



National Child Care Information Center

A service of the Child Care Bureau

NCCIC

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DESIGNING CHILD CARE FACILITIES

The following is a compilation of resources with information about child care facility design and development. Also included is information about licensing requirements and standards for child care centers.

Facility Development

■ *Child Care Information Exchange*

PO Box 2890

Redmond, WA 98073

800-221-2864

World Wide Web: <http://www.ccie.com>

Child Care Information Exchange is a publication that specifically focuses on the needs of child care center administrators. The *Exchange* frequently features articles on child care center environment and design. Exchange Press has the following materials that relate to child care center design:

- “The Role of Culture in Designing Child Care Facilities - Creating Culturally Reflective Environments” (May/June 2001), by Vicki L. Stoecklin, in *Child Care Information Exchange*, notes that even at the schematic design phase, it is important to create children’s environments which reflect the culture, values, and traditions of the country or area where they are being located. This article reflects upon the experiences in researching and studying the culture of Doha, Qatar to create a schematic design for the model employer-supported child care facility.
- “Giving Your Building a Second Chance—Guidelines for Remodeling Your Center” (January/February 2001) in *Child Care Information Exchange* discusses factors supporting day care center remodeling, including assessment of building suitability for remodeling, documents to help in assessment, creation of a team, cost and funding, and overall design considerations.
- “Design Collaborations—Successes and Failures in Developing a Child Care Center Design” (November/December 2000) in *Child Care Information Exchange* explores how thoughtful design of a child care facility enhances its safety, effectiveness, and high quality programming, and helps reduce annual maintenance to high use areas.

- “Transforming Spaces: Rethinking the Possibilities—Turning Design Challenges into Opportunities” (January/February 2000) in *Child Care Information Exchange* discusses design of the physical environment for an early childhood program and provides six starting points and pertinent questions for redesigning.
- *Places for Childhoods: Making Quality Happen in the Real World* (1998), by Jim Greenman, demonstrates how centers can face real-world challenges and make quality care a reality. Special selections authored by recognized child care experts enhance this collection of updated articles written by Jim Greenman for *Child Care Information Exchange*.
- *Caring Spaces, Learning Places: Children’s Environments That Work* (1987), by Jim Greenman, presents additional detail on design considerations which support children’s developmental and learning needs.

For additional information, contact Jim Greenman at 612-729-0718 or by e-mail at jgreenman@brighthorizons.com.

■ **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

1509 16th Street NW
 Washington, DC 20036
 800-424-2460

World Wide Web: <http://www.naeyc.org>

NAEYC is a membership organization for individuals interested in early childhood care and education. The organization produces a resource catalog listing brochures, books, and videos, and has several publications available which can offer background information and detail on resources for early childhood facilities planning and design, including:

- *Setting up for Infant/Toddler Care: Guidelines for Centers and Family Child Care Homes* (#228) (1996) describes how to work with parents, keep children safe and healthy, and promote all areas of development. This resource also includes material on business aspects on setting up a program and serving children with special needs.
- *Places to Grow: The Learning Environment* (#866) is a video that focuses on the importance of the classroom environment, how the room is arranged, organization of space, scheduling of time, types of materials and equipment, and how adults interact with children.
- *Young Children* is the professional bi-monthly journal of NAEYC. Information about *Young Children* is on the Web at <http://www.naeyc.org/resources/journal/default.asp>. The following articles relate to facilities:
 - “Out of the Basement: Discovering the Value of Child Care Facilities” (January

1998), by Carl Sussman, is available on the Web at <http://www.cccif.org/outarticle-section3.htm>; and

- “Some Guidelines for Preschool Design” (May 1996).

■ **National Children’s Facilities Network (NCFN)**

Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
733 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017
212-455-9840
World Wide Web: <http://www.lisc.org/>

NCFN is a coalition of nonprofit financial and technical assistance intermediaries involved in planning, developing, and financing facilities for low-income child care and Head Start programs. The Network’s purpose is to share information on child care facilities issues and to develop and support various financing strategies, initiatives, and programs. The members of the Network increase supply and help improve the quality of child care by providing technical assistance and financing to address capital needs.

