

Lakemont Learning Edition for Parents

The Lakemont Learning System

Optimal Learning in an Environment of Developmental Safety

From the Winter Park Presbyterian Church



*Developed by the Staff of the
Winter Park Presbyterian Church
Preschool Program*

anne bensinger, mat, ece, editor

***denotes Editorial Opinion*

Introduction

Parents and Friends – Here is a brief overview of the Lakemont Learning System currently being used in your program. The Overview consists of the Lakemont Mission, Principles, Beliefs about Learning, the methods your child will use to learn, and the General Strength Expectations for your child's development toward wholeness.

The Mission of Lakemont Learning is to foster optimum natural development of growth in body, mind, and spirit in children from birth to five years of age by offering them developmentally appropriate experiences in an environment of physical, emotional, and educational safety and to evaluate the progress of that development using each child's strengths to meet his and her needs.

The Principles of Lakemont are these:

Optimal learning in young children takes place through *Movement, Sensory Operations, Manipulation* of appropriate materials, *Construction (Destruction, and Reconstruction), Role Play, and Expression* in ways of their own choosing in an atmosphere of physical, emotional, and educational safety.

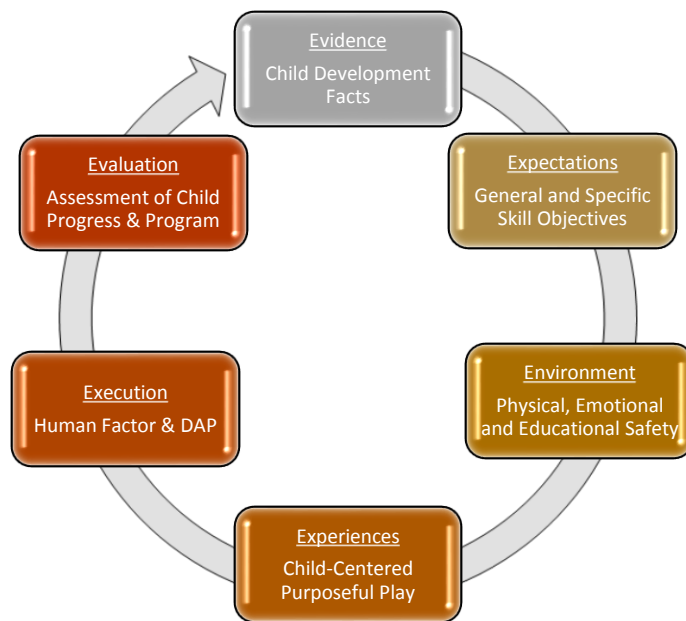
Lakemont believes that:

- ≈ Every child is good simply by the act of existing and as such, deserves the opportunity to grow, develop, and reach his and her optimal natural strength potential
- ≈ Every family deserves to be treated with dignity and respect and with great regard for its integral role in each child's education
- ≈ Every adult working with the children must be knowledgeable in the areas of child development and brain research and must use only developmentally appropriate practice
- ≈ Every program administrator must be aware of the needs of children, families, and staff and do all he or she can to create an environment that both inspires and supports the accomplishment of the Mission

