



What is my child doing at the TCIS Early Learning Center?

Some parents may be asking, "What is my child actually learning at the ELC? It looks as if my child is just playing."

Exactly. The philosophy behind much of what we do is that children learn best by doing and through active play. Learning requires active thinking to find out how things work and to learn firsthand about the world we live in.

In their early years, children explore the world around them by using all their senses: touching, tasting, listening, smelling, and looking. In using real materials such as blocks and trying out their ideas, children learn about sizes, shapes and colors, and they notice relationships between things.

In time, children learn to use one object for another. This is the beginning of symbolic things. For example, they may pretend a banana is a telephone or a big block is a chair. These early symbols are similar in shape to the objects they represent. Gradually children become more and more abstract symbols like words to describe their thoughts and feelings. They learn to "read" pictures, which are symbols of real people, places and things. This exciting development takes place during the early years as children play.

Play provides the foundation for academic or "school" learning. It is the preparations children needs before they learn more abstract symbols such as letters (which are symbols for sounds) and numbers (which are symbols for number concepts). Play is the work of young children.

The most important goal of the Early Learning Center is to help children become enthusiastic learners. This means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out their ideas and to think their own thoughts. We are teaching children how to learn, not just in the early years, but throughout their lives.

We also want to help children develop good habits and attitudes as well as teaching them a love for Jesus our Saviour.

Our goals include the following areas of a child's development

- Social: to help them feel comfortable in the center, trust their new environment, make friends, feel they are part of a group or community, and build relationships with caring, nurturing adults.
- Emotional: to help children experience pride and confidence, develop independence and self control and have a positive attitude toward life.
- Cognitive: to help children become confident learners by letting them try out their own ideas, experience success, and by helping them acquire new learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations and feelings.
- Physical: to help children increase their large and small muscle skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.
- Spiritual: to help children learn more about the Bible, God the Father and his son Jesus.