AGENDA

• Stimulating and responding to Developmental Progress:
  – Sensory programming
  – Physical environment and its impact on learning: fundamental design outcomes

• In class assignment: Environmental Checklist
For Session 5 on October 6

Please bring:
• 5 household objects

Consider:
• the 5 senses
• Safety for infants and toddlers
Watch the video. What do you notice about the physical environment?
Sensory Program Planning + Environment
Sensory Program Planning

Effective programming in infant and toddler rooms:
• starts with observations of children’s play that are then used to create learning experiences
• observations consider children’s development across different domains
• sensory based
• NOTE: programming is usually created with a focus based on one specific observation of a child/skill, but the LO will always facilitate growth in many other areas of development.
Sensory Program Planning

Infants and toddlers learn best through their 5 senses. Therefore, always consider:

– What senses are infants and toddlers using within their environment?
– What is accessible for each child? (e.g. 6 month old vs. 12 month old vs. 30 months)
– Level of stimulation varies for each child
– How much control/independence children have of their environment?
Consider…

• Watch the following video
• What sensory experiences are available to the toddlers?
Sensory Program Planning

During the LO, we take the time to observe again:

– What did the children do? Were the objectives of the LO met?
– Did the plan work? (i.e. our set-up, our teaching strategies: *what we say and what we do*) Were they effective in supporting the child(ren) to meet goals and objectives?
– Were the materials effective in supporting the child(ren) to meet goals and objectives?
– In hindsight, would you modify the LO in any/all areas based on our observations of the activity?
– What would you do in the future to extend learning?

Note: p.2 of the LO sheet but also = program planning
The Physical Environment

• Its impact on learning: fundamental design outcomes

• Working with the physical environment
What you may already know...

• Layout: Eating
• Layout: Sleeping
• Layout: Diapering and Toileting
  + caregiving as curriculum
Layout: Eating

- Infant room: refrigerator, appliance for warming food, counter space, food charts
- Toddler room: bottles/cups
- Utensils, unbreakable dishes, bottles and cups may be stored in the room if space provides.
- **Child-size tables** and chairs that can accommodate children are necessary and support independence.
- Children benefit in small group interactions with an adult situated in a comfortable way.

From: Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Gonzalez-Mena and Eyer
Layout: Sleeping

- Infants: cribs
- Toddlers: cots/pads on the floor
- Children should not share sleeping arrangements or bedding.
- Note: cultural expectations may vary from childcare practices

From: Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Gonzalez-Mena and Eyer
Layout: Diapering

- Diaper area: counter or table to change children
- All materials needed to change infants and toddlers should be stored in the room and within arm’s reach so that adults can remain available to children.
- Diapering creams and diapers, cleaning products for disinfecting after each diaper change and sanitary storage for soiled diapers should all be accessible in the change room.
- A sink with warm water, soap and towels should be located in the room and should be away from food storage or preparation areas.

From: Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Gonzalez-Mena and Eyer
Layout: Toileting

- Child-sized toilets support toilet learning.
- A child-sized sink should also be available with access to soap and paper towels to support independence and self-help skills.
- This area should be centrally located to the play space when children are indoors and outdoors.


From: Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Gonzalez-Mena and Eyer
- http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=85eeebfc2bb31410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD
- http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentonly?vgnextoid=84885ce6dfb31410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD
More helpful links: hygiene

- [http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/wellbeings/information_forPosting_and_sharing](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/wellbeings/information_forPosting_and_sharing)
- [http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentsonly?vgnextoid=ef462d6855e02410VgnVCMI0000071d60f89RCRD&vgnextfmt=default](http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contentsonly?vgnextoid=ef462d6855e02410VgnVCMI0000071d60f89RCRD&vgnextfmt=default)
Physical environment and its impact on learning

Louis Torelli, M.S.Ed., child development environmental designer, early childhood educator, a trainer, college instructor, and consultant to childcare providers

Image from: www.youtube.com
According to Louis Torelli:

“A well-designed environment......supports infants’ and toddlers’ emotional well-being, stimulates their senses and challenges their motor skills. A well-designed group care environment promotes children’s individual and social development.”

