

A Tale of Two Day-care Centers

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The utilization of relevant teaching/learning materials in a day-care center is a significant factor in the quality of learning of young children. We will endeavor to show this impact by contrasting the mood, behavior, and performance of two day-care centers, one which has received teaching aids, storybooks, and learning materials, a virtual “School in a Box” and one which must rely upon the creativity of a teacher without the materials in “the Box”.

The first day-care center, in Guimaras, has received materials from UNICEF and the teacher has been trained and oriented on their effective use. The children are given activity sheets to color and take home to show their parents,



the teacher is able to read many stories to the children from the 30 storybooks which cover history, heroes, and their rights. They learn how to tell time with the wooden clock; how to count and read the letters of the alphabet by using the magnetic alphabet and number board; and they enjoy singing and playing the drums, ukulele, and tambourine, and have learned many songs from the tapes played on the cassette player.

The center is simple but bright and airy. Attendance is high and these children are ready to enter elementary school at age 6. Their drop out rate is quite low.

The second day-care center, an urban day-care center in Barangay Payatas in Quezon City, Metro Manila, has not yet received external support, but must rely on whatever local materials the Barangay and teacher can muster. An average day would be filled with singing and dancing, playing games and listening to the teacher teach from the blackboard. The stories are limited and the exercises involving drawing, coloring and creating objects are very simple as the children must share pencils, crayons and other scarce learning materials. The smartest children do well, but many children have erratic attendance and do not learn well.



It has been demonstrated in many Barangay day-care centers that a dedicated teacher, armed with curriculum guidance and teaching materials, together with young children who have access to learning tools such as paper, pencils, crayons, and lots of storybooks, can yield an excellent learning experience even in crowded and difficult physical facilities.