

Cultivation of an Environment for Food and Agriculture Education for Children

(Courtesy of Ying-Hsuan Chen at the Division of Preschool Education)



Ecology and environmental protection have been an important agenda in education. The K-12 Education Administration, Ministry of Education, has adopted measures to motivate preschools to design and develop courses on environment and cultural identity, with a focus on the care for the environment while incorporating courses on food and agriculture education, to help small children understand nature and bridge the gap between children and nature. As such, they will learn to love, respect, and cherish nature.

Take the Yongxing Non-Profit Preschool in Changhua County as an example, beginning operation in the school year of 2021, it utilized the resources in the neighboring community to guide children to observe how guava was picked and harvested on the farm, allowing them to get close to nature through their five senses. The preschool also arranged children to walk into the rice fields through a course on environment. Teachers explained the method of rice planting and farming to enable children to understand where the rice they ate in daily life came from,

thereby raising children's curiosity about and interest in nature and cultivating their love for the land on which they lived.

The Kaohsiung City Guangwu Non-Profit Preschool was launched in the school year of 2017 with a small plot of land for farming. Teachers led the small farmers to plant and farm the land. Through exploration, observation, and sharing, the small children in classes learned about what crops to plant, how to take care of them, and how to reduce pest damage. As such, they learned how to collect information on natural phenomena from a cognitive perspective and understood how to sort out the relationship between different sets of natural phenomenon information, thereby paving ways to identify problems and find solutions. After the crops were harvested, the preschool also developed a series of activities for children to cook on their own, which not only allowed them to enjoy the fruits of their endeavor but also improved their unbalanced diet problem through the course activities.

According to the K-12 Education Administration, the preschools made great endeavor to raise children's awareness of the environment and motivate them to take care of the environment and cherish nature, while enabling them to feel farmers' hard work and learn to be grateful for what they have by taking care of the vegetables with their own hands through the courses on environmental education and food and agriculture education. In the future, the administration will continue to provide more affordable, professional, and high-quality preschool education services to the local community and develop more diverse and interesting courses through professional preschool education teams, so that parents can feel assured when they send their children to preschools.