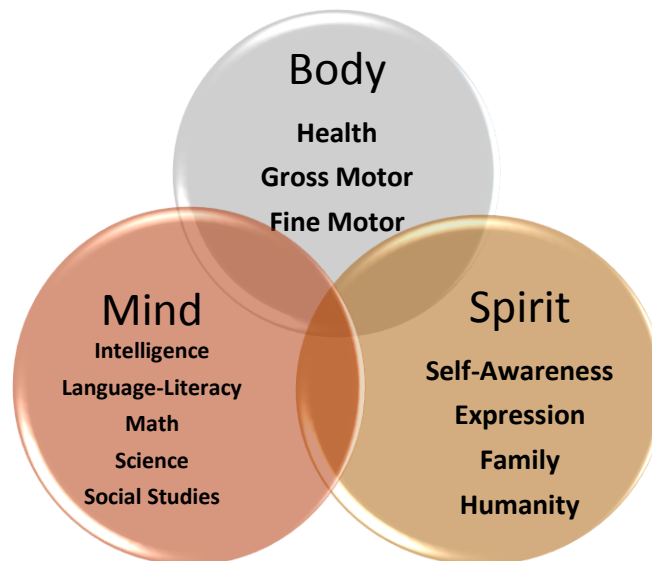
What Makes Lakemont Unique

- ≈ Lakemont is constructed on an original *Curricular Continuum* illustrating the learning process moving through *Evidence of Child Development*; determination of *Expectations* for learning based on that evidence; creation/maintenance of *Environments* of physical, emotional, and educational safety and *Experiences* that are child-centered and designed for purposeful play; *Execution* of experiences based on the Human Factor and Developmentally Appropriate Practice; and *Evaluation* of child progress and program quality based on the premise of using strengths to meet needs.
- ≈ Lakemont is based on the evidence of the most well-known and respected theories and research on child development and learning, but is an eclectic blend allowing for elasticity in planning for distinctive family and community types, specific program missions, teaching style preferences, and most importantly, individual child learning methods. Lakemont can be used by any program and specifically includes an addendum for use by faith-based programs.
- ≈ Lakemont emphasizes that young children learn best by play which includes the methods of *Movement, Sensory Operations, Manipulation, Construction, Role Play, and Expression* and must be designed through SARA, in which each child must be able to *Select, Act, Reflect on, and Apply* his/her learning.
- ≈ Lakemont calls for emphasis on:
 - Literacy in all areas of learning
 - Family in all areas of learning, planning, policies, and assessment
 - Problem-Solving in the form of daily or weekly challenges
 - Humor as a specific strength of intelligence and social development, an intentional element of the environment of safety, and as a vital teaching method
- ≈ Lakemont emphasizes a philosophy of “*Success of the Safest*” by the creation of:
 - A physical environment in which each child is kept healthy, and free from harm
 - An emotional environment of realistic self-esteem and sense of community
 - An educational environment whose organization includes:
 - Staff training in child development and learning research
 - Settings designed, arranged, and organized developmentally
 - Systems of organized but flexible planning
- ≈ Lakemont mandates the exclusive use of *Developmentally Appropriate Practice*, and emphasizes that it is the process of learning that must be emphasized
- ≈ Lakemont suggests the use of a system of individual child assessment of progress and need that uses each child’s *strengths to meet his and her needs*

The Curricular Continuum – The Framework of Lakemont



The Areas of Development and the Learning Subjects



*Where the Learning Areas intersect is the development of the "Whole Child". The Whole Child philosophy of education refers to the importance of understanding the interrelatedness of child development in all Learning Areas, encouraging the development of strengths in Body, Mind, and Spirit.

Lakemont Beliefs About Learning

- Learning occurs when connections are made in the brain and dendrites are created to receive information and stimulate its passage and development.
- Connections in the brain are made by exposure to appropriate learning experiences during the correct windows of opportunity for optimal brain development offered in a warm, positive and safe environment.
- Learning can be defined as a child's using what he has gained from an experience in the same way, but optimal learning is a child's ability to use what he has learned in an original way.
- Young children learn through the methods of *Movement, Sensory Operations, Manipulation of Materials, Construction, Role Play, and Expression* through word, music, dance, and art.
- Content to be presented and Skills to be developed can be divided into General Strength Expectations for Body, Mind, and Spirit, and into Specific Strength Expectations for each age group from birth to age six
- Optimum Learning takes place in an Environment of Physical, Emotional, and Educational Safety
- Learning Experiences must include Purpose, Feedback, and Accountability and must be offered with opportunities for Selection, Action, Reflection, and Application.
- Learning is cyclical and progressive and should be Evaluated and assessed so each child's strengths and needs are noted, and his strengths are used to meet his needs.

