**Learning Environment**- this is the use and organization of the space in your classroom, the structure you provide and the plans you develop.

Setting up the classroom: a well-designed classroom helps children make choices, encourages them to use materials creatively and appropriately and teaches them responsibilities for maintaining the classroom.

Your classroom should convey positive messages such as:

* “This is a good place” – its clean and well organized
* “You belong here”- children’s artwork is displayed
* “This is a place you can trust” schedule and routines are consistent
* “There are places where you can be by yourself when you want” – areas are defined and there is a cozy area with soft materials.
* “You can do many things on your own here” – materials are stored on low shelves and labelled with print and words.

Classrooms should have well-defined Interest Areas. You should have the following Interest Areas:

 Blocks

 Dramatic Play

 Toys and Games

 Art

 Library

 Discovery

 Sensory

 Music and Movement

Sub diving the classroom into spaces that accommodate a few children address the preschoolers’ preference for small group setting and children tend to engage in more complex play in small groups.

Establishing a Structure for Each Day – you should have a predictable sequence of events daily. This helps children feel safe, secure and independent.

When creating a daily schedule here are a few tips:

* Start by filling in the times which are out of your control, for example- meals, playground/gross motor, rest time ,etc.
* There should be a balance of active and quiet activities, small group and large group and child led vs. teacher led
* Allow at least 60 minutes for each choice time so children can become deeply involved in their play. It is not best practice nor developmentally appropriate to have children rotate during choice time.