THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER AT MIRACOSTA COLLEGE

This *Parent Handbook* attempts to answer the questions most often asked by program families. Please take a moment to read through it to help familiarize yourself with the Center’s policies. If you need further information, please don’t hesitate to contact us directly.

MISSION

The Child Development Center serves as a campus-based child development program providing both academic instruction to students enrolled in child development/early childhood education courses and childcare services to student, staff, and community families. Providing demonstration classrooms to the College community, our program offers a model of best practice in early childhood education while providing students learning opportunities through observation and on-floor interactions with young children and their families. Parents should be aware of the teacher training and service learning components of the program when enrolling their child.

PHILOSOPHY

At the MiraCosta College Child Development Center we are committed to the belief that every child has a right to be treated with respect, and a right to live each day with joy and self-fulfillment. Our center operates on the belief that children are trustworthy, and with encouragement will mature to their fullest potential. As teachers, we support each child’s growth socially, physically, creatively, and cognitively. We believe that children learn through self-discovery, hands-on exploration, and interaction with others; that these experiences will help them develop confidence in their own abilities; and that play is the primary medium for early learning. The environment is carefully planned to meet children’s developmental needs and to provide opportunities for successful learning.

ELIGIBILITY

The Preschool Classes (Room #4 and Room #5) enroll children between three-and-a-half to five years of age who have not yet attended kindergarten. The Younger Preschool Classes (Room #2 and Room #3) enroll children who are two through three-and-a-half years of age, while our Toddler Class (Room #1) enrolls children from 18 months through 2 years of age at entrance. None of our toddler or preschool classrooms require children to be toilet trained. All Center classrooms are inclusive and reflect the wide diversity of today’s families. The primary criterion of eligibility is the child’s emotional readiness to be separated from his/her parents and the parents’ willingness to share the care of the child with the Child Development Center Staff.

ADMISSION POLICY

Admission is open to all children 18 months to 5 years of age regardless of race, creed, color, ability or national origin. Children of students, staff and community may be enrolled in either the morning or extended-day session (though there is much greater demand for extended-day programming by student families). As a campus-based child development program, priority enrollment and discounted tuition are provided to student families (enrolled in 6 or more units).

In order to be admitted, children must present an immunization record, signed/stamped by a physician or other medical professional, which shows that all currently required immunizations have been received. *Physical exam forms do not meet this requirement.* A number of additional forms required by Community Care Licensing must be completed prior to a child’s actual attendance in the classroom.
The online application is available on the website at the end of each semester (for the following semester) and during the first few weeks of each semester. All incoming applications are dated and assigned a number in the order received. They are assigned a priority ranking based on student status and application date. Continuing children are given priority for enrollment. Though returning families have priority in scheduling, parents of returning children must resubmit their classroom requests each semester.

CLASSROOM OPTIONS

- **Room #1**: Young Toddler (18-26 months). This room provides our youngest children what is often their first group experience. Focus is given to developing quality relationships through consistent routines, as children master self-help and social-interaction skills.
- **Rooms #2 & 3**: Toddler (24 – 32 months) and Young Preschool (2.7 – 3.4 years). In these classrooms, children engage in developmentally appropriate learning experiences across a variety of interest centers.
- **Rooms #4 & 5**: Preschool (3.5 – 5.0 years). These classes provide the preschool child a developmentally appropriate early learning experience, laying the foundation for the transition to kindergarten or a final year in preschool.

STAFF

Each classroom is supervised by one Early Childhood Education (ECE) Instructional Specialist and staffed by two ECE Apprentices (assistant teachers). Supervising teachers must minimally meet the Master Teacher requirements developed by the Child Development Division of the California State Department of Education.

Assistant teachers are MiraCosta College students but must have completed a minimum of 6 units in child development (and ideally have completed the student internship prior to their teaching appointment). The education, training, and experience of center staff are prime factors contributing to overall program quality. Our supervising teachers actually have, or are in the process of completing, their Master’s degrees in child development.

