types of programs may vary somewhat in their specific needs. For example, preschools do not require cots; school age care programs do not need potty chairs. However, most of the equipment on the list which follows is needed to ensure that programs are safe, sanitary, and well organized.

Key:

- **basic**

These items are recommended in all programs unless otherwise specified.

- ☆ **enhanced**

These items add to the quality of the environment.

Office

While the program may not have a separate office, it is important to have a secure place to keep information, to meet with parents, and to make phone calls.

- desk or table & chair
- filing cabinet or other lockable space for files
- telephone/telephone index
- first aid kit
- notice board for parent information

Maintenance

- vacuum cleaner
- mop and pail
- broom and dustpan
- toilet brush
- cleaning supplies



Bulletin boards and handouts keep parents informed.

Washroom Equipment

- sinks
- liquid soap dispenser (1 per sink)
- paper towel dispenser or individual towels for each child
- garbage receptacle
- toilets
- adapted toilets and assist rails as needed
- potty chairs for toddlers
- toilet tissue dispenser (1 per toilet)
- change table or change mats, as needed
- container for soiled diapers as needed
- sturdy step-stool(s) to allow children to reach the sink, toilet and change table

Kitchen

- cutlery, unbreakable plates, bowls, cups, glasses - sufficient for each child and staff member, and adapted as needed
- refrigerator, if necessary for food safety
- garbage receptacle
- sink
- stove or hotplate
- liquid soap dispenser
- paper towel dispenser
- ☆ kettle, coffee pot
- ☆ dishwasher
- ☆ microwave
- ☆ cooking utensils
- ☆ pots and pans, baking pans, mixing bowls
- ☆ mixer, food processor, blender

General Furnishings

- for each napping child, a cot or foam mattress not less than 7.5 cm in thickness, with waterproof cover; or, for each infant, a crib or cot
- window coverings in areas where children nap
- child size chairs, one for each child
- child size tables (Modular tables will allow for flexibility. Tables may need to be adapted with rims, or made accessible for wheel-chairs.)

- additional chairs for staff, parents, and volunteers to sit at tables with children
- cosy couch, chair, or rocker
- paper cup dispenser or individually labelled cup for each child
- child-proof gates and door handles as needed
- car seats as needed (refer to Motor Vehicles Branch for current information)
- ☆ extra clothing for emergencies
- ☆ utility sink

For Infants:

- stroller or carriage
- playpen
- high chair
- ☆ infant chair
- ☆ infant carrier, e.g. backpack or sling

Storage

Storage which is well organized and accessible is important for the smooth functioning of any child care program.

- cubby or other private storage area for each child (e.g. individual coat hook with drawstring bag or plastic bin)
- open shelves for storage of toys and play materials
- closed cupboards for storage of additional equipment
- lockable cupboard or box for medications
- lockable storage, or area inaccessible to children, for cleaning supplies and other hazardous materials
- lockable cupboard or closet for personal belongings of staff
- space for parents' strollers
- containers for toy storage: baskets, tubs, trays in a variety of sizes
- ☆ cupboards with lockable casters for use in activity areas and as dividers between activity areas.

For more on storage and how to arrange it, see page 41.



This family child care program uses a wall storage unit to store toys and equipment.

Physical Development

Physical development includes development of the large and small muscles. In order to develop large muscle coordination and balance, children need to use their legs, arms and back muscles in activities such as crawling, climbing, throwing and catching. Small muscles are developed through activities which require finer coordination, for example, grasping rattles, constructing with blocks, and placing pegs on pegboards.

Another aspect of physical development is the acquisition of self-help skills and good health and safety habits. If children are provided with equipment, support and encouragement to help them dress, go to the bathroom and clean up, they will grow towards independence. Encouraging the use of hygiene equipment such as individual toothbrushes, and safety equipment such as goggles for woodwork, will help children to develop good health and safety habits which will protect them throughout their lives.

Program Standards

1. Provide indoor and outdoor activities that encourage the development of large and small muscle skills appropriate to each child's level of development.
2. Promote the development of self-help skills.
3. Encourage good health and safety habits.

Source: Child Care Licensing Regulation

Key:

- **basic**
- ☆ **enhanced**
- [i] Primarily appropriate for infants
- [t] Primarily appropriate for toddlers
- [t+] Appropriate for toddlers and older children

1

Provide indoor and outdoor activities that encourage the development of large and small muscle skills appropriate to each child's level of development.

Children of all ages benefit from playing both indoors and outdoors each day. Outdoor play should not be limited to large motor activities. Expand outdoor activities to include dramatic play, sand and water, art and games. Include "loose parts" such as boxes, planks, and fabric pieces, which can be used to transform the outdoor play area.

Large Muscles

► Climbing Equipment and Swings

Climbing equipment and swings help to develop coordination and balance, as well as strengthening leg, arm and back muscles.

Some programs which do not have extensive equipment are able to provide access to climbing equipment and swings through frequent visits to neighbourhood parks.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- cushioned area where infants can safely pull themselves up [i]
- equipment to climb on and crawl through, over, in and out of: tunnels, cushions, boxes
- safety mats
- low climber and slide [t]
- rocking toys [t]
- adapted climber and slide if required [t]

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- climber
- boxes, planks, tires
- ladder
- balance beam
- slide
- safety mats
- swings
- tunnels
- adapted climber and slide if required

For more information on choosing safe playground equipment, see Additional Resources, p 43.



School Age (5 - 12 Years) only

- ☆ rings
- ☆ climbing rope

Non-steel-belted tires can be used as equipment in outdoor play areas.

