

TUXEDO COMMUNITY CENTRE PRESCHOOL – CURRICULUM STATEMENT

PURPOSE

This statement is designed to show parents how the Early Childhood Educators at Tuxedo Preschool consider three key components as they organize opportunities for your children to learn in a play-based curriculum throughout the day.

1. Foster strong interactions and building relationships with the children and families.
2. Design the preschool environment to support learning through play.
3. Develop programs that offer planned and spontaneous activities and foster all areas of development.

It will break down the daily schedule and show the intent and purpose to each part of the curriculum. The result being a very positive preschool experience for the children and families involved in our programs.

INTRODUCTION

At Tuxedo Preschool we have a 3 year old and a 4 year old program. Each program has two Early Childhood Educators/ECE's (and/or Child Care Assistant) working with the children and a parent volunteer to assist as directed by the ECE's. Both programs follow a similar approach in the way they design the two hours that your child spends at the Preschool.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND PROGRAM

Circle Time: *approx. 15 minutes*

The lead ECE directs circle time and introduces the topic or theme for that day. The Child Care Assistant is gently encouraging children to participate, listen, sit quietly or wait their turn. The themes are based on observations, interactions and conversations shared with the children. We find out what they are interested in and what their capabilities are, we choose topics that many children seem to enjoy. Circle provides an opportunity to explore these topics. It provides time to talk about different families and cultures i.e. Greek, Italian, Jewish, Muslim, etc. We learn different names of family members i.e. Papa, Baba, Nona, and Zayde. It is a time to talk about different celebrations families share i.e. Hanukah, Eid, Christmas, Name Day, etc. Children bring items to show that are part of different cultures i.e. dreidels, menorah, traditional clothing, etc. We try to say simple words from different languages i.e. "Hello", "Bonjour", "Ciao" or count in different languages i.e. Greek, Italian, Spanish, French, etc. Circle also provides opportunities for parents to come and talk about the job they do or to show us a hobby they might enjoy i.e. Doctor, Dentist, wood carving, knit, etc. ECE's may invite a special visitor that compliments a theme i.e. Living Prairie Museum, Humane Society, etc. The time spent at circle is adjusted depending on the age of the children and the abilities within the group. At the end of circle time there is a craft activity introduced.

Craft Time: *varies*

Craft materials are prepared in advance and compliment the theme for that day or week. Items are set out each morning prior to children arriving. ECE's are available to gently assist, encourage and guide the children as needed. i.e. help with names, tasks such as holding scissors properly, etc. The goal is to offer children an opportunity to practice their fine motor skills i.e. beginning printing skills, proper grip, cutting with scissors, etc. Children finish craft at their own pace, in their own way. Once the children complete their craft they move on to Free Play.

Free Play: *approx. 45 minutes*

Free play and the Child: Research shows that children learn best through play and that all preschool curriculum should be play-based. The ECE's at Tuxedo Preschool understand the importance for play and its role in child development. During free play, the children have the choice to explore a number of different activities and centres. These centres change based on the interests, abilities and needs of the children as well as the program themes. Free play is an opportunity for the children to practice social skills and language as they interact with their peers. It is an opportunity to foster the development of the whole child as they explore, discover and interact in the preschool environment. The following are examples of activity choices and the kinds of learning that takes place:

- sand and water play which offers various funnels, scoops and containers, where children learn concepts such as float, sink, full and empty.
- art area which offers scissors, pencils, glue, markers, paper, pom pom, cotton balls, glitter, etc. This is where children will be encouraged to express his or her creativity in their own way, not according to a preconceived 'picture'. The goal is to have the child feel good about their accomplishment. The materials are available on shelves and tables for the children to choose on their own.

- quiet play area which offers a variety of books, puzzles and small manipulative toys like lacing toys and small building blocks, where children can practice fine motor skills as they piece together items, manipulate items and learn problem solving skills.
- dramatic play centre which offers dress up clothes, dishes, dolls and strollers, where children can use their imagination to role play and learn about the world around them in a very social way.
- block and construction centre with various kinds of blocks, tools and construction hats, where children can use their imagination to build and create structures as they learn concepts such as balance and size
- science area with items such as magnets, things from nature, colored blocks and magnifying glasses, where children can explore and discover.
- playdoh table with playdoh and toys such as rolling pins, cookie cutters and a small oven, where children practice fine motor skills as they manipulate the dough and use their imagination to create things.

