

Playground Improvement Project

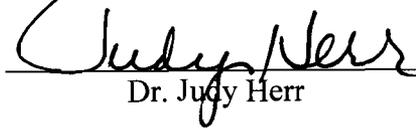
by

Jennifer Peters

A Project Report
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the
Master of Science Degree
in

Education

Approved: 2 Semester Credits



Dr. Judy Herr

The Graduate School

University of Wisconsin-Stout

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ABSTRACT

The Child and Family Study Center is a laboratory school at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The purpose of the Center is to model best practices for students at the University who are preparing to become early childhood teachers. The dated playground equipment at the Child and Family Study Center was installed in 1970 when the center was built. As a result, the equipment designed to promote large muscle development is inadequate compared to new products on the market.

The structure to date is limited to a bridge, tunnel, two small twin slides, a roller slide and monkey bars. The addition of a tire swing, a dramatic play cottage, picnic tables, a

water table and a sand activity wall to the sand box would expand the opportunities currently available.

Through the funding provided by this grant the addition of equipment will be made to the Child and Family Study Center playground that promotes three types of play; large motor, socio-dramatic and constructive play in preschool age children. In addition two in-service training sessions for the faculty at the Child and Family Study Center will be introduced. These in-services will be designed to orientate the teachers to the use of the new playground equipment and incorporate it into the daily curriculum.

BACKGROUND

The Child and Family Study Center is a laboratory at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The purpose of the Center is to model best practices for students at the University who are preparing to become early childhood teachers. The center curriculum focuses on developmentally appropriate practices, which are recognized by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Each year approximately 120 students complete preclinical experiences or student teach in one of the classrooms at the center. Upon graduation the majority of these students will become licensed teachers who are to teach preschool children from birth through third grade.

The center serves 91 children from five different adjacent counties. The two preschool classrooms have a total of 50 children enrolled. The children range in age between three and five years. The other 41 children are enrolled in the Infant and Toddler Lab at a different site.

“The mission of the Child and Family Study Center is to provide high quality programming for children of university students, university faculty and staff, and the community. The Center serves as a laboratory school and observation site for Early Childhood Education Majors and other related majors on campus. The Center experience allows university students to link educational theory with practice.” (Child and Family Study Center Parent Handbook, 2004.).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The dated playground equipment at the Child and Family Study Center was originally installed in 1970 when the center was built. As a result, the equipment designed to promote large muscle development is inadequate compared to new products on the market. The structure to date is limited to a bridge, tunnel, two small twin slides, a roller slide and monkey bars. The addition of a tire swing, a dramatic play cottage, picnic tables, a water table and a sand activity wall to the sand box would expand the opportunities currently available.

There are three different kinds of play that are crucial to outdoor play in preschool age children; large motor, socio-dramatic and constructive play. Large motor development is promoted through the use of swings, climbers, balance beams, overhead ladders, slides and parallel bars. The current playground equipment provides most of these structures, but additional swings would allow for greater participation in this type of play. Socio-dramatic play is promoted through the use of cars, boats and playhouses. Currently, there are no structures on the playground to promote this type of play. The addition of a dramatic play cottage and cars with gas pumps will encourage socio-dramatic play for the children. Constructive play is promoted through the use of sand materials, water troughs

and water pumps, elevated sand tables and gardens. The playground currently provides a dated sandbox and garden. The addition of an activity wall in the sandbox and a water table will encourage participation in constructive play.

NEEDS

The purpose of this grant is to obtain funding to purchase and introduce equipment that promotes three types of play; large motor, socio-dramatic and constructive play. With the addition of the equipment, preschool aged children at the Child and Family Study Center would have more opportunities to engage purposeful activity that would enhance their development. The equipment would also encourage the teachers at the center to improve curriculum goals surrounding large motor development. According to *National Association for Sport and Physical Education*,

“initiating movement programs for preschoolers is believed to be an important first step toward becoming a physically educated person who; has learned the skills necessary to perform a variety of physical activities, does participate regularly in physical activities, knows the implications of and the benefits from being involved in physical activities, values physical activity and it’s contributions to a healthful lifestyle.” (Wellhousen, 2002, p. 75).

Preschoolers should be given a wide variety of movement experiences that require coordinating body movements with visual information, such as ball rolling, throwing and catching balls, and striking or kicking. Preschoolers can also be introduced to activities that elevate the heart rate such as dancing, biking, jumping rope, swimming, and brisk walking. Experiences with outdoor play equipment stimulate movement exploration and creative play. According to Rhonda L. Clements, Ed.D., president of The American

Association for the Child's Right to Play and a professor of education at Hofstra University in New York, "Outdoor play stimulates a child's imagination and reasoning abilities,"(Bush, 2004, p.23).

Learning occurs naturally in outdoor settings. Jean Piaget (1962) emphasized the prevalence of constructive play in preschool age children. Teachers dedicated to outdoor play will see the benefits of specifically planning an outdoor environment that optimizes play and learning experiences.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The three grant goals include:

1. To enhance large motor development that promotes three types of play; large motor, socio-dramatic and constructive play in preschool age children

Objective - To purchase playground equipment that promotes three types of play; large motor, socio-dramatic and constructive

2. To orientate teachers to the new playground equipment

Objective - To develop an in-service training session for Child and Family Study Center staff.

