Vignette: Picking a Preschool

Mary and Jonathan are parents of a 2-year-old daughter, Cassie, and a 4-year-old son, Brian. Both parents work, and their children attend the ABC Preschool. In the beginning, Mary and Jonathan were happy with the preschool and program in which their children were enrolled. Brian has attended ABC Preschool since he was 1 year old, and so has Cassie.

The philosophy of the preschool is to provide a nurturing, success-oriented environment for all children. The ABC Preschool provides opportunities for success by viewing each child as an individual with unique developmental needs. The preschool curriculum developed by the teachers and directors closely follows academic standards. The professional child care staff members make the children their primary focus and foster a positive self-concept for each child. Positive self-concept, how one perceives and evaluates oneself, is a strong foundation for future development and learning. Although self-concept is very important for the development of their children, Mary and Jonathan are concerned that too much academic instruction is occurring in the school.

Both Mary and Jonathan are very involved in the educational growth of their children and are raising them to have a love for nature. As the children have gotten older, Mary and Jonathan have felt that the ABC Preschool curriculum has not been providing their children with the critical thinking necessary for educational growth or the important connection to nature. They have decided to enroll their children in a different preschool. After visiting and interviewing different preschools, they found one that uses the Waldorf method of teaching. The Waldorf method is one that focuses upon nurturing the child's self-confidence and self-reliance, while fostering the child's personal integrity and a sense of social and environmental interdependency and responsibility.

There are many types of early childhood programs. Some may be different, but many programs throughout the United States share many similarities. These similarities include anything from particular educational philosophies to the types of services the programs provide for children. Mary and Jonathan found that the philosophy of the Waldorf schools was a good match for their children, and they liked that the curriculum integrated the arts, music, crafts, and the natural world with the regular educational disciplines. Finding a preschool that shares your same philosophy, whether it is home or center based and licensed or not, are some of the topics that we will be discussing throughout this chapter.

Key Elements for Becoming a Professional

NAEYC DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRINCIPLE 9

Always mentally active in seeking to understand the world around them, children learn in a variety of ways; a wide range of teaching strategies and interactions are effective in supporting all these kinds of learning.

Interpretation

Jean Piaget, a leader in cognitive development, would argue that children are active learners who construct their understanding from the things around their environment.

NAEYC STANDARD 1: PROMOTING CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

a. Knowing and understanding young children's characteristics and needs

b. Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning

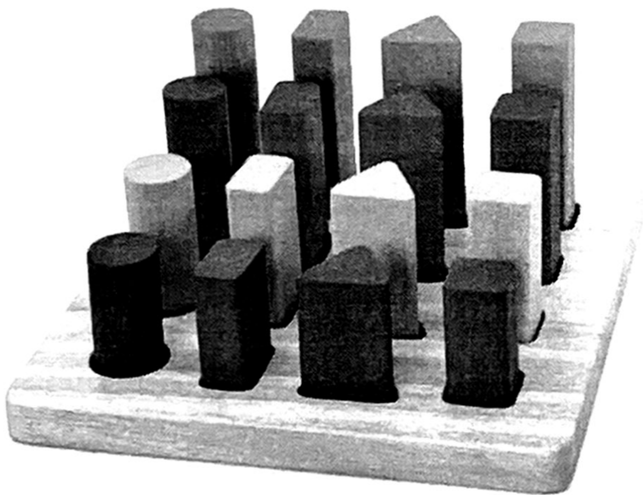
c. Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS?

There are many different types of early childhood programs, and each one has its own philosophy, mission, and approach to teaching. Even though there are many differences in the programs, they share some common ideologies. These ideologies are based on the well-being, developmental needs, and capacities of children.

Montessori Programs

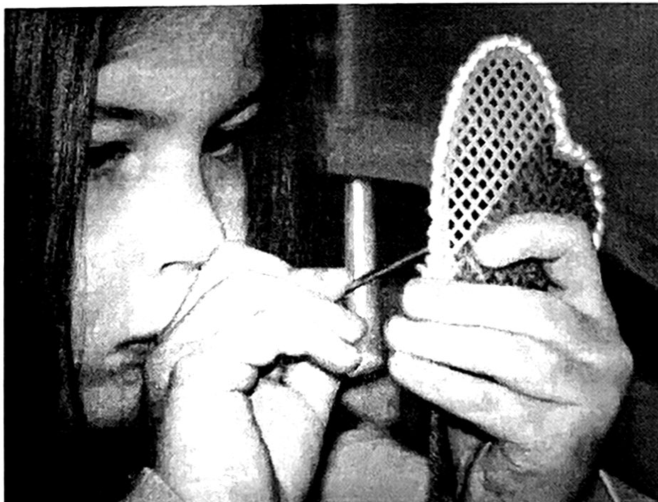
Maria Montessori, introduced in Chapter 2, established a school for children living in the poorest conditions in Italy. This first school was a scientific experiment that would lead to her now famous philosophy and method of teaching young children. Today, the Montessori method of teaching is being used with preschool through high school students and now serves primarily middle-class students. Most of the schools that follow the Montessori philosophy are private, though some public schools are using the Montessori teaching method (Chatting-McNichols, 1992). One major difference between Montessori education and other early childhood programs in the United States is Montessori's emphasis on work experiences that children must have with practical tools that have been presented to them as part of the environment rather than playtime. Although some other programs share this concept of work experience, the differences between them and Montessori are significant.



Philosophy and Mission

According to the Montessori philosophy and mission, all children are born with special mental abilities that aid in the work of their own learning. This self-learning develops as they explore their surroundings and their environments. Children are given the freedom to use their inborn mental abilities so that they can develop physically, spiritually, and intellectually. The teacher presents a sense of order and self-discipline to supply certain environmental limits on this freedom.

The Montessori philosophy also emphasizes the importance of sensory awareness. Children are taught to explore by using their senses. The curriculum is designed to develop consciousness of the senses through the use of specially prepared materials. The idea of using these materials to teach children the Montessori skills and concepts has spread throughout the world (Standing, 1984; Watts, 2000).



The Cylinder Block and Lacing Frame are examples of Montessori materials.

Role of the Teacher

In Montessori schools, the teacher's role is of primary importance, but it is also very subtle; that is, the teacher serves as a guide rather than instructing the children to do specific tasks (Watts, 2000).

The child's environment is of utmost importance because it serves as an educational tool from which children learn. The role of the child is to be an active explorer, and Montessori schools encourage the children to express themselves within their educational environments. It is important to note that the Montessori philosophy and mission may vary in different schools, states, and countries. Some schools have modified their philosophies or evolved in other directions and no longer fit the standard description of a Montessori school (Watts, 2000).

The sensory area enables students to classify and describe sensory impressions as they relate to length, width, temperature, mass, color, and pitch.

