· Scaffolding (skaf·old·ing) 
A changing quality of support over a teaching session, in which a more skilled partner adjusts the assistance he or she provides to fit the child’s current level of performance. More support is offered when a task is new; less is provided as the child’s competence increases, thereby fostering the child’s autonomy and independent mastery.

Laura E. Berk and Adam Winsler, 1995, Scaffolding Children’s Learning: Vygotsky and Early Childhood Education

Beyond Centers and Circle Time© provides for:
· Arranging the play environment,
· Scaffolding the pre-play experience,
· Scaffolding the individual child’s play experience,
· Scaffolding the post-play experience,
· And assessing the child’s development through play.
The Beyond Centers and Circle Time Curriculum requires a paradigm shift in the way early childhood educators plan and implement experiences for young children.

**Beyond Centers and Circle Time© (BCCT)** is a play-based curriculum, substantiated by research. It examines the development of the child engaged in the three types of play:

- Sensorimotor
- Construction
- Dramatic Play

Understanding the function and value of each type of play allows the teacher to facilitate and "scaffold" the play of the children, enabling them to move naturally to a new and more sophisticated level of play and development.

### Play Works

- **Intensity**: The amount of time the children are allowed to experience the 3 kinds of play during each day and throughout the year.
  
  **Example**: Children are allowed to choose from an array of activities everyday that provide opportunities to engage in dramatic, construction, and sensorimotor play.

- **Density**: The variety of ways each kind of play is presented for the child to experience.
  
  **Example**: Children can use paint at the easel, on finger paint trays, with small brushes on the table-top, etc., to practice fluid construction skills. Children can use the unit (Pratt) blocks, hammers with nails and wood, scrap construction materials with cool melt guns, and Legos® to practice structured construction skills.
The Beyond Centers and Circle Time® Series is:

• Perfected through more than 40 years of application and research.
• A play-based curriculum that is both based on research and child development theory and research based.
• Solidly infused with the Florida Learning and Developmental Standards and the Florida VPK Standards.

Beyond Centers and Circle Time® offers documented sequences of skill development in the areas of:

• Block Play
• Marker/Crayon/Easel
• Emergent Writing
• Cutting
• Bead Stringing
• Sensorimotor & Dramatic Play

These sequences have been substantiated through research conducted by The Creative Center for Childhood Research and Training, Inc. (CCCRT).

Adults using the Beyond Centers and Circle Time© curriculum will be able to plan and implement developmentally appropriate opportunities that will allow children to play their way to school success.
The concept of developmentally appropriateness has two dimensions:

- Age Appropriateness
- Individual Appropriateness

**Age Appropriateness**

Human development research and theory indicates that there are universal, predictable sequences of growth and change that occur in children during the first 9 years of life.

**Individual Appropriateness**

Each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as individual personality, learning style, and family background.

*Taken from Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children From Birth Through Age 8, edited by Sue Bredekamp and published by NAEYC.*

**Beyond Centers and Circle Time®**

is based on the theories of:

- Vygotsky
- Piaget
- Freud
- Erikson

BCCT is based on current and past research and is research-based. All of the above supports children’s development through interactions with play materials, other children, and adults.

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**The Perfect Blend of Both Approaches to How Children Should be Prepared for Formal Schooling**

Early didactic programs focusing on specific skill development do not necessarily demonstrate long term effects once children move into subject content that requires abstract thinking and problem solving knowledge and skills (Lazar, 1982; the Abecedarian Project, 1994, 1995, 1999; the HighScope Project, 1993).

Play needs to be understood, therefore, in terms of what children’s products and play behaviors mean as well as how to recognize the precursory role play has in the development of reading, writing and abstract thinking knowledge and skill.
Beyond Centers and Circle Time® curriculum is based on the complete belief that:

Young children think and therefore learn differently from older children and adults. Piaget said it first, and recent brain research supports his concepts.

The benefits of play experiences will best be reached when adults understand child development and the stages of children’s play and use them to move children toward literacy and school success.

