



Family Engagement:

Promising Practices Spotlight Series

KALEIDOSCOPE PLAY & LEARN

[Child Care Resource Center](#) (CCRC), serves California's Northern Los Angeles and San Bernardino counties. A few years ago, the agency was searching for an innovative way to provide parents, license-exempt providers, and family, friend and neighbor caregivers with early childhood support, information, and resources. CCRC also wanted a program that would strengthen their relationship with the community, while helping caregivers and families connect with each other. The goal was to promote the optimal development of the children within these often underserved caregiver settings.

The agency found Kaleidoscope Play & Learn, a program that offers community-based support to caregivers. Its philosophy is that quality early childhood experiences make children better prepared for success in school and life. CCRC has been implementing the program since January 2015.

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn is an evidence-informed practice that takes a whole-child, whole-family, and whole-community approach. The program supports caregivers in promoting the early growth and development of children, in the context of their own communities and languages. The guiding principles of the program are:

1. Community Collaboration
2. Trusting, Responsive Partnerships
3. Respectful Relationships
4. Supportive Community

How the Program Works

Each 90-minute Kaleidoscope Play & Learn group is facilitated by trained staff and includes:

- **Child-Directed Play:** Children and caregivers participate in open-ended, child-directed play. They choose from a variety of play centers that support different areas of development.
- **Coordinated Group Activity:** Children and caregivers participate in an activity such as reading or other pre-literacy activities, singing, dancing/movement, art or nutrition education.
- **Intentional Caregiver Learning:** The facilitator shares with the caregiver how and what the children are learning from an activity or through play. The facilitator will also offer suggestions on what caregivers can do at home to provide intentional learning. The information can be provided verbally (through casual conversation) or in writing (posters, handouts, etc.).
- **Intentional Efforts to Help Caregivers Build Supportive Relationships:** The facilitator structures the group so that caregivers can interact with one another. The facilitator also intentionally tries to connect participants to help them build mutually supportive relationships.
- **Opportunities for Children to Interact with Each Other:** Children can interact with one another by playing together in small or large groups.
- **Intentional Opportunities for Caregiver Leadership:** The facilitator provides opportunities for caregivers to run or help run the group. This allows caregivers to develop and practice leadership skills.

CONTACT

Phone: 703-341-4100

Email: FamilyEngagement@usa.childcareaware.org

Website: www.usa.childcareaware.org

ADDRESS

1515 N. Courthouse Rd.
3rd Floor
Arlington, VA 22201

COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2018, Child Care
Aware® of America.
All Rights Reserved.

Success by the Numbers

The California Child Care Resource & Referral Network supports the program in CCR&R agencies throughout the state. According to a 2016 Kaleidoscope Play and Learn Evaluation Fact Sheet produced by the network some significant outcomes of the program include:

- 80% of caregivers reported positive increases in each of the 14 outcome indicators
- 90 % of respondents feel more supported as a parent or caregiver in their community
- 86 % talk more with their child about numbers, shapes and sizes

At CCRC, community interest in Kaleidoscope Play & Learn has grown significantly. When the agency first introduced the program, it offered just one group per month. There are now three groups per month, and at least one more will be added in 2018. Many people attend regularly and have offered valuable feedback about the program.

- Many report they have learned a lot about child development, health & safety and nutrition
- Parents have said that they enjoy the activities and are excited about implementing them at home.
- Input from regular participants indicates that they have become very comfortable with the groups. Many are now stepping up to lead or help lead their groups.

In Their Own Words

CCRC's Kaleidoscope Play & Learn program is making strides to ensure more children in the CCRC's service area have access to safe, nurturing environments offering high-quality care.

Parent to a three-year-old:

My son, who is 3 years old, wants to go to Kaleidoscope all the time. The activities are educational and fun for everyone. I love coming and have learned a lot of new things. I have also made a lot of connections with other parents. As a single parent this has helped me. I completely recommend Kaleidoscope Play and Learn to anyone who wants to get involved with their children and educate them at the same time.

Grandparent of a four-year-old:

One of the exciting things about Kaleidoscope and their play-based philosophy is the way they invest in uncovering a child's natural curiosity. After attending Kaleidoscope for a year, my granddaughter wants to know how the world works; she asks questions and wants to research the answers. This, to me, is the heart of knowledge. The teacher at Kaleidoscope has given my granddaughter more than a place to mature her social skills, it has given her a love of learning.

Nanny to a 3 and 5 year old:

The activities are perfect to do at home! I'm a nanny and I feel so supported and connected to a community of other caregivers and I'm excited to be a part of such an awesome program! The children in my care are excited when they know we are going Kaleidoscope, and they are ready to play and learn!

LEARN MORE

[Child Care Resource Center](#)

Judi Ruiz

Family Engagement Supervisor

jruiz@ccrcca.org

[View the 2016 Kaleidoscope Play and Learn Evaluation Fact Sheet](#)

CONTACT

Phone: 703-341-4100

Email: FamilyEngagement@usa.childcareaware.org

Website: www.usa.childcareaware.org

ADDRESS

1515 N. Courthouse Rd.
3rd Floor
Arlington, VA 22201

COPYRIGHT

Copyright © 2018, Child Care
Aware® of America.
All Rights Reserved.