Free Play and the Early Childhood Educator: The ECE's have an important role in the free play part of the program. They may be sitting at a table or on the carpet with a group of children interacting and exploring the materials and items the children have chosen to play with. They may be busy offering children and opportunity to bake, conduct a science experiment, play a game, etc. ECE's use this time to expand on conversation and foster language by using open ended questions i.e. "Why do you think..." and thought provoking comments i.e. "I wonder what you see when you visit there". They may take on a role in the play in order to extend play. ECE's will watch for children who appear lost and help them focus and find something to do. This may be a time when the ECE observes an opportunity for a spontaneous activity i.e. children pretending to sing in a band so the ECE's give them paper rolls and tinfoil to make microphones. The goal during free play is to have all children involved in play. We want them engaged, keeping busy, having fun, learning and interacting with their friends. This will help them feel comfortable and confident enough to leave their parents and caregivers each day they come to preschool.

Clean up Routine and Transition times:

Transitions are the times spent moving from one activity to another. They can be difficult and stressful for preschool children so ECE's plan smooth transitions using simple teaching strategies. They may use songs, finger plays, short games/movement activities during a transition. ECE's plan clean up routines after enough time has been allotted to play and after children have been given a warning. We use indirect guidance techniques like colored baskets, labels on bins, etc. to encourage independence during this transition and always praise children and their efforts. This routine helps children learn to be responsible and feel good about themselves as they work together. After clean up they head over to the carpet circle to join the lead ECE for calendar time.

Calendar and Story time: *Approx. 15 minutes*

The ECE plans a short movement activity to allow children time to expend some energy before they need to settle and listen at calendar and story. Calendar time is an opportunity for the ECE to help children learn days of the week, months of the year and talk about the four seasons. Once calendar time is complete the ECE reads the children the story she has chosen for that day. The ECE may choose the story based on interests of the children, the age and attention span of the group and the theme of the day/week. Story is a time for children to practice listening skills, make predictions i.e. what will happen next, relate to character and events in a story, etc. After the story children are transitioned to wash hands for snack. Small groups of children are guided to the sink to wash their hands instead of one large group of children lining up to wash all at one time.

Snack Time: *approx. 15 minutes*

Children are free to choose their own place at the snack tables. Snack is set out for the children prior to them sitting down. One adult sits at snack table to ensure children are safe but also to reinforce table manners and encourage conversation. Snack time is a time for children to discover likes and dislikes, learn about texture, taste, etc. It is a time to engage in conversation and practice language while building relationships with peers and ECE's. As children finish snack they are encouraged to clean up their space and to choose a book or puzzle while they wait for their friends to finish.

Gym/Outdoor Play: approx. 15 minutes

Children are lead downstairs to a gym area or outside with ECE at the front of the line and the assistant at the end. The gym environment is set up with toys and equipment i.e. tunnels, balls, hoops, ride on cars, etc. If the children are going outside, they would be encouraged to find their jackets and dress themselves. ECE's would praise their efforts, help assist them and teach them to be independent by showing them how to dress. Gym time/outdoor playtime is a time for children to practice large motor skills such as climbing, running, hopping, jumping, etc. It provides children with an opportunity to practice balance and coordination. It may be a time when the ECE plays a cooperative movement game. These games help children learn to take turns, cooperate, move their bodies in a variety of ways, understand rules, practice listening skills, etc.

Home time:

This is an opportunity for ECE's to acknowledge parents by name and share in short conversations with them. It is a time when the ECE's remind parents of upcoming events or pass along information like monthly newsletters, field trip forms, monthly calendars, etc. These newsletters provide parents with updates about the kinds of learning taking place in the preschool room as well as provide them with information about their child's program i.e. upcoming events, Emergency Evacuation Procedures, etc. Home time is also opportunity for the ECE's to discuss a child's day or give them brief updates about their child's progress. Information that needs to be communicated that may take more time is shared through emails, phone calls, or arranged meetings. A progress report may be completed at a parent requests i.e. future kindergarten program, speech therapist, child guidance, etc. ECE's understand the important role of the parent in a child's life and therefore keep communication with parents open and ongoing.

CONCLUSION:

The programs offered at tuxedo preschool are successful due to efforts made by our team of ECE's. The ECE's at Tuxedo Preschool are dedicated individuals with knowledge of Early Childhood Development. They understand the importance of play in a child's preschool program and recognize the importance of building strong relationships with children and families. We want families to feel good about the preschool programs they chose for their children and want children to know that Tuxedo Preschool is a wonderful place to learn, play and grow.