The Environment

The Montessori approach upholds that society helps to facilitate children in following a natural course of development that progressively moves to a higher level of cooperation, peace, and harmony. According to this philosophy, children have a series of developmental stages. These stages are described as **planes of development**—the child moves to adulthood through a series of developmental periods that are related to the child's physical, mental, and social being. Montessori describes four stages of development. In the first stage, from birth to age 6, children are characterized by their "absorbent minds," absorbing all aspects of their environments, languages, and cultures. In the second stage, from age 6 to age 12, children use a "reasoning mind" to explore the world with abstract thought and imagination. In the third stage, from age 12 to age 18, adolescents have a "humanistic mind" that is eager to understand humanity and the contribution the adolescent can make to society. In the last stage of development, from age 18 to age 24, adults explore the world with a "specialist mind," taking their place in the world by choosing appropriate actions for the self and knowing how to make choices.

Reggio Emilia Programs

The **Reggio Emilia programs** were established after World War II when parents from a region in Italy wanted schools that would teach their children collaboration and critical thinking skills necessary for a democratic society. This sense of democratic purpose inspired **Loris Malaguzzi,** an elementary school teacher who dedicated himself to pedagogical activities within the early childhood educational system, to join parents and further develop the Reggio Emilia program.

Philosophy and Mission

The Reggio Emilia approach encompasses and implements the theoretical contributions of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, and Bruner. The curriculum is based on teachers closely observing and documenting the children's ideas and **co-constructing knowledge** (the teacher works with the child who learns by questioning, identifying, and developing an understanding of the curriculum) with them. The teacher gives special roles to the children as they express their ideas with the teacher. Parents continue to be engaged as partners in their child's learning. The environment is a valuable source of learning to inspire, reflect, and promote the work of the children, which is done in small groups. The educational philosophy of the Reggio Emilia schools is to be dedicated to the formation of a learning environment that will improve and assist a child's construction of "his or her own powers of thinking through the combination of all the expressive, communicative, and cognitive languages" (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1993). The Reggio Emilia approach is based on the following principles:

Table 3.1 The Reggio Emilia Approach

THE ROLE OF THE REGGIO EMILIA TEACHER:

- To co-explore the learning experience with the children.
- To stimulate ideas, solve problems, and solve conflicts.
- To receive ideas from the children and return those ideas to them for further exploration.
- To organize the classroom and materials to be aesthetically pleasing.
- To organize materials to help children make thoughtful decisions about the media.
- To document children's progress: visuals, videos, sound recordings, portfolios.
- To help children see the connections between learning and experience.
- To help children express their knowledge through representational work.
- To form a "collective" among other teachers and parents.
- To have a dialogue about the projects with parents and other teachers.
- To foster the connection between home, school, and community.

PROJECTS:

- can emerge from children's ideas and/or interests;
- can be initiated by teachers;
- can be introduced by teachers knowing what is of interest to children: shadows, puddles, tall buildings, construction sites, nature, etc.;
- can be long enough to develop over time, to discuss new ideas, to negotiate over, to induce conflicts, to revisit, to see progress, and to see movement of ideas; and
- can be concrete, personal from real experiences, important to children, "large" enough for diversity of ideas, and rich in interpretive and representational expression.

MATERIALS:

- can have variation in color, texture, and pattern to help children "see" the colors, tones, and hues and help children "feel" the similarities and differences in texture;
- can be presented in an artistic manner that is aesthetically pleasing to look at and that will invite touch, admiration, and inspiration; and
- can be revisited throughout many projects to help children see multiple possibilities (New, 2000).

Source: Roopnarine, Jaipaul; Johnson, James E., *Approaches to Early Childhood Education.* 5th Edition. © 2009. Adapted by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, NJ.

- Emergent Curriculum: An **emergent curriculum** builds upon the interests of children. Topics for study are captured from the talk of children, through community or family events, and from the known interests of children (planets, shadows, dinosaurs, etc.). Team planning is an essential component of the emergent curriculum. Teachers work together to formulate hypotheses about the possible directions of a project, the materials needed, and possible parent and community support and involvement.
- Project Work: Projects, also emergent, are in-depth studies of concepts, ideas, and interests that arise within the children. Considered as an adventure, projects may last one week or could continue throughout the school year. Throughout a project, teachers help children make decisions about the direction of study, or the ways in which the children will research the topic. Teachers will also assist with the representational process that will showcase the topic, and the selection of materials needed to represent the work.

- Representational Development: Consistent with Howard Gardner's (2006) notion of schooling for multiple intelligences (a list of seven intelligences where children are able to solve problems valued in their cultural setting: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal), the Reggio Emilia approach uses the integration of the graphic arts as tools for cognitive, linguistic, and social development. Demonstration and presentation of concepts in multiple forms of illustration—print, art, construction, drama, music, puppetry, and shadow play—are viewed as essential to children's understanding of experience.

Reggio Emilia teachers work together with students and families to promote and stimulate children's thinking and academic success.

- Collaboration: Collaborative group work, both large and small, is considered valuable and necessary to advance cognitive development. Children are encouraged to dialogue, critique, compare, negotiate, hypothesize, and problem solve through group work. Within the Reggio Emilia approach, multiple perspectives promote both a sense of group membership and the uniqueness of self.
- Teachers as Researchers: The teacher's role within the Reggio Emilia approach is multifaceted. The role of the teacher is first and foremost that of a learner alongside the children. The teacher is a teacher-researcher, a resource and guide who lends expertise to children (Edwards et al., 1993). Within such a teacher-researcher role, educators carefully listen, observe, and document children's work and the growth of community in their classroom and are to provoke, co-construct, and stimulate thinking and children's collaboration with peers. Teachers are committed to reflect on their own teaching and learning.
- Documentation and Showcasing: Similar to the development of a portfolio, documentation of children's work in progress is viewed as an important tool in the learning process for children, teachers, and parents. To explicitly represent the dynamics of learning, teachers display pictures of children engaged in experiences; print the children's own words about what they are doing, feeling, and thinking during the learning process; and exhibit the children's visual artwork that reveals their interpretations of their experiences.
- Environment: Within the Reggio Emilia schools, great attention is given to the look and feel of the classroom. The environment is considered the third teacher. Teachers carefully organize space for small and large group projects and small intimate spaces for one, two, or three children. The work, plants, and collections that children have made from former outings are displayed at both the children's and adults' eye level. Common space available to all children in the school includes dramatic play areas and work tables for children from different classrooms to come together (Hewett, 2001; Schroeder Yu, 2008).

Some of the characteristics that make this approach different from other programs or philosophies are the role of the teacher (see Table 3.1), the kinds of projects that engage children, and the kind of materials that are necessary in a child's education.

