



Overview

From September through April, the Department of Family and Child Ecology operates the Child Development Laboratories (CDL) on two campuses. One program is in Central School, 325 W. Grand River, East Lansing, and the other is in the Wilkshire Early Childhood Center, 5750 Academic Way, Haslett. CDL has offered programming for students, families, and children since 1927 and has a 4-fold mission to provide:

- an exemplary setting for training students in child development
- outstanding service to children and their families
- a research setting for faculty and students
- a base for outreach to other early childhood professionals

To this end, the programs are designed to meet the developmental needs of all children enrolled. In addition, parents are given opportunities to take an active part in their children's early education experience.

Who is Eligible?

The centers are open to all families in the greater Lansing area. Children with special needs are included in addition to children of diverse backgrounds, lifestyles, cultures, and home languages. Children must attain the group age by December 1 of the year on enrollment. Parents are welcome to schedule an observation before enrolling their children. We enjoy giving tours and discussing our program with prospective families. To ensure adequate space and the availability of a staff member, these observations are by appointment. Further information and applications are available at www.cdl.msu.edu, or by calling 517.355.1900 (East Lansing) or 517.339.6045 (Haslett).

Parent Role

Parents are asked to participate in the classroom 3 times per

semester and to donate an additional 10 to 12 hours per year via Work Parties and Fund Raising events. The CDL is advised by a Parent Council. Parents are invited to participate on the Council and to serve as group or Council officers.



Advantages of Being a Part of MSU

- Availability of consultation and referral services for children and families.
- Workshops for parents provided by qualified professionals in a variety of fields.
- Continual revitalization of the program through participation by students trained in child development
- Unique presentations to children in the classroom by members of the MSU community.

Hours of Operation

Each program is in operation Monday through Thursday during the MSU academic year. All university administrative/academic holidays are observed. The school closes each semester following the last week of university classes.

Handicapper Accommodations

Handicapper accommodations may be requested by calling the Child Development Laboratories at 517.355.1900 (East Lansing) or 517.339.6045 (Haslett)

Department of
Family & Child Ecology

Child Development Laboratories

East Lansing Campus

325 W. Grand River
East Lansing, MI 48823
517.355.1900

Haslett Campus

Wilkshire Early Childhood Center
5750 Academic Way
Haslett, MI 48840
517.339.6045

MSU

Department of
Family & Child Ecology

Child Development Laboratories

East Lansing Campus

325 W. Grand River
East Lansing, MI 48823
517.355.1900

and

Haslett Campus

Wilkshire Early Childhood Center
5750 Academic Way
Haslett, MI 48840
517.339.6045



<http://www.cdl.msu.edu>

A Typical Day for Children

The Children's Program

The overall educational purpose of the Child Development Laboratories is to provide rich and varied educational experiences for young children. Therefore, we foster, rather than force development, helping children feel challenged, successful, creative, confident, and capable. We approach learning as an active, exciting process that is balanced among all areas of development:

- Aesthetic - Emotional - Intellectual - Language
- Physical - Social - Construction - Pretend Play

In order to carry out this philosophy, teachers and parents plan together to develop specific goals for each child. Children then increase their knowledge and skills one step at a time, and at a pace that is most comfortable for them by participating in activities designed to match their individual abilities and interests. Throughout the year, teachers assess and record children's progress so they are able to maintain a program of instruction that is developmentally appropriate.

Program content is based on the assumption that children should be exposed to a wide range of experiences that teach them "how to learn." Research throughout the past decade has shown that the basic skills taught in the Child Development Laboratories program are fundamental to children's subsequent success both in school and in the community. In this way, we help children become ready and eager for future school experiences. In addition, our philosophy goes beyond preparing only for that brief period. It underlies an approach that gives children skills to build on throughout their lives.



The Head Teacher in each classroom is a faculty member in the Department of Family and Child Ecology. Each has a master's degree in Child Development or Early Childhood Education, and has had extensive experience teaching young children. Teachers are selected on the basis of demonstrated competence in planning and conducting a children's program, as well as supervising student trainees in early education.



Each classroom includes student teachers pursuing a major in Child Development or in Family Community Services. In addition, each classroom has other student trainees. The adult/child ratio for each unit is one adult to four or five children. Each teacher has a schedule that defines the daily routine in his/her classroom. While these schedules vary from class to class, they always include the following:

Pre-Session

Prior to the time that children arrive each day, teachers, students, and parents discuss concepts for the week, goals for individual children, and ways to carry out specific activities.

Free Choice

The teacher prepares a variety of learning centers, each containing materials and equipment organized to promote certain types of learning, such as creative, physical, dramatic, communicative, or cognitive. The array of activities offered are designed to promote a balanced and developmentally appropriate program.

Large Group

During this time, the entire class gathers to sing songs, listen to stories, participate in group games or carry out movement activities. How much time is devoted to large group varies with the time of the year and the age of the children. Initially, younger children will have group time 5 - 8 minutes long with older youngsters spending approximately 15 minutes. As they become more experienced, the length of large group time gradually increases.

Outdoor Period

Outdoor activities constitute an important part of each day. While physical development will be emphasized, the outdoor environment also will be utilized to stimulate learning in all curriculum domains.

Snack Time

Snack time may take place as a separate activity or as a part of the free choice period. Whenever it fits in the day, it is meant to be a positive experience for children and adults. The emphasis will be on good nutrition, relaxed conversation, and participation by children in passing, serving, or pouring, rather than strict enforcement of table manners.

Clean Up

Clean up is an activity in itself, and children are encouraged to participate as much as possible. Children develop independence and responsibility from washing tables, cleaning brushes, sweeping, moving big equipment, and from finding the appropriate place to store classroom materials.

Post-Session

After the children have left, the adults will review and discuss the day, the children's reactions to activities, observations, and the success or failure of particular strategies.