
The Eurasia Proceedings of Educational & Social Sciences (EPESS), 2014

Volume 1, Pages 12-15

ICEMST 2014: International Conference on Education in Mathematics, Science & Technology

CRÈCHE AND SAFETY FACILITIES FOR INFANT DEVELOPMENT

Dr (Mrs.) Florence A. UNDIYAUNDEYE
Department Of ECCEDE
Email: atube2001@yahoo.com
PHONE: NO. +234 805 742 2724/+234 806 412 7750

Essien Amanbo EDUNG
Department of Educational Foundation
Federal College Of Education,
Obudu, Cross River State, Nigeria.

ABSTRACT: Infants learn new things through interaction with other children at home or a crèche where others are kept for safety by parents as they attend to various careers. Even though most parents may not know exactly the degree to which infants learn as they stay together at the crèche, this guides their development with proper facilities put in place by daycare centres. The crux here is the provision of safety facilities in the crèche for proper infant development during the first six months of child care in the crèche. The major question here is what is a crèche? Are crèches safe and reliable? What would the child do at the crèche? Finding out what infants learn and the safety of being a client at the daycare centre requires an understanding of the practice in the centre as regards the child ability to develop with reference to their stages of development which form coherence to a baby's world. Studying how crèche and safety facilities facilitate infant development needs an understanding of how crèches are run to stimulate baby's cognitive and social abilities for proper integration into the human world. The babies, toddlers and young children can play, learn, enjoy meals and rest under a safety facility provision with absolute strangers in a completely new environment with a feel of comfort and confident at the crèche.

Keywords: Crèche, Safety facilities, infant development, learning and social interaction, physical development.

INTRODUCTION

Intellectual, emotional, physical, cognitive and social development correlates with baby's development as they interact at the crèche in a safety environment. A crèche is a formal daycare or nursery childcare centre where babies, toddlers and young children are cared for in a safe and stimulating surrounding. Crèches cater for the children of parents with either full or part time jobs or activities to perform outside the home. Shatter (2011). This concept though new in the Nigerian education system, is picking up quickly with the ever-increasing number of nuclear families and working parents. It can be tasking and sometimes even heart breaking to leave one's little ones with absolute strangers in a completely new environment. For parents, they need to feel assured, comfortable and confident before leaving their children at the crèche or daycare. For making a choice of daycare or crèche, some key issues must be considered by parents; where is the location? Is it close to the home or work place? Some parents even check and verify the qualifications and experiences of the staff and the persons who primarily run it. Ideally the expectation is to be run by educated, experienced and trained professional who have a valid operating license. The ratio of caregivers to number of children to ensure a child's individual attention is preferred. (Schacter, Gilbert & Wegner 2009, 2011). A crèche should be a place where children are happy and secured away from home as parents go for livelihood. This breeds a child's wellbeing, emotional and physical development.

A child starting a childcare makes a new stage of family life and requires family getting use to it in terms of preparation for both the parent and child. Parents worry about how children will cope in their absence and whether a caregiver's care would substitute parent's care. Schultzer and Schultzer & Duane (201) is of the view that it is only natural if children miss a bit of their parents at first as they get admitted in crèche.

- This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

- Selection and peer-review under responsibility of the Organizing Committee of the conference

*Corresponding author: Florence A. UNDIYAUNDEYE - atube2001@yahoo.com

Both parents and children have suggested ways on how they can prepare for a change of life as the child goes to resume in crèche. Steel and Piers (2007) suggest that following on how parents chose the right childcare crèche for their children. The best approach is either to consider a range of childcare options to find one that suits the needs of you and child, look into day nurseries, child minders nannies or ask a relative to look after the baby. List also your favourite options, the ones that suits your working hours and budget and look at them in more details; what is the adult to child ratio? If the baby is still tender, there should be at least one carer to every three babies. What are the carer's qualification and experience in looking after babies and you may want to know if you can trust them. Are there activities, books and toys that are right for the child's age? There should be plenty to do that engages the child and stimulates the child's development. What are the facilities like? The toilets, space indoors and outdoors for the children to play. If meals are provided they should be nutritious and suitable for the child's age.