► Wheeled Equipment

Wheeled equipment helps children develop leg and arm muscles and learn balance and coordination.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- small push/pull toys
- low riding toys, most without pedals [t]

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- tricycles
- adaptive riding equipment if required
- riding toys
- wagons
- ☆ child-sized wheelbarrows
- ☆ scooters
- ☆ traffic cones

► Games Equipment

Games equipment develops not only large muscles, but also cooperative social skills.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- large, soft balls

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years)

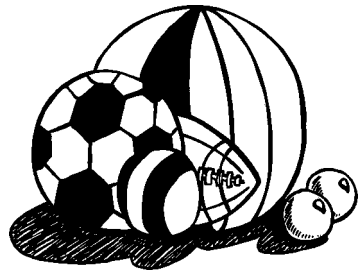
- assorted balls: rubber, soccer, large/medium

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- assorted sets of games equipment: floor hockey, bowling, tether ball, ring toss
- bean bags
- skipping rope
- tumbling mats
- ☆ parachute
- ☆ hoops

School Age (5 - 12 Years) only

- assorted large and small balls: rubber, foam, tennis, basketball
- ☆ softball equipment
- ☆ basketball hoop
- ☆ ping pong



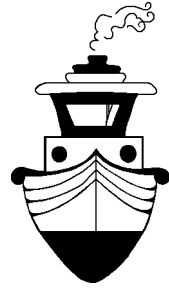
Small Muscles

Manipulative Toys

Manipulative toys help children develop coordination of small muscles.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- teething toys [i]
- squeeze toys [i]
- containers and safe objects to fill and dump
- toy trucks, boats, trains, animals, and people (multi-ethnic)
- ☆ spools or large beads to thread [t]
- rattles [i]



PreSchool (3 - 5 Years)

- shape sorters
- stringing beads
- thing to fill and dump
- toy trucks, boats, trains, animals, people from various cultures
- ☆ clothing boards or doll clothes to practise snapping, buttoning, zippering, lacing
- peg boards
- sewing cards

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- peg boards with pegs and holes of varying sizes
- beads of varying sizes for stringing
- sewing cards, assorted wool, laces
- ☆ craft supplies: knitting, weaving, macrame

Manipulative Toys

Simple to complex puzzles provide manipulative and intellectual stimulation.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- simple 2-8 piece puzzles: wooden inlay with pegs, varied materials [t]

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years)

- 5+ pieces puzzles: wooden form, wooden inlay, multi-textured, cardboard, rubber and sequence

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- 30+ piece puzzles: wooden form, wooden inlay, multi-textured, cardboard and sequence

► Art Equipment

Cutting, painting, and drawing develop small muscles. (See Art Equipment and Supplies, page 24.)

► Blocks

Blocks are important at all ages. Ensure that there are enough blocks for groups of children to complete projects.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- large, soft and lightweight washable blocks of varying sizes, shapes and colours
- ☆ large plastic or cardboard blocks [t]

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years)

- variety of medium and large sized blocks of wood, plastic, cardboard

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- variety of wooden blocks in assorted sizes and shapes

All Ages

- ☆ accessories: trains, cars, trucks, airplanes, animal sets, miniature people, transportation signs, toy village props [t]

► Construction Toys

Sets of construction toys and carpentry equipment take construction a step further than blocks.

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5- 12 Years)

- construction sets such as interlocking blocks (e.g. Lego) and Tinker Toys
- train set with interlocking track
- ☆ workbench with tools plus safety equipment, including goggles

School Age (5 - 12 Years) only

- ☆ model kits
- ☆ advanced construction set, e.g. Mechno

All Ages

- nesting and stacking toys
- interlocking blocks



2

Promote the development of self-help skills.

► Storage

Storage which is child-sized, open, clearly organized and accessible will help children access and put away materials.

All Ages

- individual cubby or other private storage area for each child
- coat hooks at child's height
- accessible open storage with labels (picture labels or colour coding if appropriate)

► Child-Sized Furnishings

Furnishings which fit the height and size of children promote independence.

All Ages (beyond infant)

- low counters or tables where children can help prepare and eat food
- booster chairs to help children reach higher tables
- child-size or low sinks and toilets, or step stools so that children can reach both

3

Encourage good health and safety habits.

► Equipment for Personal Health and Safety

Children learn about safety and hygiene through modelling, routines, and discussions.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- safe place for infants and toddlers to lie, crawl and creep

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- safety mats under climbing equipment
- safety equipment: personal helmets for wheeled toys, goggles for woodworking, safety mats

All Ages

- individual toothbrushes, facecloths, combs, towels and cups

Developing the Senses: Tactile, Visual, Auditory

In addition to the areas of physical development outlined in the program standards, children need activities and equipment designed to support development of the senses.

► Tactile Development

Children need plenty of soft and contrasting textures in their surroundings to help them develop the sense of touch.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- toys made to “mouth” and chew [i]
- soft and textured toys
- surface boards

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 -12 Years)

- soft, comfortable sofa
- ☆ pet

All Ages

- varied floor surfaces: carpets, lino
- floor pillows/blankets
- “goop” or shaving cream [t+]
- bubble-blowing supplies [t+]
- equipment for water/sand play and modelling [t+] (see p. 20)

for **Visual Development**, see **Spatial Relationships**, p. 23

for **Auditory Development**, see **Music, Dance and Movement**, p. 25
and **Listening Equipment**, p. 29

Intellectual Development

Infants are born with abilities that help them adapt to the world around them and prepare them for future learning. From infancy through early adolescence, children go through several predictable stages of intellectual development, though the timing and sequence of these stages may vary for individual children. Children actively seek out opportunities to learn new thinking skills when they are ready. The environment can either help this process, or make it more difficult.

Infants explore the world through grasping objects, manipulating them and learning how they go together. They learn to recognize people, places and things. They develop an understanding of the relationship between their own behaviours and consequences. Toddlers learn to use symbolic thought — that one thing can represent another. They learn to recognize shapes and colours and make connections between ideas. As children get older they learn to use more advanced concepts and reasoning to make sense of their world.

Program Standards

1. Develop a flexible daily program that responds to the needs and interests of the children.
2. Provide an environment that facilitates the development of curiosity, reasoning and problem solving skills.
3. Provide age-appropriate activities which encourage development of the following concept-building skills: classifying, ordering, determining direction and perceiving spatial relationships.
4. Provide activities and materials that encourage creative endeavours such as music, art, movement, imaginative play, storytelling and construction.
5. Provide activities and materials that foster a greater understanding of the environment.

