



# Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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## 10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

## This Month's Hallmark of Quality Child Care Partner with Parents

### ‘Āina Based Learning

Living in Hawai'i means access to exploring lush green forests, the deep blue ocean, and fragrant gardens. Nature can be a wonderful teacher for Hawai'i's keiki. According to the Institute of Education Sciences and Dr. Alice Kawakami from the Hawaiian-focused Charter School 'Āina Hui, 'āina-based learning allows keiki to build meaningful, two-way connections with the environment around them and the people in the community. The common theme of 'aina-based learning revolves around its spiritual and cultural connection to the people, honoring the past, present, and future to ensure the sustainability of our home and people. In addition, 'aina-based learning reinforces native Hawaiian practices, values, and language.

The benefits of 'aina-based learning include:

- **Language** – Hawaiian mo'olelo (stories) are passed from kupuna to keiki, preserving family history and identity.
- **Culture** – Learning creation stories and the history of the people and land instills a sense of connectedness and pride.
- **Place** – Develops a sense of kuleana (responsibility) to the land and people.

In this newsletter, we will share ideas on integrating 'aina-based educational practices in your program through:

- **Hawaiian language and stories** – Passing ancestral wisdom and shaping cultural identity through mele (songs), mo'olelo (stories), and mo'okū'auhau (family history).
- **Real-world topics of study** – Connecting learning to keiki's daily lives through hands-on experiences.
- **'Ohana engagement activities** – encouraging families to share their stories and culture; as well as connecting what the child is learning in your program – to their home environment.



# Hawaiian Language and Stories

According to Zero to Three, cultural identity is central to a child's well-being. One way to connect keiki to the Hawaiian culture is through language and stories.

You can provide opportunities for this by:

- **Singing Hawaiian songs**, such as *Nā Mele O Tūtū and Me*, a playlist curated by Partners in Development Foundation and available at <https://soundcloud.com/pidfoundation/sets/na-mele-o-tutu-and-me>
- **Playing instruments or dancing hula** to chants or songs. Have keiki use *kala'au* (rhythm sticks), *pu'ili* (bamboo sticks), or *'ili 'ili* (river rocks) to tap along to chants or songs such as "Aloha Kakahiaka."
- **Reading books** (or retelling them through oral storytelling) featuring traditional mo'olelo such as *Hina, Pele Finds a Home*, *Hi'iaka Battles the Wind*, *Māui Hooks the Islands*, *Māui Slows the Sun*, and *Naupaka* by Gabby Ahuli'i.

## Real World Topics of Study

'Aina-based learning provides authentic experiences with the land, allowing for meaningful connections that foster a sense of community and pride, supporting children's overall development. Here are ideas focusing on the natural resources within the land:



**Ahupua'a (slice of land):** Learn about an ahupua'a by researching with keiki. Visit the Kamehameha Schools Ka Nohona Ahupua'a: Life in the Ahupua'a website. <https://www.ksbe.edu/haumana-ohana-resources>.

Here are some hands-on ideas to help children learn about ahupua'a:

- **Dramatic Play** – Native Hawaiian people worked together, growing food or fishing. Set up a lo'i kalo (taro patch) using soda boxes. Make "kalo" using chenille stems, with a cut-out of a kalo leaf attached. Poke holes throughout the box and stick "kalo" through so it stands upright. Encourage keiki to use the props to act out planting and harvesting kalo.
- **Sensory** – Work in the fields of the ahupua'a by creating your own lo'i kalo. Allow keiki to feel the texture of the dirt, and mix it with water to make mud. Talk about how our ancestors would prepare the lo'i kalo by stepping into the mud to prepare the lo'i for planting. Have keiki find leaves around the yard and crush them with their hands to create "mulch" to provide nutrients to the soil.
- **Science** – Show pictures of an ahupua'a and point out how the water travels from the mountains, through the lo'i and streams to the ocean. Demonstrate how the water flows by attaching plastic bottles, funnels, and PVC pipes to a board, fence, or wall. Have keiki pour water into the pipe at the top and watch how it flows down.

