



## Sunshine House Mixed Groupings

Our program is a mixed-aged environment for the free choice part of the day. This mixed group takes advantage of the rich intellectual and social variety of an organic environment.

The advantages of mixed groupings are:

- ✓ Takes advantage of differences (experience, knowledge, ability) amongst children
- ✓ Children have a larger pool of children to make friends from. They can choose children who match or complement their personality, according to their needs.
- ✓ Children can have a better sense of their own development. They can look to children with more highly developed skills as role models and to younger children as a look back to where they have come from.
- ✓ Children can learn to take advantage of high competencies and accept help from others.
- ✓ Children can also learn to appreciate those with lower competencies and to nurture others from their own strengths, developing leadership and social responsibility.
- ✓ Children have a larger pool of adults to go to for comfort. This allows more opportunity for close connection.
- ✓ Children are less stressed when a particular staff member must be absent.
- ✓ Our staffing ratio is low, 1:10, mixed age groups allows for even more concentrated teacher interaction where needed vs. 1 teacher with 10 children, who must respond to all no matter the need.
- ✓ Children have benefit of all of the resources of our center, not just one classroom, to take advantage of their natural curiosity

Teacher-directed learning groups are based on developmental level. This provides a rich and optimal learning environment for academics.

The advantages of developmental groupings are:

- ✓ The group is for specific level-appropriate teaching and takes advantage of similarity.
- ✓ The group is not slowed by needing to teach to the lowest common denominator
- ✓ Children are not stressed by not being able to "keep up"
- ✓ Children are not bored by materials being too simple