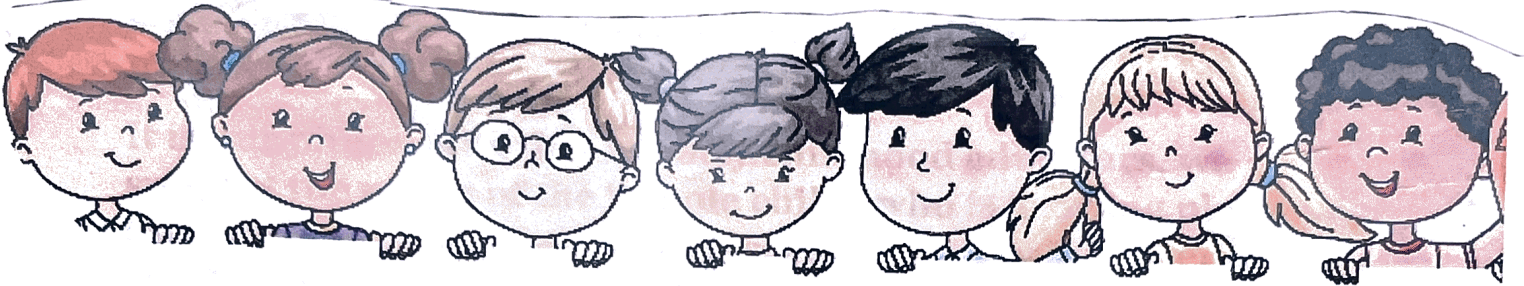


STUDENT OBSERVATION HANDBOOK



**Campus Fun & Learn
Child Development Center
@ Rockland Community College
#845-574-4561**

Goals & Philosophy

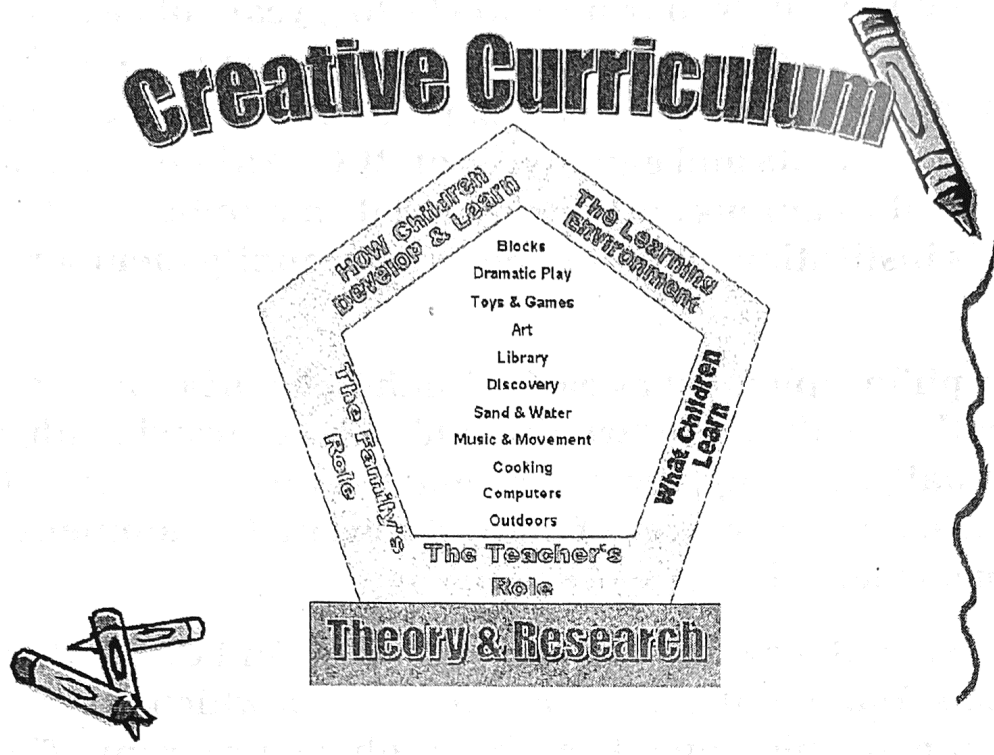
Campus Fun & Learn is a non-profit, fully licensed childcare facility open to children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age. We are located on the Rockland Community College campus and are pleased to serve a richly diverse population of families, many of whom are students and employees of RCC. Although we are located on the campus and accommodate a number of children from this institution, we are open to community members as well.

It is our philosophy that as early childhood educators, we support the needs of the “whole child” who is growing physically, intellectually, socially, creatively, and emotionally. Therefore, children are given choices of many different developmentally appropriate learning activities each day.