Source: Child Care Licensing Regulation

Key: • **basic** ☆ **enhanced**
[i] Primarily appropriate for infants
[t] Primarily appropriate for toddlers
[t+] Appropriate for toddlers and older children

1 Develop a flexible daily program that responds to the needs and interests of the children.

This program standard relates primarily to programming rather than to furnishings and equipment.

2 Provide an environment that facilitates the development of curiosity, reasoning and problem solving skills.

► Sensory Materials - Water, Sand, and More

Working with sensory materials helps children to learn concepts of measurement, conservation of volume, and density (what floats and what sinks).*

All Ages (beyond infants)

- sensory table or box for sand, cornmeal, rice or pasta [t+]
- accessories: digging tools, pails, containers for measuring and molding, funnels and sifters [t+]
- water table or water container [t+]
- accessories: boats, items that float or sink, squeeze bottles, pumps, sponges, containers to fill and measure with [t+]



► Modelling Equipment and Supplies

Modelling activities help children develop ideas about measurement and conservation of volume.*

All Ages (beyond infants)

- supply of modelling dough plasticine, clay
- tightly covered container for moist clay
- accessories: rolling pins, popsicle sticks, cookie cutters, garlic press, tortilla press

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- finer modelling tools for older children

* **Conservation of Volume:** *The concept that even when the shape of a substance is changed, the amount stays the same.*

► Cooking Equipment

Cooking helps children to learn concepts such as sequencing and conservation of volume.

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- ☆ a variety of kitchen appliances and tools for food preparation: measuring cups, mixing spoons, pots, pans, wok, chopsticks, frying pan, spatula, cookie cutters

School Age (5 - 12 Years) only

- ☆ multicultural cookbooks with child-friendly recipes

► Science Equipment to Support Reasoning

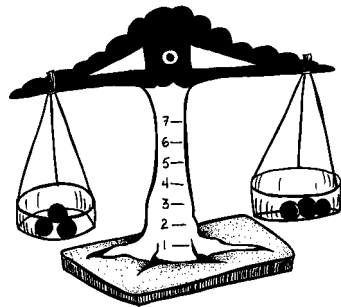
An interesting science area encourages children to observe, predict and experiment with their surroundings.

All Ages (beyond infants)

- living things: plants and animals which can be adequately cared for plus cages, tanks, and accessories as appropriate [t+]
- science table or shelves [t+]
- materials for sorting, counting, sequencing and measuring [t+]
- sets of plastic zoo and farm animals and dinosaurs [t+]

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- magnets and items made of metal
- magnifying glass
- nature collections, e.g. cones, shells
- ☆ scales and items for weighing
- ☆ timing equipment: hourglass, clock
- ☆ plastic thermometer (non-mercury)
- ☆ prisms
- ☆ kaleidoscope
- ☆ globe
- ☆ stethoscope
- ☆ microscope



► Games

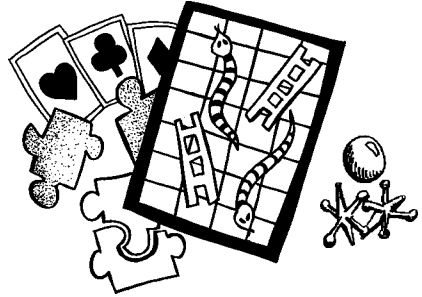
Games and puzzles help children develop skills for remembering, sorting, predicting and reasoning.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- picture Lotto [t]
- picture dominoes [t]

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years)

- simple card and board games
- memory games
- dominoes



School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- area where 2 to 4 children can play games together
- selection of card games and board games, e.g. cribbage, strategy games, dominoes, Scrabble, Sorry, Monopoly
- memory games
- ☆ computer games

3

Provide age-appropriate activities which encourage development of the following concept-building skills: classifying, ordering, determining direction and perceiving spatial relationships.

► Materials for Classifying, Ordering and Sequencing

Sets of toys which can be sorted or put in order of size or colour help children develop reasoning skills.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- nesting and stacking toys
- sets of safe objects of various sizes and colours

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years)

- objects to sort and classify: geometric shapes, small blocks of different types, buttons, cylinders, rocks, shells, marbles
- sorting boxes, cans or trays
- materials to string: beads, pasta of various sizes and colours

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- more complex sets of objects, including collections

► Determining Direction

Children learn about direction from a variety of activities: water/sand play, constructing, and playing with vehicles.

All Ages (beyond infants)

- water/sand play accessories for pouring [t] (see p.20)

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- small, safe vehicles and ramps
- stacking toys

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- toy train
- vehicles and ramps

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- ☆ directional compass



► Spatial Relationships

In order to classify and understand their world, children need to develop visual perception and recognition of objects as well as an understanding of spatial relationships.

All Ages

- toys in a variety of colours and shapes
- pictures, posters, artwork at eye level
- toy storage at eye level, labelled if appropriate
- ☆ decorative mobiles, kites, banners and provision for overhead artwork display (helps to lower the ceilings for children)

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years)

- shape sorters
- pencils, tracing paper, and shape outlines to trace
- stencils
- geometric blocks

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- geometrical drawing equipment: compass, rulers
- tracing paper
- geometric blocks and puzzles
- stencils
- ☆ spirograph

4

Provide activities and materials that encourage creative endeavours such as music, art, movement, imaginative play, storytelling and construction.

► Art Equipment and Supplies

Art activities are basic to the development of fine motor coordination as well as visual and creative development. It is important that art supplies are plentiful and varied.

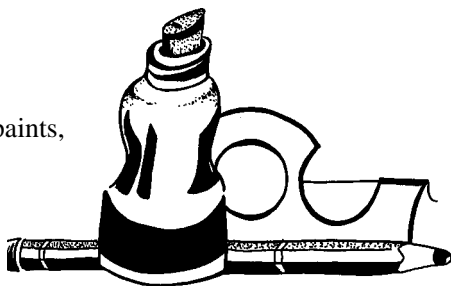
Make sure that you have markers, crayons, plasticene, and paint in diverse “people” colours. It is important to have enough art supplies for several children to use at one time.

