

Creating Enriching,
Comforting, and Healthy
Environments for Toddlers

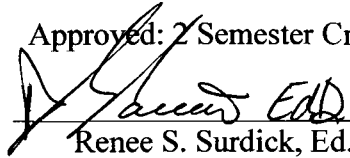
by

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ABSTRACT

Given the fact that toddlers ages one to three are spending 8-10 hours a day in childcare, close attention needs to be paid to the center's physical environment. Therefore, the purpose of this proposal is to address the need to facilitate change within the toddler classroom through teacher training, classroom equipment, and furniture modifications.

The goals of this project are to provide teacher training that focuses on current research and trends in early childhood environments. Additionally, aesthetic changes to the classroom will involve a change in lighting and wall color to create a restful and healthy classroom atmosphere. Lastly, furnishings that are functional and create a feeling of belonging and comfort will be added to the classroom space.

This project will be evaluated through the use surveys and tracking of critically significant incidents. The dissemination of the findings will be compiled, recorded, and

presented to the toddler teachers and student teachers at a scheduled staff meeting in December 2007. Additionally, a conference session will be developed and offered to teachers attending Stout's Early Childhood Conference in 2008.

This project will benefit the children and teachers of the Infant Toddler Lab by providing an enriching and comfortable childcare learning environment.

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Creating Enriching, Comforting, and Healthy Environments for Toddlers

Background Information

The mission of the Child and Family Study Center (CFSC) is to provide high quality programming for children of the University of Wisconsin-Stout's students, faculty, and staff, and the community.

The center offers programming for children ages six weeks through six years. The center consists of two sites: the Preschool and the Infant/Toddler Lab. The Preschool has two multi-age (three to five years) classrooms that can accommodate up to 19 children in each room at any given time. The Infant Toddler Lab has three classrooms: the Infant Room, the Toddler One Room, and the Toddler Two Room. The Infant Room and the Toddler One Room can accommodate eight children in each room and the Toddler Two Room can have up to 12 children at a time. The CFSC currently has 90 children enrolled.

The CFSC program philosophy includes an emphasis on social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development; enhancing the child's self-concept; developing skills in problem-solving; improving motor coordination; and facilitating concept formation. Activities in the daily program include art, music, storytelling, sensory, movement, block building, outdoor play, dramatic play, field trips, cooking, language arts, emergent literacy, science, social studies, mathematics, and computer experiences. Through these activities and helpful interactions with teachers, the child's self-concept develops as he/she grows in intellectual processes, social interaction, and physical abilities.

The CFSC program goals are broad and focus on the whole child. Collectively, they represent all four areas of development: social, intellectual, physical, and emotional.

The program goals are to develop:

- A positive self concept and view of one's self as a worthwhile and competent human being
- Independence
- Problem-solving skills
- Language skills: listening, speaking, and writing
- Fine motor coordination
- Curiosity about the world
- Positive social interaction skills
- Self expression skills
- Large motor coordination
- Creative expression skills
- Appreciate the value of one's own rights as well as others
- An awareness and respect for an individual's cultural background
- An awareness and respect for each other's uniqueness and differences

(University of Wisconsin – Stout, 2006)

The CFSC also serves as a laboratory school and observation site for Early Childhood Education majors and other related majors at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The center experience allows university students to link theory with practice.

Statement of the Problem

Many young children are being placed in developmentally inappropriate and over-stimulating childcare environments.

According to Greenman (2001), a child placed in full-time care from infancy to age seven will have spent up to 12,000 hours in a childcare setting. Given this fact, providing a safe, developmentally appropriate and caring environment should be of the utmost importance. Wurm (2005) writes “The physical features of a space for children immediately communicate a view of the child and the value placed on children and their education by the people who created the space” (p. 29). Educators of young children have an opportunity to provide an environment that stimulates and encourages optimal growth and development. Research (Rushton, 2001) indicates that during the first five years of life brain development is rapid. Optimal learning can take place when young children are allowed to learn by doing within a low stress environment. Children make connections when they touch, think, discuss, eat, and interact with each other in an enriched learning environment where they have opportunities to be physically, socially, and intellectually immersed in learning (Curtis & Carter, 2003).

