

# TYPES OF CARE AND PHILOSOPHIES

## TIPOS DE CUIDADO INFANTIL Y SUS FILOSOFÍAS

CRC BULLETIN #123

Early Childhood Programs can take place in a wide variety of settings and group sizes. They can take place in family child care homes, centers, playgroups or cooperatives.

### TYPES OF CARE

Family Child Care Homes are licensed programs that operate in the caregiver's own home and are regulated by the state. Some family child care providers include children as part of their extended family; others run their programs like a preschool which just happens to be a home setting. There are no educational requirements for obtaining a family child care license. However, all licensed providers are required to take a 15-hour child care health and safety course which includes CPR and first aid. They also need a fingerprint clearance and a TB test. Family child care providers come in a variety of sizes and age configurations:

- A "small" family child care is licensed to care for six to eight children; different age configurations are allowed depending on the number and ages of children in care.
- A "large" family child care is licensed to care for twelve to fourteen children; the provider must have a full-time assistant; different age configurations are allowed depending on the number of children in care.

Child Care Centers are programs licensed by the state of California to care for 12 or more children in a group setting. Infants, toddlers, preschool or school-age children may all receive care at a child care center. Centers are usually located in public and private schools, religious facilities, or buildings owned or leased by the provider. Most centers are licensed to care for children age two years and up. Children are typically separated by age and licensing requires staff to have specific education for working with each age group.

Cooperatives are typically State licensed programs that require parents to actively participate in classroom activities and/or administrative meetings.

License Exempt Care means that the provider is

not required to be licensed by the state of California. Exempt care providers; babysitters, nanny's and au pairs care for the children of one other family besides their own and may care for the children in their own home or in the other families home. While there are no licensing requirements for license exempt providers parents can request that the provider register his or her name with the TrustLine Registry. All child care providers listed with TrustLine have submitted their fingerprints to the California Department of Justice and have no disqualifying criminal convictions or child abuse reports in California.

You can call TrustLine at 1-800-822-8490

### PHILOSOPHIES

The philosophy of a program will explain the fundamental feeling that the owner, director and staff have regarding appropriate experiences for children. Most facilities have their philosophies written out in a parent handbook or other informational material.

Very often, a child care setting will include a mixture of these philosophies. Most early care and education professionals have been exposed to information about the various learning theories and use what they believe to work best with the children in their classroom, sometimes borrowing a little from each of the philosophies.

The most important element in any program is the strength and quality of the staff. Teachers should be friendly and caring. Your goals for your child and the program's goals should be similar. You should consider the needs of your child and what you want from the program before choosing a child care setting.

### ACADEMIC

These programs emphasize academic skills and preparation for elementary school. This type of program will be more structured with various activities taking place at set times. There will be an emphasis on learning numbers, colors, alphabet, and early math and reading. Children learn through practice and repetition.

*"The mission of Community Resources for Children is to provide resources for the early care and education of children in Napa County"*

## Montessori

In Italy, in 1907, Maria Montessori opened a preschool called Casa di Bambini. She designed materials, classrooms, and a teaching procedure that focused on the “sequential steps of learning.” Maria Montessori developed a set of learning materials that are still used widely today. One of her most valuable contributions was a theory of how children learn. She believed that any task could be reduced to a series of small steps. By using this process, children could learn to sweep a floor, dress themselves, or multiply numbers. Montessori’s approach to learning has had a continuing influence on education since those early years. Of her work, three features stand out: 1) adapting school work to the individual rather than molding the child to fit the curriculum 2) insisting on freedom for children in selection of materials and choice of activities 3) training of the senses and practical life issues. Children work with specialized materials that are designed to be self-correcting. Independence and self-confidence is developed through completing specific tasks.

## DEVELOPMENTAL

These programs base their curriculum on developmental principles and beliefs about the way in which children grow and learn. The classroom is usually arranged to include several activity centers: an indoor block area, dramatic play area, book corner and art center. The children also have easy access to outdoor play areas with lots of time for climbing, digging in sand, riding bikes and general exploration. Children have plenty of free choice as to the activities they participate in. Activities will be loosely structured. These programs are often described with phrases such as: developmentally appropriate activities, activity oriented curriculum, and teaching the whole child. The teachers use observation and interest and abilities of the children, as well as individual needs in order to determine the curriculum. A major goal is appropriate social interaction. This type of preschool program is based on the theories of famous educators such as Dewey and Piaget.

## Reggio Emilia

Some of the key elements of this philosophy are education based on relationships, communication networks and interaction among children working in small groups. Proponents of this philosophy believe that we must consider a triad of the center of education, consisting of children, teachers, and families. The goal is to make the school a place of research, learning, revisiting, reconsideration, and reflection. The aim is to create a school where

children, teachers, and families feel a sense of well-being. Active exploration and creativity by teachers and children proceed without complete certainty but with a shared idea of the point of destination. The supportive atmosphere of the school is open and democratic, inviting exchange of ideas and encouraging closeness between people. The school maintains its effectiveness and a welcoming feeling to all concerned. Communication is the key, with families and teachers sharing ideas, defining goals, time-lines and plans for activities and projects. Each child’s sense of identity is strengthened through recognition by peers and adults.

## Waldorf

In Waldorf philosophy, play is viewed as the work of the young child and the magic of fantasy, so alive in the young child, is an integral part of how the teacher works with the child. Teachers incorporate storytelling and fantasy into the curriculum. Toys in a Waldorf program may be rounds of wood cut from birch logs for house building, seashells, lengths of colored silk or cotton for costuming, or soft cloth dolls with a minimum of detail in faces and clothing, allowing for open-ended imaginative play. The Waldorf philosophy stresses that the child gradually learns to be a social being and that development of the young child in the social realm is as important as anything else we do. The teacher has the role of orchestrating how this happens through modeling good social behavior with the children, through joining together in movement activities, singing or games to develop group consciousness. Teachers also help children learn to humanistically work through disagreements. No early thrust into intellectualism is found in Waldorf. Keeping a child’s healthy imagination alive, as well as nourishing their creative thinking powers lead them toward a healthy and well-rounded adulthood.

For information about specific programs in Napa County that use any of the above philosophies contact a resource and referral coordinator at 707-253-0376.

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