Our preschool classrooms enroll no more than 22 children daily while maintaining a teacher/child ratio no higher than 1:8. Our Younger Preschool Classrooms enrolls no more than 15 children daily (Room #2) or 18 children daily (Room #3) and maintain a teacher/child ratio of no higher than 1:6. The Toddler Classroom enrolls as many as 12 children each day and maintains a teacher/child ratio of no higher than 1:4.

CAMPUS LABORATORY SCHOOL

The Child Development Center is a learning environment for both children and adults. Child development students (having completed their initial internship) serve as our ECE Apprentices. There are student teachers (interns) enrolled in CHLD 270: Preschool Teacher Internship whose work at the center is often the culmination of their course requirements. These students are under the supervision of College instructional staff and the classroom supervising teachers. Other students may be involved in Service Learning as well as in observing and studying children enrolled at the center through assignments offered in various college courses. Center staff also includes a Center Director, an ECE Office Specialist, and an ECE Program Specialist.
INCLUSION OF ALL CHILDREN

The Child Development Center has a strong and continued commitment to including children with diverse developmental abilities into our program. This commitment is based on several beliefs and grounded in legislation accounting for the educational rights of children with special needs and their families. Children vary widely in developmental pace and style during the early years. It is not unusual to have quite a range of developmental levels in the same early childhood classroom. Children have much to learn from one another, and accounting for differences is an important part of their early experiences.

Early childhood teachers, therefore, should be uniquely prepared to plan for such diversity and to work effectively with children at various places in their development. Positive, personal experiences shared by children of differing backgrounds and skills can be of great long-term value to children with and without special needs. When these experiences occur in natural and familiar surroundings, messages of belonging and individual worth are conveyed to all the children.

Supervising Teachers will be informed as far in advance as possible when a child of particular special needs is to be enrolled in their class. The Director will coordinate any support services to be provided by school districts or community agencies. As in all aspects of Center operations, close parent/professional partnerships are necessary to insure the success of all involved in this valuable endeavor.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The Child Development Center has an open-door policy and invites all parents to observe their child at play through each classroom’s observation window. Please feel free to make use of these booths at any time, though plan to use campus long-term parking lots for this purpose (rather than the 10-minute curbside parking in the front of the Center). No children are allowed in the booths for safety reasons (babes-in-arms are the exceptions). Please do not use the booth for socializing. Students use the booths to observe the children to fulfill classroom assignments. Parents wishing to socialize with one another are requested to do so in the reception area after signing their child in or out of the classroom. Responsibility for your child is yours once you have signed him/her out at the end of a session.

We hold a variety of parent/teacher and family functions each year and we invite everyone to attend. These include classroom breakfasts and teas, open houses, spring art show, and informational meetings (on such topics as language development, early learning, discipline, and kindergarten transition). Look for individual notices throughout the school year. Individual parent/teacher conferences are scheduled each semester (and as requested) to discuss children’s developmental and academic progress. Please make it a habit of checking the notices posted on the Communication Board outside the door to your child's classroom and in your family's individual mailbox, located adjacent to your child’s classroom door.

The Child Development Center works closely with many community agencies supporting parent/professional partnerships through parent education and information. We turn to the staff of the HOPE Infant Program and the Exceptional Family Resource Center as resources for family questions and support for linkages to additional community resources. The Children’s Care Connection (C3), funded through a grant obtained by Children's Hospital, provides Center families with a source of developmental screening and child assessment as well as ongoing parenting classes.
ENROLLMENT DOCUMENTATION

It is the parent’s responsibility to notify the center within five (5) working days of any change in college class schedule, emergency contact information, change of address, phone number or email. We reserve the right to request proof of college enrollment and/or progress at any time. Failure to update any information may result in the cancellation of your admission agreement.

TUITION

Please consult the Child Development Center web page for the current Center Tuition Schedule (www.miracosta.edu/instruction/childdevelopmentcenter/applyingtocenter.html).

1. Tuition is based upon a semester rate prorated evenly across 17 weeks of scheduled programming each semester. Monthly bills are not reduced for absences or for holidays (exceptions being the College Semester Break in December/January and Spring Break in March).

2. Bills are placed in family mailboxes before the end of the month prior to the month of early care and education services to be received based on projected enrollment.

