

Mixed Age Grouping at Bright Horizons

What is mixed age grouping?

Mixed age grouping at Bright Horizons focuses on maintaining a moderately wide age range in homebases. This makes us different from many other child care centers, which typically group children into narrow age ranges. When the focus is on developmentally-appropriate learning and not instruction, and individualizing care not standardizing care, there are advantages to wider age groupings.

How do children benefit from mixed age grouping?

- Fewer age group divisions means fewer transitions. With fewer transitions, children will have more stability in their lives, develop long-term relationships with caregivers and peers, and avoid the stress of moving to a new setting each year.
- Older children have an opportunity to act responsibly and articulate their experience of the world while younger children learn from observation of and interactions with older children. Children learn just as readily from other children as they do from adults, and toddlers often have an easier time sharing with children either older or younger than they are.
- Wider range age groups result in greater awareness of child differences, something narrow age grouping locations overlook by assuming that similar aged children develop at the same rate. Larger group settings can lead to a larger appreciation of each child's unique growth.
- No child will ever be "too old" or "too young" for the group. The oldest and youngest child in every room will have the complete range of learning experiences appropriate to them, and care tailored to their needs.

