



Guidelines

September 2018 Revision

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Preface	3
Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	6
Guiding Principles	8
Essential Activities	9
Curriculum Guidelines	11
Resources	19

Preface

Originally created and adopted by the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Network in King County, Washington in June 2007, and revised in 2008, 2009, and 2010, the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines* provide a common, agreed-upon definition of and standards for Kaleidoscope Play & Learn. The 2018 revision contains minor edits and pertinent updates. The original document was created with the contributions and suggestions of King County Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Network members as well as other experts and stakeholders throughout Washington State. These guidelines are now informed by our experience in offering Kaleidoscope Play & Learn for over a decade, and by our evaluation of the program. They are aligned with goals and strategies for kindergarten readiness, child abuse and neglect prevention, early learning, and family support. We anticipate that the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines* will continue to be periodically updated as the program evolves, and as new information arises about Family, Friend, and Neighbor care, children’s development, and early learning.

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn is a program of Child Care Resources, the child care resource and referral agency located in Seattle, Washington.

For more information about the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Program or the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines*, please contact Child Care Resources at (206) 329-1011, www.childcare.org, or kpl@childcare.org.



Child Care Resources improves all children’s access to high quality early learning experiences by engaging with families, caregivers, and communities. Embedded in Child Care Resources’ daily work is identifying and addressing racism so that all children thrive in their early learning environments.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the numerous individuals and organizations who contributed to and participated in the development of the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines* and the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn model. We are grateful to all who have supported the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn program and ask them to join in celebration of our accomplishments and success.

A heartfelt thank you to the families who participate in Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups each year. It is an honor to witness the children's love of life and learning and their caregivers' and parents' loving dedication and hopefulness.

A special thank you to the creative individuals who participated in the Guiding Principles and Curriculum Work Group in 2007 and the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Quality Assurance Work Group in 2009:

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We are also grateful to the following organizations for their participation in the original Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Network of King County, whose experience and expertise helped inform the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines*.

ACAP	Lake Forest Park Elementary School
Angle Lake Family Center	Neighborhood House
Atlantic Street Center	North Seattle Family Center
Black Star Line	New Futures
Briarcrest Elementary School	PASEFIKA
Campfire USA Central Puget Sound Council	Refugee Federation Service Center
Cascade People's Center	Refugee Women's Alliance
Center for Human Services	Renton Area Youth and Family Services
Children's Home Society of Washington	Sherwood Forest Elementary School
Chinese Information and Service Center	Shoreline Children's Center
Community Day School Association	South King Early Intervention Program
Denise Louie Education Center	South Seattle Community College APPLE Parenting
Encompass	Southwest Youth and Family Services
Family Works Resource Center	Wildwood Elementary School
Federal Way Youth & Family Services	Wonderland Development Center
Greater Maple Valley Community Center	Woodmoor Elementary School
High Point Family Center	YMCA of Greater Seattle
Jubilee REACH Center	YWCA –Seattle/King/Snohomish

To our committed community partners who offered their support, expertise, and resources during development:

Bellevue School District	Heliotrope
Center for Human Services	KCTS Public Television
Children’s Alliance	King County Human Services
Children’s Home Society	King County Library System
Children’s Therapy Center	Organizational Research Services
Chinese Information and Service Center	Parent Trust
City of Bellevue	Rainier Beach Family Center
City of Kirkland	Renton Head Start
City of Seattle	Seattle Public Library
City of Shoreline	Public Health – Seattle/King County
Crossroads Shopping Center	SOAR
Denise Louie Education Center	Washington Alliance for Better Schools
FACES groups in King County	Washington State Network of Child Care Resource and Referral
Friends of Third Place	White Center Community Dev. Association
Getting School Ready Action Teams	Wraparound Services Pilot Project

To our current affiliates who are profoundly dedicated to serving the families in their communities:

Bellingham School District	First Five Years & Beyond
Blaine School District	First Step Family Support Center
California Child Care Resource and Referral Network	King County Library System
Catholic Family & Child Services - Wenatchee & Yakima	Lynden School District
Center for Human Services	Mother Mentors of Whidbey Island
Child Care Action Council - CCA Olympic Peninsula	Mount Baker School District
Children’s Home Society	New Futures/Southwest Youth & Family Services
Children’s Therapy Center	Renton Area Youth and Family Services (RAYS)
Chinese Information and Service Center	Somali Youth & Family Club
Denise Louie Education Center	Southern Oregon Early Learning System
Down East Partnership for Children	White Center Community Development Association
Ferndale School District	Wonderland Development Center
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City of Seattle	Seattle Milk Fund
Discuren Foundation	SOAR
Foundation for Early Learning	Thrive Washington
King County Veterans, Seniors & Human Services	United Way of King County
Levy	Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Family Services
Kirkpatrick Foundation	
Kirlin Foundation	

Introduction

Rooted in Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care

Many parents rely on family and good friends to care for their children while they are at work or at school. Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers are an essential option in the array of child care options available to families. Research suggests that “Family, Friend and Neighbor care is the most common form of non-parental care in the US.”ⁱ In fact, millions of young children are in Family, Friend, and Neighbor care. In 2016, 60 percent (12.8 million) of the 21.4 million children under age six were in some type of regular child care arrangement in a typical week. Of children under age six, 24 percent (5.2 million) were regularly in relative care (care by a relative other than a parent). These relative caregivers are most typically grandparents (79 percent).ⁱⁱ (NWLC, 2018). Additionally, reports from the Minnesota Department of Human Services indicate as many as 50% of children in refugee and immigrant families are primarily cared for by family, friends, and neighbors.ⁱⁱⁱ

Thus, Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers play a vital role in contributing to children’s healthy development, early learning, school readiness, and later success in school and life. Throughout the US, Kaleidoscope Play & Learn has emerged as a strategy to support these caregivers and the children in their care.