3. Tuition is due in advance for a full month of service on the first (1st) of each month prior to receiving services.

4. Tuition not paid by the tenth (10th) calendar day of the month is considered delinquent.

5. Tuition not paid by the fifteenth (15th) of the month may result in discontinuation of child services.

6. We take a “billing snapshot” as each semester begins that accounts for College enrollment status as well as the number/length of days each child is enrolled. There will be no retroactive adjustments to the first tuition bill due to change in enrollment status between the first week of the semester and the next month’s billing period. Any changes in college enrollment status or children’s schedules will be reflected on the next month’s bill.

7. Fees are payable to MCC at the Student Accounts Office in the 3200 Building on campus either by person with cash, check or credit card; by mail with check; or by telephone with a credit card. The mailing address is: MiraCosta College, ATTN: Student Accounts Office #26, One Barnard Drive, Oceanside, CA 92056. We cannot accept payments at the Child Development Center.

8. If a check is returned unpaid, the parent/guardian is responsible for all bank fees in addition to a possible late fee.


Parents must advise the Center, in writing, at least one week prior to dropping their child from the program, or billing will continue until written notice is received.
DAILY SCHEDULE

All curricular areas are included in the daily/weekly plan—arts and creative expression, music and movement, nature and science, physical and outdoor activities, language and literature. A healthy snack is served in all classroom sessions. Each classroom will post a copy of their Daily Schedule as well as their Snack Schedule for parents and visitors to review.

Each class session includes child-selected time where children engage in play and structure their own activity around their interests as well as teacher-directed times such as large and small groups.

Our Child Development Center program follows the College calendar. The current college class schedule determines the opening and closing dates and holidays for each semester.

Rooms 1 & 2: The primary class time is from 8:30 am to 11:30 am with morning options only.

Rooms 3, 4 & 5: The primary class time is from 8:45 am to 11:45 am with extended day options.

Parents should plan to arrive and depart to and from the Center at these designated transition times. Even if an adult class ends prior to the end of the child’s classroom time, we limit transitions to the times designated above (as this offers each child consistent time to engage in planned classroom activities). For children staying extended day, there is no pick-up prior to 2:30pm due to the necessity for keeping the rooms quiet and calm for napping children. Parents are encouraged to discuss individual scheduling challenges with your child’s teacher, our Office Specialist, our Program Specialist, or the Center Director. Pick-up time is no later than 4:45pm.

At drop-off and pick-up, the child must be accompanied by an authorized adult who will sign the child in or out with a full signature on the sign-in sheet. Photo identification is required of all individuals not known by center staff. Any certified custody orders must be provided to the Center Director prior to enrollment. Any changes in custody orders must be provided to the Child Development Center immediately.

Children will be released ONLY to a parent or other person(s) designated by the custodial parent in writing on the Emergency Information Sheet. The addition of a pick-up person can only be made in writing; no phone authorization will be accepted.

Parking in front of the center is ONLY for drop-off or pick-up of children and is limited to 10 minutes. For longer periods, please use the student lot across the street (semester parking passes will be provided at no cost to non-student Center families). All families should enter at the front door and proceed to their designated classroom.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Preschool is for well children. The supervising teacher may exclude any child who appears ill. We expect you will call the office when your child must stay home due to illness and advise us of any contagious condition. The direct number to the office is (760) 795-6656.

Please know we act in the best interests of the children and families we serve, and check all children to be sure they are well each morning upon arrival at school. You may NOT bring your child to school if s/he has: fever, vomiting, diarrhea, pink eye, rash, lice/nits, and/or physical discomfort. If your child had diarrhea, vomiting or a fever; your child must be symptom free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child had a mucus discharge from eyes, s/he must be treated with prescription drops for 24 hours before returning to school. If your child had an unknown rash or other unidentifiable symptoms, they must be symptom free or have a doctor’s clearance before returning to school. If your child becomes ill at the center, you or a designated person will be called to pick up your child.
children should be picked up within thirty (30) minutes after notification to parent or authorized person. Failure to do so repeatedly can result in cancellation of program services. It is imperative we have current contact information on file, both for yourself and for individuals authorized to drop off/pick up your child. Please ensure that your emergency contact list includes at least two (2) individuals who are available and within reach to contact in the case of an emergency.

