Understanding Child Development - Whole Child

- Growth and development occurs unevenly - yet concurrently in the physical/motor, psychological, cognitive and language domain.
- All growth and development is interrelated and interdependent.

Brain Growth & Neurological Development

- Windows of opportunity.
- Massive interconnection or ‘wiring’ process.
- The brain’s neurological development depends on experiences during development.

Physical/Motor Development

- Physical/motor development reveals overall health.
- Healthy children perform well.
- Young children usually develop gross motor skills prior to fine motor.
- Children may have less opportunity for play currently.

Language Development

- Utilization of vocabulary, word meanings and acquisition language.
- Delay in acquisition of language may signal sensory and neurological impairment.
- Language development typically follows fairly predictable patterns.
- Language is an emergent social interactive process.

Cognitive Development

Education and learning begins long before school.
Piaget
- Heredity and environment influences cognitive development.
- Assimilation & accommodation.
- Systematic observation.

Vygotsky
- Sociocultural perspective
- Social conditions
- Language critical to cognitive development

Howard Gardner
- Multiple Intelligences Theory
- Human beings have several or all of 8+ intelligences
- Authentic assessment

Differences in Learning Styles
- Learning styles behaviors include individualistic responses to sound, light, temperature, design, perception, intake, mobility needs and persistence.
- Motivation, responsibility and need for structure.
- 2/3 of elementary children prefer learning late morning/early afternoon.

Research on Creativity
- In the past, researchers and practitioners defined giftedness as superior intellectual ability, usually measured by academic aptitude tests.
- However, Renzulli found (1978) that a review of creative adults did not support this singular theory.
- His research indicated adult creative productivity is more closely associated with three clusters: above average ability, a high degree of task commitment and ability to develop creative solutions.

Creative thinking
- Involves declarative and procedural knowledge.
- Operates in the lives of all people.
- Although genetics may create high levels of talent, it can also be learned.
- Parents and teachers can help children learn creative thinking.
Where do we begin??

Basic Needs

- There are inborn basic needs with every individual for safety, comfort, positive relations, etc.
- Maslow, Glasser and Charles all concluded that "lower needs" such as survival must be satisfied before "higher-order" needs such as creativity become activated.

Needs

- **Security**- Feeling safe without worry
- **Association**- Being with and interacting with others
- **Belonging**- Feeling a part of things, being valued, having a place in the class
- **Dignity**- Feeling respected and worthwhile
- **Hope**- Feeling that school is worthwhile and success if possible
- **Power**- Having some control over and input into events in the class
- **Enjoyment**- Participating in activities that are interesting, pleasurable, or rewarding
- **Competence**- Being able to do many things well, including the expected schoolwork

Above-Average Ability

*Teaching core standards to all children.*

Task Commitment

*Setting up a classroom to encourage commitments to the tasks.*

Authentic Learning Centers

- Allow children to manipulate, explore, discover & build.
- Allow children to make decisions about content and timing.
- Have elements that are choice and not assigned.
- Allow children to take control of learning. (NAEYC 2009)
- Have clear rules/guidelines.
- Contain manipulation (play).
- Be driven by developmental guidelines.
- Provide discovery of materials and uses.
• Provide assessment/tracking opportunities.
• Teach citizenship.

**Creativity**

**#1 Assessing Strengths, etc.**

• The Total Talent Portfolio (assessments) to determine strengths and interests.
• Informal information about experiences, hobbies, goals, etc.
  - Helps teachers identify topics that address core objects.
  - Helps teachers offer alternative resources.
  - Helps teachers plan.

**#2 Modify/Differentiate Curriculum**

• Adjusts levels of required learning so that all are challenged.
• Increase the number of in-depth learning experiences.
• Introduces various types of enrichment into regular curriculum.

**#3 Enrichment Learning and Teaching**

• Each learner is unique (abilities, interests & learning styles).
• Learning more effective with student enjoyment.
• Learning more meaningful and impressionable when learned within real and present problems (real life).