Classroom environment is critical in providing quality care in early childhood education (Curtis & Carter, 2003). When examining the effects of a toddler classroom environment on a child, the question of whether a childcare center should look like a school or a home may emerge. An important characteristic of a quality childcare program is providing young children, particularly those under three, with an atmosphere that is as home-like as possible (Whitehead & Ginsberg, 1999). Schools are often designed with straight lines, hard floors, and large rooms. Home, on the other hand,

represents a comfortable, soft, safe environment. Since most early childhood professionals do not have the luxury of designing childcare facilities, teachers must work within the existing rooms to provide an environment that best suits the need of the children in their care.

Need and Purpose

According to Wikipedia (2006), “A toddler is a common term for a child between the ages of one and three years old. During this period, the child learns a great deal about social roles and develops motor skills” (para. 1). Throughout the stage between infancy and childhood, the toddler will learn to walk, talk, solve problems, and attain social skills (Brainwonders, 1998-2001). It is important to recognize that everything that happens in the life of a toddler is significant. With each skill the child masters, a new period of growth begins. During the toddler’s amazing development, the brain is growing and changing at a rapid rate. “While we know that the development of a young child's brain is a ‘work in progress’ that takes years to complete, we also know that development in the early years is quite dramatic and can establish patterns for life-long learning” (para. 1).

Toddlers are full of energy, ideas, and a desire to explore their surroundings with the goal of becoming independent. Although their desired goal is independence, they are still very dependent on their caregivers to meet their needs. Greenman (1998) stated, “Toddlers are driven to explore, to discover, to comprehend – in Piaget’s terms to ‘construct’ reality, in Montessori’s terms to ‘absorb’ their environment, in Susan Issacs’ words to ‘realize’ themselves” (p. 49). A teacher faces the challenge of balancing the toddlers need for independence with the importance of being cared for in a safe, and nurturing environment.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC; as cited in Bredekamp & Copple, 1997) emphasizes that the environment plays a vital role in early childhood education. In their list of principles that educators should use as a guide to developmentally appropriate practices, the environment is intertwined and important to each of the 12 listed, which include the following:

- Domains of children's development - physical, social, emotional, and cognitive - are closely related. Development in one domain influences and is influenced by development in other domains.
- Development occurs in a relatively orderly sequence, with later abilities, skills, and knowledge building on those already acquired.
- Development proceeds at varying rates from child to child as well as unevenly within different areas of each child's functioning.
- Early experiences have both cumulative and delayed effects on individual children's development. Optimal periods exist for certain types of development and learning.
- Development proceeds in predictable directions toward greater complexity, organization, and internalization.
- Development and learning occur in and are influenced by multiple social and cultural contexts.
- Children are active learners, drawing on direct physical and social experiences as well as culturally transmitted knowledge to construct their own understandings of the world around them.

- Development and learning result from interaction of biological maturation and the environment, which includes both the physical and social worlds that children live in.
- Play is an important vehicle for children's social, emotional, and cognitive development as well as a reflection of their development.
- Development advances when children have opportunities to practice newly acquired skills as well as when they experience a challenge just beyond the level of their present mastery.
- Children demonstrate different modes of knowing and learning and different ways of representing what they know.
- Children develop and learn best in the context of a community where they are safe and valued, their physical needs are met, and they feel psychologically secure (NAEYC, as cited in Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 10)

In the author's role as an early childhood educator at the CFSC at the University of Wisconsin - Stout, it is necessary to consider the impact the environment has on the toddlers enrolled in the center. Several factors must be taken into account including safety, accessibility, available centers, furnishings, lighting, and use of color and sound. Constant training and updating is needed by CFSC staff members to keep abreast of current research in optimal classroom environments in order for a high quality program to exist. In addition, classrooms must be updated with fixtures, furnishings, and materials that support a healthy setting for the toddler population. This proposal supports the implementation of an appropriate and enriching childcare environment.

