

St. Maurice Daycare Infant Curriculum Statement



St. Maurice Daycare is a Catholic daycare which provides an optimum learning, safe, nurturing and stimulating environment without formal teaching of standards. We aim to develop infants emotionally, socially, intellectually, and physically through our caring routines, exploration, play, positive interactions and relationships done all throughout the day based on the developmental needs and strengths of infants at their very young age. We incorporate these through emergent curriculum approach and the religious programming which is based on monthly themes and the inclusion of Virtues.

We have two full time caregivers in the room. These educators create special relationships and bond with the four infants. They get to know the infants as well as their families' connection which contributes to a positive interaction during greeting and departing, diapering, at meal time, and naps. This has been fully attained in the presence of the two caregivers providing care to the four infants. We ask questions and continuously read each infant's cues. We continuously encourage infants to engage themselves in play activities with one another and with other children in the whole daycare as well. We prepare activities to enhance their physical, fine motor and gross motor skills. We do this by sitting with the infants at eye level, either on the floor or at the meal table. We always comment using short simple words on what the infant is doing, label their feelings, experiences and actions. In this way, infants learn social and emotional skills such as sharing, patience in turn taking, cooperation, conflict resolution and independence; cognitive skills such as creativity, problem solving and retention of basic information.

We set up a safe learning environment that is well prepared, supportive of each infant's needs, learning abilities, interests and development, for example, we make sure that all toys are adequate size to ensure no possibility of choking. We keep the shelves filled with enough toys and material to keep children engaged but not overwhelmed. Age appropriate, multiple and multicultural materials are available to enhance their learning whenever possible, such as toy dishes, telephones, dress up clothes, types of transportation toys, musical instruments, puzzle, carpentry tools and dramatic play clothes. We also ensure we have more than one toy for all areas so children have a choice in which toys to play with and it provides more opportunities to explore and create when there are multiples available. Since sharing is hard at this age it lowers the chances of children struggling over a toy. Play time is flexible to children's interest and choice as they can access all the materials provided for them. A toy rotation is done regularly for variety of play equipments and to prevent clutter in the limited space we have. Infants spend time daily in the gym, here the children have the opportunity to use their gross motor skills where they can run, jump, hop, catch and throw a ball and take part in other physical movement and games such as bean bag toss, hula-hoops, dancing, obstacle course games. They also spend time in the science room, where the children explore related toys and materials and books such as five senses, weather, counting, stacking, bead mazes and nature. Open ended materials, such as boxes, feathers and scarves are also available to sustain and develop the infant's interest and new skills by provide hands on experiences as they use their senses. All these factors contributed to infant's pursuit to investigate their environment as part of exploration and play.

Infant's daily learning experiences are shared with parents directly by the teachers through verbal communication at the end of the day. We also complete an "All About My Day"

journals that provide information on what they ate, toileting routine and general health, safety and mood. Our monthly newsletter and annual parent conferences are other forms of communication. Our office sends regular emails regarding any upcoming events. This helps us build a relationship with our all of our families. Families are encouraged to share their family's beliefs and values about infant rearing practices at home as they start in our facility. To help us better understand parents, we encourage parents to participate in multicultural days and share communication about their family through pictures and stories. We also invite parents in the room to participate in any events we may have.

Observation notes are posted and used as the basis in planning and implementing age appropriate activities. Photos of infants engaging in those learning opportunities are posted in each classroom for parents' information. The duration of developmental activities changes depending on their level of interest. The infant's art related to the planned activities are exhibited in the classroom's bulletin board to showcase their work. All staff use planning sheets to document the activities. Planning sheets are kept in the classroom's project planning binder. Likewise, the different learning centres and toys in each classroom are rotated and changed to support and enhance the interests of the infants. We purchase new toys semi-annually and as needed or if the children's interest is demonstrated.

The daily schedule is set up to provide our staff to have as much quality time as possible with the children. We have a caretaker complete all heavy cleaning daily, to ensure staff are responsible for maintenance but not heavy cleaning while caring for the infants. We also have a certified kitchen staff preparing, delivering and serving all food into the infant room, so caregivers can focus on serving and interacting with the children at that time. Our schedule is flexible, children can nap when they need and take the time they need to finish a meal, or relax with a book. We do this by having two caregivers with four infants for the majority of the day.

We also incorporate the similarities and differences of each infant, families and communities as part of multiculturalism such as getting information from the families about their culture, practices, and sharing it during group time; inviting parents to come and speak about their culture to the classroom; wearing cultural attire and sometimes bringing cultural food for children and staff to try; listening different stories from the countries where infants in the room came from and infants and teachers dancing to multicultural music; calling parents on first name basis.

As a Catholic daycare, we also provide learning opportunities on spiritual-moral development. We do this through the inclusion of virtues, implementation of age appropriate religious activities throughout the day, visits to the Church and teaching of prayers. We continuously encouraged the infants to learn and practice the Gospel values and virtues as they engaged themselves in different play activities. In doing so, we are opening up the love of Christ to each one of them.

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