

1: Child Care Design Guide by Anita Rui Olds

CHILD CARE DESIGN GUIDE by Anita Rui Olds. This new resource guide is the compiled works of the late Anita Rui Olds. Anita held a doctorate in Human Development and Social Psychology from Harvard University and was the founder and director of The Child Care Institute, an annual training program for designers and child-care professionals.

Creating Peaceful Environmental Designs for the Classroom By Amy Sussna Klein With the myriad of things good teachers and caregivers must do everyday, examining the physical environment can easily be overlooked or forgotten. Yet designing a good space benefits everyone. In peaceful classrooms, children and their families feel welcome, child-centered activities happen easily, and those who use the space feel comfortable and have the ability to take ownership. The world children are presented with will make a big difference in their lifelong journey! This article will explain the importance of good environmental design in the classroom and how this can be achieved. Why Bother with Environmental Design? A big part of making the environment peaceful for family members involves creating personal spaces. When parents come to your program, what environmental elements encourage positive outcomes? Since, most parents come your program carrying numerous items Rui Olds, , it is helpful to have a transition space. Families will appreciate having a place to set down their belongings, such as backpacks or strollers, hang their coats, and drop off their children. A small lobby with adult-size chairs make parents feel comfortable and provide for a place to say goodbye, sit and snuggle, or observe their child Dombro, Colker, and Trister Dodge, Also, It is helpful to have a place that ensures confidentiality for teacher-parent conferences and more informal sharing of information. Providing environments where parents are at ease will strengthen teacher-parent partnerships. The stronger these partnerships the more likely the child will flourish. Supporting the Physical and Emotional Needs of Children Many children spend several hours in a center each week. Yet, Rui Olds states that the average center environment provides very few furnishings for relaxation, areas of comfort, and little or no space for a child to be alone. She advocates meeting four basic needs for children: Movement refers to an environment where each child can safely move without being too restricted, yet has clear limits. Comfort results from providing a balance of stimulationâ€”a place where there is neither too much nor too little stimulation. Competence is achieved by organizing an accessible assortment of activities in a variety of places; this assortment allows each child to find the activities they enjoy. Finally, control means that the child has a place in the classroom to feel orientated and feel comfortable. For example, a child who cannot see what is behind her may lose a sense of control. A thoughtfully-designed environment for children will have fewer management issues and less wasted time for teachers if the following two fundamental goals are met: When designing your classroom environment, it is important to know your goals and educational philosophy. As Sommer points out, the hallmark of the professional is that she has her own private space and can control her use of that space. The classroom design must be consistent with the educational philosophy or the space and the teacher may well be giving the child conflicting messages. A classroom, which is set up as free-choice for the children, will create conflicts if the program is teacher-directed. Certainly we could argue the benefits of one educational model over another, but the goal is designing classroom space to combine the specific needs of the teachers and children who use the space with the physical limitations of that space. In early childhood education, we seek to encourage exploration and discovery. Children will not explore, manipulate, or discover unless they feel secure and comfortable in the classroom Olds, Insecurity and discomfort lead to problematic behaviors, such as being destructive with materials and the inability to play with other children. On the other hand, security happens because there has been attention to the four basic environmental needsâ€”movement, comfort, competence, and controlâ€”mentioned in the previous section. When children feel secure in their environment, teachers are able to actively observe or help children broaden ideas. Chaotic spaces, on the other hand, feel uncomfortable. The Reggio Emilia approach illustrates how powerful the environment may be in helping children construct knowledge. In *The Hundred Languages of Children*: This is true of floor space, ceiling space, and wall space. Materials are presented in a beautiful, homey, pleasing, and organized manner Sussna, This attention to details in the environment is something to emulate for many reasons. Also, organized