The classroom environment is critical in providing quality care in early childhood education (Curtis & Carter, 2003). Several factors must be taken into account including safety, accessibility, available centers, furnishings, lighting, and color schemes. Curtis and Carter, the authors of “Designs for Living and Learning,” raise important questions concerning the toddler classroom environment:

- Is the space inviting and welcoming to families?
- Does the center encourage independence?
- Are we providing a safe environment by allowing the children to feel secure while giving them the freedom to learn and grow?
- Are the furnishings appropriately sized?
- Is the lighting safe and comforting?
- Are the colors calming?
- Are there a variety of appropriate activities available?
- Is there harmony and order?

Safety

Teachers need to provide a safe environment for optimal learning to occur. Some organizations such as the NAEYC and state licensing agencies are available to provide the high standard of safety that needs to be implemented in every early childhood classroom.

In “A Guide to Setting Up Environments: Infant/Toddler Caregiving,” the authors, Lally and Stewart, (1990) stated, “Toddlers are especially challenging. At the height of their exploratory curiosity, they are not yet fully aware of what activities are

dangerous” (p. 9). Toddlers are natural explorers and can find themselves in unsafe situations. To ensure classroom safety, supervision is essential at all times (Herr, 2002).

Herr (2002) stated the following:

The staff is responsible for providing a safe environment for children. The following are basic objectives toward this goal:

- Supervise the children at all times.
- Maintain the minimum staff/child ratio as required by your state.
- Develop safety rules.
- Provide a safe environment.
- Practice fire safety.
- Know emergency procedures for accidental poisoning.
- Develop plans for weather emergencies.
- Recognize signs of child abuse and report any suspected cases.
- Teach children how to protect themselves from sexual assault. (p.148)

An early childhood classroom should offer the children an environment that is accessible. Self-help skills will be promoted when a child is able to accomplish tasks independently. Encouraging a feeling of self worth and a sense of accomplishment will be developed if a child is self-sufficient. As described by Bredekamp and Copple (1997), some areas in the room that should be made available to toddlers include the following:

- Sink and drinking fountain
- Daily opportunity for exploratory activities
- Age appropriate supplies and toys available for self selection
- Art work displayed at children’s level

- Variety of books available / teacher available to read
- Easily identified personal spaces

Learning Centers

The learning centers in a toddler classroom should be based on assessment of the children's needs as well as their desire for independence. There are many details to consider in the placement of centers within the classroom. The first consideration should be the division of wet/dry and noisy/quiet (Herr, 2002). The physical structure of the room will dictate some of the center placements. For example the art, science and sensory activities logically work best when located on a tile floor near a sink, allowing easy cleanup and less stress from the possible messy and wet learning experiences. The layout of the room must also take into account the need to accommodate the children who may be seeking a quiet place to read, rest, or simply be (Greenman, 1998). Conversely, young children, by nature are often active and physical which in turn can lead to an increased noise level. Thus, placing the quiet area away from noisy activities will aid in the reduction of classroom stress.

Furnishings

There are many factors that need to be taken into account when furnishing a toddler classroom. Size, safety, design, quality, and durability are all key factors in proper selection. The furniture should be sized to accommodate the needs of the children. Greenman (1998, p. 41) writes of scale and perspective in his book "Places for Childhoods."

It is easy to forget how small infants and toddlers are. Almost everything in their lives goes on under 30 inches. This requires that designers and teachers turn their

normal expectations upside down – beneath three feet is the *active zone* (where the curriculum happens), above three feet is the *passive zone* (storage, wall mounted cradles, bulletin boards).

He goes on to say, “The body size of infants and toddlers has implications for laying out spaces and distances within a playroom” (p. 41). By providing the proper sized furniture, both safety and accessibility increase.

Although it is important that toddler furnishings are easily sanitized and durable, it is of equal importance that furnishings are soft and responsive (Greenman, 1988). For example, furniture made of natural wood reflects an element of warmth and simplicity. A soft couch or love seat in a natural color provides a cozy place to read on, relax in, walk around, or hide behind. Furniture that serves many purposes is essential within the limited spaces that are occupied by curious, busy, and active toddlers.