First-aid will be administered for minor injuries. An Accident Report will be completed and parents will be notified. Our standard recommendation will be that the child be seen by his or her family doctor as soon as possible. We also provide a handout on the signs and symptoms of a more severe injury. If the parent(s) or guardian(s) do not answer their phone, we will leave a message stating we are calling the next person on the emergency list and will proceed down the list until we contact someone with authority to pick up your child and take him or her to be seen by a doctor. In the case of a head injury of any kind, our policy is to call the parent. In any situation that is beyond our first aid/cpr training, Campus Police will be called to dispatch the school nurse for a professional evaluation.

We conduct fire/safety drills once a month and disaster drills once a semester. The children are told to listen for the fire bell and then proceed to a designated outdoor meeting place, which is in front of the Center for fire drills or to evacuation area # 10 for disaster drills. Campus Police assists with traffic control during our drills. Please note the location of fire extinguishers throughout the building and refer to the Center Evacuation Plans posted at each exit door for specific evacuation routes.

**ITEMS FROM HOME**

Please leave toys, books, etc., at home. In the past, we have found that most young children like to bring things from home but may not like other children to use them. We therefore ask that you do not bring any personal items from home (for our youngest children, exceptions can be made for “transition objects” such as a special blanket, etc., though bottles and pacifiers are not allowed on the classroom floor). In the preschool classes, Share Days may be scheduled periodically during the semester. On these days, toys and appropriate objects from home are welcome (your teacher will provide additional information).

**SCHOOL CLOTHING**

*Please dress your child in play clothes in which he/she can feel free to get dirty as we regularly engage in wet and messy activities.* Backless or slick-soled shoes are inappropriate for school. It is a good idea to bring along a sweater or jacket on all but the hottest days. Our playground can be windy and cool, and part of each day will be spent outside. Also, please dress your child in clothes that are easy for him to manage. *Remember to label all clothing with your child’s name.*

Each child is assigned a personal cubby space for his/her use. Please bring a *change of clothes* for your child to keep in this cubby (and check regularly so replacements are on hand). All clothes should be marked with your child’s name. Occasionally (when a needed change of clothing is unavailable), we may share clothing from our school supply. Please be sure to launder and return all school clothing to your child’s teacher.
MEDICATION

Staff may administer a child’s prescription medication only under the following conditions:

• Medication is in the original container with prescription indicating the child’s name, dosage required, name of medication, date of prescription and doctor’s name and phone number.

• Parent must complete a “Release to Administer Medication” form for each medication.

FOOD POLICIES

A nutritious snack is served during each class session and the menu is posted bi-weekly. Parents desiring to bring a snack to celebrate a birthday are invited to do so. Please consult your child’s classroom teacher for suggestions (Note: Sweets are not acceptable).

The extended-day program has limited availability for children and is only available in the older classrooms. Priority is given to children whose parents are in class during this time. Parents are responsible for providing their child's lunch each day they attend.

If your child eats lunch at the Center, you should bring a nutritious lunch consisting of a protein food such as a meat/cheese/egg, finger vegetable or fresh fruit, a drink of milk (not chocolate) or 100% fruit juice or water. Please, no sugared drinks such as Kool-Aid or fruit drinks which are not 100% juice. The guidelines for 2-5 year olds from the US Dept. of Agriculture are: 1.5 oz of protein (cheese, yogurt, meat, refried beans), 0.5oz or ¼ cup of fruit*, 0.5oz or ¼ cup of vegetable*, 0.5oz or ½ slice of bread.** Sweets are not acceptable.

*this can be 2 different fruits or 2 different vegetables or 1 fruit and 1 veggie.
**This is the category that pretzels, crackers (all kinds), rolls, muffins, etc. fall into.

Due to the increasing risk of life-threatening allergies, parents are asked to not include any nut or shellfish products in their children’s lunches.