Retrieved Sept. 28, 2015:
Landscape for Learning: The Impact of Classroom Design on Infants and Toddlers

By Louis Torelli, M.S.Ed., and Charles Durrett

Landscape for Learning: ‘well designed environment; supports emotional well-being, stimulates their senses, challenges their motor skills; highly functional; aesthetically attractive; age-appropriate; child-directed, and teacher-supported; promotes children's individual and social development; the setting, layout, and equipment; safe to explore freely; infants learn to map their environment cognitively, to manipulate it, and to master it’

Landscape for Learning: The Impact of Classroom Design on Infants and Toddlers

By Louis Torelli, M.S.Ed., and Charles Durrett

- Group size
- Room size
- Flooring
- Lighting
- Colour: neutral coloured walls; natural furniture
- Storage
- Ease of supervision
Also consider…

- **Child Care and Early Years Act** came into effect. This new legislation replaces the *Day Nurseries Act*.
- [http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/childcare/)
- [http://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/150137](http://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/150137) *
Assessing the Quality of an Infant-Toddler Environment

• In their book *Dimensions of Teaching-Learning Environments II: Focus on the Day Care*, Elizabeth Jones and Elizabeth Prescott defined five dimensions of a learning environment:
  – Soft-hard
  – Intrusion-seclusion
  – High mobility-low mobility
  – Open-closed
  – Simple-complex


From: Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Gonzalez-Mena and Eyer
Soft-hard

• Soft materials provides a responsive environment

• Indoor environment: Rugs, soft blankets, stuffed animals, cozy furniture, mattresses, pads, cushions, and laps.

• Outdoor environment: grass, sand, water, soft balls, pads, and laps.

• Both environments need smooth surfaces and/or hard floors to offer a contrast for crawling, walking and sensory exploration.
Open-closed

- Open: play materials that can be manipulated in different ways (i.e. I have a choice!)
- Closed: only one way (e.g. puzzles)
- Low open shelves with a variety of toys supports decision making and closed storage may be used as a strategy to reduce choices to maintain an optimum level of stimulation.
- Have a balance of both!

Simple-complex

- Simple – complex: considers number of play materials combined and its capacity to sustain attention/play
- Simple unit: e.g. sand
- Complex unit: e.g. sand + shovels and buckets
- Super unit: e.g. sand + shovels and buckets + water
- With infants/toddlers: start simple and build upwards (scaffold)

Intrusion-seclusion

- Privacy and control over one’s own territory/space
- Consider how space is planned to allow infants/toddlers to have quiet spaces for solitary/independent play or spaces for adult + child to spend time together
- E.g. when parents/guests come into the room
- E.g. Create small spaces: moving couches away from walls, taking doors off lower cabinets, boxes and multi-level spaces, adding canopy

Mobility

- High mobility and low mobility opportunities: freedom children have to move around independently
- Children need a balance of high mobility and low mobility experiences
- E.g. imbalanced: story time, puzzles, sit down ‘circle’
- E.g. balanced: story time, balls, puzzles, circle with variety of songs (fast, slow, sitting, and movement)

Other things to consider in the environment

• Scale
• Aesthetics
• Acoustics
• Order

From: Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Gonzalez-Mena and Eyer
Scale

- Infant and toddler spaces: equipment and design need to reflect their age, development, and size

- Imagine: all adult furniture and equipment
  - Q: what message would that send to the infants and toddlers?

- Ceilings can be lowered. Consider size of shelves, chairs and tables, displays

- POINT: Children should feel capable in spaces that are designed for them.

From: Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Gonzalez-Mena and Eyer
Aesthetics

- Lighting: fluorescent lighting vs. natural lighting
- Consider: position of lighting
- Consider: intensity of lighting
- Opt for: neutral, calm backgrounds
- Consider: plants (safety), clutter
- Caregivers should get down to the child’s eye level to assess the environment from their perspective.