HighScope Curriculum

The HighScope curriculum, created during the 1960s, is a model developed from the theories of Jean Piaget that was one of the first intervention programs for disadvantaged children. It is designed to provide a "decision-making framework," in which teachers plan the lessons to reflect the needs and interest of the students (DeVries & Kohlberg, 1987). The curriculum views children as active learners who construct knowledge that helps them make sense of their world. This approach

supports the notion that children learn best from activities that they themselves plan, carry out, and reflect upon and that adults both support and challenge.

Philosophy and Mission

There are certain goals that the HighScope curriculum considers to be important in a child's development. These goals are for children to build up an array of skills through active learning in the arts and physical fitness as well as to learn the ability to dramatize, speak, collaborate with others, plan time effectively, make decisions, and review one's own work. This concept to "plan-do-review" allows children to plan and convey their goals, carry them out, and reflect on their learning (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995). The approach also allows children to be involved in problem-solving and decision-making situations and activities throughout the day.

The Role of the Teacher

HighScope's focus on active learning depends on positive teacher-student interactions. The role of the teacher is to assist and support students' decision making and to foster their cognitive abilities. Teachers who use the HighScope preschool approach strive to be supportive as they converse and play with children. Throughout the day, teachers practice positive interaction strategies, such as sharing control with children, forming authentic relationships with children, supporting children's play, and adopting a problem-solving approach to social conflict.

There are four key factors that Roopnarine and Johnson (2000) have identified as important interactions between teacher and student in the HighScope classroom:

1. Teachers as Active Learners: Teachers need to be active learners. They need to model and encourage students in the interest and enthusiasm of learning new things.
2. Careful Observers: Teachers are to make systematic and detailed observations of their students' behaviors and interests in order to understand their learning abilities. HighScope has

BEST Practices HighScope Curriculum

There are eight key experiences that the HighScope curriculum stresses as important for curriculum implementation (Weikart, Rogers, Adcock, & McClelland, 1971):

1. Active Learning: Children are required to initiate and convey their own tasks in the classroom.
2. Using Language: Children are expected and encouraged to communicate with others through oral and written language about their feelings and experiences.
3. Experiencing and Representing: Children are presented with opportunities to experience through their senses and represent those actions through movement, music, and role-playing.
4. Classification: Children are encouraged to observe the similarities and differences among objects because classification is important in mathematical learning.
5. Seriation: Children learn to order objects from smallest to largest based on their length, width, or weight as this is also vital for mathematics.
6. Number Concept: Children are taught to have an understanding of what numbers represent.
7. Spatial Relationship: Children learn to understand up/down, in/out, and under/over.
8. Time: Children come to understand the concept of time and are encouraged to learn the seasons, the sequence, and the past and future of events.

developed the Child Observation Record (COR) in order to assist teachers with this careful observation process of their students (Schweinhart, 1993).

3. Environmental Planning and Organization: Teachers prepare the classroom to encourage and involve students with daily work and play activities because the environment and physical setting are important aspects for stimulating students' growth and development.
4. Positive Interactions With Children: Teachers maintain a positive interaction and communicate effectively with their students.

The Environment

Organizing the classroom and playground setting is an important aspect of the HighScope curriculum because it has a strong impact on children's behavior. Children's curiosities are organized into areas of interest to support their decision-making process. Examples of children's interest areas are role-playing, drawing, painting, reading and writing, dancing, climbing, counting, and pretend play (Hohmann, 1996). Teachers store materials on low shelves, in clear boxes, and by using picture labels; this allows children to find, use, and return materials independently.

Children's daily routines are an active and engaging sequence of events that helps the children anticipate what will happen next and provides them the control for what they will do during their day (Hohmann & Weikart, 1995). Teachers encourage the children to work in small and large groups. In the small groups, teachers provide students with new and familiar materials (based on teachers' observations of what students are interested in) for them to explore and experiment with. In large groups, teachers and students begin with a physical activity, such as dance, and then proceed to story time, group discussion, and cooperative play.

In the HighScope curriculum, children plan, do, and review their daily experiences and become active learners within their environments.

Bank Street Model

Lucy Sprague Mitchell (introduced in Chapter 2) founded the **Bank Street School for Children** (a school that educates the whole child, emphasizing how children learn and how they interact with their environment) in 1916. Mitchell saw children as unique human beings with an avid desire to learn, which, if nurtured, would invigorate a lifetime of learning. Mitchell and her colleague, Harriet Johnson, believed children learn best in environments specifically suited to their ages and stages of development. In addition, they understood the close relationship between learning and the child's development. Mitchell and Johnson were aware that children's emotional lives were inseparable from their learning, interest, and motivation. They considered that in the Bank Street School setting, children would thrive and learn more naturally and happily.

Philosophy and Mission

The philosophy and mission of the Bank Street model have their origins in the **Progressive movement** of the early 20th century, specifically in the work of John Dewey (Kliebard, 1995). This movement was a period of political, societal, economic, and educational change. The Progressives pushed for social justice, equality, and public safety. A major focus of the Progressive movement was child labor and education reform. Many immigrant children were being exploited in factories

and at home, and the Progressives encouraged and mandated parents to send their children to public schools.

Lucy Sprague Mitchell and colleagues were strong believers in the Progressive education movement. They wanted to create classrooms and schools that would resemble democratic communities, with no rigid curriculum, students being responsible for their own learning, and mixed-age classrooms. They also saw the classroom as a place to study the development of children with the idea that doing so would lead to social change. The Bank Street model did not support rote learning and memorization practices but rather followed the Progressive philosophy in which children were encouraged to be active learners. The educational Progressives believed that children learned by doing real-world experiences and activities (Kliebard, 1995).

The Role of the Teacher

The role of the teacher in the Bank Street model is that of a facilitator of learning, and students are to be the scientists and researchers; they discuss, debate, and perform hands-on activities on their assigned work (Mitchell & David, 1992). The Bank Street curriculum has an underlying theme that teachers reinforce throughout the academic year. The premise is for children to develop a sense of community and social responsibility—to broaden their play and classroom activities from a small group, to a larger group, and ultimately to the school community. Teachers encourage children to share and learn from each other's skills and needs. A major part of the teacher's educational goals and the classroom environment is to help children attain a balance between their individual needs and the needs of the group. The ultimate goal is for each child to become a social individual who cares for, respects, and contributes to the welfare of others (Mitchell & David, 1992).

Communication, support, and collaboration are the hallmarks of the Bank Street classroom.

The Environment

The most important principle of the Bank Street model is that in order for children to learn and become lifelong learners, they must interact with their social and physical environments and interpret those experiences. In most of the Bank Street schools today, young children are learning by experimenting with materials. Children are encouraged to organize the Bank Street classroom with attractive furniture and school materials that promote individual and group study and interaction. Teachers use teaching strategies that encourage children to make discoveries and provide them with the time to make meaning out of those discoveries. Children choose fewer topics to learn about compared with a typical public school curriculum, but Bank Street teachers organize and develop their topics thoroughly and in depth. A unit on math, for example, might take one month in public schools while in the Bank Street school the same topic might last as long as three months, the reason being that teachers will spend more time engaged in the exploration process and making meaning.

