



Understanding the Difference between Daycare and Educational Child Care

Lightbridge Academy

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As new parents, going back to work can be one of the most stressful times especially when seeking to find the right care for their children. One of the things they need to immediately understand is the difference between daycare and educational child care. Daycare is primarily focused on the care of child and is often similar to babysitting. There may be educational activities provided, however, there usually is not an educational program or set curriculum in place.

Educational Child Care

Most professional parents want their children to experience a high quality early educational program such as what is offered at [Lightbridge Academy](#). In addition to an educational child care center, Lightbridge Academy provides a nurturing environment where children feel comfortable and parents have peace of mind knowing their children are safe and learning.

Supporting Parents

As The Solution for Working Parents®, [Lightbridge Academy](#) eases the stresses facing busy, working families. Technology is not a common component in a daycare setting as the focus is usually on the child and not on supporting the parent. Lightbridge Academy's ParentView® Internet monitoring system keep families connected to their child and the parent eCommunication app provide parents with ongoing

updates, pictures and videos. Lightbridge Academy also offers back-up care, nutritious snacks, optional meal plans, extended hours and additional extra-curricular activities on site that are difficult to find with many daycares.

“Working parents lead very busy lives and need support in addition to desiring a high quality program fostering their child’s development and early education,” said CEO and co-founder, Guy Falzarano. “From the beginning, we always cared about meeting the needs of both parent and child.”

Early Childhood Educators

Staff members working in daycare often have a passion for working with children however, we believe that passion isn’t enough. In order to have a high quality educational program, you must have a trained staff, carefully screened with all necessary background checks. In addition to possessing a Child Development Associate credential, Lightbridge Academy prefers all lead teachers to hold a minimum of an Associate degree in Child Development or Bachelor of Arts in Education with a focus in Early Childhood Education.

We know that teachers who excel in early childhood education view their career not as a job but as life’s calling. It’s in their DNA. They light up when students master new skills, inspire all those around them, find just the right words to bring comfort to a parent, build confidence in every child and always take their profession to heart.

Educational Keys to Success

Educational child care prepares children for kindergarten. In fact, assessments show that 93 percent of Lightbridge Academy’s pre-K students are already functioning at the Kindergarten level.

Lightbridge Academy views every interaction as another opportunity to learn. Because children develop in different ways, a stimulating environment is created to encourage young children to learn through their natural abilities while also stretching their abilities in other areas.

Educators use a “learning is fun” philosophy through play and positive reinforcement. As children develop, they continue to build upon what they have already learned to further develop skills. Classrooms are designed with learning centers to engage children, in addition to teacher-led activities, child-led interests and independent play.

When creating their curriculum, Lightbridge Academy turned to the most well-respected early childhood education theorists for inspiration. Lesson plans were designed knowing that children build on skills that naturally develop as they age, aligned with the theories of Jean Piaget. This enables children to gain information in an innate way, as Howard Gardner promoted. Similar into Maria Montessori’s teachings, Lightbridge Academy places a focus on the development of the whole child. And child observations are used to help in furthering child-led exploration in accordance with Loris Malaguzzi’s teachings. And finally, Lightbridge understands the importance of play as children grow, as recommended by Fredrich Fröbel.

“Daycare primarily focuses on specifically on the care of a child... diapering, feeding and play. Of course, all young children need to feel cared for and nurtured in order to feel secure and ready to learn. It is also an extremely important component of a quality early childhood education program. Our curriculum was created knowing that in order for children to become lifelong learners, they must enjoy learning. Lightbridge Academy accomplishes this in a fun and natural way,” said COO and President Gigi Schweikert. “It is so important to make every situation a learning experience so that children are constantly developing and growing.”

Lightbridge Academy’s integrated curriculum has seven learning domains that are each important so that

a child can advance both academically and developmentally. The Seedlings Early Childhood Education Curriculum allows children to focus on all areas of their growth, letting them see letters, sign words, hear sounds and learn through a multi-sensory approach. The Seven Learning Domains in an integrated curriculum that includes mathematics and science, arts and music, language and literacy, social and emotional, sensory, physical and well-being and cognitive learning. Additionally, STEM is taught at an early age so children can reap the benefits of analytical thought, critical thinking and reasoning skills, Handwriting Without Tears® helps children with hands-on lessons to prepare them to read and write and Singing Sprouts encourages children to understand music with song, movement, instruments, rhythms and patterns. Spanish Sprouts teaches children the basics of communicating in Spanish, and Signing Sprouts introduces children to American Sign Language.

Culture Counts

Finally, in addition to an extensive curriculum, another differentiator between Lightbridge Academy and daycare is its core values and Circle of Care philosophy. The culture that is fostered within a company is the key creating a happy and quality learning environment for everyone. Culture is not a word commonly used in a daycare setting.

Lightbridge Academy believes that each person whose life is touched is equally important. This includes parents, children, staff members, franchise owners and the community all coming together as a family to create a Circle of Care. The child benefits by being at the center of the Circle of Care, and meeting the needs of everyone in that Circle of Care are integral to the child's success.

"We take our jobs seriously and know that parents have entrusted us to not only help develop their child's mind but also socially and emotionally," said Falzarano. "It is such an important time in a young child's life and what occurs directly impacts their ability and preparedness for elementary school and beyond."