



Nurture children's sensory perceptions through indoor and outdoor play

IN GOOD SENSE

EDUCARER KE CAIYUN DESIGNS SENSORY PLAY ACTIVITIES TO ENCOURAGE INFANTS AND TODDLERS TO EXPLORE AND DISCOVER.

Early brain development has a lasting impact on a child's ability to learn and succeed in school and in life. Research tells us that rich sensorial experiences contribute significantly to healthy brain development for young children. This is why Mdm Ke Caiyun, 49, a senior Chinese language infant educator at PCF Sparkletots @ Radin Mas Blk 18, creates plenty of sensory play experiences for children under her care to explore the environment around them.

"Opportunities for infants and toddlers to engage their sense of sight, touch, smell and hearing help develop hand-eye coordination and motor skills, and enhance muscle development," explains Mdm Ke, a 2020 ECDA Outstanding Early Childhood Educarer award winner. "These also help stimulate the brain and contribute to language and cognitive development, and lay the foundation for the future."

HANDS-ON PLAY

Mdm Ke often makes her own teaching aids which the toddlers are encouraged to freely explore. For example, Mdm Ke, who used to be

a seamstress before becoming an educator, sewed a hen that 'lays' an egg whenever a toddler turns the attached cardboard carton. This game stimulates curiosity (about where eggs come from), builds hand-eye coordination and motor skills, and teaches them about cause and effect.

For outdoor exploration, the toddlers were guided to plant potatoes and peanuts in flowerpots they had made from recycled containers. When a curious child pulled out a plant, Mdm Ke encouraged the class to observe what happened to the leaves of the uprooted plant. "Expose young children early to nature. By showing them how to care for plants, we



Mdm Ke often makes her own teaching aids for children

help them to become socially responsible," she adds.

RELATABLE LESSONS

Regular communication with parents during drop-offs and pick-ups, as well as through phone calls and the centre's Parent Engagement Portal, enables Mdm Ke to tailor activities for the infants and toddlers. "Learning about a child's experiences at home allows me to better understand his needs and interests. This guides me in planning meaningful activities," she says.

One mother, who shared that her child loved playing with their three puppies at home, inspired Mdm Ke to turn the child's interest into teachable moments. She sewed a dog puppet and created a storybook in Mandarin about a dog and its bone. Interacting with the puppet encouraged the children's social-emotional development, while the book extended their knowledge about dogs and their habits.

She encourages parents to allow their children to explore their environment. "Hands-on activities allow the child to accumulate experiences that enhance their holistic development," says Mdm Ke. ●

EXPRESS YOURSELF

Tips to promote your child's language development at home.

- 1. Use proper grammar and speak in full sentences to your child.** For instance, you can say "Do you want to eat?" instead of "Want eat?".
- 2. Set up a doodle wall by sticking large pieces of paper on the wall.** Let your child draw on them and use these drawings to make up stories.
- 3. Make educational toys with child-safe, recycled materials.** For example, build a car out of cartons and arrange different objects on the floor as landmarks. Name the object as the child travels to each item.



For more about Outstanding Educarer Mdm Ke Caiyun, watch her video at fb.watch/2mKS6yA05J or scan this QR code.