There is not a microwave available to warm the children’s lunches. Please put in an ice pack in the lunch box to keep the food, especially milk, cool as there is not a refrigerator available for lunches.

Try and limit your child’s food in the lunch box to the guidelines. Some children have far too many items to choose from and feel like they have to eat everything. Children may feel the need to take additional time to eat everything, which makes it difficult to transition the group to nap in a timely manner. Leftovers no longer have an ice pack to keep them at proper temperature and should be discarded at day’s end.

A policy prohibiting the use of food for play, e.g. rice in the sand table, macaroni for collage, potatoes for printing, etc. has been established at the Child Development Center on ethical grounds. It is a concern that such use of food does three undesirable things: (1) wastes food; (2) teaches children that having an abundance allows one to waste; and (3) encourages children to be insensitive to the needs of others. Some acceptable uses include using flour to make play dough, planting beans and seeds and preparing foods for snack.

NAP TIME

If your child is attending both morning and transitions to the afternoon, he/she is required by State law to rest. Please bring a light blanket to leave at school. It can be taken home once a week for washing. The Center provides cots and/or mats and individual sheets (laundered weekly).
SEPARATION

We expect and understand that young children may have a hard time separating from their parents (and vice-versa!). The staff is trained in making this transition as easy as possible for both the child and the parent. Your child’s classroom teacher will inform you at Orientation how they prefer to handle separations. In general, once the separation process is complete, we ask parents to say a prompt, friendly goodbye and establish (and maintain) a consistent "separation ritual" to help children make an easier separation. Parents can then observe their child from the observation booth. If you have any concerns about separation, please feel free to discuss them with your child’s supervising teacher and/or the Center Director.

TOILETING

Transition to group care can be a challenge for some young children, and teachers will remind each child to use the toilet when necessary. Individual differences will be accounted for within this process. Some children may need more time than others to fully manage this transition. As accidents will happen, particularly in the first few weeks of school, please be sure to provide several pairs of extra underwear and at least one change of clothes in your child’s cubby.

If your child is enrolled in the Toddler Class or Young Preschool Class, please make sure your child has plenty of diapers in his/her cubby. If we inform you that we used a school diaper, please bring a replacement diaper the next time your child comes to school. Pull-ups are difficult for changing, so please use regular diapers. Parents are asked to bring a box of baby wipes to keep in your child’s cubby. Toilet training is a part of growing up. We will be happy to work with you and your child in this process. Before transitioning your child from diapers to underwear, please speak with your child’s supervising teacher.

DISCIPLINE & LIMITSETTING

The Child Development Center’s approach to discipline and conflict resolution is grounded in a respect for children, the development of self-esteem and the building of problem-solving skills. Using affirming guidance and positive direction, teachers help children understand the limits of appropriate behavior in a classroom setting. Interventions are focused on helping children understand the consequences of their behavior, reminding them of acceptable alternatives (walk instead of run) and redirection. The goal is to help children build self-control and develop autonomy. Punitive disciplinary measures, such as scolding, corporal punishment or isolated time-out are unacceptable and inappropriate.

In solving interpersonal conflicts, Supervising Teachers guide children in recognizing each other’s needs and point of view and in coming up with acceptable, workable ideas to solve the problem. The goal is to help children develop the skills to be successful social negotiators and to rely on non-violent means of resolving their conflicts. It is important to give children an opportunity to problem-solve on their own. By jumping in too soon with the solution, adults teach children to rely more on adult authority than their own resourcefulness in solving problems.

NON-SEXIST/ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION

The Child Development Center is committed to providing all children the freedom to be whomever or whatever they choose. We portray both men and women as nurturing, capable and feeling human beings, and refrain from gender-casting jobs and roles. We also encourage active and quiet play for both boys and girls.

Supervising Teachers are aware of the ways in which language, personal interactions, program features and classroom arrangements convey information to children about their options. Non-sexist/ant-bias education is an active, ongoing endeavor.
HOLIDAYS AND OTHER CELEBRATIONS

The population at the Child Development Center is diverse and multicultural, bringing a wonderful richness to everyone's experiences. The Child Development Center is a place where adults and children from any background can feel comfortable, welcome and respected. Holidays from a variety of cultures are a valuable way of recognizing the similarities and uniqueness of different cultures, for example the uses of food, dress, crafts and/or songs in the celebration, while also appreciating the diversity in the forms these aspects take.

