

CHLD 101: Introduction to Early Childhood Education

Katie's Kids at Fort Jesse

Learning Outcomes	3. Compare and contrast funding sources, organization's structure, program practices and legal requirements, and policies for diverse early childhood settings and programs. 9. Identify observation, screening, and assessment techniques and demonstrate competencies in observation techniques, synthesis, and analysis by observing in diverse early childhood programs and analyzing information gathered with respect to the role and influence of culture, linguistic, and ability diversity.
DEC Recommended Practices	C2. The social dimension of the environment is structured and adapted to promote engagement, interaction, communication, and learning by providing peer models, peer proximity, responsive adults, and imitative adults; and by expanding children's play and behavior
NAEYC Standards	4a. Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with children.

For this assignment you will be visiting Katie's Kids Learning Center at Fort Jesse. This privately owned center serves children ages 6 weeks to 6 years old. Their website states that Katie's Kids offers "quality care in a home-like and professional environment. This attention to high quality in a professional and comfortable environment sets Katie's Kids apart from the rest. By providing staff that possess the best skills to offer a warm, supportive and stimulating environment, we are able to meet the needs of each individual child." The site also states their slogan – "Developing Relationships: The Heart of Quality Child Care" and that they use the Reggio Approach to curriculum (Katieskids.net). The purpose of this field experience is to provide you with an example of a center using the Reggio Approach that also has a strong focus on social and emotional development.

To prepare for this field experience:

- Review Chapter 10: Supporting Social-Emotional Development Through Guidance.
- Study Katie's Kids website to familiarize yourself with their philosophies and policies and to look for information for your site description. Available from:
<http://katieskids.net/>
- Refer back to your textbook pages 222-223 to review the Reggio model.
- Call (309) 268-9400 to arrange an appointment to observe a classroom. You can choose which age group you prefer. Be sure to indicate that this assignment is for CHLD 101: Introduction to Early Childhood Education.

Part I: Program Visit. Be prepared to observe within the environment for an hour. While observing, take objective notes on what you observe using one of the observation methods outlined on the class handout "**Common Observation Strategies.**"

Please remember: When you are undertaking a field experience within an ECE environment, you are looking at one point in time. As a result, what you see may be a specific response to a

unique situation and not always reflective of common practices. Therefore, field experiences must be conducted with an open mind.

Part II: Reflection. Based on your observation completed during Part I, please respond to each of the following:

- Questions pertaining to method:
 - What method of observation did you use to collect data?
 - What did you see as the strengths and weaknesses of this method?
- Questions pertaining to environment:
 - Describe the setting you were observing within, including:
 - Type of facility and classroom
 - Number of children
 - Number of staff
 - Activities occurring during observation time period
 - Other relevant information (whether families were in the room, how children responded to strangers, etc.)
 - What environmental and interaction strategies are used to support child and family diversity?
 - What did you see as the environment's strengths?
 - What did you see as the environment's challenges?
- Questions pertaining to children:
 - Describe the diversity-related characteristics of children within the classroom environment.
 - How were children interacting with the environment?
 - Did you feel there was a sense of classroom community?
 - Did the children seem engaged?
 - Would you suggest any strategies to support further engagement?
- Questions pertaining to staff:
 - How was the staff interacting with the children and each other?
 - Did the staff seem engaged?
 - Would you suggest any strategies to support further engagement?
- Questions pertaining to Katie's Kids specifically:
 - How do the teachers address the social and emotional curriculum?
 - What center policies help assure that "developing relationships is really the heart of quality child care?"
 - What signs were evident of the Reggio Approach to curriculum?
- Links to your learning:
 - In what ways did your field experience complement what you have learned in the course?
 - In what ways did your field experience contradict what you have learned in the course?
 - How do observed practices reflect evidence-based practices you have learned about in the course?
 - Did you feel the program was individually and developmentally appropriate?

After you complete your field experience:

- Submit your objective notes collected in Part I and your Reflection developed in Part II to your instructor.