



Ask us why our logo is orange.
#EveryChildMatters

SETTING UP THE ENVIRONMENT

INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

Children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems, and make meaning from their experiences – especially when the spaces contain interesting and complex open-ended materials that children can use in many ways - HDLH, pg. 22

WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENT COMMUNICATING TO THE CHILDREN?



- ✓ Is the layout accessible for all children (and their equipment) to engage in all areas of the classroom? Does it discourage running and rough play, yet is not overcrowded with furniture?
- ✓ Is the furniture child-sized and adaptive to fit the needs of all children?
- ✓ What spaces are available for children to work independently in small and large groups? Does the layout allow for uninterrupted play?
- ✓ What spaces exist for children to regulate and engage in quiet play? i.e. Cozy area away from active play areas, books and literacy area for quiet reading, soft furnishings available in other areas of play such the dramatic area, etc.
- ✓ Whose work is being valued? i.e. Are displays mostly children's work and at their eye level?
- ✓ What materials are available for children to explore with throughout the classroom? Are there a variety of open-ended materials? Are the materials developmentally appropriate for the children in the classroom?
- ✓ How is diversity represented and promoted in activities, props, displays, and daily routines?

WHAT DEFINED INTEREST AREAS EXIST FOR CHILDREN TO ENGAGE IN A VARIETY OF LEARNING EXPERIENCES?

Are they clearly defined and organized? (i.e. Block Area, Sensory Area, Dramatic Area etc.)



- Labelled open shelving?
- Labelled containers for toys?
- Non-crowded shelving?
- Play space near toy storage?



INTEREST AREA REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS



✓ **Blocks:** What portion of the day is the block area accessible for? Are various types of blocks available on clearly labeled and accessible shelving?

✓ **Dramatic Play:** How often are materials rotated for maintaining interest and how do they represent diversity?

✓ **Sensory Play:** When and where are sensory experiences (safely) offered? IE. every day, both indoors and outdoors?

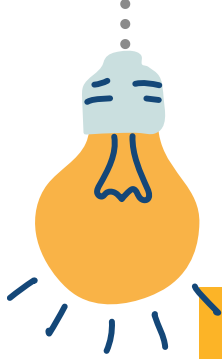
✓ **Science/Nature:** What materials are available for hands-on discovery and exploration? Is there a variety?

✓ **Music/Movement:** When is music available? IE. as a free choice and group time activity?

✓ **Art:** Is there a wide variety of materials available to support creative expression? (i.e. 3D materials, clay, playdough, wood etc.)

✓ **Books/Literacy:** How often are books and other literacy and language materials rotated? How do they relate to current classroom activities?





**SPEAK WITH YOUR QUALITY
FIRST CONSULTANT**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Environment Rating Scales

Rating scales such as ECERS-3, ITERS, SACERS and FCCERS can be used as a resource to reflect on your environment and to assess process quality.

The Power of Purposeful Preschool Environments

RESOURCES AVAILABLE AT THE RESOURCE LIBRARY FOR BORROWING TO SUPPORT YOU IN SETTING UP THE ENVIRONMENT

Loose Parts 3: Inspiring Culturally Sustainable Environments (#11118)

A book containing inspiration and guidance on how to create early childhood environments that are culturally sensitive, promote sustainability and avoid generalization and bias.

Inspiring Spaces for Young Children (#6491)

A book to inspire educators in transforming ordinary classrooms into creative and beautiful learning spaces.

Rating Observation Scale for Inspiring Environments (#6488)

A rating scale that challenges educators to examine their classrooms with an aesthetic lens and get inspired in new and different ways.



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