The History of Kaleidoscope Play & Learn

Approaches like Kaleidoscope Play & Learn have been around for years – even centuries – as families and communities have gathered together to play, learn, and share knowledge and companionship as they raised their children.

In January 2006, Child Care Resources set out to build upon these traditions by launching the King County Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Network. The Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Network was a partnership with numerous community organizations, public agencies, funders, and others committed to strengthening the supports available to Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers and the young children in their care.

Since the beginning, the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Network was committed to and involved in growing and nurturing the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn program so that all children and their Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers had access to a Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group in their neighborhood. We continue to be committed to new learning and realizing quality as we develop and revise the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn program.

Family, friend and neighbor care is a new name for the most ancient and widely practiced form of child care in history.

Betty Emarita, Strategic Management Consultant and President of Development and Training Resources

Purpose of Kaleidoscope Play & Learn

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn works with Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers and parents to support them in preparing children for success in school and life through quality early childhood experiences.

The purpose of Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups is:

1. To provide Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers and parents with information, resources, support, and connections to promote optimal development of the children in their care
2. To build connections, friendships, and a circle of mutual support among people who care for children
3. To provide children with intentional, developmentally-appropriate learning experiences with their peers and caregivers
4. To instill in children and caregivers the love of – and quest for – life-long learning.

We should treat Family, Friend and Neighbor caregivers like family – that is their strength. We should help them create strong and supportive environments for children which promote healthy development.

Joan Lombardi, PhD Director, The Children’s Project

Grounded in Theory and Practice

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn is informed by decades of theory, research, and practice in the fields of child development, early childhood education, family support, group practice, and other disciplines. Please see the Resources and References section of the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines* for a partial listing of some of the frameworks upon which Kaleidoscope Play & Learn draws.

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn also operates from a Theory of Change, which outlines the desired outcomes and goals for the model. The Theory of Change is the framework we use to measure Kaleidoscope Play & Learn’s effectiveness. You will find the Theory of Change in the Resources and References section.

Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood, for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child's soul.

*Friedrich Froebel,
“Father” of modern kindergarten*

Committed to Evaluation and Quality

Since 2006, the King County Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Network has conducted an annual outcomes evaluation and hosted a learning community to draw upon in-the-field experiences and observation.

The evaluation results have shaped the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines* and have helped us refine the model.

The outcomes evaluation has consistently shown that participation in Kaleidoscope Play & Learn leads to caregiver learning and positive changes in their care of children. We have also learned that Kaleidoscope Play & Learn decreases caregiver isolation and that the more caregivers attend, the better outcomes they have. For more information about the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn evaluation, please contact Child Care Resources at (206) 329-1011.

We know that Kaleidoscope Play & Learn is an evolving program and that it is important to continue to evaluate how Kaleidoscope Play & Learn can be most effective in reaching our goals to support Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers and parents and the children in their care. Additionally, in early 2018 we established a Statewide Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Steering Committee, whose work will also help us refine the model to best meet the needs of our community partners and family participants, while maintaining the fidelity and intent of the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines*. Therefore, as we learn more and conduct evaluations of the program, we will modify the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines*.

Guiding Principles

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn takes a **whole child – whole family – whole community** approach. Children are members of families and communities and are affected by the well-being of their families and communities. Kaleidoscope Play & Learn works toward supporting families and communities where children can thrive and grow.

To enhance early learning, view children holistically – as members of families and communities and as participants in their culture.

Betty Emarita, Strategic Management Consultant and President of Development and Training Resources

Our guiding principles include:

1. **Play is the Work of Children.** Play is the primary means by which children grow and develop in all areas of their lives. Through play, children develop their bodies, language and literacy, problem-solving and cognitive skills, understanding of emotions, and how to get along with others. Play is important to all children, regardless of their abilities. An article from the American Academy of Pediatrics noted that “free and unstructured play is healthy and – in fact – essential for helping children reach important social, emotional and cognitive developmental milestones as well as helping them to manage stress and become resilient.”^{iv} When provided with opportunities for developmentally-appropriate, safe, and enjoyable play (enhanced by the guidance of a loving caregiver), children prepare for success in school and later life.
2. **Community Collaboration.** Kaleidoscope Play & Learn is driven by the community’s values, wishes, and needs. The community is active in shaping each Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group and a variety of community players contribute expertise, resources, and support. A good example of this is a family support center that partnered with a local public library to host a Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group. The family support center ran the group (hiring and training the facilitators) while the library provided space, promoted the group to its patrons, and offered book recommendations for children’s books. This type of collaboration is at the heart of the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn model, and allows us to support groups in many different settings.
3. **Trusting, Responsive Partnerships.** Families’ interests, priorities, and concerns are central to Kaleidoscope Play & Learn. Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups work in partnership with participants to design the group and its content. Kaleidoscope Play & Learn builds upon families’ strengths and hopes for the future. Curriculum and activities are created together with participants based on their preferences and needs.