From: Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Gonzalez-Mena and Eyer
Acoustics

• The noise level in infant and toddler rooms is something that must be carefully considered.

• Noise levels can be controlled through:
  – Group size
  – Dividing play spaces
  – Softness in the form of pillows and carpeting to absorb sound
  – Background noises such as adult voice pitch, music

From: Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Gonzalez-Mena and Eyer
Order

• The environment needs to present a sense of order to balance the way children explore. They will dump toys, take things apart and carry things from one end of the room to another.

• This can be done by:
  – Arrangement of furniture, shelves, etc. to set-up play spaces to accommodate 2-3 children at a time
  – Clear pathways
  – Shelves for toys
  – Picture labels on shelves, bins and play areas

From: Infants, Toddlers, and Caregivers: Gonzalez-Mena and Eyer
In class: Environmental Checklist
To do:

• Consider information from the following slides: Fundamental Design Outcomes

• Watch video

• Complete Fundamental Design Outcomes Environmental Checklist – time in-class: one assignment per group (max. 4 per group)

• Due: Session 5, Oct. 6 in class to Cindy at 9:00am
Fundamental Design Outcomes

1. **Emotional Security**: Each child, in particular, infants and toddlers, need to feel “safely relaxed” in their environment in order to acquire security.

Environmental support (Physical features)
- Equipment and furnishings scaled to size
- Transitional entry space in the room so that initial experiences isn’t overwhelming
- Logical, clearly visible order to caregiving system
- Easy access and close location of equipment
- Well designed diapering areas
2. **Softness and Comfort**: A responsive environment provides opportunities not only for active exploration of mind and body, but also chances to recharge and gain reassurance through tactile/sensual experiences.

**Environmental support (Physical features):**
- mats; sand; laps; swings; grass; water; carpeting
- messy creative materials
- adult cozy furniture
- dirt to dig
- animals to hold
- pillows, quilts
- texture materials
- daily sensory activities to support self-directed learning
3. **Health and Safety**: Concern with prevention of infectious diseases and accidents must be balanced with maintaining a warm and sensual, home-like setting

**Environmental support (Physical features):**
- Sink hardware that allows foot/elbow control of faucets or photo-sensitive taps
- Individual tubs set into water table
- Storage units securely attached to walls
- Full spectrum fluorescent lighting
4. **Mobility and Risk-Taking:** Children need to test minds and bodies. Safety at the expense of motor challenges and risk-taking prevents learning, autonomy and responsibility.

**Environmental support (Physical features):**
- Evaluate use and context of equipment
- Equipment scale to size
- Crowd control
- Multi-level physical space; lofts, platforms, steps, pits
- Pull-up bar and mirror for infants
- Array of equipment which can be combined for climbable opportunities
5. **Privacy and Social Space**: Both children and adults need experiences of ALONENESS to ensure the development of the self and individuality.

**Environmental support (Physical features):**

- Provision of “loose parts” (pillows, large waffle blocks, boxes, blankets) for children to create and recreate private areas of stimulus shelters
- Attach hammocks to two walls
- Canopies
- Attach eye screws to walls and corners to allow snap-on curtains
- Curtain partially recessed crawl spaces
- Provide accessible area where each child and adult can keep their own personal belongings
- Design space which supports small group interactions
6. **Order**: Goals of physical and temporal order in the environment should support program values, be understood by adults and children, and reflect on-going developmental changes.

**Environmental support (Physical features):**

- Entries and pathways which direct traffic
- Use of colour or texture to provide visual cue for space boundaries
- Spatial storage arrangements ordered in obvious manner so both adults and children can restore order (pictures, symbols, labels n shelves); reduce “clutter”
- Open storage no higher than three feet) accessible to children
- Closed storage of supplies and equipment for rotation
- Rituals to be consistent despite staff or children turnover
In class: Environmental Checklist

Submit Session 5, Oct. 6 in class to Cindy at 9:00am