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Early Child Care

According to the Child Care Services Association (CCSA), child care is the fee-based education and care service a child receives in a center or home-based setting when not in the direct care of a parent. Davy Crockett states that child care or day care started in France around 1840 as a charitable means of caring for children of working class women. Day care centers first appeared in the United States by private charities in the 1850s, the first one being in New York in 1854. Day care centers allow parents to be free for other activities, usually work. With the growing number of parents, mothers to be exact, being in the workforce, day care is needed. It is very important to expose children to education, other children, and learn to be without the present of parents. Early childhood care assists in children’s development and provides valuable support to families with young children (Miller). It needs to be understood the impact of child care services and the first five years of a child’s brain development. All children should start out in a day care center or home-based care to effectively develop socially, educationally, and emotionally.

When it comes to developing children, studies have shown that they learn more in the first five years of life. These first five years, according to the Center for Development and Learning (CDL) “creates the foundation for children to carry out critical developmental growth that sets the stage for later school success”.  Starting from the first day of life to when the child enters kindergarten, children learn, change and grow at an alarming pace (Miller). This is when the brain undergoes its most dramatic growth (CDL).  That is why day care is important because that’s when language blossoms, motor abilities are set, thinking becomes complex, and social and emotional development affects how the child learns and relate to others (CDL).

Placing a child in child care at an early age enables trained professionals to watch the child’s progress. Elizabeth Carney stated that “by observing children’s progress, many developmental disabilities ca are diagnosed” (par. 2). Carney went on to say that early intervention can help cut many disabilities such as hearing and sight impairments, speech problems, or delays in learning. If a child is being cared for by an untrained professional, then these disabilities can go unnoticed until the child gets to kindergarten. That is why it is important that all children go to child care so that they can develop socially, educationally, and emotionally.

There are many benefits to children being able to play and interact with other children. Social skills develop over time, so it is best to start while young. The social skills that are developed during childhood prepares one for adulthood. Smith stated that there are many socialization techniques learned during early play and day care experiences. These experiences include sharing, taking turns, forming friendships, playing well with others, problem solving, etc. These socialization techniques aid in forming the foundation for later relationships with family, friends, and co-workers. Communication is another social skill developed when children are placed in a structured learning environment with children their age. They learn how to express themselves verbally and nonverbal. Any behavior learned can be improved. The early development of socialization skills will be fine-tuned, expanded, and honed over a lifetime (Smith). However, the basic building blocks of socialization begin to take shape while they are young. It is important that children interact with other children in a safe, structured and well supervised day care setting. This encourages the children to develop critical social skills at a faster rate. The advantage that social skills play in learning benefits the children even the more.

There has been a lot of academic research conducted on the long-term benefits of early childhood education. Justin Feldman stated that one of the most important studies on the long-term effects of preschool was the Abecedarian Project. The project randomly assigned students to an early childhood education program or a control group. The study has tracked the participants since the 1970s and found that attending preschool had long-lasting benefits in academic performance, career development, and health outcomes (Feldman). Placement in day care at an early age gives children a major advantage over children that are not placed in day care.

“High quality child care appears to provide a small boost to academic performance, perhaps fostering the early acquisition of school readiness skills,” said James Griffin of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. These findings suggest that the association between early childcare and subsequent academic achievement and behavior seen in earlier study findings persists through childhood and into the teen years. They enter kindergarten with the skills needed to be socially and emotionally ready to handle situations.

Children deal with a lot when it comes to being in unfamiliar environments. Child care has emotional benefits that help children cope. A 2010 study conducted by the US Institutes of Health showed that children who attends high quality day care are less likely to act out because of the support, interaction, and cognitive stimulation received there. These children also tend to be more socially aware than children that do not spend no time in day care.

In conclusion, children can greatly benefit from being in day care. There are many social, educational, and emotional benefits that set the foundation for future interactions. Day care centers give children the head start they need to set up a strong foundation. Child Care centers place children ahead of those that did not attend a child care center or develop the social skills they need to progress in school. As stated, there are many benefits of early child care despite the cost. The children will benefit. The benefits of children attending child care centers while young lay the foundation children need to be socially, educationally, and emotionally sound.

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