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn encourages families to take leadership roles within the group and community. For instance, caregivers might take turns reading or telling stories in the group, playing a musical instrument at circle time, or organizing local experts to make presentations to the group.

4. **Respectful Relationships.** Respectful relationships between the facilitator and all child and adult participants are the key to Kaleidoscope Play & Learn success. Facilitators approach participant situations with empathy and a non-judgmental attitude. Kaleidoscope Play & Learn also conveys the importance of positive, supportive relationships between the children and their caregivers and parents. Additionally, building respectful and supportive relationships among the participants is a key tenet to the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn model.
5. **Supportive Community.** People – young, old and in-between – grow and change in the context of a supportive, loving community. Each Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group creates a community that supports participants in their learning and in their connection with others. Kaleidoscope Play & Learn connects families with other resources that keep families safe and healthy and that promote early learning, such as physical health and mental health services, kindergarten transition teams, and other early learning programs.
6. **Inclusion.** Every child and every family is welcome. Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups reflect and support the diversity of cultures and family situations and are inclusive of people of all abilities, cultures, races, ethnicities, religions, incomes, languages, genders, sexual orientations, types of families, and education. Kaleidoscope Play & Learn is offered in familiar locations and with a safe and nurturing atmosphere that intentionally reflects the cultures, languages, and preferences of the participants. Some groups use a specific language, while others may be bi- or multi-lingual.
7. **Quality.** Kaleidoscope Play & Learn works toward positive outcomes for children, families, and communities. Kaleidoscope Play & Learn is a developing and dynamic program that learns from the knowledge in the field as well as collective and organization-based evaluation. This learning is applied to make program improvements and adjustments and to guide further development of the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn program as a whole.

Play is so important to children’s cognitive, social and emotional development that it has been recognized by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights as the right of every child.

Essential Activities

In 2008, the King County Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Network worked to further define and describe what Kaleidoscope Play & Learn is. This included spelling out the “Essential Activities” that together make a Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group and set it apart from other types of programs and services. Put another way, for a group to be considered Kaleidoscope Play & Learn, it must include the seven Essential Activities listed in this section.

The Essential Activities were determined based upon collective years of experience of offering and evaluating Kaleidoscope Play & Learn.

Please note that the examples used below are meant to illustrate specific ways the Essential Activities may be implemented, but they are not exhaustive; nor are all Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups required to incorporate every example within their groups. Rather, Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups must include all Essential Activities, but not necessarily the examples of the Activities listed here.

We generously use the word “intentional” throughout this section. That is, well, intentional! Part of what makes a group Kaleidoscope Play & Learn is that it purposefully works toward the goal of Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers and parents having the knowledge, resources, and support to help prepare the children in their care to succeed in school and life.

In other words, when the organizations offering and the people facilitating Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups are *intentional* about implementing the Essential Activities, they do so knowingly and with the end goal in mind.

Essential Activities

The following activities are planned for and occur each time a Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group meets.

1. **Weekly Groups of 90 Minutes or More.** The Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group meets weekly for 90 minutes or more.
2. **Child-Directed Play.** Children and caregivers participate in open-ended, child-directed play, choosing from a variety of play centers which together support the different areas of development (e.g., cognitive, social-emotional, language, fine-gross motor).
3. **Coordinated Group Activity.** Children and caregivers participate in a coordinated group activity. Examples include:
 - a. Reading or other pre-literacy activities (e.g., rhymes, storytelling, finger plays)
 - b. Singing
 - c. Dancing/Movement
 - d. Creating art
 - e. Making a snack together

4. **Intentional Caregiver Learning.** The facilitator plans and provides for intentional caregiver learning. Each Kaleidoscope Play & Learn session includes intentional caregiver learning about how children learn through play. The facilitator may also include caregiver learning about other topics as well.

Intentional caregiver learning can be done in a variety of ways and at different times throughout the group, such as:

- a. Casually through conversations with caregivers during the child-directed play time,
- b. As a group during a circle time, or
- c. During a time when the caregivers are separate from the children.

Caregiver learning can also be accomplished one-on-one (caregiver and facilitator), in small groups, or as a whole group. Some examples of how caregiver learning can occur are:

- a. The facilitator talks to the caregivers about how an activity helps children learn and offers suggestions on what they can do at home.
- b. The facilitator provides information (verbal or written) about other community resources and services that might benefit the child, caregiver, and family.
- c. The facilitator asks caregivers to share information.
- d. Guest speakers present to the group on specific topics.

Some examples of intentional caregiver learning about how children learn through play include:

- a. The facilitator highlights one or two play activities during a circle time to briefly explain or show what a child learns with that activity.
- b. The facilitator offers tips on how to interact with children during play to help children expand their thinking and skills.