Color Schemes

Color can change the mood or feel of the environment. There are several schools of thought regarding colors in the classroom. Curtis and Carter (2003, p. 26) state, “Warm colors, carefully chosen textured fabrics, artwork, plants... have been shown to create an atmosphere where people feel emotionally and physically at ease.” Greenman (1998) suggested that the colors in nature are beneficial to children. He wrote,

A childcare center contains huge amounts of details and motion because of the sheer number of people in the same room. Walls and surfaces should provide a background against which the items that children use stand out. Plain wooden shelves show off toys and materials well... With a backdrop of neutral walls and fabrics, people stand out sharply. (p. 42)

Greenman (2005, p. 87) adds “that too much color can create a dizzying or disorienting effect.” The above research clearly indicates the important role color plays within a childcare learning environment.

Lighting

Lighting plays an important role in a child's total development. Due to rapid physical growth and increased brain development, a toddler may be more at risk when exposed to unhealthy lighting (Rushton & Larkin, 2001). Teachers and directors need to be aware of the facts regarding lighting in a classroom environment.

Many childcare centers are illuminated with overhead fluorescent lighting. Dr. Warren Hathaway (1995, as cited in “Citizens,” n. d.) conducted a two-year study which stated that students under full-spectrum fluorescent lamps with ultraviolet supplements had better attendance, achievement, growth, and development than did students under other lights. These findings indicate that lights have important non-visual effects on students who are regularly exposed to them in classrooms. In “Psychology Today,” (1988, as cited in “Citizens”), psychiatrist Wayne London reported that children stay healthier if they are taught in classrooms with full-spectrum fluorescent lighting rather than cool white standard fluorescents. When possible, natural lighting offers the healthiest way to light an early childhood classroom. Curtis and Carter (2003) suggested that in addition to natural light, the use of lamps, track lighting, and a well lit aquarium offer soft and homelike options to harsh overhead fluorescent lighting. Choices in lighting are available and should be considered to provide young children with a safe environment.

People

The environment of a classroom is shaped by many contributing factors but none are more important than the people who make up the staff. It takes many people working together to provide a quality childcare environment including teachers, children, parents, director, and support staff.

The relationship between families is of primary importance within the definition of classroom environment. NAEYC accreditation criteria states that in good programs “teachers and families work closely in partnership ensuring high-quality care and education for children, and parents feel supported and welcomed as observers and contributors to the classroom” (Baker & Manfredi-Petitt, 2004, p. 11). A trusting relationship is a key component in establishing parent, teacher, and child relationships. Within a childcare environment, there are many steps that can be taken to nurture the relationship between parents and teachers. Communication is an important factor in building a comfortable and trusting relationship. The sharing of weekly parent letters, pictures, anecdotes, daily notes and simply taking the time to greet families in the morning and say good-bye in the evening allows parents to connect with their toddler’s caregiver (Greenman, 1998). Teachers who make themselves available to the parents are able to achieve a level of insight that helps to nurture and support the child. “Strong relationships between families and caregivers allow communication to flow naturally and smoothly” (Baker & Manfredi-Petitt, p. 22).

There are many important factors to consider when planning a toddler classroom. Careful attention must be paid to safety, furnishings, learning centers, color schemes,

lighting, and people. The creation of an environment that encourages independence within a safe, nurturing, enriching, and creative environment, provides a toddler with a wonderful place to be a child. To quote Greenman (2001):

When everything comes together; when we get it right and it truly is a wonderful place to be a child for those 12,000 hours, and a great place to be with a child career; a place in and of the world; we have created a place for a childhood. (p. 8)

Presently, the Infant Toddler Lab consists of three classrooms housed within the Home Economics Building at the University of Wisconsin - Stout. The climate of the university is by design “institutional.” The lighting is harsh, the flooring is durable, and the walls are white. The acoustics are at a high level given the high ceilings, lack of walled divisions, and surplus of hard materials. Many furnishings are in need of updating due to wear from high usage. Additionally, in order to best meet the needs of the children, the staff needs to be trained in the recent trends and developmentally appropriate practices regarding classroom environments.

