

Motor Center: Infants

- In this center we do play activities that help parents and caregivers understand how to best hold or position their child for play and how to set up the environment to encourage exploration and independence.
- We work on rolling, sitting, scooting, crawling standing and walking.
- We also do a lot of fun movement experiences like swinging, spinning, rocking and bouncing play.
- All children have the ability to move and explore independently in some way regardless of their motor or sensory challenges. We help caregivers learn what strategies work best for their child.

Motor Center: Toddlers

In addition to the activities we do in the infant motor program the Toddler Motor Center focuses on:

- Parallel play with peers.
- Obstacle course play to work on sequencing, motor planning and following simple directions.
- Motor/language concepts like “run, jump, spin”, and prepositions like “fast/slow, in/out, on/off”.
- Orientation and Mobility skills and early pre-cane and cane skills.
- Independent play in preparation for separation from caregiver in preschool.

Some equipment is available for families to try first before ordering/ buying.

Light Room

- In this center we emphasize learning how to use **all** senses to learn about our environment
- Using light, contrasting colors & sound to guide and direct visual attention
- Students develop a visually guided reach and cause & effect

Music Therapy Center

- Music therapy teaches children about rhythm, patterns, sound differentiation and sound localization.
- Children get to explore a variety of instruments and an understanding of how they sound and how they are played.
- Music therapy teaches social skills such as turn taking, listening to others and playing as a group.
- Children learn about concepts such as loud, soft/quiet, fast, slow and high/low pitch.
- Music is such an important part of all cultures and through music therapy Children learn about different genres of music.
- All children can experience and enjoy music regardless of their physical or cognitive abilities.

The Sensory/Kitchen Center (Toddler Program only)

- In this center we emphasize sensory experiences with food and developmentally-appropriate feeding skills.
- It is not as much about eating as it is working on the foundational skills needed to eat a variety of foods or just enjoy the social aspect of eating.

We will be doing things like:

- Exploring the texture, color and smell of different/unique foods and beverages.
- Practice with self-feeding, utensil use, drinking from various cups, pouring liquids and serving foods.
- Positioning options for optimal mealtime experiences.
- Practice making choices, waiting for a turn and social interactions in a small group setting.

Children do not need to be eating by mouth to participate in this activity- it is a multisensory experience.

Sensory Play

- We teach caregivers “Feet First” strategies and “Hand Under Hand” techniques.
- Early sensory play requires an understanding of the importance of “Wait Time”.
- Resonance Boards are used to help children understand how to move and explore and where materials are in relationship to their body.
- Sensory play for young children with vision impairment is essential! Multisensory learning happens through tactile exploration, vibration, movement activities, listening, seeing and smelling.
- We teach options for positioning to encourage learning and face to face interactions.
- We also emphasize early communication such as listening, waiting and reading baby’s cues.

Gardening Center

- Gardening activities provide a great opportunity to introduce natural multisensory materials.
- This center helps children learn to use all of their senses for purposeful play (and work) activities.
- Whether it be watering plants, smelling herbs, navigating across the bridge for the first time, digging in the dirt or feeling the textures of grasses in the sensory garden, we hope to promote curiosity about nature.

Story Time and Literacy Room

Literacy (or emergent literacy) is implemented in a variety of ways when working with small children who have visual impairments.

“Pre-literacy” activities are essential building blocks for early learning and concept development and include:

- Exploring books and tactile materials/story boxes
- Turning pages of a book
- Making a choice; which story should we read?
- Using real objects to act out the story
- Playing dress up
- Matching colors and shapes
- Looking for pictures
- Exploring tactile books with hands and feet.
- We incorporate the use of braille and assistive technology to introducing literacy in a variety of adapted or multisensory ways
- Visual, auditory and tactual!

All of these activities are wrapped into the concept of “literacy”.

Parent Center

Parent Centers are designed to be both educational and supportive. Specific topics are covered during the year having to do with your infant or toddler’s development, parent-child interactions and how these might look different with a visually impaired child.

Orientation: knowing where your body is in space especially in relation to other objects.

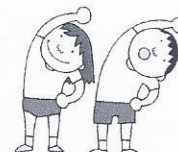
Mobility: the physical act of moving from one place to another.

O&M for Preschoolers

- ◆ Interpret sensory input
- ◆ Improve gross & fine motor skills
- ◆ Learn basic and environmental concepts
- ◆ Develop mobility and cane techniques
- ◆ Use basic travel clues and landmarks



Learning concepts, skills, and techniques necessary to orient to surroundings and plan how to safely and independently move in the environment.



O & M Orientation and Mobility



Questions? Ask Elise Darrow-teacher of students with visual impairments and certified orientation and mobility instructor



Orientation and Mobility Instructor will:

- ◇ Help students comprehend and utilize spatial concepts (above the sink, beside the teacher, between the chairs etc...)
- ◇ Expand students' knowledge of environmental concepts (cars, buses, sidewalks, streets, fences, curbs, hallways, stairs, rooms etc...)
- ◇ Model specific mobility techniques (sighted guide, negotiate stairs, finding and sitting in a seat, room familiarization, hand trailing a wall etc...)