In order to benefit the most from recognizing a variety of holidays, Supervising Teachers consider the following in the planning of related activities:

1. Avoidance of holidays having any religious purpose;
2. Providing a focus on the most universal aspects of a holiday, (e.g. family, home, community) rather than the commercial aspects;
3. Avoidance of any activity that could make any child or family feel uncomfortable;
4. Ensuring that all activities are age appropriate and culturally sensitive.

Supervising Teachers also routinely solicit the help of the parents of the children in their class and ask them to share information and resources about their family’s cultural traditions, holidays and ideas for activities that would be appropriate for the children. Such information can be incorporated within the universal aspects of traditional American holidays.

Note: As examples of this policy, here at the Center we do not dress in costumes for Halloween (though we may do face-painting) and we do not bring valentines to school (though we do share feelings in letters to our family and friends).

Birthdays are very special events, which give children a sense of themselves as growing individuals. While birthday parties, with all of their accessories, are not appropriate at the Child Development Center, acknowledging and celebrating a child’s birthday are essential to promoting self-esteem. Supervising Teachers should be sensitive to the individual child’s comfort in being publicly recognized. Speak with your classroom teacher on various ways their classrooms recognize individual birthdays.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT & CHILD ASSESSMENT

The Child Development Center is strongly committed to a play-based approach to early learning (as outlined within the Preschool Learning Foundations and the Preschool Curriculum Framework, published by the California State Department of Education). The framework for our curriculum development incorporates careful attention to design of the environment (with a focus on interest centers), developmentally appropriate practices (DAP), purposeful planning, and accurate assessment of learning outcomes. Teachers will use a variety of ways to observe and document the interests and abilities of each and every child in their charge, and develop curriculum that is responsive to individual child interests. Teachers assess children’s learning using a variety of tools including, the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), designed to provide children with a seamless transition to kindergarten. They incorporate this information in their planning for learning, and explicitly communicate the outcomes of such ongoing assessment with classroom families.
Elements of the Reggio Emilia approach to learning are incorporated within our program philosophy, and these directly influence curriculum development and child assessment. Within this approach, there are a number of key areas that require careful consideration.

**The time needed to document children's work.** Teachers need time to both observe and reflect. Our daily schedule has few transitions - children need time for uninterrupted work and extended time for involvement in purposeful activity. Teachers share equitably in planning, documentation, curriculum development, and parent contacts.

**The role of the teacher in the learning process.** It is important to consider how each individual staff member approaches learning necessary to re-examine our own assumptions about how children (and adults) learn. Within this approach, importance is placed on following the child's cues, listening to children, provoking thinking and documenting efforts, using the child's interests as a primary source for curriculum.

**The role of the child in the learning process.** Teachers ask lots of open-ended questions, asking "why's?" to provoke and extend children's thinking about a topic or subject. Children's work is valued and given worth by the teachers. Children are encouraged to "sketch" their ideas on paper as a way of expressing their thinking across mediums and to engage in curriculum projects that extend their understanding of concepts and ideas.

**The reverence for the physical environment.** Our environment is "softened," with attention to indirect and natural lighting, use of creative materials, documentation boards, display boards, photographs of children at work, children's artwork, glass bottles with colored water, lamps and rugs, more muted use of colors, materials that are primarily "life skills" focused, glass plates, wood and metal (little plastic), mirrors, light tables, wooden chairs and tables, etc. Note the importance of the environment's messages to children and how we include children in set-up and preparation of the environment.

**Note:** Please see the following sections entitled From Theory to Practice and Assumptions About Learning (as well as sample competencies from the DRDP which can be found at www.drdpsr.org) as sources of additional information from which our approach to early learning, curriculum development, and child assessment can be better understood. Understanding how children learn and documenting what children learn is our essential endeavor. All Center families are invited to be partners with us in this process!