Significance Statement

The potential contribution of this project is improved toddler classrooms that encourage growth and learning in a stress-free and enriching environment. The contribution will potentially enhance the lives of 32 toddlers who individually spend an average of 1,280 hours annually within our childcare environment. Proposed changes include improved light fixtures to provide a safer environment, updated furnishings improving size, safety, and material, and upgraded aesthetics by painting the facility in neutral tones.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children advocates that a high-quality, developmentally appropriate program will have certain attributes in common. A high quality early childhood program is one that provides a safe and nurturing environment that promotes the physical, social, emotional, aesthetic, intellectual, and language development of each child while being sensitive to the needs and preferences of the families. (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 8)

This project will benefit the children of the infant toddler lab by providing an environment that enhances each child's specific and unique needs through:

- Furnishings and equipment that are properly sized allowing children to gain self help opportunities
- The presences of self-directed activities that will foster independence and heighten self-esteem
- An improved classroom design to accommodate learning and development within the safety of a stress-free environment

This project will benefit the teachers and student teachers of the Infant Toddler Lab by providing:

- Valuable teacher training that addresses strategies for facilitating appropriate classroom environments
- Additional equipment and materials that help create an enriching learning environment

Importance of Project

Many children spend 8-10 hours a day in the CFSC. Given the amount of time children spend in the classroom, it is important to provide a developmentally appropriate

environment. The importance of this project is that it will improve the environment and overall quality of childcare offered to the children of this setting.

Potential Replicability

The University of Wisconsin - Stout provides the students in the Early Childhood Education Program the opportunity to observe and study the child care center. Likewise, ECE students do their preschool student teaching placement at the CFSC. In the capacity as a training facility, the center is promoted as a model school. What is adopted at the center would likely be reproduced at other centers. After working in this optimal environment, student teachers will take this gained knowledge into their future classrooms.

Other Funding Sources

The grant cycles of the University of Wisconsin-Stout are not compatible with this project and its timeline.

Table 1

Goals and Objectives of the Study

Goals	Objectives
<p>1: Teacher training that focuses on current research and trends in toddler classroom environments will be provided to the staff.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upon the completion of the training program ten teachers will each describe practical techniques to modify classroom environment in order to create a calm environment. 2. Each teacher will be provided a resource book to be used as a tool to recognize the need for change and explain options for improving classroom environment. 3. The teachers will complete a pre-survey to identify the current classroom needs.
<p>2: Upgrade the existing classroom aesthetics to provide an appropriate environment designed for optimal learning.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The teachers will oversee the implementation of environmental changes (ex. full-spectrum bulbs to replace the existing harsh fluorescent lighting). 2. Teachers will select a warm, neutral color to create an atmosphere that promotes a feeling of well being for children and adults. 3. The teachers will design a toddler friendly classroom environment by adding the following classroom furnishings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two round toddler browsing tables/pillows • two window seats/cushions • two low toddler tables • two bench seats • two bronze canopy netting/pillows • one teak bench • one overstuffed sofa
<p>3: Assess the project outcomes.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To survey the six Infant Toddler Lab teachers on the outcomes and value of the teacher training and classroom modifications.

Table 2

Timeline to Achieve Goals and Objectives

Activity	Persons Involved	Date	Expected Outcome
Goal 1			
Activity 1			
Prepare for teacher training workshop (contact speaker, set date and time, reserve room for workshop, order resource book for each attendee, and get refreshments)	Jamie Lynch	December, 2006	Flyer, handouts, letter of agreement completed for speaker. Prepare nametags, sign in sheets, process CEU forms through university.
Goal 1			
Activity 2			
(1) Workshop for teacher training	12 teachers of the Infant Toddler Lab	January, 2007 CFSC Library 6:00-8:00 p.m.	Engage teachers in discussion of classroom environment modifications using grant resources. Ideas will be documented at conclusion of workshop. Review monthly data collection procedures (one log per classroom).
Goal 2			
Activity 1			
Schedule university personnel for lighting installation and room painting	Jamie Lynch	February, 2007	Installation and testing of full spectrum lighting, and painting of toddler classrooms completed.
Goal 2			
Activity 2			
Order classroom furniture and distribute to classrooms upon arrival	Jamie Lynch	February, 2007	Furniture ordered and distributed to classrooms
Goal 2			
Activity 3			
Creating and updating classroom spaces	6 teachers of the Infant Toddler Lab	May, 2007	Materials organized and integrated into the classroom

Table 2 continued

Activity	Persons Involved	Date	Expected Outcomes
Goal 3 Activity 1	Jamie Lynch	December, 2007	Review data logs monthly. Note critical incidences. Tabulate data quarterly. Summarize findings in a written document annually.
Goal 3 Activity 2	Jamie Lynch	May, 2008	Present two sessions on toddler classroom environments at the Early Childhood Conference to 100-150 participants.