5. **Intentional Efforts to Help Caregivers Build Supportive Relationships.** The facilitator structures the group to allow for caregivers to interact with each other and makes intentional efforts to connect adult participants to help them build supportive relationships with one another. This way, caregivers get to know each other and share ideas and suggestions that help them care for children. Some examples of what a facilitator can do to support this include:

- a. Introducing new participants to one another
- b. Helping connect individual caregivers who have common interests or can provide guidance to each other about a particular situation
- c. Helping caregivers balance the time they play with children with the time they talk with each other

- d. Including activities and games during the group session to help caregivers get to know one another

6. **Opportunities for Children to Interact with Each Other.** The group provides opportunities for children to interact with each other by playing together in small or large groups and through parallel play. The facilitator (and caregivers) assists the children with getting to know each other and in helping children learn to play and work together.
7. **Intentional Opportunities for Caregiver Leadership.** The facilitator provides intentional opportunities for developing caregiver leadership and participation in running the group. Some examples of how this might happen are:
 - a. Caregivers are encouraged to plan and lead activities such as reading or telling stories, sharing cultural celebrations, etc.
 - b. Caregivers volunteer to help welcome and engage new participants.
 - c. Caregivers talk to their Family, Friends, and Neighbors to recruit new participants and to share what they have learned at the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group.

Embedded Practices

The following practices and concepts are a part of how the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group is offered:

1. Is conducted within the intent and parameters of the *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guidelines*
2. Uses an emergent curriculum approach. Other curricula may also be used to fit the needs and preferences of participants
3. Uses modeling, one-on-one guidance, and large group approaches to assist caregiver learning
4. Is conducted in a culturally-appropriate and competent manner for the participants for whom the group is intended
5. Offers developmentally-appropriate activities for the child participants
6. The facilitator works to develop warm, helping relationships with participants
7. The facilitator solicits and responds to caregiver input on activities, areas of focus, and topics for caregiver learning, etc.

Planning and Managing Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Groups

The organization that runs the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group:

1. Recruits and engages participants with a special focus on outreach to Family, Friend, and Neighbor caregivers.
2. Designates at least one person who is primarily responsible for facilitating (planning, conducting, and following up after) each Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group. This person may be paid or volunteer.
3. Ensures that each primary facilitator has completed *Kaleidoscope Play & Learn 101* and any necessary training as required by the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Affiliate Agreement.
4. Conducts a criminal background check for each Kaleidoscope Play & Learn facilitator (paid or volunteer) and any other adult who will be supervising the children during the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group (not including participants unless they also serve as the facilitator) and disallows anyone with criminal convictions related to any form of child abuse, sexual assault, or hate crime to serve in any such role.
5. Operates Kaleidoscope Play & Learn in locations that:
 - a. Have access to bathrooms with running water
 - b. Provide adequate space to meet all local codes for the number of participants
 - c. Present no significant hazards for young children
 - d. Have ready access to a telephone, fire extinguisher, and first aid kit
 - e. Are, whenever possible, ADA accessible

Curriculum Guidelines

Introduction: Curriculum Approach

Curriculum is what actually happens at Kaleidoscope Play & Learn. It's a set of practices that promotes our outcomes and is conducted within the framework of the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Guiding Principles.

Everyone – children, caregivers, and facilitators– learns at a Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group:

1. Caregivers learn about the value of play in children's development and what they can do at home to promote play and learning through everyday activities.
2. Caregivers learn about child development, community resources, early literacy, school readiness, good health, and other topics related to the joys and challenges of caring for young children.
3. Children learn through developmentally-appropriate play with their peers and their caregivers.
4. Facilitators learn about what caregivers and children are interested in and how best to support them in their learning.

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn reaches a diverse group of participants in a variety of settings and no two Kaleidoscope Play & Learn groups are the same. Groups differ in who attends, including the languages spoken, cultures and preferences represented, ages of children attending, and the relationships of the adults to the children (grandparent, older sibling, parent, family friend, etc.).

The location and size of the group also influence what goes on and how the facilitator must plan. Groups vary in their specific routines, structures, and activities. The needs and interests of a particular group may change over time as children grow and caregivers become more experienced and as new families join the group.

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn requires a curriculum approach that can fit many settings and family needs and preferences - and can respond when these needs and preferences change. While some groups may use an off-the-shelf curriculum, most groups choose to use an **emergent curriculum approach**.

Emergent Curriculum

Emergent curriculum is one that accounts for the unique needs and preferences of the children and caregivers who attend the group. Because it builds on what families already know and is created around what families would like to learn, it is socially relevant, intellectually engaging, and personally meaningful.^v

The curriculum is called emergent because it evolves—diverging along new paths as choices and connections are made, and expanding to new possibilities that were not thought of during the initial planning process.^{vi} The curriculum is not built on the children's and caregivers' interests alone. The facilitator also creates learning opportunities that bring to life the goal of helping all children get ready for school and life.

"Emergent curriculum arises naturally from adult-child (and adult-adult) interactions and situations that allow for 'teachable moments.' It connects learning with experience and prior learning. It includes all interests of children (learners) It is process- rather than product-driven. The curriculum is typically implemented after an idea or interest area emerges from the group."