The Beyond Centers & Circle Time Pre-K Theme Series includes a variety of materials to support successful, developmentally appropriate play environments.

• Beyond Centers & Circle Time handbook
• Nine 4-week units with daily schedules and lesson plans. Unit themes include:
  ▪ Me and My Family
  ▪ Real and Make-Believe
  ▪ The Farm and The City
  ▪ Insects and Spiders
  ▪ Birds in My Neighborhood
  ▪ Animals of the Jungle
  ▪ Amphibians and Reptiles
  ▪ Oceans and Ocean Life
  ▪ Authors and Illustrators

• Six training DVDs:
  ▪ Beyond ABCs and Writing My Name
  ▪ From Theories to Play
  ▪ Food, Fun, and Family-Style Meals
  ▪ Literacy Throughout the Day
  ▪ Scaffolding Dramatic Play
  ▪ Authentic Assessments
Observation scales and developmental checklists for the following:

- Gross Motor Development
- Pre-Scissor and Cutting Development
- Marker/Crayon and Easel Painting
- Sensorimotor and Dramatic Play
- Structured Construction Play
- Patterning Development
- Writing Development

- Set of twelve posters supporting the tenants of the Beyond Centers and Circle Time Curriculum.

Quality literature to support the nine themes including:

- Peter’s Chair by Ezra Jack Keats
- A Color of His Own by Leo Lionni
- The Little House by Virginia Lee Burton
- Owl Babies by Martin Waddell
- The Runaway Bunny by Margaret Wise Brown
- The Little Red Hen by Paul Galdone
- Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel by Virginia Lee Burton
- Bunny Cakes by Rosemary Wells
- Where the Wild Things Are by Maurice Sendak
- The Grumpy Ladybug by Eric Carle
- A House for Hermit Crab by Eric Carle
- Verdi by Janet Cannon
- ...and many more!

Scaffolding the Environment

- Pre-organize the play environment with enough materials (3 play spaces per child)
- Plan for intensity and density of experiences
- Have a variety of materials that support the three kinds of play
- Sensorimotor, construction, and dramatic
- Have a variety of materials that support literacy experiences
- Arrange play opportunities to support positive social interactions
The Organization of Play Spaces

For children ages 3—5 there must be a minimum of 2.5—3 play spaces per child.

Classroom Organization for 20 Pre-Kindergarten Children

6  Paper, Scissors, Crayons, Tape
4  Easel Paint at the Chalkboard
8—10 Teacher Directed Art Activity
2  Writing Desk
2  Book/Listening Space
4  Beads and Laces/Alphabet Fishing
3  Blocks
2  Dish Washing on a Table
2  Cake Icing
6—8  General Playhouse w/Book Area
2  Babies for Washing, 2 Powders, 2 Washcloths
5—6  Shoe Store/Family Reunion

Scaffolding the Pre-Play Experience

- Read a book about related experiences or conduct a visitor’s demonstration
- Incorporate new vocabulary and demonstrate the concepts that support the Performance Standards
- Give ideas for how to use materials
- Discuss the rules and expectations for the play experience
- Explain the sequence of the play period
- Organize the children for successful social interactions
- Design and implement an orderly transition to play
Scaffolding the Individual Child’s Play Experience

- Give children time to organize and elaborate their play experience
- Model appropriate communication
- Enhance & extend their language
- Increase socialization opportunities through support of peer interactions
- Observe and document children’s play development and progress

Scaffolding the Post Play Experience

- Use clean-up as a positive experience to practice classification, seriation, and general organization of the play materials.
- Recall and review the play experience so that each child may share their accomplishments.

The key to developing reading and math literacy – and all other skills – is to pace the learning so that it is consistent with the child’s development, enabling him or her to succeed at the early stages.

Ensure this initial success and the child’s natural love of learning blooms. Doom him to failure in the beginning by making inappropriate demands and he may well be unable to overcome the resulting inadequacy.

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