

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

A monthly DIEEC spotlight feature that highlights the variety of programs delivering quality care to children in Delaware.

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A “Little Bit of Sunshine Daycare & Preschool” Lighting Up Young Children’s Lives

Written by Lin Nordmeyer

In 1995, Stacy Morgan left her banking career to start her family child care program to spend more time with her one-year-old son. More than 25 years later, she's helped launch generations of children in Townsend, Delaware, with her investment in creating an environment that facilitates learning and character development.

"At my program, Little Bit of Sunshine Daycare & Preschool, it is important for me to provide not only a safe environment but a loving, nurturing, and play-based/nature-based program," said Stacy. "A learning environment that is not just learning ABCs and the 123s but is also teaching values such as honesty, courage, self-reliance, potential, self-discipline, and moderation."

For example, there is a creative corner activity set up outside, and when possible, she adds nature items to use as art tools. Small group literacy and tabletop math are on large wire spools in the outdoor classroom. The children also can practice writing the monthly letters in dirt and/or sand or on the sidewalk with chalk.



Photo credit: Stacy Morgan, Little Bit of Sunshine Daycare & Preschool

The curriculum also has STEAM ideas which she sets up in the outdoor classroom for the children to explore all month long. These centers include blocks, sensory, science and nature, outside discovery, and dramatic play.

A fundamental of Stacy's philosophy includes teaching social and emotional skills. She believes a mixed-age group increases the opportunity to build secure, attached relationships and supports children's social and emotional development.



Photo credit: Stacy Morgan, Little Bit of Sunshine Daycare & Preschool

According to Stacy, a family child care setting also helps build these skills and facilitates close relationships. "It provides a small, secure environment for children during the most critical development time. Family child care offers a home away from home that provides children with 'siblings' of all ages, races, religions, or abilities. It allows them a safe place to play, socialize and learn with friends.

"In my program, I work daily with the children to develop these strong social and emotional skills. I believe it is highly important for them to learn how to manage their emotions, empathize with others, establish healthy relationships, set positive goals, and make responsible decisions," said Stacy. "My goal is to prepare them to succeed in school and live their best life."