All Ages (beyond infant)

- jumbo crayons
- paper: assorted textures, sizes, colours
- drawing materials: crayons, pencils, erasers, rulers
- easels (double-sided with troughs)
- drying rack or drying space for artwork
- chalkboard and chalk (including sidewalk chalk for outdoors)
- paint brushes and paints in a variety of sizes, types, and colours
- finger paint supplies
- paint smocks
- felt markers
- gluing supplies
- scissors in different sizes, right- and left-handed, adapted if required, various cutting types, e.g. pinking, curved
- collage materials including cultural diversity: multicultural photos, fabric scraps from various cultures
- three-dimensional materials: modelling dough, clay, recyclables
- ☆ assorted things to apply paint with: sponges, bingo daubers, eye droppers, tooth brushes

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- ☆ additional drawing materials: art pencils, charcoal, acrylic paints, water colours



► Music, Dance and Movement

Instruments and dance props help children develop rhythm and creativity.

All Ages

- simple rhythm instruments: rattles, drums, cymbals, tambourines, wooden blocks (If possible, include instruments from various cultures: marimbas, maracas, rainsticks.)
- tape player or CD player and selection of rhythmic tapes or CDs from various cultures
- ☆ scarves, streamers and other props

► Housekeeping and Imaginative Play

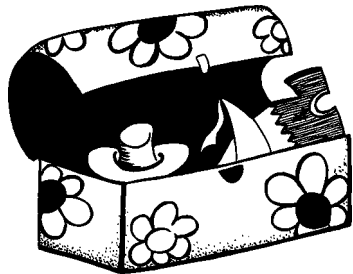
Housekeeping and imaginative play help children to fantasize and practise role-playing.

All Ages

- multi-ethnic dolls of both genders
- doll clothes from various cultures and both genders
- baby carriers and sleeping furniture from various cultures
- play house furniture
- dishes, pots and pans
- play foods from many cultures, food containers, grocery carts
- dress-up clothing and accessories: multi-ethnic, occupational [t+]
- puppets: hand, finger [t+]
- full-length mirror (shatterproof) [t+]
- ☆ rack for dress-up clothes [t+]
- ☆ doll house with furniture and people (multi-ethnic)
- ☆ farms, airports, etc., plus people and accessories
- ☆ prop kits, e.g. boxes of costumes and props for hospital, post office, grocery store, fire station, restaurant [t+]
- ☆ puppet theatre [t+]
- ☆ tent [t+]

for **Equipment for Storytelling**,
see **Books and Storytelling**, p. 28

for **Equipment for Construction**,
see **Construction Toys**, p. 16



5

Provide activities and materials that foster a greater understanding of the environment.

► Equipment for Environmental Understanding

Children can enjoy and learn about grass, trees, plants and animals in the outdoor play yard or parks and beaches.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

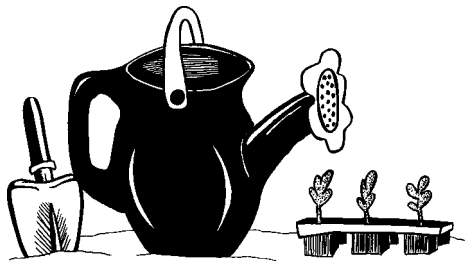
- grassy area to lie on
- digging equipment

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- storage for nature collections such as shells, rocks and seeds
- child-sized garden equipment: trowels, hoes, spades, pots, potting soil
- ☆ magnifying glass
- ☆ wind sock
- ☆ thermometer
- ☆ weather chart
- ☆ composter

All Ages

- space to garden: window boxes, tubs, garden plot
- recycling box
- ☆ bird feeders, including hummingbird feeder
- ☆ wind chimes



Language Development

From the cooing and babbling of infancy, children's language develops rapidly. By the end of their second year, the majority of children are speaking in two-word sentences, and by age six have vocabularies of 8,000 to 14,000 words.

Children learn language by listening and talking. Equipment and furnishings which encourage attentive listening help children recognize words and speech patterns.

Children develop confidence in speaking when they have lots of chances to practise with their peers and with adults. They need activities and equipment which encourage them to communicate through words, helping them to express ideas and practise their expanding vocabularies.

Program Standards

1. Model good language and listening skills.
2. Provide opportunities for children to develop receptive and expressive language skills.
3. Encourage communication.

Source: Child Care Licensing Regulation

- Key:**
- **basic**
 - ☆ **enhanced**
 - [i] Primarily appropriate for infants
 - [t] Primarily appropriate for toddlers
 - [t+] Appropriate for toddlers and older children

1**Model good language and listening skills.**

This program standard applies primarily to interaction patterns, rather than to furnishings and equipment.

2**Provide opportunities for children to develop receptive and expressive language skills.****► Books and Storytelling**

Books should include stories and people from various cultures and races, people with disabilities, and should show men and women, boys and girls, in a variety of roles.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- sturdy board picture books in different sizes
- multi-textured books
- puppets
- adult rocker or armchair

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years)

- more detailed picture and story books

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- felt board and figures
- puppets
- ☆ puppet theatre
- ☆ stage platform, props and costumes

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- wide assortment of books: stories with chapters, favourite stories, science books
- ☆ encyclopedia
- ☆ atlas

All Ages

- sofa, comfortable chairs and pillows

► Listening Equipment

Listening practice helps children to develop attentiveness, memory, and summarizing skills.

All Ages

- tape or CD player
- selection of songs and music from various cultures and various genres: classical, rock, jazz, folk, country
- selection of stories on tape or CD

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- ☆ listening centre with headsets

3 Encourage communication.

► Talking Equipment

Talking equipment gives children extra opportunities to practise grammar and vocabulary.

All Ages

- play telephones

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- walkie talkies ☆ cans and string
- ☆ long cones or cylinders for talking and listening
- ☆ camera for care provider to take pictures of events to talk about
- ☆ tape recorder for recording voices

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- ☆ cameras for children's use

► Writing Equipment

Even before children can read, they like to dictate stories and copy favourite words.