For more information on Emergent Curriculum:
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/emergent-curriculum>

For more information on the Importance of Play:
<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/play>

Guidelines for Choosing a Curriculum

Whether a Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group uses an emergent approach or adopts a packaged program, all groups do the following when creating or choosing curriculum:

1. Work closely with the participants of the group to understand their needs and preferences
2. Choose content that is relevant to the lives and experiences of the group's participants
3. Ensure that what happens in the group is connected to Kaleidoscope Play & Learn's purpose and guiding principles
4. Consider different learning styles, preferences, and unique needs of the children and their caregivers
5. Ensure that curriculum works within the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Guidelines for developmentally-appropriate practice^{vii} as well as within the context of the participants' cultural backgrounds
6. Ensure that curriculum fits within the National Association for the Education of Young Children's Guidelines for early childhood curriculum^{viii}

Indicators of an Effective Curriculum:

- *Participants are active and engaged.*
- *Goals are clear and shared by all.*
- *The curriculum builds on prior learning and experiences.*
- *The curriculum is comprehensive.*
- *The curriculum is likely to benefit participants.*

Adapted from National Association for the Education of Young Children and National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education, "Where we stand on curriculum, assessment and program evaluation," 2004.

How Learning Happens

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn curriculum guidelines are built upon what we know about how people – of all ages – learn best, including:

1. Through trying and experiencing new things and through discovery and play
2. By interacting with others and with the support of people who care about them
3. In the context of their families, communities, and cultures

4. When they are valued and respected and when they are supported in expressing emotions and opinions in healthy ways
5. When they are healthy and their basic needs are met

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn reaches two groups of learners: young children and their caregivers. The program's effectiveness relies on careful planning and a variety of methods to set up a learning environment that supports people of all ages.

The facilitator uses a variety of techniques to foster participants' learning, including:

1. Modeling
2. Presenting and demonstrating
3. Coaching and guiding
4. Facilitating group discussions among caregivers
5. Providing written information
6. Setting up presentations and demonstrations from other community experts
7. Referring participants to other community resources, including other early learning opportunities

Please see the appendix for more information on the theories, frameworks, and sources about how people develop and learn that inform our approach.

On the following pages are Guidelines that highlight what children and caregivers learn at Kaleidoscope Play & Learn and how the facilitator supports their learning.

Children and adults learn through their important relationships (social); they learn when they are engaged and motivated in what they are learning (emotional); and they learn when they are making sense of their world and mastering new skills (intellectual). Children learn best when adults are able to engage social, emotional, and intellectual learning all at the same time rather than as separate experiences.

Mind in the Making: What is Early Learning? (2006) New York: Families and Work Institute

According to the *American Academy of Pediatrics*, developmentally appropriate play with parents and peers is a singular opportunity to promote the social-emotional, cognitive, language, and self-regulation skills that build executive function and a prosocial brain. Furthermore, play supports the formation of the safe, stable, and nurturing relationships with all caregivers that children need to thrive.

1. We learn through trying and experiencing new things and through discovery and play. We learn from observing and experiencing the world –even if we’re not aware that we’re learning. Learning begins at birth and lasts throughout our lifetimes. New learning and development builds upon prior learning and experience.

What children learn at KP&L:	To support children’s learning, facilitators:	What caregivers learn at KP&L:	To support caregiver learning, facilitators:
<p>1) Through play, children learn and develop skills in all domains, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Problem-solving, creativity, and cognitive skills b. Communication, language, and early literacy c. Using their muscles and bodies d. Expressing and naming feelings e. Getting along with others <p>2) Learning is enjoyable and fulfilling</p>	<p>1) Provide a variety materials, activities, and experiences that are readily available in the caregivers’ homes and that incorporate and respond to children’s interests, skills, and abilities</p> <p>2) Provide adequate time for children to explore and engage in the activities and materials</p> <p>3) Provide adequate space for children to explore and interact with materials and each other</p> <p>4) Observe children at play to gather information about the children’s development and ways to enhance their play and learning</p> <p>5) Interact with children during play to enhance children’s learning and development</p> <p>6) Plan for both child- and adult-initiated activities</p> <p>7) Model your own joy in learning and with the activities</p> <p>8) Provide materials, activities, and experiences that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support the child’s development in all domains, including cognitive, social/emotional, language/communication, fine and gross motor, and self-help 	<p>1) Children start learning at birth and they learn all the time and everywhere</p> <p>2) Children learn through developmentally-appropriate, child-directed play</p> <p>3) Learning happens through the <i>process</i> of playing, creating, and discovery. The end product may not be as important as the process</p> <p>4) Caregivers can inspire a positive attitude toward life-long learning and children’s natural curiosity</p> <p>5) Caregivers can provide early learning opportunities at home by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Providing time, safe materials, and an environment set up for play. They do not need expensive toys or equipment for children to learn and play b. Turning everyday activities into “teachable moments” by involving children and talking to them about household routines and happenings c. Setting up activities that promote joy and fun d. Setting aside time to join in with the child’s play at home 	<p>1) Provide information about how children learn</p> <p>2) Model and encourage ways to support child-directed play</p> <p>3) Provide information about why the facilitator has chosen the activities and what children are learning through those activities</p> <p>4) Label play centers with information about what children are learning and how the caregiver can facilitate and interact with the child</p> <p>5) Provide ideas on how to continue and set up play and learning at home</p> <p>6) Use (and demonstrate how to use) materials and supplies that would be readily available in the children/caregivers’ homes</p> <p>7) Provide information about how to find free, inexpensive, and recycled toys and materials</p> <p>8) Provide suggestions on finding every day learning moments, such as at the grocery store, helping with household routines, during walks through the neighborhood, in the car, at the park, etc.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Engage children’s senses c. Allow them to use their own creativity d. Are challenging but not frustrating e. Create a balance between what they do and do not have access to at home f. Incorporate objects from their home culture g. Respect and acknowledge their abilities h. Support pre- and early-literacy development <p>9) Include loosely structured playtime and more highly structured activities, such as a circle time, story time, movement/dance time, etc.</p>		
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2. We learn by interacting with others and with the support of people who care about us.

