



JANE BROWN
Executive Director

Child Care Options - Nursery School

Nursery Schools are not required to be licensed if the program is less than three hours per day. Nursery Schools are generally a good child care option for parents who are looking for a social and learning environment for their child on a morning or afternoon schedule. Nursery Schools enroll children aged two years and nine months to five years of age. Groups of children are divided by age and developmental needs. They usually run on a school-year calendar. Some programs may require that the child be toilet-trained. There are various types of nursery school programs available, from traditional programs to a program that follows a Montessori approach. Knowing your child and her needs will help you to determine what type of environment will suit her best.

Types of Programs

Traditional

Traditional nursery schools tend to focus on social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth. The program usually incorporates a mixture of learning activities, some teacher-directed and some child-directed. There is a daily schedule and the teachers base the curriculum on standard early childhood educational concepts.

Montessori

This program is based on an educational philosophy developed by Maria Montessori. Generally the program is focused on the individual child, using “tools” as learning materials. Children move from one task to another at their own pace, and teachers do not directly “teach”, but rather show children how to use the “tools”. Emphasis is on the relationship between the child and the materials themselves. Montessori programs tend to be very structured, individualized programs. Montessori practices will vary according to particular programs.

Reggio Emilia

Developed in Italy, this type of early childhood program incorporates a bit of Montessori and traditional programs. It tends to be less structured, where children can focus on activities at their own pace. Teachers stay with a group throughout the pre-school years. There is also an emphasis on a partnership with home and school.