A key feature of Bank Street is the idea that the child develops as a social being, which is strongly linked to the child's intellectual development. Children work in groups in order to communicate their ideas, share their experiences, pose their questions, and solve their problems. Working in groups allows children to undertake a problem and brainstorm a solution. Group work and learning to solve problems together are a fundamental part of the Bank Street classroom (Mitchell & David, 1992).

Waldorf Model

Rudolf Steiner is considered the founder of **Waldorf education**, which serves students through the 12th grade and functions independently from political and economic restrictions. Steiner's educational and personal background constitute the central focus of Waldorf education today. The central focus is in the understanding of every person's background and place in the world, not as members of any specific nation or race, but as members of humanity and world citizens (Davy, 2006).

Philosophy and Mission

Rudolf Steiner, an educator and a philosopher, was asked to start a school for the children of the workers in a Waldorf factory in Stuttgart, Germany. He described his new school of philosophy as **anthroposophy**: the wisdom of the human being. Anthroposophy, though oriented toward the Christian faith, is primarily concerned with the acknowledgment and development of spirituality in the person and the universe. Anthroposophy forms the philosophical and theoretical basis of the Waldorf teaching methods, which is reflected in the attitudes of its teachers—that is, to explore the nature of the human being as body, soul, and spirit; to seek the deeper meaning of life; to grasp the laws of karma and reincarnation; and to strive to create new forms through practical work and community building. Anthroposophy, however, is not taught as such to students in Waldorf schools worldwide. Focusing on each student's developmental needs, the Waldorf concept integrates the arts, music, movement, crafts, and drama with the disciplines of science, humanities, math, and technology. A unique aspect of Waldorf education is that the same teachers stay with their students from first through eighth grade. A class in a Waldorf school becomes very much like a family; the challenge for the teacher is to master all the subjects in the elementary curriculum.

The Waldorf philosophy educates the whole child by the "head, heart, and hands":

- Head (the academics)—stimulating the mind and cultivating imagination and creativity.
- Heart—engaging the heart with a sense of caring and responsibility for the earth and its inhabitants.
- Hands—encouraging respect for the arts, respect for humanity, and reverence for nature; fostering an enduring love of learning; and creating a close community of students, teachers, and parents (Davy, 2006; Easton, 1997).

The Role of the Teacher

The role of the Waldorf teacher is to guide the students in their daily work of creative play and discovery. Waldorf teachers offer their young students a sense of comfort and security, since young ones are just discovering their place in the world. The teacher encourages the students to widen their imaginations through the process of investigating their surroundings. This investigation process is persuaded by engaging the students in dramatic play. During the preschool and kindergarten years, children learn through "imitation" (Swartz, 1996), and the teacher serves as a role model worthy of imitating. Once the child is in first grade, students start searching for greater influence to assist and lead them with their next discovery. Therefore, the role of the teacher changes to one that is teacher-centered. The teacher will be the primary teacher for the lower-grade classes through eighth grade, serving as the main teacher and the authority figure for the entire elementary education. Teachers present the curriculum in a structural and sequential manner relying on lessons that are not accompanied by textbooks. The students create their own textbooks, by recording what they have learned and creating experiments, poetry, and stories.

Waldorf teachers teach all the important subject areas that conventional schools offer, subjects such as math, reading, and science. Teachers provide the lessons through a process of exploring nature, constructive and creative play, oral (not written) language and storytelling, and song singing.

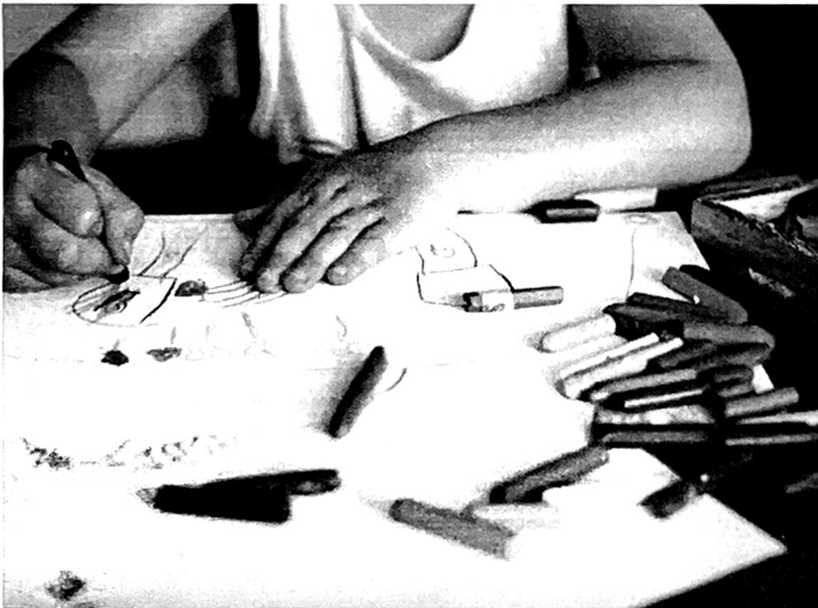
The lessons are carefully developed for each age, but the timing for teaching them might be different than that of conventional schools because the Waldorf curriculum is designed with the growing child in mind (focusing on aesthetics, spirituality, and interpersonal skills). This makes the lessons naturally relevant and satisfying.

The Environment

The classroom environment is organized to make it pleasing and harmonious to all students. The Waldorf environment takes into consideration the child's own physical body and sensory experience by considering everything that the child sees, hears, and touches. The indoor and outdoor environments provide diverse and nourishing opportunities for the child to experience the senses—touch, balance, lively and joyful movement, and listening. Classroom materials are made out of natural wood, and students use wax to write and color. On a given morning, children might do such things as paint with watercolors, color with beeswax crayons, cook, sing a song, or build with wooden blocks. Rudolf Steiner (1965) would argue that an environment is one that nourishes the senses:

> The essential task of the kindergarten teacher is to create the proper physical environment around the children. "Physical environment" must be understood in the widest sense imaginable. It includes not just what happens around the children in the material sense, but everything that occurs in their environment, everything that can be perceived by their senses, that can work on the inner powers of the children from the surrounding physical space. (p. 24)

Programs Based on a Behaviorist Perspective



A kindergartner coloring a picture using a natural material such as beeswax crayons exemplifies the Waldorf approach.