Evaluation Plan

This project will be evaluated through the use of questionnaires and critical incident logs. In January of 2007, a questionnaire will be given to the teachers of the Infant Toddler Lab. The first survey will ask teachers to identify present levels of training, resources available and classroom furnishings, and equipment used in the classroom setting. At a staff meeting during professional development week in May of 2007, a list of the new materials, resources, and equipment will be distributed to the staff. Time will be given to become acquainted with these items and to discuss the various purposes and uses for them.

A second questionnaire will be distributed to the staff of the Infant Toddler Lab during a weekly staff meeting in December, 2007 to determine whether

- The strategies presented at the teacher training were effective in the classroom and whether they were viewed by the teachers as effective.
- The curriculum resources were effective in the development of appropriate classroom environments.

- The classroom materials and equipment were used and how they affected the classroom climate.
- More training, curriculum resources or classroom materials are needed to continue to facilitate the development of an enriching and appropriate environment for the children and adults of the Toddler Lab.

Each toddler classroom teacher will monitor classroom critical incidences in a designated log book (one per room) to be reviewed monthly. Data will be tabulated quarterly and findings will be summarized annually in a written document.

- See Appendix D for sample log book

Dissemination of Results

The project's dissemination plan is tri-fold:

- The results from the survey process (pre-post project) will be presented at a staff meeting during professional development week in January of 2008. There will be time at this meeting to discuss the results and to formulate a plan for future action.
- Because the impact of changes in the area of classroom environments must be measured over time, it is important to assess teacher attitudes and beliefs and children's behavior every semester. Therefore, at a staff meeting during professional development week each semester the staff will discuss the ongoing effects of the modified environment on the children in their care. The effectiveness of training, furnishings, and updated equipment/fixtures will be discussed as well as setting goals for future updates and changes.
- The results of this project will be presented at the Early Childhood Conference in May, 2008 on the topic of enriching toddler classroom environments.

Budget Narrative

The items requested in this grant have been selected to enhance the learning environment for the toddler classrooms in the Child and Family Study Center.

Personnel. The teacher training workshop (two hour) will address the first goal of the project providing teacher training that focuses on current research and trends in creating a calm and enriching toddler classroom environment. Teachers will get valuable training enabling them to design and implement classroom modifications. During this training session, research-based strategies will be outlined to increase calmness and decrease stress in the classroom environment. There will be question and answer time as well as opportunity to plan within the actual physical space. Funds will be used to compensate the trainer and trainees. This workshop will take place in the Infant Toddler Lab. See Tables 2 and 3 for details of personnel costs.

No funds are requested to cover ordering and distribution duties. These tasks will be performed as part of the staff responsibilities during the scheduled work day.

Services/Supplies. The first goal will be met through a staff training session. As part of the teacher training, a book will be used by teachers as they plan and implement classroom modifications. “Designs for Living and Learning” will be purchased for each of the six lab teachers. Likewise, four additional books will be ordered and made readily available for lab teachers to use for ongoing research and reference. The selected resources have been chosen due to their research-based practical ideas pertaining to young children and the impact of the environment.

The first and second objectives stated in goal two include the teachers overseeing the implementation of environmental changes such as replacement of fluorescent lights

with full-spectrum bulbs and selection of the paint color for the Infant Toddler Lab. The third objective involves the teachers in the design and change of the classrooms. They will be allowed to introduce the new furnishing into the environment while paying careful attention to the placement and planning of the classroom space.

The following equipment and furnishings are being requested as part of this grant. A summary of the materials is as follows: 10 resource books, six accent pillows, two bench seats, two canopy nettings, four stackable reading cushions, one teak bench, two browser tables, eight throw pillows, and one overstuffed sofa. The color pallet selected will consist of colors found in nature including browns, greens, tans, and burgundy. These materials were selected because they are designed to enrich the environment while nurturing and stimulating the development of young children. See Tables 4 through 6 for details on services and supplies, including shipping costs.