■ **National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities (NCEF)**

National Institute of Building Sciences
1090 Vermont Avenue NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005
888-552-0624
World Wide Web: <http://www.edfacilities.org>

NCEF is a free public service that disseminates information about K-12 school planning, design, financing, construction, operations, and maintenance. NCEF’s resource list of links, books, and journal articles provide extensive resources on design guidelines, quality indicators, safety requirements, and lighting guidelines for American and international early childhood facilities. A list of resources for early childhood centers is available on the Web at <http://www.edfacilities.org/rl/earlychildcenters.cfm>.

■ **National Network for Child Care (NNCC)**

World Wide Web: <http://www.nncc.org>

NNCC unites the expertise of many of the nation’s leading universities through the outreach system of Cooperative Extension. Cooperative Extension has an 80 year history of working in the areas of child care and early childhood development. NNCC offers an internet source of over 1000 publications and resources related to child care. Links to articles on *Child Care Center Design* are available on the Web at http://cyfernet.ces.ncsu.edu/cyfdb/browse_2pageAnncc.php?subcat=Child+Care+Center+Design&search=NNCC&search_type=browse.

■ **Spaces for Children**

1250 Addison Street, Suite 113

Berkeley, CA 94702

510-549-9980

World Wide Web: <http://www.spacesforchildren.com>

Spaces for Children focuses on developmentally-appropriate environments. Their expertise encompasses the overall programming and design of child care buildings, including complete architectural services, furniture, and play structure design. Their publications include:

- *Enhancing Development Through Classroom Design in Early Head Start: Meeting the Program Performance Standards and Best Practices* (2002) is available on the Web at <http://www.spacesforchildren.com/enhanc.html>.
- *Designing an Early Head Start Facility: Tips for Start Up* is available on the Web at <http://www.spacesforchildren.com/ehssetup.html>.
- *Eight Steps in the Design Process for Child Care Centers* is available on the Web at <http://www.spacesforchildren.com/8steps.html>.
- *Landscape for Learning: The Impact of Classroom Design on Infants and Toddlers* is available on the Web at <http://www.spacesforchildren.com/landc1.pdf>.
- *Landscapes for Learning Design Manual: Designing Group Care Environments for Infants and Toddlers* (1999).

■ **Whole Building Design Guide (WBDG)**

World Wide Web: <http://www.wbdg.org>

The WBDG is a Web-based portal providing government and industry practitioners with one-stop access to up-to-date information on a wide range of building-related guidance, criteria, and technology from a “whole buildings” perspective. The WBDG Web site is offered as an assistance to building professionals by the National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) through the funding of the NAVFAC Criteria Office, the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), the Department of Energy (through the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL)), and the assistance of the Sustainable Buildings Industry Council (SBIC).

The Web page on Child Care Facilities includes information on building attributes, emerging issues, relevant codes and standards, and major resources. This information is available on the Web at <http://www.wbdg.org/design/index.php?cn=1.2.1&cx=0>.