Behaviorism originated with the work of **John B. Watson**, an American psychologist who claimed that psychology was not concerned with the mind or with human consciousness but instead was concerned only with behavior (Good & Brophy, 1990). Other key players in the development of behaviorist theory were Ivan Pavlov, Edward Lee Thorndike, and Burrhus Frederic Skinner. Today, **behaviorism** (the study of observable behavior) is most closely associated with the name of B. F. Skinner, who made his name by testing and rejecting Watson's theories. In doing so, Skinner formed his own theory that almost exclusively emphasized reflexes and conditioning as the primary forces behind behavior (this research study is discussed in Chapter 4). Skinner would say that people respond to their environment to produce certain consequences.

Philosophy and Mission

According to Watson, humans and animals could be trained to do anything one wanted. This concept set the stage for other researchers to investigate the idea of **cognitive maps**—a type of mental processing by which we can acquire, code, store, recall, and decode information about a specific location, word, idea, or task in our everyday environment. This process of learning new information can shape a learner's behavior through reinforcing the desired behavior. In other words, manipulation of reinforcements can control the behavior of a learner, and reinforcements need to continue in order to maintain the behavior. Skinner believed that children in schools were taught to learn

through **aversive stimulation**. An aversive stimulus is something that is unpleasant or a punishment. A behavior followed by an aversive stimulus results in a decreased probability of the behavior occurring in the future. The behaviorists believe the following major principles:

1. Behavior that is positively reinforced will reoccur; intermittent reinforcement is particularly effective.
2. Information should be presented in small amounts so that responses can be reinforced (referred to as "shaping").
3. Reinforcement will generalize across similar stimuli—that is, responding to a stimulus similar to but distinct from the conditioned stimulus (referred to as "stimulus generalization") (Markle, 1969; Skinner, 1968).

The following sections explain the methodologies that educational behaviorists use to teach new behavior to children.

Learning

From a behaviorist perspective, learning is a process of disseminating information from teacher to student. "The teacher must present the student with appropriate behavioral responses to the student's specific stimuli—incentive or motivation—and reinforce those responses through an efficient reinforcement schedule" (Skinner, 1976, p. 161). An efficient reinforcement schedule must consist of a consistent repetition of the material; small, progressive sequences of tasks; and continuous, positive reinforcement. A learned response will become extinct without the positive reinforcement. Students will continue to adjust their behavior until they receive some positive reinforcement (Mook, 2004). Many educators use the behaviorist learning styles to teach students in their classrooms.

Strengths of Behaviorism

Educators who use the behavior model in their teaching do so for the following reasons:

1. A behaviorist lesson plan works well when there is a clear goal, and the learner responds and learns that goal. For example, the skills that require a significant amount of integration between muscle memory and cognitive processing, such as putting a puzzle together or riding a bike, are usually implemented successfully in the behaviorist learning style.
2. The behavior that is observed can be reinforced for it to occur again or punished in order to eliminate it.

Limitations of Behaviorism

Just as there are strengths to the behaviorist model, there are also limitations. Critics of this model have presented the following:

1. Behaviorists believe that learning is an activity independent from the mind; therefore, behaviorism does not account for all means of learning.
2. Behaviorism is not able to explain learning that occurs on its own without reinforcement, such as a child developing new language patterns.

Motivation

Behaviorists explain motivation as "schedules of positive and negative reinforcement" (Magoon & Critchfield, 2008, p. 1). Humans and animals learn positive or negative behavior by the type of

reinforcements they receive. If the reinforcement is positive, then the student will be motivated to continue that behavior. For example, if each time a dog catches a ball it receives food, this behavior will teach the dog that a desired connection between a stimulus (food) and an appropriate response (catching the ball) is motivating, and the dog will continue catching the ball. Another example of reinforcement is when toddlers stop wetting their pants and tell their parents that they need to use the restroom. Parents reinforce the practice of using the restroom by praising their child. That verbal praise will motivate the toddler to use the restroom next time.

The Role of the Teacher

The behaviorists claim that the teacher's job is to establish classroom situations that reinforce desired behavior from their students. Behaviorist-based teachers need to predetermine all the skills necessary for their students to learn and then present them in a sequenced manner.

Teachers are constantly using the behaviorist approach to teaching in our educational system. Students are taught certain skills and then are asked to practice what they have learned over and over; this method is referred as "skill and drill" (Conway, 1997). This skill and drill exercise consists of constant recurrence of practice in order to efficiently reinforce a desired behavior. An example of reinforcement is testing students on the degree of their learning using an exam. Another behaviorist instructional method is question and answer, an activity in which questions can be of increasing difficulty and a good source for review of material covered in class. Research shows that teaching with the behaviorist method can be effective in areas where memorization is required and where there is either a correct or an incorrect response. This method of teaching has been successful in teaching structured material (e.g., mathematical formulas and facts, scientific concepts, and vocabulary for foreign language). The effectiveness of behaviorist teaching in comprehension and analytical aptitude, however, has been disputed (Conway, 1997).

Skinner's Operant Conditioning

B. F. Skinner is the best-known psychologist of his generation, and his theory of **operant conditioning** revolutionized the educational system. Operant conditioning is the effect of the consequences of a particular behavior on the future occurrence of that behavior. Skinner described four types of operant conditioning: **positive reinforcement**, **negative reinforcement**, **extinction/nonreinforcement**, and **punishment**. Below are descriptions of the four types of operant conditioning and some examples of how teachers might use operant conditioning in the classroom (Davey & Cullen, 1988).

- Positive Reinforcement: Responses that are rewarded are likely to be repeated. (Verbal praise, smiling, a pat on the back, and candy are reinforcers that motivate a child to do a behavior again.)
- Negative Reinforcement: Responses that allow escape from painful or undesirable situations are likely to be repeated. (Being excused from taking an exam because of good behavior throughout the year will likely motivate a child to continue good behavior.)
- Extinction or Nonreinforcement: Responses that are not reinforced are not likely to be repeated. (Ignoring a child screaming should extinguish that behavior.)
- Punishment: Responses that bring painful or undesirable consequences will be restrained but may reappear if a reinforcement changes. (Penalizing children for not putting their toys away by withdrawing privileges should stop their messiness.)

Child Care Centers and Nursery Schools

Child care, day care centers, and day nurseries existed in the United States long before such services were publicly recognized, regulated, or financed. Child care centers were originally designed to serve

Consider This Shining Stars

Jessica is a second-grade teacher who has been teaching for 4 years. In her classroom, she likes giving shining stars to her students because it rewards them for good behavior. Shining stars are blue slips of paper that describe the good behavior that the child has performed. Such behaviors include *Be Safe, Be Responsible, Be Respectful, Be on Task, and Be Kind.* Multiple behaviors can be marked if a student performed more than one. When students reach 20 shining stars, they get to turn them in to the office to have lunch with the school principal. Shining stars are given to all students who earned them by the end of the week. Shining stars are a reward mechanism that the entire school district has adopted. The district has been using this for a long time, and it has been extremely successful with Jessica's students. What Jessica's students like the most about earning shining stars is having lunch with the principal.