Where is the childcare situated? Somewhere close to the home or workplace should be most convenient. An easy journey to childcare means you and your child can both start your days feeling relaxed. In the unlikely event of emergency, you can be there quickly. It is also worth talking to other parents too. They may have firsthand experience of childcare in your area.

When decision have been made about the preferred childcare for the child, the next step is to help the child get to know his/her new carer because the more familiar the child is with the carer, the happier he or she will feel being left with them. Arrange a number of visits, at least an hour long with the new carer. This will give the child a chance to relax and enjoy the time with the new person in his or her life with the support of the parents presence. It may also be useful if the child is to be looked after by a grandparent, toddler play groups or other relative a few times before parents go back to work. This will get the child used being away from parents and will learn that parents will always come back to them. A child's crying is unlikely to mean that he or she is unhappy at childcare or that the carer aren't doing their jobs properly but that he or she needs some time to adjust to the new environment through more support from other children, parents and carers in crèche. (Steel, Piers and Konig, 2006). As parents, when you are at crèche with the child, make an effort to show the child that you and her caregiver get along. This will assure the child of the parents' trust of the carer.

Crèche Policy Guidelines for Child Development

There are usually policies for parents, caregivers and play equipment at the crèche. The centre welcomes parents participation in the activities or operations of the centre to be discussed with the supervisor, who in turn can advice them on what opportunities available for the child. There is a complaint and suggestion book kept in the crèche in case of any dissatisfaction parents can enter their feelings on the book. But parents must refrain from being angry with the crèche staff in front of the children to upheld the morale of the centre. Crèche meetings are fixed with parents as scheduled. Parents are required to discuss their unhappiness in any regard and they should not feel it will be used against the child for this help in the service improvement. Parents are requested to encourage their children to listen to simple instructions given by the crèche staff (Xiang, Bride & Guan, 2004, Ole Frode, Kurt & Terri, 2010). Most issues are dealt with affectionately and redirected to other activities in perfection. Parents also are required to leave clear instructions on medication for proper administration of prescribed drugs if it is required during the day. Parents would always be consulted on where to seek medical attention if need be. No toy from home is allowed in the centre unless the child cannot stay without them. Looking after children is an enormous responsibility; let the caregiver not worry about toys. If such items must be sent the crèche staff are not held liable for damage (Ryan, Rich, Edward & Deci, 2000).

The belongings of each child need to be checked by parents at the end of the day during pick up time. In case of missing items, parents are to inform staff as soon as possible. Clear instructions are required if parents are travelling during the day and contact number particularly for any emergency. If children are sick or have an infectious illness, the child should stay at home within that period. Fees requirements by children must be paid appropriately as a responsible obligation by parents.

Care givers or carers are expected to wear smart cotton clothes, hair plaited or made into bun. Very essential jewellery are allowed, no long earrings and glass bangles for the glass bangles tend to break and may hurt the children hence best avoided. Working hours is not a time for chat with friends and family (Wigfield, Guthries, Tonks & Perencevich, 2004) Care givers should always remember that children are God's gift, they come into being and are much dependent on them and have a chance to learn social skills and appropriate behaviours. They are to be nurtured with love, patience and pleasantly. Foul language should be avoided in childcare for the children are quick to initiate and unlearning is always more difficult. Even distribution of work should be done to avoid confusion and resentment. Caregivers are expected to be truthful and honest as role models for the children. The children are expected to be attended to except when sleeping, even then, periodic checks on the infant for safety. The day care needs to be swept and moped as many times as required as otherwise ants may

trouble the children. Also, dust all surfaces and remove cobwebs. The children are not to be compared as each is unique and will be gifted in one area or other. The kids need to be appreciated as often as possible for each small task taken. While arranging the furniture keep the children's safety in mind. Toys and linen need to be washed every week. Curtains need to be washed once a month. Play is essential for children to learn and grow. What kids learn while playing need to be watched. Werier & Bernard (2012) posits that when children play, they figure out how things work, pick up new words and ideas, build strong muscles they can control, use their imagination solve problems, learn to cooperate with others. Note that as these children play, remember safety first, safe toys for young children are well made with no sharp parts of splinters and do not pinch, painted with non-toxic, lead free paint and easily cleaned and they should be frequently checked for safety.