Additional Resources

- *Child Care Facilities: Quality by Design* (May 2004), by Tony Proscio, Carl Sussman, and Amy Gillman, published by Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), describes the interaction between building design and the quality of child, offers examples of effective efforts to create superior child care facilities, and recommends further steps to bring the issue more squarely into the discussion of what both communities and children need for health, growth, and success. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.lisc.org/resources/assets/asset_upload_file269_7064.pdf.
- *Child Care Center Design Guide* (# PBS-100) (July 2003), published by the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA), contains criteria for planning and designing child care centers in GSA-owned or controlled spaces. It includes planning for space and location; site design; interior space design; furnishings and equipment; interior finishes; and technical criteria. This resource is available on the web at http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/Design%20Guide_R2FD38_0Z5R/DZ-i34K-pR.pdf.
- *Child Care Financial Planning and Facilities Development Manual* (Revised 2003), by the National Economic Development and Law Center (NEDLC), addresses key components of financial planning and managing the child care facility development process. Chapter Two includes information on selecting a site, design of the interior facility and the playground, and securing a contractor. Chapter Three provides instruction on managing the site construction and ensuring the safety of the facility and the site. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.buildingchildcare.org/publications_ccc.htm#2.
- *Making a Place for Children: Child Care Facility Planning Manual for Washington State* (2003), by Jan Gleason and Sally Knodell, for the Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, is a resource for the development of a quality center serving children from infancy through school age. It offers a description of the steps to take in designing a facility, references to the published requirements, and design considerations for indoor and outdoor elements of the facility. The manual offers a general overview of program considerations. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/esa/dccel/facmanual.shtml>.
- *Aesthetic Codes in Early Childhood Classrooms: What Art Educators Can Learn from Reggio Emilia* (October 2001), by Design Share, compares the messages contained in the physical environments of early childhood classrooms in Reggio Emilia, Italy with typical early childhood settings in Canada and the United States. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.designshare.com/Research/Tarr/Aesthetic_Codes_1.htm.
- *Guide to ADA Accessibility: Guidelines for Play Areas* (May 2001), by U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (The Access Board), is intended to help designers and operators in using the accessibility guidelines for play areas. These

guidelines establish minimum accessibility requirements for newly constructed and altered play areas. It provides specifications for elements within a play area to create a general level of usability for children with disabilities. Emphasis is placed on ensuring that children with disabilities are generally able to access the diversity of components provided in a play area. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www.access-board.gov/play/guide/guide.pdf>.

■ *Child Care Design Guide* (2001), by Anita Rui Olds, published by McGraw-Hill, provides detailed information about the planning and design of child care centers for architects, interior designers, developers, and child care professionals. The book is organized into four parts: 1) the child's environment; 2) the design process; 3) ingredients of good design; and 4) the functional spaces. Step-by-step explanations are provided of interior and exterior layout and design principles through case studies. It includes licensing and code requirements, operational standards and strategies, and checklists, charts and graphs. It features over 300 floor plans for infant and toddler, preschool, and afterschool spaces, plus areas for outdoor play. Additional information is available on the Web at <http://www.mcgraw-hill.co.uk/html/0070474494.html>.

■ *Head Start Center Design Guide for Head Start Facilities* (April 2000), prepared for the Head Start Bureau (HSB), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), by the National Head Start Training and Technical Assistance Resource Center, contains suggested criteria for planning, designing, and renovating Head Start centers. The content is based on the U.S. General Services Administration's *Child Care Center Design Guide*. The objective of this guide is to promote centers that are safe, child-oriented, developmentally appropriate, beautiful, environmentally sensitive, and functional. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www.headstartinfo.org/pdf/hscenterdesignguide.pdf>.

■ *Child Care Financial Planning and Facilities Development Manual* (April 2000), by the National Economic Development and Law Center (NEDLC), addresses key components of financial planning and managing the child care facility development process. Chapter four describes the child care facility development process, including a process breakdown and the different tasks, roles, and responsibilities that must be managed in order to build a new child care facility or renovate an existing one. Chapter five presents information on financing and renovation for family child care providers, including instructions on creating a budget and financial statements and suggestions for planning a renovation project. For additional information, contact NEDLC at 510-251-2600 or on the Web at http://www.nedlc.org/publications_childcare.htm.

■ *Building for the Future: A Guide to Facilities Loan Funds for Community-Based Child and Family Services* (January 5, 2000), prepared for the Finance Project, is a guide for policymakers, funders, program directors, and opinion leaders trying to expand and strengthen the system of supports and services for children and families. It provides information, based on a growing experience from around the country, upon which to assess the feasibility and potential impact a specialized lending program might have on addressing the capital needs of those who deliver supports and services to children and families. This resource is available on the Web at

<http://www.financeproject.org/facilityfund.htm>.

