

The Impact of a Great Pre-School Teacher

By Kathryn Antin

Great teachers make great preschools. When looking for a preschool, it is very important that a parent understand the preschool learning environment and the influence that a teacher has in creating that environment. Understanding a teacher's contribution to a well-run classroom, then, is critical in selecting a preschool for your child.

Life is very active for a preschooler. A young child learns most of his or her concepts through play and hands-on, real-life experiences. Therefore a **great preschool teacher will plan and set up a rich, inviting environment that provides each child the opportunity to learn at an optimal level.** A classroom filled with toys, equipment, and themes, by which children can learn language, math concepts, social skills, fine and gross motor skills, creativity, problem solving, and science concepts, serves as a tool for teachers to use in keeping a well-managed classroom. He or she will understand the various means by which young children learn, and provide activities and lessons which engage children on multiple levels. With a carefully planned and prepared environment, an early childhood teacher has all kinds of teaching resources at his/her fingertips.

A great preschool teacher will notice and value the individual. A great preschool teacher will have a method to take notes about a child's individual development and methods to customize attention or activities to individual needs. A great preschool teacher will take the time to understand each aspect of a child's development: creative development, social and emotional development, cognitive development, language and communication development, and physical development. Within this framework, the teacher will honor each child as a unique person worthy of respect, listening and responding to questions and concerns.

A great preschool teacher will encourage each child. A teacher should provide plenty of positive reinforcement, both when children are in groups and also when working one-on-one with a child. Just as adults appreciate affirmation in what they do well at work, church, or volunteer service, so children desire to know specifically what they do well. A great preschool teacher will notice these details and communicate them to the children. A critical part of preschool development involves social interactions; so a great preschool teacher will encourage healthy relationship development between the students, and between the students and staff.

A great preschool teacher will be effective by being a gentle leader. The list of characteristics that describe teachers is endless. One parent said that she looks for "someone who is very, very sweet – is kind;" but "kindness" only begins the list. Preschool teachers must be mature leaders who have great inner strength and know how to be creative, spontaneous, problem solving, patient, calm, positive, consistent, caring, listeners, kind, knowledgeable, and respectful. These qualities are the same qualities we hope to instill in our children; and they learn what they live. All these characteristics can be summed by one word: **LOVING.**

Busy Bees Christian Preschool strives to hire great preschool teachers with loving character. They are leaders that teach with LOVE. At Busy Bees Christian Preschool we say that **LOVE** is **L**Leading the children, **O**ptimizing their learning opportunities, **V**aluing each as unique and individual, and **E**ncouraging each to develop as a complete child. Stop in at Busy Bees to meet our great teachers and to sign your child up for a **FREE OFFICE TOUR** to experience our preschool. Call 479-267-0456 for an appointment, or visit us between 7 am and 6 pm M-F.