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- writing centre equipped with paper, varied writing and illustrating materials (e.g. crayons and pencils) and typewriter or computer if available

Emotional Development

The process of emotional development begins in infancy, when a baby first begins to comprehend that she is an “I” separate from her primary caregiver. The question “Who am I?” continues to be asked right through to adulthood. The answers which the child discovers influence her self-concept and self-esteem which in turn influence development in other areas. When choosing equipment to promote the development of a healthy, positive self-concept, it is important to think about the messages children receive about themselves, their families, and their cultures.

Healthy emotional development involves accepting and appropriately expressing emotions. Children need to be able to reflect on their emotions in soft, comfortable and private surroundings. They also need space for sturdy large motor equipment which will allow them to direct excitement, anger or aggression appropriately.



Program Standards

1. Help children develop a positive self-concept.
2. Help children develop an accurate perception of self.
3. Help children express positive and negative feelings in appropriate ways.
4. Provide a comfortable atmosphere in which children feel proud of their cultural heritage, and where cultural sharing is encouraged.

Source: Child Care Licensing Regulation

Key: • **basic** ☆ **enhanced**
[i] Primarily appropriate for infants
[t] Primarily appropriate for toddlers
[t+] Appropriate for toddlers and older children

1 Help children develop a positive self-concept.

2 Help children develop an accurate perception of self.

► Supporting a Positive and Accurate Self-Concept

Images of themselves and their work help children to feel valued and important.

When choosing pictures of people, consider diversity in all its aspects.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months) and PreSchool (3 - 5 Years)

- pictures at children's eye level, including different cultures, gender roles, and abilities
- bulletin boards or other areas to display children's artwork and photographs of children
- ☆ unbreakable mirror
- ☆ camera for caregiver to take children's pictures
- ☆ photograph albums to collect pictures

School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- bulletin boards or other display areas where children's work can be displayed and ideas expressed
- pictures and posters reflecting children's interests
- ☆ camera equipment for children's use
- ☆ photo albums

3 Help children express positive and negative feelings in appropriate ways.

► Soft Spaces/ Private Places

Children frequently need the assurance of a soft, comfortable, safe place.

Small, quiet retreats allow for times when children want to be alone, or one-on-one with a caregiver.

All Ages

- soft mats with washable covers [i, t]
- floor pillows
- rocking chair [i, t]
- stuffed toys, dolls
- soft chairs or sofa
- ☆ sheepskins [i, t]
- child-sized soft furniture
- ☆ nook or other small, quiet space
- carpeted area

► Expressing Feelings Appropriately

Space and equipment for physical activity, along with dolls, pets and cuddly toys, encourage children to express feelings.

Infants & Toddlers (0 - 36 months)

- soft area where infants can safely pull themselves up [i]

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- safe area for children to “let off steam”
- large pillows
- stuffed animals, cuddly toys, dolls
- ☆ paper to rip

All Ages

- books containing messages about positive and negative feelings
- ☆ easy-to-care-for pet

4 Provide a comfortable atmosphere in which children feel proud of their cultural heritage, and where cultural sharing is encouraged.

► Culturally-Inclusive Materials (all ages)

When choosing books, toys, tapes, or pictures, include the cultures of all the children in your program, and other cultures as well.

- pictures of people from various cultures
- decorations from various cultures
- culturally inclusive toys, dishes, dress-ups, etc.
- music, food and stories from various cultures
- paints, crayons, and modelling dough in diverse “people” colours

Puzzles, games and toys should reflect many cultural backgrounds.



Social Development

Infants begin their social development by forming strong bonds with caregivers. From nine months on, infants will offer and accept toys from each other, and play social games. Most older toddlers enjoy activities with two or three other children for short periods of time. One of the equipment challenges of this stage is sharing. As two-year-olds attempt to define themselves and their social world, the word “mine!” accompanied by an attempt to snatch a toy away from someone else, is commonplace. In planning equipment for children at this stage, care providers should have duplicates of popular toys.

During the preschool stage, children begin to play cooperatively, to develop feelings of empathy and caring for each other, and to begin lasting friendships. By the time they are school age, children’s peers become increasingly important. Social skills such as communicating, sharing, cooperating, and helping others increase dramatically. For school age children at this age, the need to be accepted and to form friendships is important.

Program Standards

1. Provide an environment for children to work independently and to share and work cooperatively in small groups.
2. Provide an environment that fosters positive behaviour in children.
3. Help children appreciate differences and respect the personal feelings and property of others.
4. Provide opportunities for social interactions that help children develop appropriate skills for social relationships.
5. Provide experiences that facilitate a child’s feeling of belonging to family, community and the world at large.

Source: Child Care Licensing Regulation

- Key:**
- **basic**
 - ☆ **enhanced**
 - [i] Primarily appropriate for infants
 - [t] Primarily appropriate for toddlers
 - [t+] Appropriate for toddlers and older children

1 Provide an environment for children to work independently and to share and work cooperatively in small groups.

► Equipment for Playing Together

The type of furniture and equipment, and how it is arranged, can encourage positive social interaction.

All Ages

- artwork, blocks and other supplies in sufficient quantity for groups of children to work side by side
- equipment and play props for group time: carpet squares, puppets, musical instruments
- climbing equipment with wide slides and platforms for more than one child

PreSchool (3 - 5 Years) and School Age (5 - 12 Years)

- board and card games
- large motor equipment which promotes cooperative group play

► Equipment for Playing Alone

Most children enjoy spending some time alone.

All Ages

- carpet squares, soft chairs for individual children to sit on
- ☆ small tent or nook
- ☆ listening centre with headphones

2 Provide an environment that fosters positive behaviour in children.

This program standard applies primarily to programming, rather than to furnishings and equipment.

3 Help children appreciate differences and respect the personal feelings and property of others.

► **Storage and Display to Encourage Respect**

All Ages

- cubby or other private storage area for each child
- bulletin boards and display arrangements for children's artwork and projects

4 Provide opportunities for social interactions that help children develop appropriate skills for social relationships.

► **Housekeeping and Imaginative Play**

Children practise interacting and taking on group roles.

See **Housekeeping and Imaginative Play**, page 25.

5 Provide experiences that facilitate a child's feeling of belonging to family, community and the world at large.

► **Equipment Relating to Belonging**

Toys, books and pictures about families and friends help children to perceive themselves as important members of groups.

