Chou Thao

Reflective Portfolio

*Programs for Children and Families*

*Students will understand* ***features of model programs*** *for children and families as well as implement* ***developmentally appropriate curriculum*** *activities. Students will* ***evaluate the impact and efficacy*** *of these programs for children, families and communities.*

1. Read and reflect on the statement above. What is your response to what you have learned about programs for children and families since the time you began your higher education experience.
2. Next, what assignments would document what you have written above? Are there assignments from your college courses that would document your growth in the area of programs for children and families?

Many communities have created programs to keep children and youth out of trouble and engaged in activities that help them learn. Programs, whether it be for children or adults, can be use effectively to improve that group of the population. Programs however must be age appropriate for it to be effective. Programs for children with better-trained caregivers appear to be more effective. There is also evidence to suggest that programs are more successful when they have smaller child-to-staff ratios.

I have been taught from my Appropriate Curriculum for Children class to develop appropriate programs for children. I know that an early childhood teacher must carefully and thoughtfully prepare the classroom for developmentally appropriate play and learning. A quality environment for young children does not just happen it requires careful planning and a considerable amount of work. A good environment must have personal space for not only the children but also the teachers. For example, a cubby for every child would be that child’s personal space. A quality environment must have an art center; a manipulative center; a literacy center; a block center; a dramatic play center such as a house keeping center; a music center and also a science center. The equipment and materials must be safe, durable, enhance self-concept, encourage cooperative play and must allow children to play with minimal adult supervision. The most important thing about developing appropriate programs for young children is that the environment is safe for the children. For example, the environment must be clean and the play dough must be non-toxic. These are some of the things that we as professionals working with children must consider when developing programs for children.

I have grown in the areas of programs for children and families. I know the benefits that effective programs can have on the development of children. I have been taught to develop programs for children from my Appropriate Curriculum for Children class. In my Appropriate Curriculum for Children class our final project was to work in groups to design and plan a developmentally appropriate environment for preschoolers. For this project our program was called Sunshine Kidz Pre-school. We developed the philosophy, mission statement, goals and objectives for our program. We describe in writing our programs physical indoor and outdoor environment. We developed our programs daily routine. We also developed a one week theme for our program. Our theme was Hawaiian. We developed five activities for our theme. For example, activity 3 was music and movement. The objective was to sing and move: If you’re happy and you know it, do the hulas (Shake, Shake).

There are assignments that document what I have written above. One assignment that documents my growth in the area of programs for children is my DAP TOWN: Final Project. This project taught me to carefully and thoughtfully plan/prepare the classroom for developmentally appropriate play and learning. Another assignment that documents my growth in the area of programs for children is my Child Development Practicum individual inquiry project. This project taught me how to plan and implement a one week long inquiry on Life Science. I developed a Life Science area outside the classroom. The third assignment that documents my growth in the area of programs for children is my observation notes from my Appropriate Curriculum for Children class. Observation notes are a tool I will use to help me develop appropriate programs for children.