Indirect costs. This grant proposal is designed to benefit the University of Wisconsin - Stout and the CFSC. Therefore, as stated in University policy, a 37% fee will be added to the grant total to cover facilities and administrative costs. Table 7 outlines the indirect costs for this project.

Budget

See Tables 3-9 for details of the budget. The cost of shipping the materials has also been estimated and included in this proposal.

Table 3

Personnel Costs

Item	Cost
(1) presenter for a two-hour teacher training workshop (\$100.00/hour x 2 hours including all preparation and travel expenses) Topic: Enriching Classroom Environments	\$200.00
SUBTOTAL	\$200.00

Table 4

Training Costs

Item	Cost
Designs for Living and Learning (six books @ \$26.37/copy) Amazon	\$158.22
Refreshments – Pizza and Lemonade (12 people @ \$5.00/person)	\$60.00
SUBTOTAL	\$218.22

Table 5

Costs of Curriculum Resources

Item	Amount	Price Per Item	Catalog/page	Cost
“Caring Spaces, Learning Places”	1	\$48.00	Amazon.com	\$48.00
“Working in the Reggio Way: A Beginner's Guide for American Teachers”	1	\$14.93	Amazon.com	\$14.93
“Creating the Peaceable Classroom: Techniques to Calm, Uplift, and Focus Teachers and Students”	1	\$19.77	Amazon.com	\$19.77
“Early Learning Environments That Work”	1	\$16.47	Amazon.com	\$16.47
			SUBTOTAL	\$99.17

Table 6

Costs of Classroom Aesthetics and Materials

Item	Amount	Price Per Item	Catalog/page	Cost
Estimate for painting Classroom 165 Classroom 175	2 rooms	\$1,200.00	Order through University - Donny Moats	\$2,400.00
Estimate for full spectrum lighting	92 replacement bulbs	\$4.20	Order through University - Donny Moats	\$386.40
Accent Pillows	6	\$44.00	Harrison pg. 11 JL216SB	\$264.00
Bench Seat	2	\$200.80	Harrison pg. 11 JL7559	\$560.00
Bronze Canopy Netting	2	\$99.99	Harrison pg. 5 JL7288	\$199.98
Stackable Reading Cushions	4	\$98.5	Harrison pg. 5 JL744587	\$394.00
Teak Bench	1	\$559.00	Harrison pg. 9 JL9049	\$559.00
Browser tables	2	\$145.99	Harrison pg.2 JL3080JC	\$479.78
Throw Pillows	8	\$44.00	Harrison pg. 2 JL216SB	\$352.00
Overstuffed Sofa	2	\$240.00	Harrison pg. 12 JL7555	\$240.00
			SUBTOTAL	\$5,835.16

Table 7

Estimated Shipping Costs

Catalog	Calculations	Amount
Amazon	\$3.00 per shipment + \$.99 /book (some books are included in free shipping promotion, if available at time of ordering)	\$7.95
Harrison and Company	15% of total price of items (\$3088.76)	\$46.33
	SUBTOTAL	\$54.28

Table 8

Indirect Costs

Facilities and Administrative Cost Rate	Amount
University indirect costs calculated at 37% (6406.83 x .37)	\$2,370.00
	SUBTOTAL
	\$2,370.00

Table 9

Total Requested Funds

Item Area	Amount
Personnel	\$200.00
Training	\$218.22
Curriculum Resources	\$99.17
Classroom Aesthetics and Materials	\$5,835.16
Shipping Costs	\$54.28
Indirect Costs	\$2,370.00
	TOTAL
	\$8,776.83

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Appendix A: Letter with Grant Submission

October 2, 2006

Target Foundation
1000 Nicollet Mall, TPS-3080
Minneapolis, MN 55403

Dear Grant Review Committee,

This is my submission for the grant titled "Creating Enriching, Comforting, and Healthy Environments for Toddlers" for the grant cycle of 2007. The grant proposal components follow your guidelines outlined on the foundation website. I have enclosed additional requested supplementary materials in the appendices.