Play equipment could be outdoor or indoor. Out door equipment like jungle gym, sea-saw, slides, sand pit, soft balls, swing, rope ladder are used by children under the supervision of carers according to their ages and requirements to prevent being hurt by themselves or other infants and children in the centre. Children catch a lot of fun as they play with these equipments but special attention must be given to where they are placed. Barneister & Vobs (2004) feels that slides should be placed under shady places to avoid sun burns during swing weather and sieved pebbles in sand pits to prevent stone being put in the mouth by smaller kids and small wooden horses arouse children socialization as they enter small spaces and have imaginary family living. Indoors hand's on toys like rattles, squeeze toys, balls, puzzles, bends and bound or card games build eye hand coordination, encourage ideas about how things work and faster cooperation and problem solving. Books and recorders are sources of joy for children and adults. Chose some to build on children's interest such as animals or silky words. Children who are read to in their early years usually become better readers. Art materials foster creativity and build skills that lead to reading, writing and seeing beauty in life. Infants who can grasp a maker will delight in the motion of scrubbing. Construction items like blocks building sets, and wood making are excellent sources that contribute to muscle strength and coordination. Experimental materials like sand, water clay and musical instruments are ideal learning tools because children have much control over them as they relish their feeling and sound (Jones & Ishmael, 2008). Sleeping schedule for babies under one year is followed by their body clock while toddlers under 18 months to 2 years gradually the mid morning nap will be discontinued as they progress. Favoured sleep posture needs to be reported to parents. Some sleep on their tummy, some on their back and some sleep only if patted when sung to or rocked.

Toilet training is always a stress process but is usually complete only when the child independently is able to hold on till he/she gets to the bathroom. Toilet visits is built into daily schedule for young children while older children will be encouraged to use the toilet before leaving the crèche for outdoor activities or field trips.

Safety Facilities for Infant Development in Crèche or Day Care Centres

One of the most viable ways for proper infant and toddlers development in a crèche is to provide safety facilities or be safety conscious in the provision of facilities, every child is provided with a warm and secure environment and plenty of attention from a caring adult (Murphy & Jim, 2009 & Carvone, Shadil, Smith, Ronald, Fiori & Marina, 2006). Personalized schedules and tender interactions throughout the day encourages children to learn, develop and grow in their unique way. The following ideal crèche facilities would increase proper functioning of the infants and toddlers at their later years in their various fields of endeavour.

- Adequate room: Avoid overcrowding, which gives free movement and play, decrease chances of disease transmission and good ventilation reduces sweating.
- Adequate ventilation: Enough windows for free flow of fresh air, reduce air borne disease transmission
- Adequate lighting: Sunlight rooms usher in bright and happy mood, sunlight kills flies, mosquitoes, bacterial and viruses
- Adequate care givers: A ratio of one to three children
- Good general hygiene: Change clothes immediately on soiling. Change diapers when suited, wash children after feeding and teach children to wash their hands after toileting.
- Appropriate nutrition: Children under six months reformation far expressed breast milk, complementary feeds for infants above six months, prepared food to be heated slightly before feeding, fresh food be hygienically prepared, raw fruits and vegetables to be washed and care givers must wash their hands before feeding the kids.
- Timely medical care: There should be first aid for small injuries, abrasions, cuts, immunization should be strictly followed and contact a doctor for emergencies.
- Accident prevention: Avoid slippery floors, keeping sharp edged toys, furniture in the play areas, children should not be allowed alone in the toilet. The following must be kept out of he reach of children; blade, knife, scissors, nails, nuts, beads, small rubbers, pills, peanuts, beans, glass items, liquid medicines, kerosene, toilet-cleaning liquids, paints etc.
- Psychosocial stimulation: Small infants should be provided physical warmth and tenderness while older infants should be talked to and sung to, story telling session should be held, pictures and flash cards can be made for