What children learn at KP&L:	To support children's learning, facilitators:	What caregivers learn at KP&L:	To support caregiver learning, facilitators:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) New ways of interacting with peers 2) Their caregivers enjoy being with them and sharing in their learning and discovery 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Design experiences that encourage children to work together 2) Encourage and coach interaction between children 3) Provide opportunities for children to work alone, in small groups, or in large groups 4) Point out and talk about positive interactions (when children share, cooperate, help each other, etc.) 5) Set the stage for positive peer interactions: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide enough toys, supplies, and space for everyone b. Remind children of the rules for play c. Provide modeling, coaching, and guidance to help children mediate conflict 6) Interact with children during play: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Ask open-ended questions, talking with children about what they are doing b. Show how to use a toy or material in a different way c. Show interest and appreciation in what the children are doing d. Add new words and ideas to what the child is doing e. Give assistance with problem solving when needed 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Appropriate expectations for sharing and cooperation among children 2) Ways to interact with children to enhance children's learning 3) Children's learning is enhanced with the guidance and encouragement of caregivers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Provide information about developmentally-appropriate expectations for sharing and cooperation among children 2) Provide modeling, coaching, and guidance to help children mediate conflict 3) Model, demonstrate, and provide information about how to interact (make comments, ask questions, play along) with children during play 4) Encourage caregivers to play with their children 5) Give suggestions on how to observe and notice children's learning and point out progress that has been made 6) Provide positive feedback to caregivers in their interactions with children

3. We learn in the context of our families, communities and cultures. We learn best when our families, communities and cultures are valued and respected.

What children learn at KP&L:	To support children’s learning, facilitators:	What caregivers learn at KP&L:	To support caregiver learning, facilitators:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Their home language(s) and culture(s) are valued and important 2) People in their family and neighborhood care about them 3) They are part of the world around them 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Incorporate objects, photos, textures, sounds, flavors, and scents that are familiar to the children 2) Gather information from caregivers, family members, or others about the child’s home culture and incorporate that information into the group 3) Include caregivers, family members, and community members in activities with the children 4) Design a place for learning that is familiar, welcoming, and organized 5) Use the participants’ home languages whenever possible 6) Provide opportunities for cross-cultural learning 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Their home language(s) and culture(s) are valued and important 2) They are part of a supportive caregiver community 3) Families’ home culture(s) and language(s) are legitimate foundations for learning 4) The importance of nurturing appreciation of the child’s and others’ cultures 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Welcome and introduce participants and call them by their preferred names 2) Check in with each caregiver during the group 3) Build in time and opportunities for caregivers to get to know each other 4) Provide opportunities and encouragement for caregivers to take on leadership roles and ownership within the group and within their community 5) Encourage caregivers to share information about what they’ve learned about caring for children and supporting early learning with others in their families and communities 6) Ask caregivers about their expectations for KP&L and goals for their children

4. We learn best when we are valued and respected, and when we are supported in expressing our emotions and our opinions in healthy ways.

What children learn at KP&L:	To support children’s learning, facilitators:	What caregivers learn at KP&L:	To support caregiver learning, facilitators:
1) Children learn new, developmentally-appropriate ways for recognizing, naming, and expressing their emotions	1) Provide varied opportunities for children to express themselves 2) Help children talk about and name their feelings 3) Assist caregivers with positive child guidance techniques during the group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Redirect b. Intervene c. Provide consistency in guidance d. Give options for behavior 4) Use puppets, role play, books, and other methods to talk about feelings	1) The caregiver’s supportive, loving, and trusting relationship with the child will help them succeed in school and life. 2) Children are growing emotionally and socially and benefit from caregiver support and guidance in learning how to recognize and name their emotions 3) Developmentally-appropriate strategies for helping children to develop socially and emotionally	1) Provide information, support, and coaching on child guidance 2) Model as well as provide information, support, and coaching on helping children recognize, name, and express their feelings 3) Model appropriate ways to address children’s emotional needs 4) Provide children with opportunities for choice and success in their play, selection of materials, etc. and explain to caregivers how this builds social/emotional development 5) Talk about how healthy social-emotional development sets the stage for school success

5. We learn best when we are healthy and our basic needs are met. Learning and success requires a “whole person” approach.