The goal of this grant proposal is to provide quality childcare for toddlers within an enriching and nurturing environment at the University of Wisconsin-Stout Child and Family Study Center. Given the fact that many young children spend most of their waking hours in a childcare facility, providing a safe, stimulating, and caring environment should be of the utmost importance. Therefore the purpose of this proposal is to address the need to provide supportive childcare environments through teacher training, and updated classroom equipment. This project will benefit the toddlers by offering appropriate opportunities to grow and develop within an optimal classroom environment. The teachers in the Infant Toddler Lab will benefit by receiving valuable teacher training as well as materials and equipment that will allow them to create an exceptional learning environment.

Please find my materials for your review. I look forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jamie Lynch
Instructional Specialist
Child and Family Study Center
University of Wisconsin-Stout
811 6th Street
Menomonie, WI 54751
lynchj@uwstout.edu
715/232-2428

Enclosures

Appendix B: First Survey of Child and Family Study Center Teachers (January, 2007)

The purpose of this survey is to assist the project director in collecting information regarding training, materials, and equipment within the classroom environment. Briefly answer the following questions.

1. Is there a specific physical area of your classroom where the environment is appropriate and enriching to toddlers? If so, where?
2. Is there a specific physical area of your classroom where change in your physical environment would benefit the children in your program? If so, where?
3. What are your biggest challenges in regard to classroom setup?
4. What specific training have you had in classroom environments?
5. What specific training do you need relating to appropriate implementation of toddler classroom environments?
6. What resource guides are you currently using when setting up and arranging your classroom?
7. What specific materials are needed to assist you in making appropriate changes to your existing classroom?

Appendix C: Second Survey of Child and Family Study Center Teachers

The purpose of this survey is to assist the project director in collecting information regarding the effectiveness of teacher training, classroom furnishings, and equipment provided by the grant to enrich the toddler classroom environment. Briefly answer the following questions.

1. What specific strategies have you used from the teacher training session that has improved your classroom? What evidence have you seen of this improvement?

2. What specific activities for enriching the classroom environment have you used from the provided resources? Please state name of resource and page.

3. What specific changes have you made to the physical areas of your classroom that have created an improved environment? What evidence have you seen?

4. Have you received any comments from parents about the changes in the classroom environment? If so, what?

5A. Do you feel that the teacher training, new furnishings, and updated fixtures provided in this project were sufficient for creating an enriching and appropriate classroom for the children of the Infant Toddler Lab?

Insufficient

Very sufficient

1

2

3

4

5

5B. if you answered 1-4, please specify what areas and resources are still needed.

5. What additional information can you provide that will be important for the evaluation of this project?

Appendix D: Critical Incident Log

Critical incident logs will be secured through the department and placed in each of the two toddler classrooms to record consistent and detailed information regarding the children within the modified classroom environment. This log will be compared with the current critical incident log (according to state licensing regulation).

Critical incident logs contain the following information:

- Date
- Time of day
- Name of child/children/teacher involved in incident
- Description of incident including activity, toy, area of classroom, involved in incident.

Appendix E: IRB Approval



Office of Institutional Research and Human Subjects
152 Voc Rehab Building

University of Wisconsin-Stout
P.O. Box 790
Menomonie, WI 54751-0790

715/232-1126
715/232-1749 (fax)
<http://www.uwstout.edu/irps>

Date: December 11, 2006

To: Jamie Lynch

Cc: Renee Surdick

From: Sue Foxwell, Research Administrator and Human Protections Administrator, UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research (IRB)

Subject: **Protection of Human Subjects in Research**

After completing the modifications for your project, "*Creating Enriching, Comforting, and Healthy Environments for Toddlers*," it is **Exempt** from review by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects. The project is exempt under Category 2 of the Federal Exempt Guidelines and holds for 5 years.

Please copy and paste the following message to the top of your survey form before dissemination:

<p>This project has been reviewed by the UW-Stout IRB as required by the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46</p>

Please contact the IRB if the plan of your research changes. Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and best wishes with your project.

***NOTE: This is the only notice you will receive – no paper copy will be sent.**

SF:dd