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

The orientation of the Child Development Center at MiraCosta College draws heavily from the psychodynamic theory of Erikson and the cognitive developmental theories of both Piaget and Vygotsky. The establishment of trust and support of autonomy are cornerstones of our program’s philosophy, while an emphasis upon a sensorimotor base of active exploration and experimentation serves as the basis for our curriculum development. In organizing our activities, there is an attempt to bridge the theoretical-practical gap and include a wide range of developmental concepts. Children, parents, and students are viewed as active learners, each contributing to overall program success as well as individual child and family progress. The following assumptions are drawn from theories of development and learning which integrate behavioral biology, cognitive developmental perspective, humanistic psychology, and psychodynamic theory:

**Behavior Biology** (Ames, Gesell)

- A child is born with unique genetic potential that influences her temperament, learning style, and rate of maturation and development.
**Cognitive Development** (Piaget, Vygotsky)
- A child's innate capacities in conjunction with her environment produce qualitatively different stages of learning and development.
- A child's thinking differs both qualitatively and quantitatively from that of an adult.
- A very young child learns through concrete experience; exploration of her world grows to include non-physical mental action.
- A child grows optimally when her own ideas and inventions, curiosity, initiative, and creativity are encouraged and supported by adults.
- Learning is a social activity that is facilitated by the presence of a more experienced adult or child.
- All areas of development - including physical, social, emotional, and intellectual – are interrelated.
- Learning is a lifelong process, not a product, and occurs at different rates and in different forms throughout the lifespan.

**Humanistic Psychology** (Rogers, Barth)
- Each child is a unique individual with her own perceptions, feelings, and capabilities.
- A child learns best when she has a positive self-concept.
- Positive self-concept allows a child to take risks and challenges, to accept and learn from her failures, and to work towards behavioral and developmental change.
- Self-initiated learning involves the whole child - her feelings and intellect - and is the most pervasive and permanent mode of learning.
- A child is learning to value and respect others people's feelings and to experience life as interesting, significant, and worth living.
- A child needs opportunities for interaction with peers, adults, younger and older children in order to begin to develop significant lasting human relationships, respect for differences among people, and a sense of mortality.

**Psychodynamic Theory** (Freud, Erikson)
- A child learns best in a safe, secure, and supportive environment.
- Each child is dealing with issues of trust, sex-role identity, attachment-separation, adaptation, autonomy, initiative, adequacy, self-control, and relatedness.
- A child's emotional, social, and moral reasoning is qualitatively different from an adult's and produces qualitatively different stages of development.
- Play provides the vehicle for children to indirectly or symbolically reveal the conflicts they are feeling, to try out different roles, and to act out potentially aggressive or destructive feelings.

**ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT LEARNING**
- Children learn better through concrete, hands-on experience
- Children think learning is exciting and new when they can be involved
- Children learn by example through observation and modeling
- Children learn better when they can relate to the materials being presented
- Children are motivated to learn through their personal interests
- Teaching and learning are as much about the process as the product
- Learning is more than memorization; it implies understanding
- Children are learning most of the time, whether intended or unintended material
- The degree of learning is closely related to personal interest and motivation
- Hands-on activities are essentially the most beneficial method of learning
- All children have the capacity to learn
• If a child is labeled, eventually the child will conform to that label
• Spontaneous play promotes developmental skills for later in life
• Attitudes in the classroom will be influenced by situations in the home
• Preconceived notions by the self and others can become a self-fulfilling prophecy and can affect learning positively or negatively
• Children learn constantly throughout the day, through interactions with other children, teachers, and parents
• All children can learn; and teachers are responsible for finding the ways
• Teachers must challenge children’s preconceived ideas about the world, but must also find ways to support children in their development of new understandings
• Anything can be interesting to learn
• Children learn in different ways, shapes, and forms
• Children learn better when they can relate the information to their life
• When children can relate information to their life, they enjoy learning more

• When a child is learning, s/he builds on previous experience and knowledge
• Children learn best at their own pace and learning style
• Children learn through peer interaction
• Children construct their own knowledge based on their individual perspective(s)