**Final Paper Project Design**

**Best Start Elementary Program**

Your name

PSY2650: Child Development

Professor Name

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Early childhood is a key developing time in a child's life. A preschool program should seek to enhance children's physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development. Best Start preschool program seeks to help children develop to their full potential.

Early Start is a comprehensive education program that seeks to provide children with the experiences and tools necessary for physical development. This program occurs at school and is designed for children age 3-4. This age group has unique physical, cognitive, and social-emotional needs. A three-year-old would work with toys with moving parts, does 3-4 four puzzles, and turns book one page at a time. They also play with towers and can build up to six blocks. The child is also learning social-emotional skills such as coping with adults and friends, showing affection, and taking turns. His language skills include following 2-3 step instructions. This child can also say their name, age, and sex. Physically this child can climb well, ride a three-wheel bike and walk up and down stairs one foot at a time(CDC, 2018). Building on these skills is important in the Early Start program.

Classrooms include practical life, art, sensory, mathematical sciences, linguistics, and botanical sciences as well as special study units. The children grow in trust, self-esteem, and intellectual confidence through their experiences in these areas. Each child is moving at its own pace and developing self-reliance and caring for others. Learning is exciting, absorbing, and joyful in this setting (Santrock, 2019)

**Cognitive**

The cognitive program utilizes a mix of the Montessori approach and child-centered approach. Montessori is the perfect way to assist cognitive growth in young children. Teachers support but the children but do not direct a child’s learning (p 266). This allows children to establish independence. Our program will have different children's play stations to choose from every day. This includes red for math, green for science, blue for language, pink for art, and so on. Next, the teachers will move from group to group. This will help keep the classroom activities and ensure that the teacher promotes learning instead of directing a child's learning. , not at the classroom front. Also, The Montessori approach provides free choices for children. The teacher is a facilitator in this regard and assists children in learning how to practice. Second, instructional materials that help children remain involved are very diverse. Montessori demonstrated more academic achievement in mathematics, problem-solving, and vocabulary ( p 267).In addition. The Montessori method is the best, as a proof is supported. Montessori demonstrated more academic achievement in mathematics, problem-solving, and vocabulary ( p 267).

Next, the program will also use a child-centered nursery. This approach emphasizes the education of children and promotes cognitive, physical, emotional, and social dimensions ( p 266). According to Santrock, the children's focused kindergarten alone values the child's totality in terms of their cognitive growth. The focus is on the learning process rather than knowledge acquired. Coupled with Montessori theory this gives children the ability to learn how to learn. This helps them become self-starters.

**Social-emotional**

The Montessori approach also inspires empathy, social justice, and the joy of lifelong teaching, which is noted for the pace at which it develops independently and promotes individuality. As students are free to ask questions, analyze carefully and create links in Montessori, they are confident, energetic, and self-directed learners (p 267).

Physical: There will be multiple physical activities for the children to engage in. These range from gross motor skills such as passing balls to each other, throwing, running, and walling outdoors. Further, there are also fine motor skills that are refined with cutting paper, threading beads on a string, or stretching elastic bands on a grid board.

**Activities**

There are multiple activities to enhance physical and cognition in children. For language or cognitive development, the use of books. This activity will have books of interest for a young child. The books will be colorful, big and full of pictures. There will be a bookshelf. Children are free to "read" to themselves and others, or ask the teacher for help. As children advance there will be more words per page. Arranged so children can see and reach quickly their books. Will have some common books such as Three little bears. The teacher will ask questions at times about the books children are reading to help facilitate language development.

For physical development and fine motor skills, there will be a scrapbooking-type center. Here there will be safe scissors, colorful paper, glue, felt, and other material for children to create art. This will also increase hand-eye movement coordination.

A third activity will be fine threading. This will have a shoelace with small beads. The child will put the beads (not so small they choke) and will thread them onto the shoelace. This helps increase eye-hand coordination and refines their grasp.

Free play and outdoor play help develop social and physical skills. There will be balls for children to kick, throw, and pass to each other. Further, there will be equipment such as slides, monkey bars, and swings to encourage children to be physically active. Sharing the ball helps children develop social skills.

Having the children play make-believe and dress up helps increase all three areas. The children play with each other and thus increase their social skills. Next, the act of putting on clothes increases their physical development and daily activities. Last, playing make-believe with each other and sharing helps them express their emotions and learn how to make friends.

**Conclusion**

The Early Start program when combined will lead to an emphasis on the entire student’s development including social, mental, intellectual, and physical growth. Early start uses numerous activities based on Montessori theory to encourage a child’s development. By using evidence based research we can provide a child with the tools to grow.

**Schedule**

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| Time | Activity | Description |
| 8:00-8:30 am | Children arrive. This is free playtime. | This is free playtime. Children play with toys, dress up, and choose free play centers. |
| 8:30-9:00 | Morning attendance and breakfast | Children stand in a circle and then go to their tables to eat breakfast. |
| 9:00 - 11:00 am | Montessori Activities | Each child selects activities of particular interest to him/her in a fully equipped Montessori environment designed to meet the learning and social needs of children 4 to 6. |
| 10-11 am | Second Montessori Activity | Children move to another learning area of their choosing. This can range from art to science, foreign language. Teachers walk around and help children with their learning. |
| 11-11:30 | Lunch | Children practice social skills by helping set the table, sitting with others, and interacting with other children. |
| 11:30-12:30 | Outdoor playtime (If weather permits) | Children engage in age-appropriate activities such as kickball, bouncing balls, gym. |
| 12:30-1:30 | nap time | This time allows children to rest. Children who do not take naps may have quiet playtime including reading books. |
| 1:30-3:00 pm | Individual and small group lessons | Children had the option to work on something new or something they have already experience with other children. Facilities social learning |
| 3:00-4:00 pm | outdoor playtime and extra learning if needed | Enhances physical and social skills |

**References**

CDC. (2018, October 22). *Important Milestones: Your Baby By Three Years*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/milestones-3yr.html

Santrock, J. W. (2019). *Children*. Mcgraw-Hill Education.