

## Scientific Research Basis for Early Childhood Classroom Design and Management

It is well established that classroom management techniques and the physical environment play an important role in early childhood programs<sup>1,3</sup>. These can directly impact the kinds of behaviors that children exhibit and whether the environment is orderly or chaotic. This in turn has a strong relationship with how well children will be able to learn.

### Classroom Design

With respect to the physical space, the following should be taken into consideration<sup>3</sup>:

- Traffic patterns that flow well;
- Materials placed where children can access them;
- Storage that is organized;
- Adequate supplies and equipment;
- Well defined areas and boundaries;
- Thoughtful placement of centers;
- Work areas for large group, small group, and independent or one-on-one learning;
- Furniture that fits the children and activities; and
- Rich with print and with children's work.

### Classroom Management

The management of the classroom revolves around how and which activities occur and are conducted throughout the day. In addition to an orderly and carefully thought out physical environment, attention to an orderly routine is also critical for children to experience success each day. Effective classroom management means that there is an overall structure that is predictable but that also is dynamic for interesting learning to occur.

Key components include<sup>3</sup>:

- Daily plans, which can be supported with charts for the children (e.g., Helpers, Attendance, Centers);
- A system that helps children know what to do (e.g., color coding);
- Consistent use of and fair enforcement of rules; and
- Frequent feedback.

## Summary

It is important to recognize that the interactions that occur in a well-designed and managed classroom are the key to seeing their full potential for children's learning. When classroom set-up and management run smoothly, the teacher and children can attend to building strong, trusting and responsive relationships with one another and to the excitement of learning. Research strongly supports that the primary mechanism through which children learn is through responsive interactions between themselves and adults. Together, emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support offer great opportunity for young children's success<sup>2</sup>.

## Using Hatch Products to Help Children Achieve Critical Outcomes Through Classroom Environment

**Instant Classroom:** The Instant Classroom is an unbeatable way to create a fully-functional early childhood classroom customized to fit a program's needs. Hatch tailors a classroom especially for each customer and a trained Hatch Classroom Integration Consultant (CIC) will do all the set-up work. When you say goodbye to your CIC, each classroom will be complete and ready to use immediately.

## References

<sup>1</sup> Bowman, B.T, Donovan, S.M. and Burns, S.M. *Eager to Learn: Executive Summary of the National Research Council*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> Heckman, J.J. *Schools, Skills, and Synapses*. Bonn, Germany: Institute for the Study of Labor, 2008.

[http://www.heckmanequation.org/system/files/Schools\\_Skills\\_Synopsis.pdf](http://www.heckmanequation.org/system/files/Schools_Skills_Synopsis.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Landry, S.H. *Effective Early Childhood Programs: Turning Knowledge Into Action*. Houston, TX: James Baker Institute for Public Policy, Rice University, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> Pianta, R.C., La Paro, K.M., and Hamre, B.K. *Classroom Assessment Scoring System Manual Pre-K*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2008.