“All worthwhile movements have a background of planning, foresightedness, and hard work. The kindergarten had as its sponsor, Professor Edna McNaughton, whose pioneering spirit was, and is, the backbone of our preschool education. Miss McNaughton saw the great possibilities of such a movement, in a county where no public school Kindergarten existed. She saw too, the need in the State of Maryland for trained teachers, to fill the many Kindergarten positions available in nearby counties. Her dream, now a reality, has materialized on the University Campus.”

–Margaret Stant, *This is Kindergarten, 1950*
Edna Belle McNaughton

UMD Professor from 1919-1956

Childhood Education Pioneer & Early Childhood Advocate

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION NURSERY SCHOOL 1934–1937

The Works Progress Administration nursery school program was introduced in 1934 to provide relief to the unemployed and underprivileged children. The program was designed to improve the living conditions of children in economically disadvantaged families during the Great Depression.

The Works Progress Administration nursery school program involved the establishment of nursery schools on the University of Maryland campus, where the University's financial obligation toward this school was not to exceed $250.00. Edna McNaughton became head of the "Nursery School". In addition to a focus on the nutrition and health care needs of community children, the "Nursery School" provided a laboratory in which undergraduate students could observe and gain practical experience teaching with children. McNaughton taught Child Study, Nursery Training, and Hygiene and Child Study courses to the increasing number of child development majors.

The Works Progress Administration nursery school program, as well as the University's need for better facilities for the nursery school on campus, made her request impossible to grant.

Summary of Correspondence to President Pearson, May 16, 1934 from W.S. Small, Dean College of Education

Description of Nursery School Program

- 5.5 McNaughton, a professor of Home Economics directed the nursery school.
- The staff included 4 previously unemployed persons as follows: a head teacher, an assistant teacher, a nurse and a cook.
- 14 children, age 2–4 years, were enrolled from a population of families on relief. Many were underweight and showed signs of malnutrition.
- The program of the Nursery School spanned from 9 – 3:30, 5 days a week.

THE PROGRAM

Snack 10:00 – 10:30
Breakfast 10:30 – 11:00
Snack 11:00 – 11:30
Lunch 11:30 – 1:00
Snack 1:00 – 1:30
Supper 5:00 – 5:30
Coffee 5:30 – 6:00

MOST POPULAR MENU

Baked potato
Baked ham
Raspberry pie
Snack mix

Results: All the children gained weight with one exception. This was because of illness.

Now Why did the Popularity of Spinach?

H. L. Bodwell, Provost of the University of Maryland 1927–1944
Center for Young Children
College of Education

BENJAMIN

Marilyn Church
Director, 1975–1988

Silencing The Chorus of Yucks
Researchers Seek To Open Young Minds and Moods to Nutritious Food

Dr. Ford planned the ground-breaking ceremony for the new state of the art building to house the Center for Young Children. President Kirwan along with Jean Hebeler, Acting Dean of the College of Education presided.

Children Playing, Cambridge complex

1980–1988

Literacy
Art with Clay
Dramatic Play

1977

Food Lesson for the Cookie Set
This article explains a three year nutritional study conducted with preschoolers at the University of Maryland, Center for Young Children. The two researchers were Dr. Primala Brewster and Dr. Marilyn Church.

"Three and four year olds are capable of learning good eating habits. A child likes what he grows to love when he is taught and he develops spread feelings for different foods. It's hard to change these feelings. But the earlier you start, the more likely children will choose things like lettuce and green beans," said Dr. Church.

1975

June Wright
(Second from left), Director, 1991–1992

Elisa Klein
Director, 1988–1991

"The new Center for Young Children will provide full time child care for faculty, staff, and students of the University of Maryland in the newly renovated Cambridge Hall. Our commitment to meet the child care needs of the University community must never run at cross purposes with our commitment to design and implement a high quality program that provides a model for others, that provides outstanding teaching opportunities for our students, and that provides an exciting area for research."

June 27, 1988
Letter to Dennis Blumer, Office of the Chancellor from Elisa Klein, newly hired Center for Young Children Director

Outside Playground

Benjamin

Cambridge complex

Cambridge Complex

Carla Ford, Director 1992–1993

The Ford Foundation first provided funding for the center.

Princess Doreen during visit from the University of the Virgin Islands presented.
James L. Hymes, Jr.
Director, 1957-1967

Wilson Homer "Bud" Elkins
President of the University, 1954-1978

February 6, 1968
Correspondence to Sargent Shriver from Wilson Elkins, President
"We are pleased that Professor Hymes has been asked to make a contribution to a project of this type to assist communities in providing special programs for children from deprived families before they enter school." (Headstart)

December 10, 1993
Letter to Ms. Gail Mickie from Mrs. Lois Mast.
"Recollections of teaching at the Nursery School, 1954-1957
"The College of Education was a friendly, helpful College in which to be enrolled. During my years on campus the lab school was located in temporary buildings in what we called the 'gulch.' I taught kindergarten there and remember it was difficult teaching and having classes in the building which only had partitions between the rooms."

February 17, 1995
Correspondence to Marilyn Church from James L. Hymes Jr.
"Recollections of the Nursery School
"When I came to Maryland the school was in the barracks, not unhappily incidentally. The 'barracks' setting had virtues. Our Early Childhood classes were held there, so planned observation and conducive informal observation was built in. Being separate and apart helped create a certain esprit de corps among our staff. There were no noise. Only our Early Childhood majors ever took a class in the school. The Elementary Human Development people never traveled over there then. When a new Education building, Observation Rooms, was built, and we were scattered in the middle, our Early Childhood student would miss greatly our lab school. No rival of other majors tier took place."

James L. Hymes, Jr.
Director, 1957-1967

February 21, 1956
Correspondence to Marilyn Church from James L. Hymes Jr.
"Memories of the Nursery School
"The early childhood classes were held in temporary buildings in what we called the 'gulch.' I taught kindergarten there and remember it was difficult teaching and having classes in the building which only had partitions between the rooms."

Louise M. Berman
Director, 1967-1975

University of Maryland
Nursery School

Research Emphasis
1970's
Young Children  
Then and Now

**Personal and Social Development**

**Physical Development**

**Language and Literacy**

**The Arts**

**Social Studies & Dramatic Play**

**Mathematical Thinking**

**Scientific Thinking**

**Child Development**

Have things really changed over the years?
EXEMPLARY EARLY CHILDHOOD CURRICULUM

The Center for Young Children bases its curriculum on current research, teacher knowledge, and the interests of the child. The Project Approach and Reggio Emilia, a northern Italian preschool model, influence our “Study Approach”. Our main goals for children are:

• To encourage critical thinking
• To facilitate questioning and problem solving
• To encourage curiosity
• To encourage enthusiastic and engaged learning
• To encourage social competence
• To encourage parent participation on behalf of children

The Center is staffed by the faculty. Teachers with degrees are in each classroom.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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PAST RESEARCH

Welcome to the CYC

CYC ADVOCATES

Welcome to the CYC

CURRENT RESEARCH

Welcome to the CYC

CYC ADVOCATES

Welcome to the CYC

CURRENT RESEARCH