

FAMILY RESOURCE

C O N N E C T I O N

A publication created by and for New Horizon Child Care • www.newhorizonchildcare.com • Phone: 763-557-1111

Recent Brain Research Supports Curriculum and Approach to Learning

The four principles of the brain development research found in *Rethinking the Brain*, a publication by Families and Work Institute, support the New Horizon hands-on learning approach. The four principles are:

1. The outside world shapes the brain's wiring.
2. The outside world is experienced through the senses-seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, and tasting-enabling the brain to create or modify connections.
3. The brain operates on a "use it or lose it" principle.
4. Relationships with other people early in life are the major source of development of the emotional and social parts of the brain.

How Can My Child Benefit From the New Horizon Curriculum?

New Horizon Child Care was founded on the principle of promoting positive self-esteem in children during these critical early years. Activities and teacher-child interactions are geared toward promoting each child's self-esteem, in addition to challenging intellectual, social, and physical development. Our goal is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners. This is accomplished through our unique curriculum implemented by our trained child care professionals. Both the curriculum and positive teacher-child interactions encourage children to become active and creative explorers. The hands-on curriculum celebrates the fact that ***young children learn best by doing***. Whether your child is an infant, or attending elementary school, you will discover numerous benefits from the curriculum at New Horizon Child Care.

- **Activities and interactions promote positive self-esteem.** Teachers gear activities for success and allow children to make many choices throughout the day.
- **The New Horizon curriculum is developmentally appropriate.** We carefully select the activities to meet and challenge the needs of children of all ages and developmental levels.
- **Our curriculum includes the child's daily routines.** We understand that eating, toileting and hygiene are a large part of a young child's daily life.
- **We incorporate theme-based activities.** Theme-based activities allow each child to explore topics and concepts that are of interest and meaningful to them.
- **All toys and materials are easily accessible.** This allows children to choose activities, toys and equipment independently.
- **Our curriculum places strong emphasis on the classroom environment.** Classrooms are set up with a variety of learning centers, allowing each child to select areas that are of interest to them.
- **Learning centers are enhanced daily.** Each center features activities and materials that explore the theme, encouraging curiosity and discovery.
- **The program schedule allows for a balance of active and restful times throughout the day.** We understand a child's need for a variety of activities throughout the day.
- **Activities allow children to explore the world around them by using their senses.** By using their senses-touching, tasting, seeing, listening, smelling, children learn by doing.

Mission

To open "New Horizons" of self-esteem and potential for the little people entrusted to our care, their families, and our employees by providing and continuously improving the best child development on the planet!



Theory and Research Behind the New Horizon Curriculum

Our curriculum is based on current educational philosophy and theory, including Jean Piaget's theories of cognitive development and Erik Erikson's stages of socio-emotional development, and principles of physical development. The curriculum focuses on four areas of child development: (1) intellectual development, (2) social development, (3) emotional development, and (4) physical development. The New Horizon curriculum, and our approach to learning, is greatly influenced by the early childhood text, The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood, by Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Colker (3rd Ed. 1992) published by Teaching Strategies, Inc. (the "Creative Curriculum"). Over the past ten years the Creative Curriculum has been implemented in a wide range of early childhood programs and public schools throughout the United States, Canada, and in Australia. New Horizon has designed and compiled several thousand pages of theme-based instructional materials and resources to supplement its curricula.

Other theorists and educational approaches that have had some influence on our child care curriculum include: Dr. Marie Montessori, who developed educational materials and methods based on her belief that children learn best by doing, High/Scope programs also believe that children learn through active involvement with people, materials, events and ideas. We have considered some of the philosophies from the Reggio Emilia approach, which is also based on educational theorists Montessori, Dewey, Piaget and Vygotsky. In particular, the Reggio Emilia approach suggests that children learn best by construction rather than instruction. We support the Reggio belief that learning is an ongoing, flexible, open-ended process wherein children construct their own understanding.

Creative Discoveries Curriculum

Our toddler and preschool curriculum, Creative Discoveries, encompasses daily practices and routines, room arrangement, environment, and child-oriented activities. Creative Discoveries is a theme-based curriculum that allows children to explore topics and concepts that are meaningful to them. The classroom environment is set up with learning or interest centers. The numerous volumes of our Creative Discoveries curriculum offer activity ideas to enhance each interest area. The activities all relate to an age-appropriate theme. Our child care professionals choose enhancement activities for each learning center from the Creative Discoveries manuals, but also have the creative flexibility to choose activities from other resources to support the theme. During the early years, children engage in many activities during a short period of time. Our professional staff assist the children in moving from one activity to another. Lesson plans outlining the weekly theme, daily enrichments, and objectives are displayed on each classroom parent board.

Small Wonders Infant Curriculum

New Horizon utilizes the Small Wonders infant curriculum developed by Johnson and Johnson. This curriculum provides individual activity cards to use with infants at varying ages and developmental levels. The card's activities match the developmental level and ability of each infant. Each infant is allowed to follow his/her own pattern of daily activity and routine, as dictated by the parents and the child's temperament. On-going communication with parents about each infant's daily activities is essential. The infant classroom contains areas for quiet and active play. The equipment and supplies are of interest to infants of varying age and developmental levels. Lesson plans are displayed in each infant classroom on the parent board.

Camp Discovery School Age Curriculum

The classroom and curriculum for the school age children at New Horizon feature seven interest centers: dramatic play, creative art, discovery, language, table games, music and movement, and the computer station. Time outdoors is also a vital part of the school-age daily routine. The school age teaching staff plan active, hands-on experiences that meet the needs and interests of school age children. The themes, activities, and field trips fall primarily into three categories: arts, science and nature, and sports. All experiences support the school age child's need for independence and the ability to make choices in a safe, encouraging environment. Respect and responsibility are examples of two concepts, among many, that the curriculum encourages in each school age child. Field trips and enrichment opportunities are options offered in all New Horizon school age programs.

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