



"early education with the nurturing kids need"

small-group preschool program



Christy Fajkowski
103 Bridle Road
Billerica, MA 01821
(978) 663-0604
christy@habitOts.com

About habitOts

habitOts is a unique early childhood education program that provides a small-group preschool experience for your three to six year old. **habitOts** is owned and operated by Christy Fajkowski; Christy has worked in early childhood and parent education since 1982, and her extensive knowledge and experience has helped prepare children for kindergarten since 1990.

habitOts offers a unique educational program designed to foster your child's physical, social, intellectual and emotional growth. Limiting each class size to ten students gives every child vast opportunity for independent and cooperative learning, and allows for strong teacher support of student

participation.

With a deep commitment to literacy, Christy uses children's literature as a starting point and then extends the theme of each story into music, language, science, cooking, math, and dramatic play experiences. This encourages children to relate words on a page to real things in everyday life, which is the foundation for later academic skills and a lifelong love of reading.

habitOts firmly believes in the process of art; not the product. Children are offered many mediums and different utensils, and are introduced to a topic or theme. They are not shown how to assemble their craft; students paint, draw or create spontaneously. This encourages

imagination, free thinking, and even problem solving. The result is real, heartfelt art.

The **habitOts** curriculum grows with your child until he or she enters elementary school. Lesson-plans are carefully designed to meet the small group's particular needs, including your child's individual interests, developmental age, and interactive style. Classroom activities provide increasing challenges as your child's skill level advances. This is education tailor-made; not education en masse.

The habitOts Environment

habitOts utilizes a 600-square-foot classroom on a separate level of a private residence, with its own school entrance. The classroom was renovated in the fall of 2005.

Classroom centers include Computer Center, Dramatic Play and Housekeeping Centers, Block & Truck Center, Writing Centers, Puzzle & Games Center, Library Corner and a variety of Math & Manipulative and Art Centers daily. Lessons are introduced through Story Time (reading and discussion), Circle Time (dramatics, creative movement, language arts, math) and Table Time (art, cooking, or science projects; number and letter learning.) The lunchroom is on an adjacent level for food service and outdoor play is in a natural, wooded setting.

Christy Fajkowski

Christy Fajkowski first conceived the idea of **habitOts** in 1982, and **habitOts** came to Billerica in 1990. Christy has been a member of the Dutile School Site Council since 1993, working to construct an

annual school improvement plan for this Billerica elementary school. **habitOts** is licensed by the MA Department of Early Education and Care and Christy receives ongoing professional-development

in preschool education. Christy is the parent of four children: a son with a Master's degree in Biology; a daughter with a Bachelor's degree in English Literature, and daughters in high school and middle school.



Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum

habitOts takes into account:

- Child's age (chronological)
- Child's stage (level of development)
- Personality and temperament
- Life experiences
- Individual needs

At **habitOts**, developmentally appropriate curriculum uses intentional learning-through-play

experiences to encourage:

- Exploration
- Investigation
- Problem solving
- Practice of gross motor skills
- Creativity
- Development of self-esteem
- Literacy
- Social Interaction
- K Readiness skills



Daily Pattern

Our morning provides a balance of indoor and outdoor exploration; active and quiet choices; child-directed and teacher-directed activities, with both independent and group participation.

One half of the morning is devoted to students choosing their own activities in classroom centers, while teachers observe and interact with each child individually or within a group, facilitating the child's social, physical, and cognitive learning.

Additionally, half the morning is spent in teacher-prepared lessons (Math & Sciences, Art, Music & Movement, Language) related to the daily theme or curriculum unit of the month.

There is a minimum half hour of outdoor physical activity daily and full-service lunch, promoting physical health, nutrition, and the wonderful social experience of a shared meal. There are early-bird arrival and late-stay options.



"early education with the nurturing kids need"

The developmentally appropriate classroom is characterized by:

Respect for Children:

- Children's interests are important starting points for learning
- Children's ideas and work are taken seriously
- Children have many opportunities to choose (activities, stories, projects)
- Children have time to observe, look around, and wonder
- Children help each other
- Individual, cultural, linguistic differences are celebrated

Support of Thought, Imagination, and Self-Esteem:

- Teachers respond to children's ideas and questions
- Considerable attention is given to the process of exploration and discovery; inquiry and investigation
- Errors are seen as steps toward learning, as particular inventions – not as mistakes or failure
- Teachers provide a safe, supportive environment that encourages children to take new steps toward growth

Connections to the World:

- Children bring books, journals, day notes, etc. from school to home for sharing and vice-versa
- Field trips are available that are related to classroom learning

Abundant Opportunities to Learn:

- The classroom is full of language – reading, writing, listening, speaking. Children are read *real* literature by children's authors, not publisher-produced readers
- The classroom is inviting and colorful; children have immediate access to a variety of interesting materials
- Learning is rooted in true experience, concrete materials, and hands-on activities. Teachers help children make the connection – curriculum is presented as an interconnected knowledge
- Teachers know that learning takes place over time and that children need numerous, related experiences to absorb critical concepts and use these concepts effectively

