

Classroom Environment Considerations

Classroom Behavior Concerns

- When there is a concern in the classroom, (a behavior issue) always look to the classroom environment before looking to the children.
- Use your environment to help solve conflicts. Discuss with the children how they want to use the space. Keep in mind the size of the space. Is there enough room for groups of children?
- Consider your intention- your message about the space radiates to the children.

Power Sharing

- In power sharing, “we share with children the opportunity to think about the job of looking after people” –Faith Woolson –this includes becoming aware of rule making
- Allowing children to own the space (setting up and rules for using it, upkeep and further discussions for room arrangements, time organization with the children)
- Who is the room for? Make problems not be problems. Have materials that are child sized (brooms, dustpans, etc...) Teaching chores helps children learn how to care for their space and for their friends.
- Re-assessing as needed: Is this working in my individual group? At this time? How can I make it safe? What’s my long term goal? What’s needed right now?

Help from others

- When you come up against a brick wall ask for fresh input from someone who is not in your space to observe and offer solutions.
- Ask your families and community to help build your intentional space. What do they feel is an important aspect of a child haven?

Elements to Create a Safe, Guiding, Loving Space

- ❖ Light—lamps, battery powered “candles”, electric lights off and natural light coming in, season change considerations
- ❖ Patterns of calm-
- ❖ Harmonious textures—are they interesting? Or soothing? Using fabrics to create space. (Please contact your local Fire Department for more information. The fabric may need to be flame retardant. If that is the case, you may choose to use fabric in a limited amount due to the flame retardant application is chemical laden.)
- ❖ Colors of nature- greens (leaves, grass, pine trees, moss, lichen), blues (ocean, sky), browns(dirt, bark), oranges (sky, flowers, fruit), soft or deep purples (flowers and vegetables), crisp reds (fruit, birds)
- ❖ Sources of scent- herbs, herbal sachets, essential oils, cooking scents, indoor plants, gardens outside and in—cleaning the air, natural wood polish, lemon and lavender.
- ❖ Restful rooms- elements that create calm, quiet places. Music, scents and guided meditation are very beneficial.
- ❖ Rooms for the mind- rooms that engage but are not over-stimulating—think “homey”, comfort, not “busy”
- ❖ Pleasures of the table- creating tables that welcome you to join them. Use cloth table cloths, small vase of flowers, even a battery operated candle would add a sense of calm to the space.
- ❖ Gateways to sleep- elements that create restfulness and peace, lavender oil/natural lotion/lavender eye pillows, chamomile flowers or tea as potpourri, or in beanbags, herbal bean bags, made with tea bags in them, as well as music and white noise.
- ❖ Bathroom Balm- recipes, scents, elements that help nourish and protect
- ❖ Feng sui elements: Earth, air, fire and water—natural materials, wood, metal, acrylic/glass, cotton, feathers, water
- ❖ Eating Spaces—should encourage comfortable, relaxed dining experiences—think Reggio with real dishes, table cloths, child sized dishes, silverware, etc...