We believe that learning can and should be fun! CFL follows the principals found in the *Creative Curriculum* which serve as the foundation of a high-quality early childhood program. The most important goal is to help children become enthusiastic learners. This means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out their ideas and to think their own thoughts. Our goal is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners. We are allowing them to learn at their own pace and in the ways that are best for them. We are encouraging positive habits and attitudes, particularly a positive sense of themselves, which will make a difference throughout their lives. The culmination of these teaching strategies and philosophies is what will help children to develop an intrinsic motivation to learn and succeed.

Creative Curriculum

<http://www.foundationheadstart.org/creativecurriculum/outdoors.html>



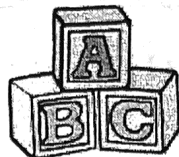
The activities we plan for children, the way we organize the environment, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, and talk with children, are all designed to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give the children a successful start in school.

- We base our curriculum on the most current brain development theory and research on how young children learn.
- Key components of the curriculum are embracing the family's role, the teacher's role, the learning environment, how children develop and learn and what children are learning.
- Taking into account the culmination of the above components, teachers can then use the various learning centers in the classroom to provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences and activities that encourage children to learn in ways that are meaningful to them!

Learning Centers

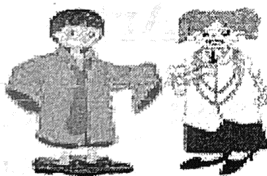
<http://www.foundationheadstart.org/creativecurriculum/outdoors.html>

As you observe, look for what the children are learning in the.....



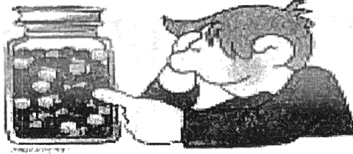
Block Center

When children do this:	they are learning to:
Put blocks in a truck and dump them out	Size, weight and number concepts (Math and Science)
Use blocks and animals to create a zoo	Recreate the world around them (Geography & Social Skills)
Balance one large block on top of another	Control and coordinate muscles (Physical Coordination)



Dramatic Play

When children do this:	they are learning to:
Put on dress up clothes	Use their fine motor skills (Self-help and Writing)
Pretend to be grown-ups	Understanding meaningful experiences (Abstract thinking)
Separate cups and plates at clean-up time	Group objects in categories (Math)



Toys and Games

When children do this:	they are learning to:
Put pegs in a peg board	Eye-hand coordination and Fine motor skills (Reading and Writing Readiness)
Finish a puzzle	Complete a task (Study habits and Self-esteem)
Sort pictures, objects, etc.	Match and Classify (Math)



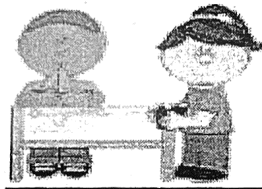
Art

When children do this:	they are learning to:
Make Playdough	Recognize how materials change (Science)
Gather materials for a project	Plan and carry out a task (Independence)
Draw a picture of a person	Use symbols (Math, Reading and Writing readiness)



Library

When children do this:	they are learning to:
Turn pages of a book from beginning to end	Read a book from left to right (Reading and Writing readiness)
Scribble on a paper	Use writing as a means of communication (Reading and Writing readiness)
Listen to a story and talk about what happens	Love books, remember details and express ideas (Language development)



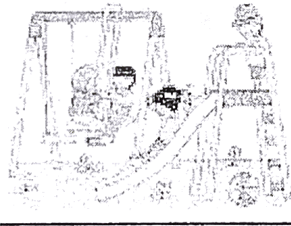
Sand and Water Play

When children do this:	they are learning to:
Make boats sink	Recognize cause and effect (Science)
Play beside each other	Get along with others (Social Skills)
Pour	Small motor/Fine motor Skills (Physical Coordination)



Music and Movement

When children do this:	they are learning to:
Create different sounds (instruments or voice)	Explore cause and effect (Science and Logical Thinking)
Sing or do a fingerplay with other children and the teacher	Participate cooperatively in a group (Social Skills)
Sing and dance	Rhyming, following instructions, gross motor skills



Outdoor Play and Exploration

When children do this:	they are learning to:
Catch and throw balls	Coordinate hand-eye movement (Physical Development)
Talk about changes in plants, people and things outside as seasons change	Observation and Exploration Skills (Science)
Climb on outdoor equipment	Use their bodies in challenging tasks (Self-Esteem and Gross Motor)

This is just a glimpse of the learning that occurs in our classroom centers. Be sure to observe all these “happenings” as well as the caregiver relationships with the children and their families!

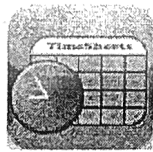
“Play is our brain's favorite way of learning.”

-Diane Ackerman

“Almost all creativity involves purposeful play.”