All Ages

- photographs of children and families
- books, pictures, toys and puzzles depicting diverse families and cultures
- car seats, strollers, and other provisions for getting out into the community

D. Using Space Effectively

Arranging Space

This booklet tries to answer the question: *What furniture and equipment do I need to have?* But just as important is a related question: *How should I arrange this furniture and equipment?*

The aim of the child care environment is to encourage the child to explore freely and safely, choosing independently from a variety of activities. According to Jim Greenman (1988, p. 55), “the play environment should be developed as a wonderful, interesting place that continually captures a child’s attention and is laid out to ensure individual and small group experiences, without the continual presence of many watchful adults.” Creating this environment requires careful arrangement of activity centres, including clearly defined physical and visual barriers such as shelving, furniture or floor markings.

When thinking about how to arrange equipment and furniture, consider the types of activities which go well together. Active, noisy play should happen away from quiet, reflective types of activity. Wet, messy play activities need to be grouped around a sink, on a linoleum or tiled area. Pathways linking the areas need to be well marked.

In all cases, accessibility is a key factor. The equipment and materials need to be clearly visible and accessible without adult help. Extra consideration may be required for children with support needs. Are storage areas clearly labelled for a visually-impaired child who is part of the program? Can a child in a wheelchair get into an area easily and access the materials? When care providers arrange the environment so that children with disabilities can be easily included, they convey a strong message: *all children can play together and have fun.*

The ages of the children in the program will dictate some of the ways in which space is organized. Infants need a clearly defined space where they can move and play without running the risk of being stepped on or pushed by older children. School age children need space where they can safely store long-term projects.

Arrangement of equipment and supplies is also influenced by an assessment of “what is enough?” Rotating sets of toys and equipment avoids crowding and overstimulation. The rotation principle ensures a degree of order (not overloading the available space) and a degree of surprise and enjoyment when unfamiliar equipment replaces the all-too-familiar. Rotating equipment requires that there is enough equipment to rotate, and that there is adequate storage to hold the equipment not currently being used in the play area.

Adults need space, too. Care providers, if they are to avoid burnout, need a place to make a phone call, or to sit quietly for a few moments. Parents need space to hang their coats, sit down for a cup of coffee, or meet with the care provider for a quick chat.

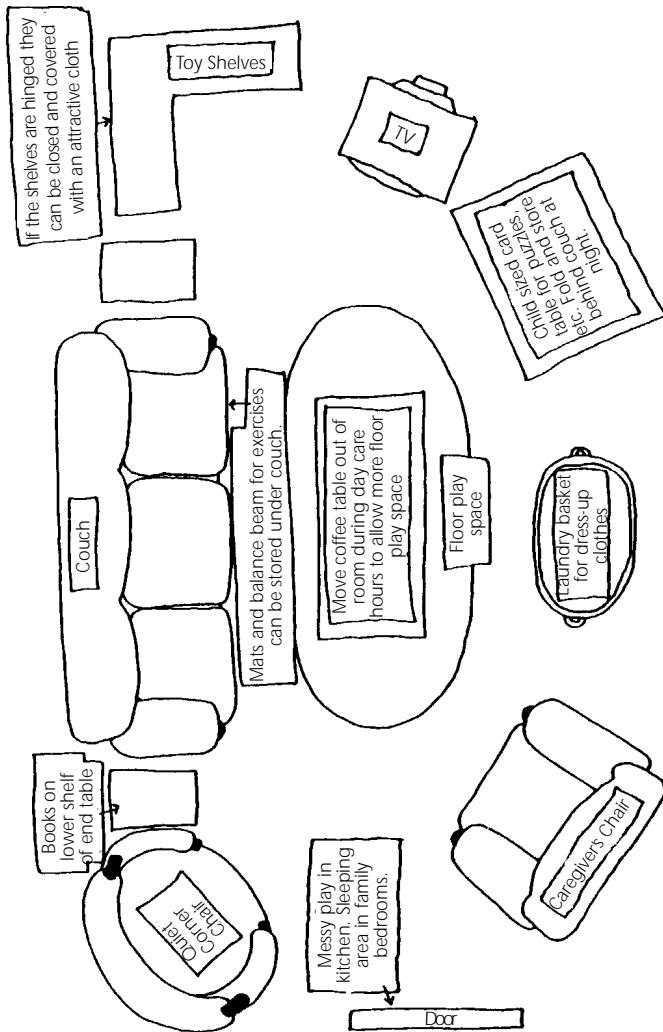
The outdoor play area is often considered a world apart from the indoor space: a collection of large muscle equipment such as slides, swings, climbers, and wheeled toys. Outdoor space, however, can be arranged to include much more: art and dramatic play opportunities, access to sand and water, sites and materials for building, garden sites to dig and plant. “Loose parts” — pieces of lumber, crates, ropes, pipes, saw horses, foam mattresses, blankets, and dress-up materials — can transform a barren outdoor play space into a constantly changing laboratory for children. Outdoor play areas which provide a natural setting of grass, sand, dirt, water, and plants, as well as a variety of “loose parts” and expressive materials are much more inclusive of *all* children, including children with special support needs, than play areas specializing only in fixed large muscle equipment. Outdoor settings are also stimulating places for infants, participating from the safety of a playpen or a blanket spread out on the grass.

A section of the room is clearly defined as an inviting book corner.