materials build organizational skills. A child as young as one-and-a-half will put things away when the items are presented in an organized manner and will build important sorting skills while performing the task. The educators in Reggio Emilia collaborate and purposefully set up the environment so that there is a clear message inviting children to take part in new explorations and to look at what they have done in the past, helping them make deeper inquiries. Experiences such as these encourage revisiting. Revisiting is a process of reviewing the discovery that has been captured and made concrete through documentation. Revisiting allows and encourages extension, connections, and understanding. Anita Rui Olds began a class on environmental design for young children by asking participants to close their eyes and do three visualizations: After each visualization, Rui Olds had participants draw the place and encouraged them to think of the size, smells, shapes, and lighting in that place. Then, as a group, the participants listed the elements in each place. This exercise may seem simplistic, but it can tap into essential elements of what is needed to create peaceful classroom environments. Thinking about size, smells, shapes, and lighting are helpful in reminding adults to provide children with what they naturally need and create a variety of environmental experiences. They need hard and soft spaces. A chance for sunlight is important. Smells may make children feel at home and nurtured. Rather, teachers need to reflect upon developmental ages, issues of diversity, attention to safety, and a need for varied uses e. When evaluating your environment, consider the following: Does the environment reflect tendencies of the developmental age level of the children that are going to use the environment? For example, infants will be on the floor and are apt to be teething, so it is helpful to have spaces that can be washed easily to prevent the spreading of germs. Toddlers usually want to climb. Adding a small loft to the classroom will allow them to meet their needs. Four-year-olds are typically dogmatic about their world. Helping four-year-olds learn that there are several right ways to use their environment would be helpful. How many people are typically in the environment? Is there a place for them to meet as a whole group? There should also be places for them to break out into small groups. Since children are at school for a long time each day, they may yearn for some quiet and a place to be alone sometimes. What about safety issues? If the space is too open, it may invite running. On the other hand, if a space is too closed, children will not have enough room to use materials appropriately. Without the proper space, children may bump into each other and this could lead to arguments. Every classroom should have spaces that give children a chance to be alone and have privacy, but teachers need to make sure there are no hidden spaces that could be dangerous. If you do not feel this positive welcoming, it is a signal that something probably needs changing. It is important to remember, however, not to change everything at once. When making changes, think about what appeals to you and see where it takes you. Also, think about the various areas and materials in the classroom and the type of behaviors and activities you wish to foster. If something is not functional or attractive, be brave enough to let it go. Small and inexpensive changes can have a positive impact on your space. Sit on the floor, brainstorm solutions and dare to take some small action to improve your environment. Small and affordable additions to the classroom can be the inclusion of homey touches. Families are often helpful in providing these homey touches, too. For example, many parents will have a basket sitting around that they may lend to the classroom for holding materials. Perhaps you can have a family meeting to talk about building a peaceful environment. Parents may also be helpful in brainstorming ideas and making sure that the population in the classroom is authentically attended to. Children feel a sense of ownership when they are represented in the classroom. Knowing that their parent s contributed can extend this ownership. Conclusion All early childhood teachers can certainly start taking steps towards making their classroom into more peaceful, purposeful environments. To build wonderful environments, it helps if teachers reflect upon who is in their classroom, what feels comfortable in their space, and why. We all need to remember that change happens one step at a time. Since building peaceful environments is an ongoing quest, take time to celebrate successes along your journey. Boston Boyd, Cadwell, L. Bringing Reggio Emilia home. The creative curriculum for infants and toddlers. The hundred languages of children: The Reggio Emilia approach " advanced reflections. A thing of beauty: Aesthetic development in young children. Young Children, 42 6. Caring spaces, learning places: Designing developmentally optimal classrooms for children with special needs. Perspectives on young children with special needs.

2: Child Care Design Guide : Anita Rui Olds :

Child Care Design Guide helps architects and designers plan, design, and renovate functional, developmentally rich, pleasing centers. Author Anita Rui Olds brings to this work over 25 years of design experience with children's facilities.

3: Child Care Design Guide by Anita Rui Olds - ISBN: (McGraw-Hill Education - Europe)

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4: Earlychildhood NEWS - Article Reading Center

Anita Rui Olds was passionate about designing children's play spaces that would fulfill their developmental needs and provide a "rich environment for the wild spirit to flourish."¹ As a designer, consultant, writer, and instructor, Dr. Olds was one of North America's leading experts on child care center design

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6: Child Care Design Guide - Anita Rui Olds - Google Books

Virtually unknown 30 years ago, it is now the primary child-rearing environment for a majority of American children. It is estimated that the average child spends 10 hours a day, 5 days a week, 50 weeks a year, for 5 years in this environment.

7: Child Development Centers | WBDG Whole Building Design Guide

Child Care Design Guide. Olds, Anita Rui This book provides architects, interior designers, developers, and child-care professionals with detailed information on the planning and design of child care centers.

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