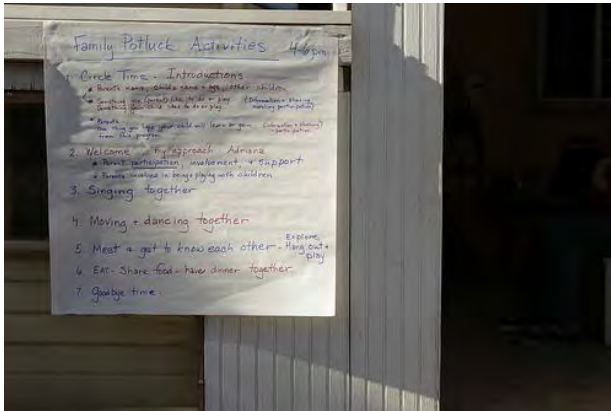


.....an environment in which the experiences of high-quality early learning for all children are the foundation of the curriculum and its planning considerations, are appropriate for all sectors and programs, and fit with the characteristics of children, their families and communities. "Adapted source-Page 104, CA ECE Competencies Competency: Professionalism, Performance Area: Pedagogy



When looking for ways to expand my family child care program I found this section in the ECE Competencies manual. Several times a year we hold meetings in the House of Learning. We provide food for the occasion. Families and their children have the opportunity to relax together, in a friendly environment so that we can build a stronger more solid community.



Peter, my husband, helps prepare meals, organize tables and chairs, and invites friend-musicians to entertain.

He and I always plan the evening, after our shifts. This time I decided to include other families in planning the fall meeting to welcome new families. We hope to take advantage of the opportunity to inform them of the PITC program.



Families work full time and to accommodate their schedules, I conducted surveys to determine their preferences for dates, types of activities, topics of interest, and if they prefer prepared food or would like to bring something to share with everyone.



They chose a September afternoon in which they could all attend, and decided that each family would bring some food to share. They wanted to have singing, interaction, and hear a little bit about our program. But above all, they wanted to meet one another. Some offered to help set up, clean, and watch the children play. Nearly all of the families attended.



We gathered to meet, sing and dance. We could all appreciate the culture of the program and the families shared their culture with the others. I talked about the PITC program and talked about how their children could benefit from my training. My staff was proud of their recently acquired knowledge and felt great because they were able to answer the questions for the families.



There was time for private conversations and social interaction, while a person entertained us by playing the guitar .



The children were happy because their families "attended" the school. It was touching to see it. Families warmed up to the environment. Their confidence in the program grew and they were happy to have their children in the program.



The children shared the vegetables in the garden that they helped harvest.



The families shared a healthy meal and there was time to relax and get to know each other. I felt that I played a major role in creating a community based on sound principles for the care of children. When I plan the next event, I will include all of the families. Maybe I'll invite someone from PITC to entertain us.



As for me, I deepened my professional capacity. I can speak with pride and integrity about my childcare practices and educational program. I'll continue to look for effective ways to share my educational program's success with more families.