3. To expand large motor activities in the curriculum

Objective - To develop an in-service training session for Child and Family Study Center staff to develop outdoor curriculum and incorporate the new playground equipment

TIMELINE

Activity	Person's Involved	Date	Expected Outcome
Goal #1 To purchase and install playground equipment.	Moe Hendricks Jennifer Peters Child and Family Study Center Staff	Spring 2005	The equipment will be ordered and shipped to the Child and Family Study Center. Playground equipment will be assembled and installed.
Goal #2 To develop a workshop for Child and Family Study Center staff.	Jennifer Peters	Fall 2005	Workshop will be planned and scheduled.
Goal #3 To develop a workshop for Child and Family Study Center staff to develop curriculum and make changes to incorporate the equipment	Jennifer Peters	Fall 2005	Workshop will be planned and scheduled.
To increase user satisfaction of the playground equipment	Child and Family Study Center Staff Children at the Center	Spring 2006	Survey will be distributed to staff. Children will be questioned about the new playground equipment.

*BUDGET***BUDGET – Service and Supplies**

Quantity	Materials	Price Per Unit	Total
1	Tire Swing	\$1234.00	\$1234.00
1	Stone Cottage	\$2100.00	\$2100.00
1	Mini-Car	\$1050.00	\$1050.00
1	Gas Station	\$96.00	\$96.00
1	Sand Box Cover	\$326.00	\$326.00
1	Sand Activity Wall	\$380.00	\$380.00
1	Water Table	\$576.00	\$576.00
2	Picnic table	\$652.00	\$1304.00
1	Shipping & Installation	33 % of Equipment total (\$5762.00)	\$2352.98
	Refreshments/Lunch	\$7.00	\$91.00

Total: \$9509.98

BUDGET – Personnel

Quantity	Materials	Price Per Unit	Total
13	Teacher Stipend	\$35.00	\$455.00

Total: \$455.00

Grand Total: \$9964.98

BUDGET NARRATIVE

The budget has been created for this grant by researching resource catalogs to find the highest quality and safest playground equipment. One tire swing will be purchased as an addition to the playground equipment to promote large motor development. A dramatic play stone cottage, mini-car and gas station will be used to promote socio-dramatic play at the center. A sand box cover will be purchased to replace the current, damaged cover. The sand activity wall and water table will be purchased to promote constructive play. Two picnic tables will be purchased to provide an area for the children to sit and do activities outdoors. It will also provide seating for picnics. All of the equipment will be

purchased and installed through Grounds for Play. The installation fee is 33 % of the equipment total of \$7066.00. The budget will also include an in-service training session for faculty to develop curriculum related to the new equipment. Thirteen Child and Family Study Center teachers will receive a stipend and be provided lunch for attending the session

EVALUATION PLAN

Goals and Objectives	Assessment Tools and Strategies	Timeline	Who is Responsible
Goal #1 - To enhance large motor development in preschool age children Objective - To purchase playground equipment	Checklists – Comparisons of checklists completed spring of 2005 to checklists completed spring 2006	Fall 2005-Spring 2006	Child and Family Study Center Staff
Goal #2 - To orientate teachers to the equipment Objective - To develop a workshop for Child and Family Study Center staff	Survey	Fall 2005	Child and Family Study Center Staff
Goal #3 – To increase the use of large motor activities in the curriculum Objective - To develop a workshop for Child and Family Study Center staff	Survey	Fall 2005	Child and Family Study Center Staff
To increase user satisfaction Objective - To	Survey with staff Interview with children	Fall 2005-Spring 2006	Child and Family Study Center Staff and students



monitor the use of the equipment.			
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DISSEMINATION PLAN

What	When	To Whom	Who's Responsible
Parent Letter informing parents about playground improvement and curriculum changes	January 2006	Parents of CFSC students	Jennifer Peters
Presentation informing the School of Education about the playground improvement and curriculum changes	January 2006 – School of Education meeting	School of Education Staff	Jennifer Peters
Newspaper Article to inform the community about the playground improvements.	January 2006	Community	Jennifer Peters

May 4, 2005

Ms. Susan Roeder
Community Relations Department
Andersen Corporation
100 Fourth Avenue North
Bayport, MN 55003

Dear Ms. Roeder,

This is the submission of the grant proposal entitled, "Playground Improvement Project" for your next review cycle. The grant proposal follows your guidelines outlined in your application.

The purpose of this grant is to obtain funding to purchase and introduce equipment that promotes three types of play; large motor, socio-dramatic and constructive play. With the addition of the equipment, preschool aged children at the Child and Family Study Center would have more opportunities to engage purposeful activity that would enhance their development.

Enclosed are the materials for your review. I look forward to hearing from you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Peters
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Menomonie, WI 54751
petersj@uwstout.edu
715-232-1478

Enclosures

REFERENCES

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Wellhousen, K. (2002). *Outdoor play every day*. Albany, NY: Delmar