A Lakemont Program will:

- Base its philosophy on the most reputable and researched learning theorists
- Employ the Curriculum Continuum
- Base its learning experiences on the *Methods* children use to learn

Learning Methods

It is the Lakemont premise that young children learn by these methods of purposeful play:

- Movement** – gross motor, fine motor, hop, skip, jump, & wiggle
- Sensory Operations** – look at, touch, listen to, smell, taste, & react
- Manipulation of Materials** – mush, mash, squish, put in, out, under, over, & through
- Construction** – plan, build, tear down, & rebuild repeatedly
- Role Play** – learn adult roles, work, and play through imitation and imagination
- Expression** – talk, sing, play music, create original art, and express ideas through facial expression, gesture, spoken word, dictation, journaling and written word

Purposeful Play

Often early childhood educators find the need to defend the philosophy of reaching educational expectations through play. Parents concerned about readiness, standards, and standardized tests, need to understand the value of the connection between play and skill achievement. Here are a few resources on the power of purposeful play.

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/119/1/182>

<https://www.himama.com/blog/importance-of-play-in-early-childhood-education-programming>

<https://www.familylives.org.uk/advice/toddler-preschool/learning-play/how-children-learn-through-play/>

http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=591

<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/play>

“When we treat play as seriously as it deserves, we are helping them feel the joy that’s to be found in the creative spirit. It’s the things we play with and the people who help us play that make a great difference in our lives.”



-Fred Rogers

Expectations

There must be an organized system of clearly defined goals that explain what the children are expected to learn. Programs may call them Standards, Benchmarks, Milestones, or Objectives. These standards vary from state to state, program to program, and curriculum to curriculum but all must be based on research by professionals in the fields of child development, human brain growth, and pediatric-related medicine and psychology. Lakemont calls these objectives ***Strength Expectations*** to emphasize the use of a child's strengths to continue positive progress or to meet any discovered needs. Lakemont believes that "strengths beat needs".

Both General and Specific Strength Expectations listed in this manual are adapted from information from a number of sources including *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision by the American Academy of Pediatrics*; the *High Scope Preschool Key Developmental Indicators*, the *Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum*, the *Milestones listed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, the *State of Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Birth to Three and VPK*, the *Next Generation Sunshine State Standards* and a review of the *Common Core Standards for Kindergarten*.

For the purpose of comparison to the Lakemont Strength Expectations, parents may wish to view the Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for birth to 8 Months, 8 to 18 Months, 18 to 24 Months, Two Year Olds, Three Year Olds, and Four Year Olds enrolled in the Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) program at <http://flbt5.floridaeearlylearning.com/> and Florida's Common Core Standards, called the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards at <http://www.fldoe.org/bii/curriculum/sss/> or <http://www.cpalms.org>.

The following pages show the ***General Strength Expectations*** or learning objectives expected in each of the ***Learning Areas*** and ***Subjects*** for all children and details the ***Learning Methods*** the children will use. For review of the ***Specific Strength Expectations*** for your child's age group, see:

Overview of Expectations

Body

Health

Growth/Stamina

Hearing/Vision

Nutrition/Dental

Self-Help/Hygiene

Gross Motor

Movement

Balance

Agility

Coordination

Strength

Games/Sports

Fine Motor

Eye Hand Coordination

Manipulation, Use of Tools

Scribbling

Drawing

Hand Dominance

Printing



Mind

Intelligence

Attention Span

Facts*

Memory

Direction-Following

Problem-Solving

SARA**

Humor

Technology

Lang-Literacy

Listening

Comprehension

Vocabulary

Recall/Retelling

Emergent Reading

Math

Math Media

Emergent Math

Time and Money

Science

Scientific Process

Scientific Tools

Facts***

Social Studies

Self

Family

Community

Facts****



Spirit

Self-Awareness

Separation

Self-Concept

Self-Esteem

Self-Regulation

Humor

Expression

Personal Need

Imitation

Using Words

Conversation

The Arts

Written Words

Family

Knowledge

Affection

Pride

Humanity

Bonding

Playing

Acceptance

Social Cues

Empathy

Respect

Turn-Taking

Making Friends

Cooperating

Caring for Others

Caring for Earth

Faith

Knowledge

Affection

Action



*Recognition/Identification of Common Objects

***Biology, Zoology, Botany, Geology, Meteorology, Chemistry, Physics, Buildings, Machines

**Selection, Action, Reflection, Application of Learning

****Sociology, Geography, History, Ecology

Lakemont Learning Charts for General Strength Expectations – What and How All Children Learn

<u>Learning Area</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Descriptor</u>	<u>Methods</u>
Body	Health	Growth/Stamina	Physical fitness, appropriate size, energy to work & play	Movement, Sensory Operations, Construction, Role Play
		Hearing/Vision	Hear and See well	Sensory Exploration
		Nutrition/Dental	Eat well, see need for good nutrition, practice dental hygiene, have teeth that do not impair nutrition or speech	Sensory Operations, Role Play, Expression
	Gross Motor	Self-Help/Hygiene	Perform hygiene skills of dressing, hand washing, toileting, begin to see need for good hygiene	Movement, Sensory Operations & Practice, Role Play, Expression
		Movement	Use body to explore, negotiate, and travel	Movement
		Balance	Show increasing ability to stand, balance, move, climb w/o falling	Movement, Sensory Operations & Practice, Role Play, Expression
		Agility	Show increasing ability to move w/flexibility and speed	Movement, Construction, Role Play, Expression
		Coordination	Show increasing ability to move with skill and dexterity	Movement, Construction, Role Play, Expression
		Strength	Show increasing ability to use the body with vigor and effectiveness	Movement, Construction, Role Play, Expression

Learning Area

Subject

Strength

Descriptor

Methods

Body

Fine Motor

Eye-Hand Coordination

See, reach, grasp, & hold objects

Movement, Sensory Operations, Manipulation, Construction

Manipulation

Reach for, grasp, hold, manipulate, and use toys and objects

Same as Above

Tools

Grasp, hold, manipulate and use a variety of developmentally appropriate tools in general, then imitative, then specific and original ways

Same as Above, Role Play, Expression

Scribbling

Make marks on paper with crayon, chalk, marker or pencil, show an interest in using paper and pencil or keyboard to communicate

Manipulation, Expression

Drawing

Make recognizable representations using lines, circles, shapes

Same as Above

Hand Dominance

Become adept/comfortable at fine motor skills with left or right-hand dominance

Movement, Sensory Operations, Manipulation, Construction, Expression

Printing

Print letters and numerals

Sensory Operations, Manipulation, Expression



Learning Area

Subject

Strength

Descriptor

Methods

Intelligence

Factual Knowledge

Recognize/Identify common objects, actions, pictures, words

Same as Above

Memory

Recall, retain facts

Same as Above

Direction-Following

Understand/retain information & carry out action requested

Same as Above

Problem-Solving

Determine solutions to questions/dilemmas

Same as Above

SARA

Selection

Show interest, weigh option, make decisions

Same as Above

Action

Plan, Participate, & Finish work/play actions

Reflection

Recall through gesture, word, art, dictation, journal

Repeat learning and apply to new use

Application

Humor

Understand, appreciate, and create appropriate humor

Movement, Sensory Utilization, Role Play, Expression



Learning Area

Subject

Strength

Descriptor

Method

Mind

Language-Literacy

Listening

Attend to spoken, read, and written words

Sensory Operations

Comprehension

Understand nonverbal, spoken, read, written ideas

Sensory Operations, Role Play, Expression

Vocabulary

Ability to use native, some second language

Same as Above

Recall & Retell

Recall, retell words read, sung, recited, & written

Same as Above

Emergent Reading

Manipulating Books

Hold, focus on, & turn pages of books & written media; Show desire to pre-read, read