In your classroom, what type of reinforcements would you use to motivate your students' behavior?

as custodial care rather than fulfill an educational need. With the creation of the factory system and the hiring of a large number of females during the Industrial Revolution, there was an increased need for child care. Philanthropic institutions, private individuals, and community service organizations or private homes typically organized these services, and they were funded by parent fees, private contributions, and, in some cases, state funds. The responsibilities of the caregiver were simply to feed the children, clean them, and keep them safe. The need for child care increased as a larger age range of young children were enrolled in child care centers, including infants and toddlers (Gomby, Larner, Stevenson, Lewit, & Behrman, 1995).

Nursery schools were first established in the poorest areas of London, England. Children who attended these schools were children who needed cognitive or physical assistance. Therefore, the schools focused on preventative methods for children's mental and physical illnesses. Nursery school activities varied, with some schools providing educational opportunities while others simply provided basic child care services. Schools that focused on education taught such early social skills as interpersonal interaction, peer relationships, and classroom skills, such as following teacher instructions. **Margaret and Rachel McMillan** developed this educational program because they believed that a nursery education should be one of nurturance (Spodek, 1985).

Philosophy and Mission

The McMillans considered nurturance as teaching the whole child through working with the social, physical, emotional, and intellectual aspects of a child's development. Their nursery school programs taught children the skills involved in caring for oneself, such as tying shoelaces and washing hands. Part of the program taught the students a sense of responsibility through activities such as keeping the school clean or taking care of plants and animals. **Edward Seguin**, who developed activities to improve the sensory education of children with mental retardation (Winzer, 1986), influenced the philosophy of nurturance and helping children learn observational skills through their senses. His influence can be seen today in programs for children with "special needs" and in the Montessori teaching method that emphasizes using the senses. Early nursery schools also emphasized specific activities that included the senses, such as language, music, rhythm, and color activities. Play activities were part of the nurturance approach, allowing young children to work with water, sand, and other nonstructured materials (N. E. Cohen, 1996).

Head Start

Head Start is a preschool program that was developed in 1965 for low-income children and their families. This is a U.S. federally funded program mandated to meet students' social, emotional, health, nutritional, and psychological needs (Vinovskis, 2005). Head Start programs serve preschool children 3 to 5 years of age and their families. It is a comprehensive program in that it stresses all of the child's development domains (social, emotional, language, cognitive, and physical). Head Start also stresses the importance of good health and provides families with the resources needed to meet medical, psychological, dental, and nutritional needs. Because this is a federally funded program, there has been underfunding of the program, and not all children who are entitled to participate do receive these services.

The Benefits of Head Start

Research shows that young children who attend Head Start benefit from its programs. Findings demonstrate that children who have the opportunity to attend Head Start do better in elementary school, have fewer absences, and are less likely to drop out of school, be held back, or be in special education classes (Garces, Thomas, & Currie, 2000).

There are three factors that the National Head Start Association has recognized as important for the development of early childhood programs and programs for low-income children and their families.

1. Quality Early Childhood Programs. The guiding principle for Head Start is that high-quality standards are followed for their educational programs. The central focus of the curriculum is the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of a child's development. Head Start believes that a successful early childhood program will combine a child's developmental knowledge with his or her learning abilities. Allowing children to use their developmental knowledge will benefit their development. Table 3.2 presents the requirements that Head Start programs must follow.

Table 3.2 Head Start Requirements

1. Secure, supportive, nurturing environment.
2. Small class size.
3. Small adult-child ratio.
4. Culturally sensitive curriculum and staff.
5. Staff trained in child development and comprehensive services.
6. Safe environment.
7. Parent involvement in the child's education.
8. Individualized approach that builds on children's strengths and promotes positive self-image.
9. Combination of individual, small group, and large group activities.
10. Child initiated/directed activities.
11. Class not segregated by language, handicap, behavior, etc.
12. Focus on health, cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development.
13. Encouraging social relationships.
14. Balance between children-initiated and teacher-initiated activities.
15. Developmentally appropriate curriculum.
16. Teacher training minimum standard. (This minimum standard will soon be a BA degree.)

Source: © National Head Start Association.

2. A Comprehensive Approach. A comprehensive approach to a child's education consists of providing children and their families with medical, dental, and mental health services as well as proper nutrition. Children need good nutrition and good health care in order to succeed and reach their full potential academically. The program also provides parent education and encourages significant parental involvement. Head Start recognizes that families with young children are prone to higher stress levels, and these stressors are increased for single parents, minority families, young parents, and working parents.

These are some of the services that Head Start programs provide for eligible children and their families:

- Medical/dental screenings and follow-up treatment
- Home visits
- Parent support groups
- Mental health counseling
- Social service information and referral
- Community advocacy
- Meaningful involvement in decision making

3. Parent Involvement. Children whose parents are involved in their education will have long-lasting benefits in their educational future. Parents are considered the child's first and continuing teachers; preschool programs should incorporate parental activities in their curriculum. Head Start programs do a good job in involving and collaborating with parents. There may be differences in the type and level of parental involvement depending on the parents' needs (see Table 3.3).

HOW ARE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS FINANCED?

Many of the early childhood programs that have been mentioned in this chapter are financed either by one or multiple owners or by an organization, or are partially supported by the federal system or the state. Early child care programs are financed by different organizations or individuals. This section will introduce you to several organizations that finance childhood centers and their programs.

For-Profit

For-profit businesses are those that produce profit for their owners. The profits are generally from parent fees, which are the sole income for the program. This money is used to pay for teacher salaries, space, housing costs, and expenses for toys and equipment used in the program. Most for-profit programs are locally owned child care centers and family child care homes. The child care teachers may or may not have academic training in early childhood education. Therefore, the quality of the child care center may vary due to discrepancies in academic knowledge and training.

Table 3.3 The Different Types of Parental Involvement

1. Ongoing communication about the child and program.
2. Parent education regarding child development.
3. Parent participation in the program as volunteers, observers, etc.
4. Parent input and decision making in program design and evaluation.
5. Parental access to children's programs at any time.

Source: © National Head Start Association.

Nonprofit

Nonprofit programs do not make a profit from their businesses. In for-profit care centers, after expenses are paid, the remainder is considered profit, and the money goes to the owner. Nonprofit monies are incorporated back into the program or are returned to the sponsoring agency (Mocan, 1995). The reason nonprofit centers are popular is because the sponsoring agencies are not operated for profit. Churches are the most common sponsors of early childhood programs. Other common groups include YMCAs, city recreation departments, hospitals, colleges, and universities.

Parent Cooperative

In parent cooperative programs, parents are responsible for paying for their children's education. Parental involvement is required in order to keep the tuition low. Parents assist teachers and are expected to spend a specific number of hours each month helping out in the classroom. This arrangement works well for both parents and the child care centers because it allows the center to operate with fewer paid adults, and it reduces the financial cost for parents. The increasing trend of a higher number of parents entering the workforce full-time, however, impacts their level of involvement in various school functions.