What children learn at KP&L:	To support children’s learning, facilitators:	What caregivers learn at KP&L:	To support caregiver learning, facilitators:
1) Healthy habits that promote well-being	1) Offer play opportunities and materials that reflect healthy habits 2) Model and encourage healthy habits, such as providing nutritious snacks, washing hands, being physically active, etc.	1) Caregivers play a role in keeping children healthy and ready to learn 2) Community resources are available to support families, including programs and services for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Meeting basic needs b. Mental health c. Medical and dental care d. Job training and employment programs e. Special needs and early intervention f. Other early learning opportunities g. Getting ready to enroll in school 	1) Provide information and arrange for speakers on child nutrition, health and dental screening, home safety, prevention, and other health and safety topics 2) Provide information to caregivers about community resources that might support their families 3) Help find out information about schools, expectations for school-readiness, and how to connect families with schools 4) Provide information on other early learning opportunities

Resources

Theory of Change

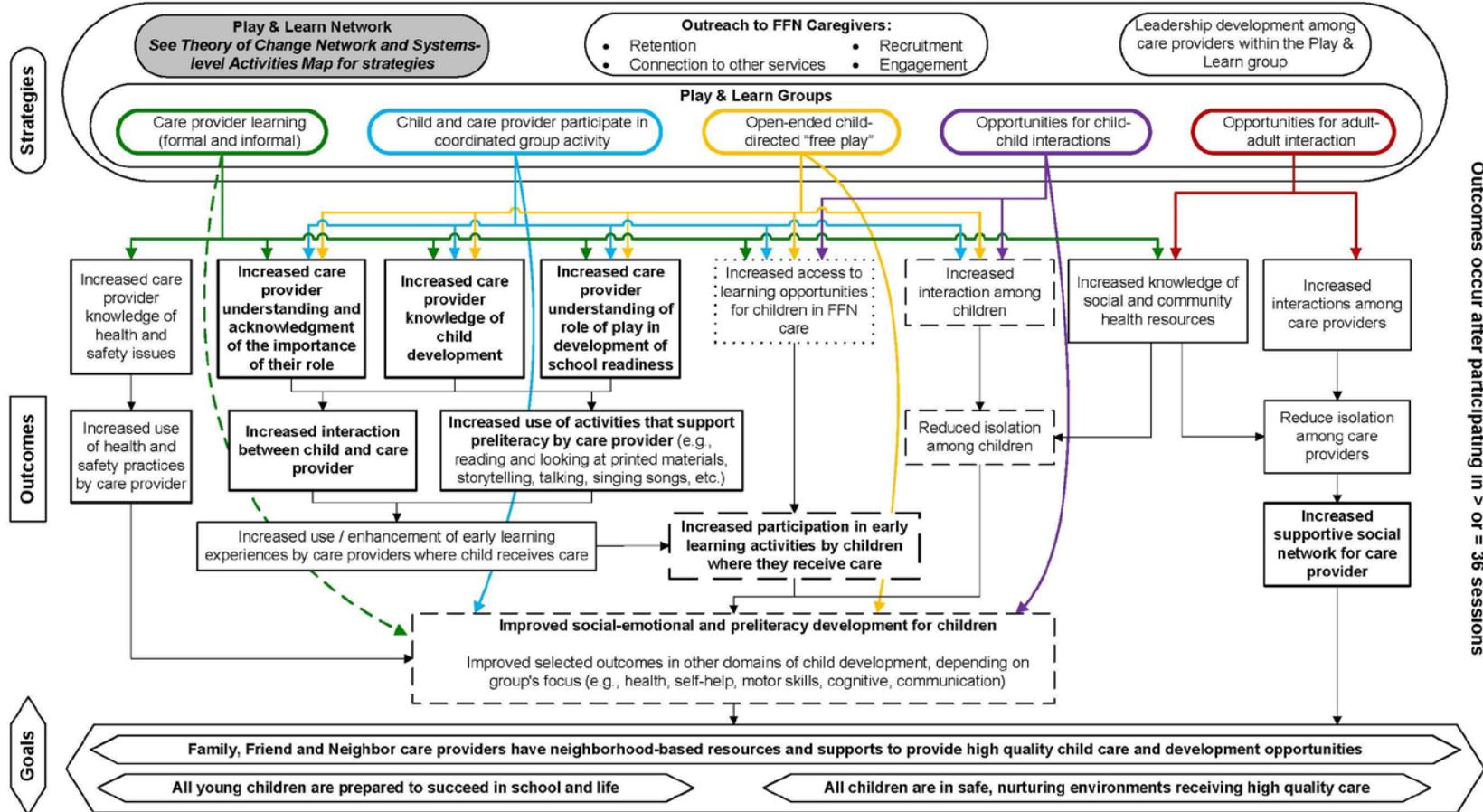
See following page

KPL Protective Factors Alignment

See page 21

King County Family, Friend & Neighbor Child Care Initiative: Play & Learn Model Theory of Change Outcome Map

KEY: DASH line = CHILD outcome | DOTTED line = SYSTEM outcome
 BOLD line = high priority status from stakeholders