Manipulation, Sensory Operations, Expression

Choosing Books

Reciting Letters

Sing, say alphabet by rote

Expression

Noticing Letters

See, point to individual letters

Sensory Operations, Expression

Recognizing Letters

Recall, recognize, name letters

Same as Above

Print to Language

Understand that printed letters form words that have meaning & can be spoken & read

Same as Above & Manipulation

Sequencing

Recognize that reading is done from left to right

Sensory Operations

Letters to Sounds

Make connection between letter and sounds they represent

Same as Above

Sight Words

Recall, recognize some whole words by sight

Same as Above

Rhyming Words

Recognize, appreciate, & use rhyme

Same as Above

Phonics/Reading

Decipher/Decode words by sounding out & connecting sounds the letters represent

Same as Above, Expression



Learning Area

Subject

Strength

Descriptor

Methods

Mind

Math

Math Media

Manipulate material/equipment designed for math skills

Manipulation, Sensory Operations, Construction, Role Play, Expression

Emergent Math

Seriating

Arrange, sort, match, & sequence objects

Same as Above

Patterning

Recognize, compare, contrast by size, color, texture, shape, & function

Same as Above

Shapes

Recognize, compare, contrast geometric shapes

Same as Above

Sets

Create sets of objects by recognizing similarities & differences or by pattern or pattern break

Same as Above

Spatial Awareness

Understand prepositional directions; Use math words

Same as Above

Measuring

Compare, contrast, determine size in various media

Same as Above

One-One Correspondence

Match item to item

Same as Above

Comparison Recognition

Understand comparative concepts in size, weight, height, length

Same as Above

Reciting Numerals

Count by rote memory

Sensory Operations, Expression

Noticing Numerals

See, point to written numbers

Same as Above

Recognizing Numerals

Recall, Recognize, Name Numerals

Same as Above

Numbers to Amounts

Make connection between numerals and amounts; Counting

Same as Above

Simple Math

Perform basic addition & subtraction

Same as Above

Time and Money

BASIC CONCEPTS

Same as Above



<u>Learning Area</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Descriptor</u>	<u>Methods</u>
Mind	Science	<u>Scientific Process</u>		
		Curiosity	Show interest in exploring/handling natural & manmade objects	Sensory Operations, Manipulation, Construction
		Observing	Notice how things feel, look, smell, sound, taste, move, and are used	Same as Above
		Exploring	Manipulate objects	Manipulation
		Discovery	Make assumptions, estimates, conclusions	Sensory Operations
		Experimenting	Use objects in different ways	Sensory Operations, Manipulation, Construction
		Inventing	Use objects in new ways	Same as Above + Expression
		Scientific Tools	Use traditional and nontraditional tools for scientific process	Sensory Operations, Manipulation
		<u>Factual Knowledge</u>	<u>Grasp Basic Concepts of:</u>	
		Biology	Human Life	Movement, Sensory Operations, Manipulation, Construction, Role Play, Expression – All Methods in All Subject Areas
		Zoology	Animal Life	
		Botany	Plant Life	
		Geology	Basic Elements	
		Meteorology	Weather	
		Chemistry	Matter	
		Physics	Gravity, Motion	
		Buildings	Architecture	
		Machines	Vehicles, Machines	
		Astronomy	Space	
		Technology	Computer, Keyboard, Tablet*	



*Computers, tablets, and videos are NOT considered appropriate daily learning tools as they lack the Human Factor necessary for optimal learning in young children, but may be used to develop active manipulation or fine motor practice and letter/symbol recognition (keyboards only); when an individual child is ready developmentally for their use in reinforcing concepts; when a child needs a quiet solitary activity for the purposes of relaxation; or when children need to experience a mindless entertaining activity when outdoor play opportunities are not available and during before/after 'school' hours when children are not participating in purposeful play relating to Strength Expectations.