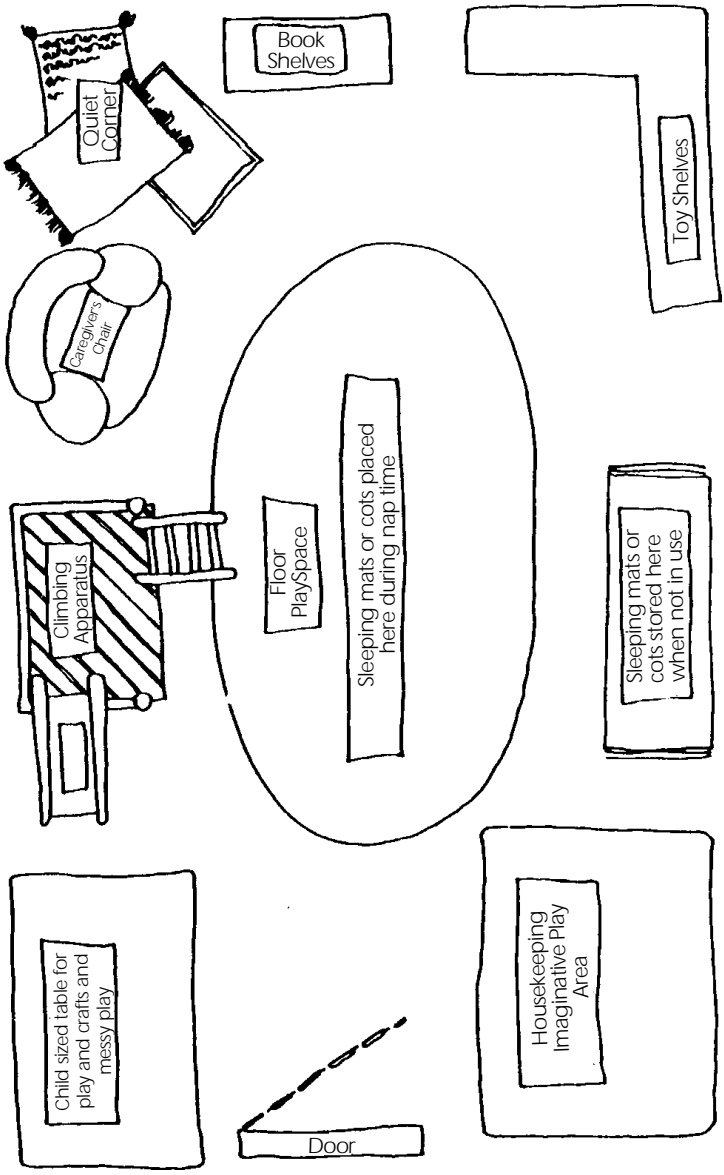


Space Plans

Whether a program is just starting up or well established, care providers can often discover better ways of using space by drawing up floor plans. If the program is already established, a combination of systematic observation of how children are using space and floor plans, and exploring alternate space arrangements, can often help identify areas which could be organized more effectively. A common space challenge for the care provider working in a home-based program is how to store equipment and quickly transform a family home into a child-centred facility. Some typical solutions are provided in the space plan for two rooms of a family home, shown on these two pages.

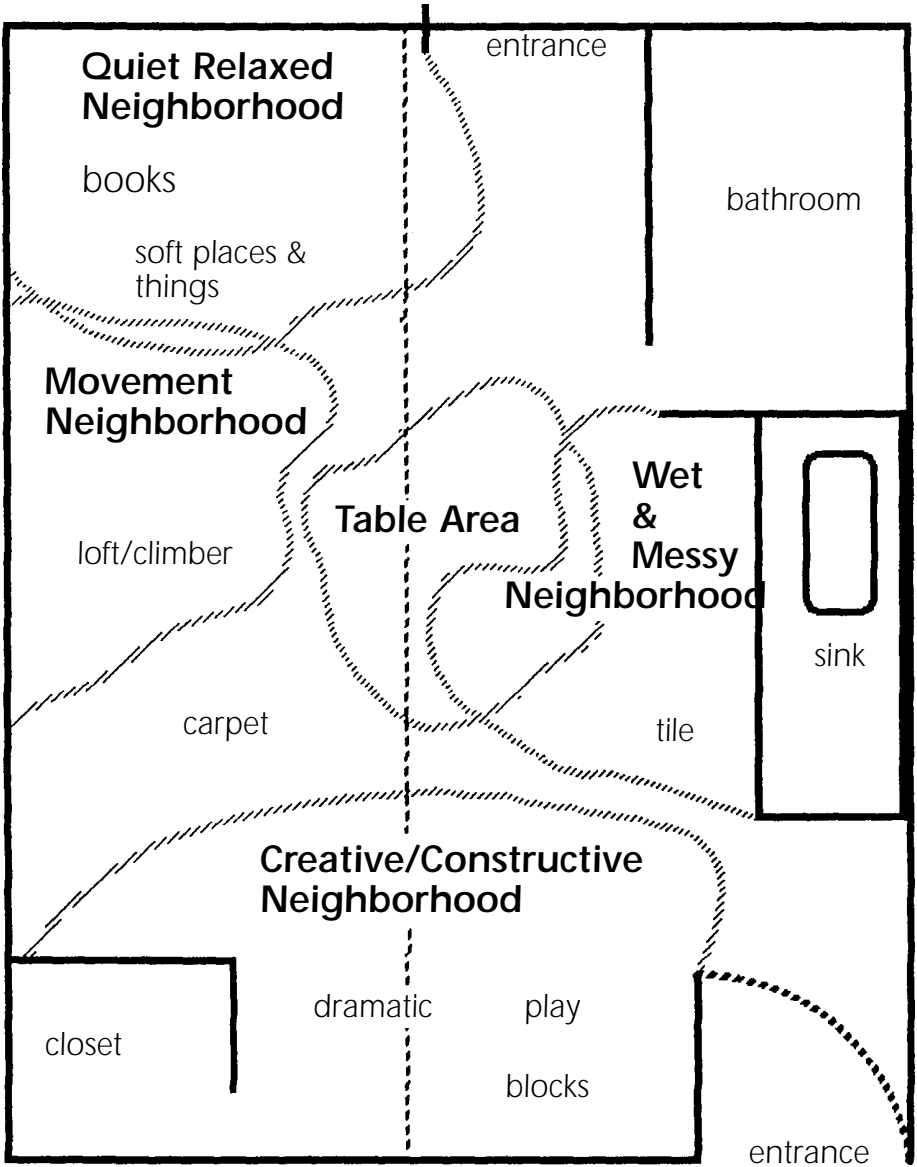


Dunster; Lee. (1994). Home child care: A caregiver's guide. Reprinted with permission.