University- and College-Affiliated Programs

Many early childhood programs throughout the United States are affiliated with universities and community colleges. These child care centers function as laboratories, or training programs, for college students training in early childhood education. The centers also serve as sources of experience for practicum and research and demonstrate the best practices in the field. Other university centers serve primarily as campus child care centers for the young children of students, staff, and faculty. The main aim of this type of campus center is to provide a service to the members of the campus community. The majority of university and community college child care centers combine both research and a fieldwork component.

University and college child care centers operate as affiliates of a campus department, such as a child development, early childhood, or psychology department, or as a university-wide program. These programs are usually considered of high quality because theory and research about child development are integrated within them, and there is high involvement of professional educators. Part of the funding comes from parents, and the other part from the sponsoring university or college.

Funding Sources

Historically, the federal government has provided funding for child care and early education programs; however, funding has fluctuated in amount and purpose. Today's child care financing system is a confused collection of funding streams with unclear goals, standards, and administrative structure. Public support for child care, for example, has tended to focus on one particular goal of child care, such as promoting school readiness, protecting children from abuse or neglect, or providing opportunities to compensate for disadvantage (A. J. Cohen, 1996). Some administrative decisions and comprehensive child care programs that the federal government has supported have been created with virtually no public discussion about child care. The Lanham Act—passed by Congress in 1940, authorizing federal grants and loans to public or private agencies for the maintenance and operation of public works—was later interpreted to apply only to child care facilities in war-impacted areas and passed without even mentioning child care. Head Start is seen as an educational program and not as child care; therefore it has funding allocation differences.

WHAT ARE HOME-BASED AND CENTER-BASED CHILD CARE SETTINGS?

Home-based and center-based are two different types of child care settings, and depending on their preference, parents are encouraged to make informed decisions about the specific programs that are most appropriate for their children. Ultimately, whatever the choice, parents should consider choosing a high-quality program with a low adult-child ratio and trained teachers who offer an affectionate, caring, and developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Home-Based Care

Caretakers in private households run home-based day care centers. In the United States, it has been estimated that the largest number of children are cared for in family child care homes. Infants and toddlers are most often cared for in such homes because parents typically prefer a more intimate, homelike setting for their young ones. Most states require licensing or registration of family child care homes, although it is estimated that a great majority of homes are unlicensed (Halpern, 1987; Pence & Goelman, 1991). Table 3.4 presents the advantages and disadvantages of home-based programs.

Center-Based Care

Many parents prefer center-based care because they offer a formal, structured environment. All centers must be licensed and comply with appropriate regulations, teachers are supervised (many classrooms

Table 3.4 Advantages and Disadvantages of Home-Based Programs

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
1. There is generally a low ratio of children to adults.	1. Not all home-based care providers are licensed.
2. Most day care workers choose this career because they love children.	2. Providers are not required to have background experience in child care.
3. It is generally cheaper than a nanny or a day care center.	3. Not all settings offer an academic program.
4. There are opportunities for socialization with other children.	4. Exposure to extracurricular activities, such as dance and art, may be limited.
5. Child is taken care of by one (or possibly two) provider(s).	5. If there are only one or two other children in the home, there may be times when the child will be the only one in attendance.
6. Hours are generally flexible. Some providers watch children on the weekends as well.	6. Most providers will not take children before a certain time, so if parents have early morning meetings or an early morning work schedule, they may need to find alternative transportation to the home.
7. Often home-based settings do not charge enormous overtime fees when you have to pick up late due to a meeting.	7. The provider may not have the funds to provide the same type of equipment, activities, and learning experiences as a center-based program.
8. A comfortable home setting might be more fitting for some children than a center.	8. If the child care provider is ill, the parent may need to find a backup placement or take a day or more off of work.
	9. Without a contract, home-based providers can stop watching children at any time they wish.

have more than one teacher), and a director oversees the entire operation. Teachers who have taken college units in early childhood education or child development, or who hold a current and valid Child Development Associate Credential, run center-based programs. These centers are located in elementary schools, churches, or other types of child care facilities. Center-based programs usually include larger groups of children than do home-based programs. Centers have clear-cut rules for parents to follow (such as pickup and drop-off times) so they know exactly what is expected of them (Halpern, 1987; Read, 1987). Table 3.5 presents the advantages and disadvantages of center-based programs.

WHY DO CHILD CARE CENTERS NEED TO BE LICENSED?

All states have licensing requirements that define minimum acceptable standards for center-based and home-based centers. Licensing assures that those programs that are licensed have achieved at least the minimum standards required by law to meet the health, educational, and social needs of the children receiving those services. Licensed child care centers protect children's well-being and maintain high standards of service. However, not all center-based and home-based centers have licenses. Many home-based centers get away without one, especially if the provider is taking care of only one or two children. According to the Children's Defense Fund (2011), many states require a background check and some educational training, but only a few states inspect all family child care homes. Some states require nothing more than that the provider mail in a self-certification form or add his or her name to a list. See your state's child care profile from the National Child Care Information Center. Centers that are licensed tend to provide more comprehensive services, as required by state law, to children and their families.

Table 3.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Center-Based Programs

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
1. Caregivers in center-based care may be better educated and may have received more specialized training than caregivers in home-based care, but not always—ask about the educational background of the provider or specific teachers in your child's age-group.	1. Center-based child care often feels and looks institutional and is usually located in large facilities.
2. Center-based programs usually have a substitute pool, so if a teacher is sick or on vacation, a substitute teacher can fill in for the day.	2. May not meet needs of parents with late, early, rotating, or part-time work schedules; usually less able to adjust to changes in parent schedules or emergencies.
3. Children in center-based programs may be exposed to an educationally enriched curriculum that encourages literacy, language development, and social and emotional development, or they may be exposed to a rigid academic curriculum that may be developmentally inappropriate and can add stress and discourage future success.	3. Larger group sizes and instability in staffing may pose a difficulty for some children and families.
4. Dependable schedule; open daily year-round; availability usually not affected by teacher illness or absence.	4. Children attending a full-day center for only part of the day, or for less than a full week, may have more challenges creating friendships or fitting in when most other children attend full-time; they may not have a sense of stability.