■ *Design Standards for Children's Environments* (2000), by Linda Cain Ruth, published by McGraw-Hill, addresses the design or maintenance of spaces where children are the primary users covering both commercial and residential designs and products. Part I provide anthropometric data of children from birth to age 18, offers dimensions for typical objects within the child's built environment; synthesizes the Consumer Product Safety Commission's safety guidelines for play areas; and provides dimensions of typical, and sometimes untypical, products that are often found in children's environments. Part II features a source list developed for designers that lists products appropriate for use in children's environments. Part III outlines the development of children's abilities and perceptions in the first stages of life from birth to age 10, and offers a bibliography of the most effective and highly regarded resources in the area of children's design.

■ *Facility Management Child Care Resource Book* (July 1999), published by the General Services Administration (GSA), provides maintenance and operations guidelines for managing GSA child care centers within the same standards and level of a GSA operated facility. Areas covered address cleaning standards and guidelines; equipment funding and inventory; maintenance of living environments and problem areas; checklists for school safety, health, and security; designing and remodeling; and playground maintenance. Also covered are the roles and responsibilities of child care providers, and comments on operation costs and quality. Final sections address issues on fundraising such as legal considerations and steps to fundraising success. This resource is available on the Web at http://www.gsa.gov/gsa/cm_attachments/GSA_DOCUMENT/Facility%20Resource%20Book_R2E-c-oQ_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf.

■ *Tribal Child Care Facilities: A Guide to Construction and Renovation* (1999), prepared for the Child Care Bureau, ACF, HHS, provides technical assistance in addressing major areas of the child care facility construction and renovation process, including conducting a child care community needs assessment, identifying a site, financing costs, developing a business plan, conducting an environmental assessment, building and designing a facility, and hiring contractors. A glossary of terms and resources are provided. Appendices contain a sample notice of Federal interest, a list of construction and renovation documents and deadlines, and an application of Title III (Public Accommodations) of the Americans with Disabilities Act to the Tribes. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www.nccic.org/pubs/tribguid.html>.

■ *Design of Child Care Centers and Effects of Noise on Young Children* (1999), by Design Share, outlines design issues related to noise and child care centers. This resource is available on the Web at <http://www.designshare.com/Research/LMaxwell/NoiseChildren.htm>.

REGULATIONS and STANDARDS

There are no Federal regulations for early child care and education programs. Each State develops its own minimum standards for licensing early childhood programs. Standards generally address such issues as group size, adult-to-child ratio, staff qualifications, and maintaining safe and healthy environments. The following resources and publications have useful information.

- **Child Care Law Center (CCLC)**

221 Pine Street, Third Floor

San Francisco, CA 94104

415-394-7144

World Wide Web: <http://www.childcarelaw.org>

CCLC is the only organization in the country working exclusively on the legal issues concerning the establishment and provision of child care. The Center's major objective is to use legal tools to foster the development of quality, affordable child care programs. Established in 1978, the CCLC serves as a Statewide legal support center providing free legal training and legal services to attorneys and others who work on child care issues for low-income families throughout California. CCLC also provides legal assistance and information to nonprofit centers, family day care providers, parents, policy-makers, community and governmental agencies, unions, and employers throughout the country. In addition to its small legal staff, the Center is able to call upon attorneys who provide technical consultation and *pro bono* legal representation.

- Information about space requirements and other regulations for each State is available from the State office responsible for licensing of child care programs. These offices are listed under "Contact Information" in NCCIC's *State Profiles*. This information is available on the NCCIC Web site at <http://nccic.org/statepro.html>.

- *Individual States' Child Care Licensure Regulations* of the child care licensing standards for center-based child care for all 50 States and the District of Columbia is available on the Web site of the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care at <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/STATES/states.htm>.

- *Stepping Stones (2nd Edition)* (2003) is a compilation of the standards from *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs* found to be most directly related to assuring the health and safety of children in group care. This resource is available on the Web at <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/STEPPING/index.htm>.

- *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs, 2nd Edition* (2002), available from the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care, addresses many health and safety concerns that arise in children's settings, including nutrition, cleaning and sanitizing procedures,

playground safety, and prevention of communicable diseases. This resource is available on the Web at <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/CFOC/index.html>.

The National Child Care Information Center does not endorse any organization, publication, or resource.

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