Dunster, Lee. (1994). *Home child care: A caregiver's guide*. Reprinted with permission.

Care providers working in centre-based programs are often faced with a large, open area which needs to be divided into activity areas. A typical space plan might look something like this one.



Greenman, J. (1988). *Caring spaces, learning places: Children's environments that work*. Reprinted with permission from *Child Care Information Exchange*, P.O. Box 2890, Redmond, WA 98073, 1-800-221-2864.

Storage

Just as important as arranging furniture and equipment is storing it. Most materials and equipment — those in current use — need to be stored close to where they will be used. They need to be stored in a way that children can see them, access them, and make sense of them. Storage needs to be the right size and shape for what is being stored, it needs to be clearly labelled with words, photos or symbols to allow for easy clean-up, and it needs to be safe.

Children with special support needs may require storage space for equipment such as walkers, standing frames, and prone boards. Try to include space for these in your planning.

Most programs have areas to store things not in current use: extra supplies and equipment which are brought out at specific times. These storage areas should be designed for retrieval and labelled clearly so that staff members can easily locate pieces of equipment. In addition, every program needs some locked storage to allow for safe storage of medication and hazardous cleaning products.



Clearly organized, accessible storage is an important part of any child care program.

E. Dollar-Smart Choices

Think Before You Buy

When deciding on the best way to spend limited dollars, here are some general questions to ask yourself before buying a piece of equipment:

- Will it retain children’s interest over time?
- Can it be used in a number of different ways, by different ages?
- Does it reflect diverse cultures, families, abilities and languages?
- Can it be used by children of all abilities?
- Is it sturdy, well-designed and built to last?
- Is it safe? Does it meet current safety standards?
- Is it easy to keep clean?
- Does it fit well with what I already have?

The Frugal Care Provider

The question *Is it a good buy?* raises a number of possibilities for canny child care shoppers, who are well aware that not everything has to be purchased new from equipment suppliers. Before you rush out to buy an expensive piece of equipment or a set of supplies, you might want to consider these possibilities:

- Are there parents/friends/family members who might have what you want, and would be able to give or lend it to you?
- Can you buy a “nearly new” version of the item by advertising in your community newspaper or checking out second hand stores and garage sales?
- What about an “equipment swap”? Think of arranging a toy, book, or tape swap with friends, neighbours or other care providers.
- Can it be borrowed? Contact your local Child Care Resource & Referral Program, Health Authority or a family day care association to see if there is a toy or equipment lending library in your community.
- Make your own (or get a friend or parent to help). Items like musical instruments, puppets, games, felt board and figures, puppet theatres or playhouses built from appliance boxes can all be made with recycled materials and a little skill. Check the library for toy-making ideas.
- Recycle. Parents and friends are usually delighted to collect supplies such as collage materials, dress-ups, and props.

Additional Resources

Child Care Programs & Equipment

Allen, J., Fisher, M., and Goldman, C. (1991). ***Growing through play.*** Toronto, ON: Canadian Mothercraft Society.

Information for family child care providers, with material on development at different ages, and ideas for activities and equipment, including homemade equipment.

Bender, J., Elder, B.S., and Flatter, C. (1984). ***Half a childhood: Time for school-age child care.*** Nashville, TN: School Age NOTES.

Information for school-age care providers, including many ideas for equipment, materials, and arrangement of the environment.

Capital Health Region (1995). ***Health & safety practices:***

A handbook for early childhood educators and child day care staff. Victoria, BC.

Information on recommended health and safety practices for child care facilities. Available from Capital Health Region - CCFL, #201-771 Vernon Street, Victoria, BC V8X 5A7.

Capital Health Region (1995). ***Safe playgrounds: A handbook for early childhood educators and child care staff.*** Victoria, BC.

Detailed information on how to organize a play area, how to choose safe equipment, and how to choose appropriate surface coverings. Available from Capital Health Region - CCFL, #201-771 Vernon Street, Victoria, BC V8X 5A7.

Dunster, L. (1994). ***Home child care: A caregiver's guide.*** Ottawa, ON: Child Care Providers Association.

This resource for family child care providers is full of creative and common-sense information.

Early Childhood Multicultural Services. (1996). ***Multicultural/anti-bias equipment resource list.*** Vancouver, BC.

Updated annually, this resource lists equipment and materials to provide a multicultural dimension to child care programs. Prices and suppliers are given. The list is available from Early Childhood Multicultural Services, 210 Broadway West, Vancouver, BC V5Y 3W2, (604) 709-8366.

Mulligan, S.A., Green, K.M., Morris, S.L., Maloney, T.J., McMurray, D., and Kittelson-Aldred, T. (1992). ***Integrated child care: Meeting the challenge***. Tucson, AZ: Communication Skill Builders, Inc.
A very useful resource on the “how to’s” of integrated child care, including sections on accessibility, play materials, and adaptive equipment.

Child Development

- Bredenkamp, S. (Ed.) (1987). ***Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8. (Exp. Ed.)*** Washington, DC: NAEYC.
Outlines developmentally appropriate and inappropriate practice for different age groups.
- Mulligan, V. (1996). ***Children’s play: An introduction for care providers***. Don Mills, ON: Addison-Wesley Publishers Limited.
Helps care providers examine the ways in which they can support the play of children of different ages.
- Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. (1991). ***Program standards for early childhood settings***. Victoria, BC: Queen’s Printer.
This document outlines and elaborates on the Program Standards established in the British Columbia Child Care Licensing Regulation. It is available from your Licensing Officer or the Open Learning Agency, 4355 Mathissi Place, Burnaby, BC V5G 4S8. Phone in BC 1-800-663-1653/Fax: (604) 431-3381.

Space and Equipment

- Esbensen, S.B. (1987). ***An outdoor classroom***. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.
A detailed look at the planning that needs to go into the choice and arrangement of playground equipment, with particular emphasis on safety features.
- Greenman, J. (1988). ***Caring spaces, learning places: Children’s environments that work***. Redmond, WA: Exchange Press Inc.
A comprehensive look into what children need at different ages, and how those needs can be met through consideration of the child care environment and careful planning of space and equipment.



Revised Spring 2003