Is the Child Development Lab a Good Place for Children and Their Parents?

The time for a child to attend a preschool, or school overall will eventually come. Parents will have to think about what preschool they want their kids to attend. Parents always want what is best for their kids, and will have to do some research and figure out what is the best school for their kids. There is a program that can help parents decide what preschool is best for their kids. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is a childhood program that accredits preschools. The program has 10 standards, which are the standards that accredit certain preschools. In order for a preschool to be accredited it has to pass all 10 standards.

The California State University Chico has a preschool program located within the school, The Associated Students Child Development Lab (ASCDL). The ASCDL serves children between the ages of 8 weeks to 5 years of age. The lab is run by the student association, and has 4 different rooms. The infant room is for children 8 weeks old to twenty-four months, the blue room is for children of age 2. There are two different rooms for preschool aged children. One is the purple room, and the other one is the Modoc Room. The Modoc Room is located in Room 127 in Modoc Hall. The preschool years are the most important time frame to shape a child’s physical, social emotional and cognitive development, and therefore children in the Modoc room are exposed to these stages.

Children in the Modoc room have many activities that help them enhance their physical development. Physical development is area of development. Physical activity helps children in many ways such as balancing, muscle strengthening, and internal growth. The book *The World of Children* recommends that children should have sixty minutes of structured activity and free play. A healthy diet is also key to having excellent development. From a professional perspective, children should have 3 meals a day plus 2 snacks. Children in this room are offered nutritious meals and snacks, which keeps them on track for healthy physical development. During this stage children develop motor skills, which facilitate their movements.

There are two primary types of motors skills: gross motor skills and fine motor skills. The children in the Modoc room have somewhat mastered the gross motor skill. They are able to run around, jump and stand up. Thought they are able to do these things, they are still in the process of working towards being able to properly throw, catch, and kick a ball. According to an article called “ Physical, Cognitive, and Socioemotional Development in Early Childhood”, Children develop the large muscles first, which then helps them master the fine motor skills. The fine motor skill proves to be the one that children have the most trouble with. The curriculum is set to help these children master this skill. They have the opportunity to color, write, and work with putting small things together.

The secondary stage of early childhood is socioemotional development. This stage includes the child’s experience, expression, and management of their own emotions. During this stage they learn to understand their own feelings, and the feelings of others. Socioemotional development is put to use when role-playing. During role-play, children have the opportunity to practice social interactions. They may or may not encounter a successful playing buddy. This is when they learn to identify and react to different emotions displayed by their peers. The children in the Modoc room have the freedom to role-play or just free play, which both gives them the opportunity to develop their socioemotional skill. They decide whether they want to have solitary, cooperative, parallel, or associative play. It gives the kids freedom to express their emotions without an adult guiding them. Free play along with other activities in the Modoc room offers the kids the time to learn to interact with others, and reactive properly to certain situations.

The curriculum in the Modoc room revolves around physical, socioemotional, and finally cognitive development. Children do many activities that involve speaking, listening, and discovering new things. Circle time is an example of cognitive development because it maintains children involved in listening, speaking, and recalling information that was previously learned. These activities help the children learn new things every day, which builds upon their cognitive development. Piaget’s theory consists of four different stages in the cognitive development. One of the stages is the pre-operational stage, in which children’s thought processes are developing. It is at this time that children’s vocabulary expands, symbolic play emerges, and intuitive thought occurs. Children in this stage are ego centric and don’t consider things from other points of view. They then find out that they are not the center of the world, and other people have different opinions from their own. Symbolic play also occurs, which enables them to use their imagination. They have the opportunity to pretend. Pretending requires them to transform objects and action symbolically. It also requires them to be involved with role taking, problem solving and goal seeking.

As mention above the three primary stages in early childhood are physical, cognitive, and socioemotional development. These stages are very important in early childhood, and therefore should be enforced by parents, teachers, guardians, etc. so that children have a positive learning experience. Children in these stages are encountering many obstacles that they later overcome while experiencing it. They are in the stage where they become more self-sufficient and develop the basic skills needed to care for themselves. Children in these stages need good nutrition to help them develop properly. These stages are very critical and caregivers should not neglect this opportunity. The article mentioned above by Dennis Florio states that negative early experiences could impair a child’s primary stages of development. The ASCDL, specifically the Modoc Room, offers a child the opportunity they need to learn. The curriculum is prepared in a way the kids have hands on experience to help them improve their physical, cognitive, and socio-emotional development. Children in this lab, receive a good nutrition, which benefits their growth. Parents are welcomed and are given feedback on his or her child’s improvement, as well as difficulties. Overall, the ASCDL of California State University Chico is a healthy environment for children and their parents. Some of the standards that NAEYC enforces include community relationships, curriculum, nutrition, teaching, as well as physical environment, leadership, and families. The Modoc room represents a great example of an accredited program. Their nutrition, curriculum, and teachers are qualified to give the children the opportunity to improve their physical, cognitive, and socioemotional development.

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