

Tender Loving Kare Child Care & Learning Center – Middletown Site

Curriculum & Assessment Investment Pays Big Returns for Staff and Students

Tender Loving Kare Child Care & Learning Center (TLK) in Middletown, Del. is a “happening place” with more than 200 children from infant through school age actively engaged with close to 40 staff members.

Although each classroom percolates with different activities, all the learning has one thing in common – it has its roots in the effective implementation of Creative Curriculum.

“We invested in Creative Curriculum about four years ago,” said Julie Johnson, owner and site administrator. “And we have worked to ensure that each teacher fully embraces it.”

This “work” includes providing the staff with many supports and opportunities to understand and become familiar with the curriculum. “We help teachers to link the ‘why’ of the curriculum to the outcomes for our children,” said Caitie Malone, the site’s curriculum coordinator.

“They have intentional orientation systems in place and have the administrators do classroom observations to support the teachers,” adds Jen Potts, Delaware Stars Curriculum & Assessment Technical Assistant.

Often these administrators serve as mentors to support the staff and provide one-on-one advice on implementing effective strategies. Other supports include monthly team meetings and a shared google drive designated for the curriculum.

TLK also hosts a family night dedicated just to curriculum where parents and caregivers get an opportunity to better understand about their children’s learning experience. Families learn about the goals and expectations of the curriculum in addition to participating in activities, all in support of getting everyone in the community comfortable and excited about their child’s day.

According to Julie, using Creative Curriculum with Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) has paid off on many fronts such as supporting staff in:

- meaningful lesson planning;
- generating creative ideas;
- promoting the center’s philosophy;
- partnering with families, and
- developing and fine tuning skills.

Perhaps the biggest benefit is what the curriculum and assessment tools have done for the children at TLK. “Through our weekly observations and TSG’s data collection tools we are able to individualize and create developmentally appropriate learning experiences for each child,” adds Caitie.

“Our investment in these tools and our focus on family and community has created a culture about quality,” concludes Julie. A culture befitting of a Star Level 5 program.