Learning Area

Subject

Strength

Descriptor

Methods

Mind

Social Studies

Self

Identify himself as to name, age, gender, description

Movement, Sensory Operations, Role Play, Expression

Family and Friends

See himself in a family group, recognize family relationships, see himself in a group of friends, recognize the relationships in that group

Sensory Operations, Role Play, Expression

Community

Understand the roles of people in his community as to service, help, & work

Same as Above

Factual Knowledge

Grasp Basic Concepts of:

Sociology

People in both the immediate environment and in locations outside the immediate environment

Movement, Sensory Operations, Manipulation, Construction, Role Play, Expression – All Methods in All Subject Areas

Geography

Geographical locations in the world and that there are people and places with similarities and differences in culture, race, ethnicity, ability, age, and gender

History

A sense of history in terms of time and awareness of objects, pictures, facts, events, & situation of a historical nature

Ecology

How people's actions and habits can influence the physical environment



Learning Area

Spirit

Subject

Self-Awareness

Strength

Separation

Self-Concept

Self-Esteem

Confidence

Eagerness

Independence

Enjoying School

Self-Regulation

Humor

Descriptor

Comfortably separate from parent on arrival

Have a sense of self physically, by name, age, family, school, community

Have a positive sense of self

Have a positive attitude in participating and make attempts to act

Be interested, curious, and excited about work/play and is willing to take some risk

Can developmentally solve problems and accomplish things with w/o adult assistance

Have a positive attitude toward coming to school, toward participation in experiences, and toward learning

Can regulate feelings and action to participate comfortably in learning experiences and allow others to do the same

Laugh in appropriate situations of a humorous nature and understand the difference in laughing "with" rather than at the expense of the feelings of others

Methods

Sensory Operations, Expression

Sensory Operations, Role Play, Expression

Same as Above

Same as Above

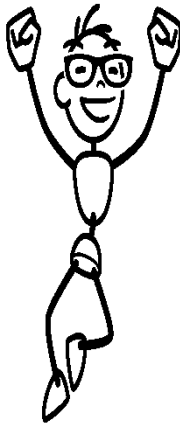
Same as Above

All Learning Methods

Sensory Operations

Sensory Operations, Role Play, Expression

Same as Above



Learning Area

Subject

Strength

Descriptor

Methods

Spirit

Expression

Personal Need

Ask for help when needed by nonverbal and increasingly verbal means

Sensory Operations, Role Play, Expression

Imitation

Follow/mimic the actions, ideas, expressions of others

Movement, Sensory Operations, Manipulation, Construction, Role Play, Expression

Imagination

Create original actions, ideas, and expressions

Same as Above

Facial Expression/Gesture

Express himself by facial expression, gesture, or sign language

Sensory Operations, Role Play, Expression

Spoken Word

Express himself through speech

Same as Above

Conversation

Take part in communicative speech and discussion; share ideas, memories, and opinions, stories, & answers to questions

Same as Above

Artistic Expression

Express himself through art, music, movement, and drama; observe/respect the artistic expressions of others

Same as Above

Written Word

Express himself through dictation, print, & journaling

Sensory Operations, Manipulation, Expression

Family

Knowledge

Understand family relationships, names, ethnicity, culture, faith, customs, celebrations

Sensory Operations, Role Play, Expression

Affection

Show love for family

Expression

Pride

Show pride for family and share family stories, events, culture, history and want to have family members participate in learning process

Expression

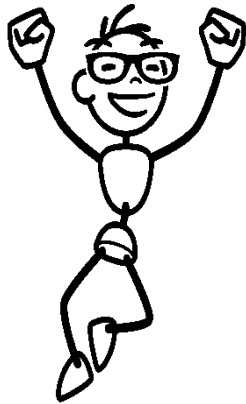
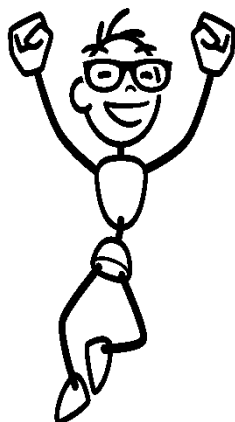