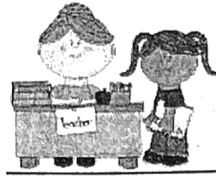
- Abraham Maslow,

American psychologist



Time Sheets

- **Upon entering the building you will be asked to sign our Visitors Log. You will be required to log the time you entered the building, as well as when you leave.**
- **Students must fill out their time sheet each day they observe and have it signed by the cooperating teacher upon departure.**
- **We do not allow observations during rest time as there is little to observe. We also encourage morning observations while a head teacher is present in the classroom.**
- **Any schedule changes should be cleared by the Director.**



Professionalism

- It is important to maintain professional integrity during your time at CFL, as well as when you leave the center.
- When you are working with the children, staff and families, you are treated as a professional educator and should always act accordingly.
- We would like you to greet families and introduce yourself as they enter the classroom. However, we ask that you graciously decline if asked any questions about the child and his/her day. Pleasantly refer them to the teacher for this information.
- Please make sure that any and all discussions you may have with our staff member are of an appropriate nature. The children are always listening and learning from your conversations.
- We ask that staff members and observers do not babysit for families. You are an educator first and this relationship should not involve babysitting.
- There is a fine line between “sharing of important information” and “gossiping”.
- Never discuss a child in front of that child, other children, or other parents.
- Never discuss one parent with another parent.
- Never gossip about staff with other staff members or your peers. If there is a problem to be addressed, please feel free to come to me.
- Remember to protect the confidentiality of the children and their families throughout your time observing at the center. Please do not use a child’s last name in any of your

documentation or discussions. We ask that any and all discussions of your observations occur **ONLY** in a classroom setting for educational purposes.

- There is absolutely **NO** cell phone use during your observations. This includes taking phone calls, texting, photography or recording devices.
- The staff lounge is for staff members only. You may keep your coats and bags in there if you like but the lounge is not to be used for homework or computer time. Please use the library for those purposes.



Dress Code

- Please dress appropriately when visiting the center. Make sure you are dressed comfortably and wear clothes that can get dirty.
- Do not wear revealing skirts, shorts or tops that can expose your body as you interact with the children.
- You should also stay away from T-shirts with characters or advertising on them that encourages either inappropriate or adult-like behaviors.
- Be prepared to go outside!! Unless it is extremely cold or raining, we go outside all year round. Please make sure to bring appropriate clothing and shoes for outdoor play.



The Outdoors

- The playground is an extension of the classroom. Teachable moments are constantly occurring. Also, no matter how safe the equipment, accidents happen. Therefore, no one should be sitting on a bench just observing.
- Talk, ask open-ended questions and interact with the children. Remain close to the group you may just be observing. Use this time and the environment as another teaching tool.



Health and Safety

- We ask that observers encourage and model proper health and safety behaviors. Rooms should be kept neat, orderly and clean. Children are expected to put away toys and equipment when done before moving on to another activity. Shelves are labeled to help facilitate the children in becoming independent during clean-up. They are also learning categorizing, problem solving and cooperative skills throughout the process.
- Health department regulations require that you wash your hands upon entering the room each day. You must also wash your hands when helping a child to wipe their nose, coming in from outside and before helping to prepare or serve any snacks.
- Remember YOU are modeling healthy behaviors and habits!

- We ask that observers do not assist children when using the bathroom or assist teachers with diaper changes. You may however help them with hand washing.
- A staff member should also be responsible for helping a child in any first-aid related needs.



Snacks & Lunch

- Before serving snack or lunch, adults should wash hands and wear plastic gloves.
- Mealtimes are opportunities for social and emotional development, as well as a time to teach healthy eating habits. Please encourage and engage in appropriate conversation with the children. Model how to sit and eat while encouraging pleasant conversational topics.
- An adult must remain with the children until every child is done eating. This way, if there is a choking emergency, we can respond quickly.
- Adults must follow the same expectations as the children when it comes to eating. All eating and drinking should take place at the appropriate times at the tables with the children. Please remember we are a NUT-FREE school. We ask you do not bring anything into the center that contains any form of nut products.



Classroom Supervision and Management

- Discipline should be left to the teaching staff unless there is a concern for safety.
- Observe how the teaching staff works with the children and mirror these behaviors. Try to redirect the children!
- Get down on the floor with the children and remain at their level. Speak slowly, simply, quietly and SMILE! This helps them to relax so they participate freely with you and their peers.
- Encourage children to problem solve! Yelling, threatening, or any kind of physical discipline (pushing, pulling, jostling, etc.) is NEVER acceptable!! Anyone seen displaying this type of behavior will be dismissed immediately.

One Final Note

You all have the amazing opportunity of observing right here on your college campus.

We want learning to be fun for you as well.

Take this time to practice and implement strategies you are learning about in your classroom.

If you have a question, please always feel free to talk to me or your cooperating teachers.

We are here to help you in any way we can!