older children, children should not be beaten or threatened, older children should be encouraged to help in taking care of infants and children must feel secure in the crèche.

- Counselling to parents regarding breast feeding and use of expressed breast milk: Avoid bottle feeding, psychosocial stimulation that have interaction, child spacing and accident prevention at home
- Cost effective management: Crèche facilities should be affordable by parents.
- Idea of community crèche for women: Crèche near the work place should be a choice of parents. Parents could contribute toys and other stuff for psychosocial stimulation.

CONCLUSION

Good day care centres include a nice mix of activities during day to teach different skills such as singing, dancing and story telling. In the recent years, a lot of importance has been rightly placed on early childhood stimulation. Every effort is made to provide the children a rich environment with carefully chosen educational toys, books and music. Every child is provided with a warm and secure environment and plenty of attention from a caring adult called caregiver. A good crèche runs on open door policy and encourage parents to drop-in unannounced and become part of the day care community by helping with activities. Crèche focus in development and learning through play is a valued concept and day care owners would like to follow current official curriculum guidance in the way that they organize their day. A crèche is a place where children are secured and happy while away from home set up. It contributes to a child's well being, emotional and physical development. When children make a fuss at the end of the day on return, parents need be patient and give a chance for absence or being missed and they may want some hugs and attention and not a minus for criticisms or apportioning of blames yet.

REFERENCES

- Baumeister, R.F & Vohs, K.D (2004). Handbook on Self-regulations. Research Theory and Applications. New York: Guilford Press.
- Cervane, D, Shadel W. G, Smith, G. Ronald E. Feri, A & Marina E (2006). Self Regulations: Reminders and suggestions from personality science. Applied psychology. An international review SS (3) 333 – 385.
- Jones, J & Ishmael, A. (2008). The Human Factor: Inside the CIA's Oys functional intelligence culture New York: Encounter Books.
- Murphy, J & Jim, A. (2009). Inner Excellence, Mc Graw-Hill.
- Ole Fredrick, L. Foode, S. Kurt, M & Teri, F. (2001). European Early Childhood Education Research Journal Vol 18.
- Ryan, K, Edward, L, Richard, K & Deci I. (2000). "Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: Classic definitions and New Directions" Contemporary Educational Psychology b251: 54 – 67.
- Schacter, D.L, Gilbert, D.L and Wegner, D. M (2009 & 2011). Psychology 2nd ed. New York: Worth.
- Shater, D. (2011). Psychology. United States of America. Catherine Woods. P323 – 351.
- Schultz, K & Schultz, Z & Duane, A. (2010). Psychology and Work Today. New York: Prentice Hall pp 121 – 122.
- Steel, P & Piers, K (2007). Essentials of Organizational behaviour. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Steel, P, Piers, K & Konig C. (2006). Integrating Theories of Motivation. Academy of Management Review 31: 889 – 913.
- Weiner, S & Bernard F. (2012). "Interpersonal and Intrapersonal theories of motivation from an attribution perspective" Educational Psychology Review 12 (1): 1 – 4.
- Wigfield, A, Guthrie, J.T, Tonks, S & Perenovic, K.C (2004). Children's motivation for reading: Domain Specificity and Instructional Influences. Journal of Research, 97, 299- 309.
- Xiang, P. Bride, M.C & Cuan, J (2004). Children's motivation in elementary physical education: A Longitudinal study. Research Quarterly for exercise and Sport 75 (1) 71 – 80.