Chart includes the Optional Strengths, Descriptors, and Methods for Learning for programs sponsored by faith-based organizations*

<u>Learning Area</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Strength</u>	<u>Descriptor</u>	<u>Methods</u>
Spirit	Humanity	Bonding	Make emotional/social connections to other	Sensory Operations, Expression
		Playing	Increase social interactions from parallel play to cooperative work	All Learning Methods
		Accepting	Show interest in (neither shun or fear) others	Sensory Operations, Expression
		Social Cues	Recognize/respond to verbal and nonverbal cues from others	Sensory Operations, Role Play, Expression
		Empathy	Show understanding for feelings and situations of others	Same as Above
		Respect	See value in others; understand the need to treat others with reciprocal care	Same as Above
		Taking Turns	Understand the 'fairness' of alternating possession of objects and time	Same as Above
		Making Friends	Be able to connect emotionally/socially with others positively	Same as Above
		Cooperating	Carry out positive actions for the good of the community of learners	Same as Above
		Caring for Others	See the need to care for, nurture, and protect others	Same as Above
		Caring for Earth	See the need to care for, nurture, and protect the planet	Same as Above
	*Faith	Knowledge, Affection, Action	Grasp BASIC Concepts of faith, feel he is a cherished member of the faith, and act according to its teachings	Sensory Operations



Environment

Lakemont believes the best environment for optimal natural learning is that of Physical, Emotional, and Educational Safety.

To assure that each child is safe Physically, Lakemont mandates policies and procedures for:

- **Safety** – staff training, physical facility inspections, developmental furniture
- **Security** – strictly followed policies on custody, visitors on campus, observing strangers
- **Health and Nutrition** – strictly followed policies and procedures on illness, strong suggestions on nutrition
- **Safekeeping System** – a system of sound developmentally appropriate behavior management

To assure that each child is safe Emotionally, Lakemont encourages the affirmation of Realistic Self-Esteem for each child and the building of each class group into a community. Lakemont strongly suggests that teachers create this Emotional Environment through:

- **Warmth and humor**
- **Acceptance and respect**
- **Protection of rights**
- **Assignment of responsibilities**
- **Celebration of events and milestones**
- **Strong connections with families**

To assure that each child is safe Educationally, Lakemont insists on:

- Hiring of well-trained professional **Staff**
- Creation of developmentally appropriate physical **Settings**
- Use of an organized **System** of delivery of learning experiences

Experiences and Execution

The Learning **Experiences** offered to the children are based on **Child-Centered Purposeful Play**. This means the child makes decisions and choices about his learning and the teachers understand that children learn best through Movement, Manipulation, Sensory Operations, Construction, Role Play, and Expression without being asked to attain strictly academic skills until each is developmentally ready.

The Experiences are carried out with the inclusion of the **Human Factor** (teacher and other children involved in cooperative play) and with the exclusive use of **Developmentally Appropriate Practice** (matching expectations, experiences, and execution to the developmental level of each child).

Evaluation

Lakemont asks teachers and parents to assess the Strengths and Needs in the progress of each child toward the Specific Strength Expectations for his age and developmental level.

This assessment is NOT a report card or a test to determine success or failure and it is NOT an evaluation of your child himself, but it is a picture of each child's steps on the developmental journey. Assessment is used to give you and your teacher a factual, nonjudgmental view of your child's *Strengths and Needs* so that we may **use those strengths to meet any needs.**

Teachers assign conference dates to each parent, and together the partnership will review and discuss the child's strengths and needs using either a detailed or narrative Assessment Form. They together create a plan of continuation of progress and a meeting of needs using each child's strengths, learning styles, and preferences to meet discovered needs and continue positive development.

If you have questions about Lakemont's research and references, you may ask to see the Teacher's Edition.

