

SANDY ABRAMS: Quality child care is truly about the interaction of the adults and the children and the environment adults can set up for children. So quality requires educated staff, staff that are committed to working with children, who have the knowledge and ability to individualize the curriculum so that they can meet each child's needs.

Children's development runs the gamut, and we, here, serve children 18 months to five years old, so our teachers have to be ready for everything every day. All of our teachers have at least a bachelor's degree. Some have master's degrees we also work with interns, so the quality of their knowledge and their ability to interact with children and offer them learning opportunities-- that's what makes for a quality program.

We're also lucky enough that we have a beautiful facility that was built by the students of California State University, Northridge, and our facility offers us the opportunity to set up learning environments that really allow children to explore, to try new things, to work together with peers, to work with adults. They have lots of opportunities to learn, and that's what gets them ready for kindergarten.

What makes this a child-friendly environment is it is the children's place. They create most of what goes on our walls, most of what goes on our floors. Their creative opportunities-- their art, their math, their science, pictures of them engaged in activities that give them learning opportunities-- that's what makes the building a children's place.

So we have art and creative activities that children post on the walls down low enough for them to actually be the ones who put things up. We have some things just above their heads, because when it's just above your head, you have the opportunity to look up and see the world in that way. And then we also use our art as a parent-teaching tool in the hallways. We have a lot of bulletin boards down our main hallways, and that's where teachers post a lot of children's activities, and what children are learning while they're doing those activities.