	How Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Supports this Protective Factor	How Caregivers Experience this Protective Factor	Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Measurement
Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development	<p><u>Essential Activity</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intentional caregiver learning ➤ Child directed play ➤ Opportunities for children to interact with each other <p><u>Guiding Principles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Trusting, responsive partnerships ➤ Play is the work of children <p><u>Embedded Practices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The facilitator uses modeling, one-on-one guidance and small and large group approaches to assist caregiver learning. ➤ The group offers developmentally appropriate activities for the children. ➤ The group is conducted in a culturally appropriate and competent manner for the participants for whom the group is intended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A place to observe and learn from the facilitator and other caregivers ➤ Encouragement from the facilitator and caregivers to practice new skills and ideas in a supportive environment ➤ The facilitator and caregivers share easy-to-do ideas and tips for supporting healthy child development & early learning using the resources families already have ➤ Referrals and information from the facilitator and other caregivers about community resources and services that help caregivers learn more about parenting and child development 	<p>Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Caregiver Feedback Form (survey)</p> <p>Quality Self-Assessment of the facilitator</p>
Social Connections	<p><u>Essential Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Coordinated group activity ➤ Intentional efforts to help caregivers build supportive relationships <p><u>Guiding Principles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Supportive Community ➤ Inclusion of every child and every family <p><u>Embedded Practices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The facilitator works to develop warm, helping relationships with participants. ➤ The group is conducted in a culturally appropriate and competent manner for the participants for whom the group is intended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encouraged to get to know other caregivers and create supportive relationships & friendships with other caregivers that also extend outside of the group ➤ A warm, inviting, accepting community within the group 	<p>Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Caregiver Feedback Form (survey)</p> <p>Quality Self-Assessment of the facilitator</p>

<p>Concrete Supports in Times of Need</p>	<p><u>Essential Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intentional efforts to help caregivers build supportive relationships <p><u>Guiding Principles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community collaboration ➤ Supportive community <p><u>Embedded Practices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The facilitator uses an emergent curriculum approach. ➤ The facilitator works to develop warm, helping relationships with participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Referrals and information from the facilitator and other caregivers about community resources ➤ Offers of assistance, such as child care and transportation to appointments, from other caregivers 	
<p>Social & Emotional Competence of Children</p>	<p><u>Essential Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intentional caregiver learning ➤ Opportunities for children to interact with each other <p><u>Guiding Principles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Respectful relationships ➤ Supportive community <p><u>Embedded Practices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The facilitator uses an emergent curriculum approach. ➤ The facilitator uses modeling, one-on-one guidance and large group approaches to assist caregiver learning. ➤ The group is conducted in a culturally appropriate and competent manner for the participants for whom the group is intended. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encouragement from the facilitator and caregivers to practice new skills and ideas in a supportive environment ➤ A place to observe and learn from the facilitator and other caregivers as they support children’s social-emotional learning ➤ Referrals and information from the facilitator and other caregivers about community resources and services that help them learn more about children’s social-emotional development 	<p>Kaleidoscope Play & Learn Caregiver Feedback Form (survey)</p> <p>Quality Self-Assessment of the facilitator</p>
<p>Parental Resilience</p>	<p><u>Essential Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intentional opportunities for caregiver leadership <p><u>Guiding Principles</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Trusting, responsive partnerships with families ➤ Respectful relationships ➤ Inclusion – every child and every family is welcome <p><u>Embedded Practices</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The facilitator uses an emergent curriculum approach. ➤ The group is conducted in a culturally appropriate and competent manner for the participants for whom the group is intended. ➤ The facilitator asks for and responds to caregiver input. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encouragement from the facilitator and caregivers to practice new skills and ideas in a supportive environment ➤ A non-judgmental place to talk about the challenges of caring for children ➤ A supportive community that conveys the message “you have what it takes” through feedback and encouragement 	

Family Support Principles

The Principles for Family Support Practice are the culmination of a multi-year effort on the part of Family Support America's Best Practices Project, which sought to identify, define, and articulate quality practice in the field of family support.

More than 2,000 staff and family participants of family support programs throughout the U.S. and Canada contributed many hours and resources to provide information and insight based on their experience and expertise.

The following Principles of Family Support are modeled in all program activities of Family Support of Washington, including planning, governance, and administration.^{ix}

- 1) Staff and families work together in relationships based on equality and respect.
- 2) Staff enhances families' capacity to support the growth and development of all family members – adults, youth, and children.
- 3) Families are resources to their own members, to other families, to programs, and to communities.
- 4) Programs affirm and strengthen families' cultural, racial, and linguistic identities and enhance their ability to function in a multicultural society.
- 5) Programs are embedded in their communities and contribute to the community-building process.
- 6) Programs advocate with families for services and systems that are fair, responsive, and accountable to the families served.
- 7) Practitioners work with families to mobilize formal and informal resources to support family development.
- 8) Programs are flexible and continually responsive to emerging family and community issues.

Family Support of Washington, 2004-2005

Theories, Frameworks & Resources about How People Develop and Learn

Theorists/historical figures that have influenced the early childhood profession:

- Arnold Gesell – Maturation Theory, Stages of Physical Development
- Erik Erikson – Stages of Social Emotional Development
- Howard Gardner – Multiple Intelligences Theory
- Jean Piaget – Stages of Cognitive Development
- John Dewey – Progressive Education
- Lev Vygotsky – Sociocultural Theory
- M.B. Parten – Stages of Social Play

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End Notes

ⁱ Susman-Stillman, A. & Banghart, P. 2008. *Demographics of Family, Friend and Neighbor Child Care in the United States*. New York: Child Care & Early Education Research Connections.

ⁱⁱ National Women's Law Center Report. 2018. *Child Care & Early Learning; Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care: Facts and Figures*. Washington DC: National Women's Law Center.

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^{viii} National Association for the Education of Young Children. 2003. *Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation: A position statement with expanded resources*. Washington, DC.

^{ix} Family Resource Coalition. 1996. *Guidelines for Family Support Practice*. Chicago, IL.