

Child Care Students Learn with Light

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Earlier this year, we turned on our over head projector and shined it on the wall. We encouraged the girls to each pick one small item from the room to place on the projector. The girls chose a variety of items from plastic animals to interlocking blocks to cars. They were amazed and intrigued at the shapes now displayed on the wall. They couldn't quite grasp how this was occurring. What was interesting was how they piled items on the projector until the vision being displayed was almost black.

We encouraged the exploration by giving them assorted colors of cellophane. They again began to experiment. What happens if you put red cellophane on the projector? What about if you put a blue piece on top of the red? The questions continued and the girls were able to give the answers by looking at the display on the wall. They were quite excited to learn and explore.

Finally we took all the items away and encouraged them to put their hands in front of the light. Now they could see their hand shape on the wall. They made different shapes using their hands. We ended the activity by telling a story which was shone on the wall. All through the activity, the girls were intrigued and excited to learn how this was working.

As a result of the interest in this activity, we have a proper light table. A light table is a free standing table which has a light shining from underneath. We are excited to see the possibilities this will have for learning and exploration as light tables are a very important aspect of the Reggio Emilia philosophy.