Promoting Optimal Development

Licensing and Regulation

In theory, almost all home day cares are required to meet state licensing regulations for health and safety to operate. But in practice, many get away without a license, especially if the provider is taking care of only one or two children besides his or her own. Many states require home day care providers to go through a background check and some training, according to the Children's Defense Fund (2011), but only a few states inspect all family child care homes. Some states require nothing more than that teachers or directors mail in self-certification forms or add their names to a list. A license is not a guarantee of quality child care; but a license shows that the provider takes at least a degree of professional pride in his or her work.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (1996b) has provided these 10 principles for applying an effective system of early childhood care and education services:

1. Any program providing care and education to children from two or more unrelated families should be regulated; there should be no exemptions from this principle.
2. States should license all facilities that provide services to the public, including all centers, large family or group child care homes, and small family child care homes (i.e., granting permission to operate).
3. In addition to licensing facilities, states should establish complementary processes for professional licensing of individuals as teachers, caregivers, or program administrators (i.e., granting permission to practice).
4. Licensing standards should be clear and reasonable and reflect current research findings related to regulative aspects that will reduce the risk of harm.
5. Regulations should be vigorously and equitably enforced.
6. Licensing agencies should have sufficient staff and resources to effectively implement the regulatory process.
7. Regulatory processes should be coordinated and streamlined to promote greater effectiveness and efficiency.
8. Incentive mechanisms should encourage the achievement of a higher quality of service beyond the basic floor.
9. Consumer and public education should inform families, providers, and the public of the importance of a child's early years and of ways to create environments that promote children's learning and development.
10. States should invest sufficient levels of resources to ensure that children's healthy development and learning are not harmed in early care and education settings.

Certain states require that child care facilities have a license if they provide child care services. Here is an example of the requirements from the state of Connecticut for a child care center to receive licensing:

- Private family day care homes must care for no more than 6 children, including the provider's own children, who are not in school full-time. The hours of caretaking should be no less than 3 and no more than 12 hours in a day. In a regular academic school year, an additional 3 full-time children are allowed to be under the care of the provider, including the provider's own children.
- Group day care homes should care for 7, but no more than 12, children when offering a supplementary day care program.
- A child day care center provides, on a regular basis, services to more than 12 children outside of their home.

There are some child day care programs that are not required to meet the licensing standards requirement and, therefore, are not liable for licensing. Programs that are not liable are those administered by a nanny or family relative, programs where parents stay with their child at a recreation facility, and extracurricular programs limited to 2 hours (Connecticut Department of Public Health, 2011).

Summary

Quality child care programs are essential in today's society. The type of program you choose to teach will depend on its philosophy, mission, environment, and approach to teaching. Montessori programs give children the freedom to use their inborn mental abilities so that they can develop physically, mentally, and spiritually. In the Reggio Emilia programs, the teachers work closely with children to co-construct knowledge and the curriculum. HighScope allows children to be involved in problem solving and decision making; children have to plan, do, and review their goals and reflect on their learning. Bank Street focuses on the developmental stages of the child, in an environment where the child has the opportunity to be an active learner through experimentation. The central focus in Waldorf education is to understand the child as whole and as a member of humanity. Anthroposophy is the theoretical basis underpinning teaching practices. Behaviorist programs are based on the learners' behaviors. Children learn new information through positive or negative reinforcements. Head Start includes programs that provide early education and intervention to low-income children and their families. Many of the programs mentioned above are financed by public or private businesses, agencies, churches, hospitals, recreational departments, and universities.

Key Terms

Anthroposophy 65
Aversive stimulation 67
Bank Street School for Children 63
Behaviorism 66
Co-constructing knowledge 59
Cognitive maps 66
Edward Seguin 69
Emergent curriculum 60
Extinction/nonreinforcement 68
For-profit 71
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John B. Watson 66
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Negative reinforcement 68
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Planes of development 59
Positive reinforcement 68
Positive self-concept 57
Progressive movement 63
Punishment 68
Reggio Emilia program 59
Rudolf Steiner 65
Waldorf education 65

Reflection, Application, and Analysis Questions

1. Reflect back on the Montessori approach to teaching, and describe how this approach fits into your own ideas of teaching young children.
2. Observe a teacher carrying out an activity in any of the early childhood programs described in this chapter, and explain how the activity corresponds to what you have learned. Provide examples to illustrate your observations.
3. Talk to an early childhood teacher and find out what model he or she is familiar with and how the philosophy has influenced his or her practices in the classroom.
4. Identify two advantages and two disadvantages of home-based and center-based programs.

Extension Activities

1. Observe a Montessori, a Waldorf, and a Reggio Emilia program. Compare the similarities and differences in their philosophies and school practices.
2. Find out the necessary requirements for a home day care to be licensed in your state. Compare your state's requirements with those of a neighboring state.

Additional Readings

The following reading list will be useful for those of you interested in learning more about the different educational approaches.

Brunton, P., & Thornton, L. (2005). *Understanding the Reggio approach: Early years education in practice.* London: David Fulton Publishers.
This book describes key features of the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education and provides examples from infant-toddler to preschool centers. It highlights key ideas that practitioners should consider when reviewing and reflecting on their own practices.

Helm, J. H., & Katz, L. G. (2010). *Young investigators: The project approach in the early years.* New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
This book introduces the project approach and provides step-by-step guidance for conducting meaningful projects. It provides a variety of nature experiences, with examples that show how project work is an excellent way to connect children to the natural world.

Lillard, P. P., & Jessen, L. L. (2003). *Montessori from the start: The child at home, from birth to age three.* New York: Random House.
Montessori From the Start is a practical and useful guide to raising calm, competent, and confident children. The authors provide guidance for establishing a beautiful and serviceable environment for babies and very young children.

Petrash, J. (2002). *Understanding Waldorf education: Teaching from the inside out.* Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House.
If you want to learn more about Waldorf education, this book contains important views on its philosophy and learning experiences that involves all of the senses.

Taylor, G. R., & MacKenney, L. (2008). *Improving human learning in the classroom.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
This book is written for classroom teachers who may want to learn more about the behaviorists. It is designed to translate the educational psychological theories into practical classroom application.

On the Web

American Montessori Society - *http://www.amshq.org/*
This website is for parents, educators, and all of those who are interested in learning more about the Montessori programs in the United States. This site gives you information on how to find a school, a program, or a regional Montessori group, as well as other important information.

HighScope Educational Research Foundation - *http://www.highscope.org/*
This informative website offers a wealth of information on its curriculum starting from infant and toddler to youth development. It also provides training to those who are interested in teaching the HighScope curriculum and other information about its research and conferences.

International Montessori Society - *http://imsmontessori.org/*
This website provides information about types of Montessori teaching, teaching technology, accreditation, workshops, and more.

National Head Start Association - *http://www.nhsa.org/*
This website keeps its visitors informed of the latest news and conferences affecting Head Start. It also gives information on their services, research, and Head Start membership.

North American Reggio Emilia Alliance - *http://www.reggioalliance.org*
A historical overview of the Reggio Emilia approach is provided, in addition to community and parental support, administrative policies, teachers as learners, the role of the environment, and other important topics.

Student Study Site

Visit **www.sagepub.com/gordonbiddle** to access several study tools including eFlashcards, web quizzes, links to SAGE journal articles, web resources, video resources, lesson plan templates, and more.