

FUN AND STIMULATING EARLY CHILDHOOD ENVIRONMENTS

What are best practices working with
the youngest children in the industry?

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OVERVIEW

- ◉ Resources Introduction
- ◉ 2 Main Types of Environments (for children)
- ◉ Areas of consideration for each type

RESOURCES

- ◉ NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standard
- ◉ ECERS (Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale)
- ◉ ITERS (Infant-Toddler Environment Rating Scale)

CONTEXT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The physical environment sets the stage and creates the context for everything that happens in any setting—a classroom, a play yard, a multipurpose room. A high-quality environment welcomes children; engages children in a variety of activities; provides space for individual, small-group, and large-group activities; and generally supports the program's philosophy and goals. Ultimately, the physical environment must convey values and messages about who is welcomed, what is important, and what the beliefs are about how children learn. (Sharon Ritchie, Barbara Willer. NAEYC publications)

WHAT WE ARE CONSIDERING

- ⦿ Physical Environment
 - Space
 - Furnishings
 - Toys, Materials and Equipment
- ⦿ Emotional Environment (or how it “feels”)
 - Personal Care Routines
 - Listening & Talking
 - INTERACTIONS
 - Program Structure

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- ⦿ Child’s Perspective - most important thing to consider for any space! *(Get on the floor ☺)*
- ⦿ Indoor Space - what do you have control over?
- ⦿ Furniture for Routine Care and Play
- ⦿ Provisions for Relaxation and Comfort
- ⦿ Room Arrangement
- ⦿ Display for Children
- ⦿ Space for Privacy
- ⦿ Space for Gross Motor Play
- ⦿ Gross Motor Equipment
- ⦿ How can you consider needs for personal care routines and the space available?

EMOTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

- ⦿ Personal Care Routines: greeting/departing, meals/snacks, nap/rest time, toileting/diapering, health practices, safety practices
- ⦿ Language-Reasoning/Listening-Talking
- ⦿ Activities (how set up and facilitated?): fine motor, art, music/movement, blocks, dramatic play, sand/water, nature/science, math/number, use of TV/Video/Computers, promoting acceptance of diversity
- ⦿ Interactions
- ⦿ Program Structure: schedule, free play, group time, provisions for children with disabilities

WRAP-UP

- ⦿ Further information and resources:
 - Early Childhood Environment Grants through OCC (Office of Child Care)
 - UAEYC: email Katie Ricord @ uaeyc.mail@gmail.com