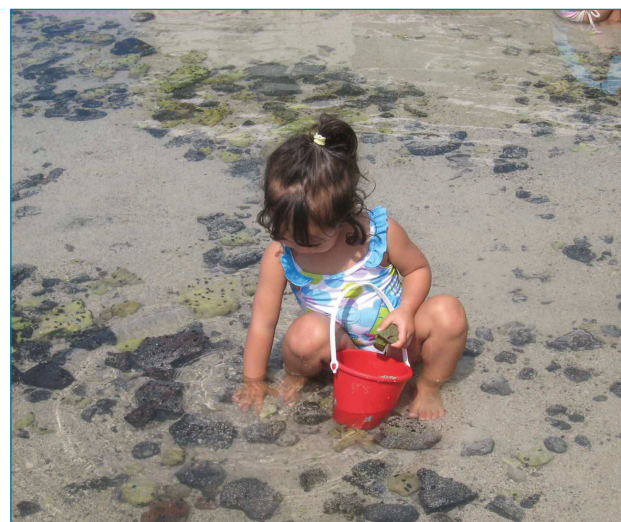
**Loko I'a (Hawaiian Fishpond):** Learn about Hawai'i's unique loko i'a, by researching at your local library or online: <https://www.nps.gov/teachers/classrooms/kaloko-fishpond-curriculum.htm>

- **Math** – Add toy fish to your water table, or cut colorful sponges into fish shapes to include instead. Have keiki catch the fish with a net or sieve. Count how many fish were caught. Extend learning by providing different containers for sorting the different colored fish.
- **Physical Development** – After talking about how the gate keeps the little fish safe from the bigger fish, go outdoors and set up a game of chase using a collection of sticks as the “gate” of the loko i'a. Lay the sticks at a corner of the yard and let the children know that this is the “safe” area. Pretend to be the big fish and chase keiki until they reach the gate that you are unable to pass through.

## ‘Ohana Engagement Activities

Building strong relationships with the families in your program is associated with better outcomes for keiki. It is within the family unit that a deeper understanding of culture and values is developed. The following activities can support ‘ohana engagement:

- **Inoa (My Name)** – Have families teach keiki the meaning of their name by creating a page for a group book called “The mo’olelo of my inoa” and have the families write down the story behind their names. After each family writes their mo’olelo, assemble them into a book and read it to the children during story time.
- **Keiki learn to recite their mo’okū’auhau (genealogy)** from a young age. A fun way to start is by creating a family tree. Have the families add photos and the names of the people closest to the keiki. Go over the family tree, such as “Tūtū Lei is your Mommy’s mom. Tūtū Kane Kimo is your Daddy’s father.”



- **Ask families to join an excursion** to visit a mala (garden) or lo'i kalo (taro patch) in your neighborhood. Or take an excursion to one of the loko i'a in your ahupua'a and do some restoration work, as the keiki are able to.

## Citations

*‘Āina-based Education, Place-based Education, and Project-based Learning* | IES. (2023). Ed.gov <https://ies.ed.gov/use-work/resource-library/resource/fact-sheetinfographicfaq/aina-based-education-place-based-education-and-project-based-learning/>

Fraser, A. (2022). A critical approach to Indigenous pedagogy - Aina-based (land-based) learning. *Ngoonjook: Australian First Nations' Journal*, (36), 44–50. <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.437217003009981>

## Training Opportunity

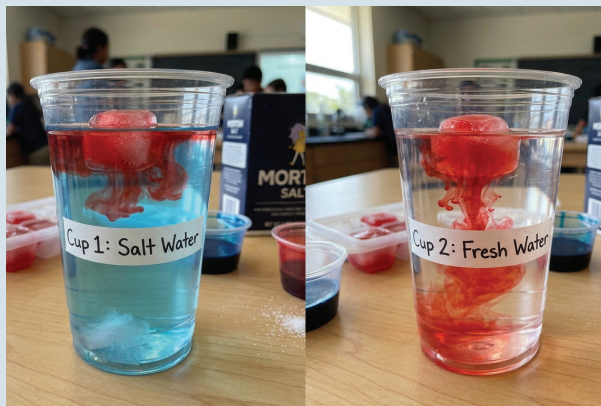
### *Nature-Based Emergent Curriculum: The Power of Place for Planning*

Register at Edweb.net Webinars to view this recorded webinar and earn a 1.0-hour certificate of participation. This webinar explores the fundamental principles of the nature-based approach.

<https://home.edweb.net/webinar/classroommanagement20240516/>

## Featured Activity

### Loko I'a in a Cup



#### What you need:

- Clear plastic cups
- Blue and red food coloring
- Salt
- Water
- Ice Cube Trays

#### What to Do:

1. Add red food coloring to a container of tap water and pour into ice cube trays to freeze.
2. Pour ½ cup of room temperature water into a clear cup and mix with ¼ cup of salt (this is your salt water).
3. Add a drop of blue food coloring to the salt water mixture.
4. Place a red ice cube in the cup with salt water and observe as the ice melts.
5. Next, pour ½ cup of fresh tap water in a different clear cup. Add a red ice cube and observe as the ice melts.

*\*Since salt water is heavier than fresh water, the red freshwater stays on the surface until mixed together. Similarly, the brackish water in a loko i'a is a combination of fresh water from the streams and salt water from the ocean.*

## Suggested Books

Discover these books and more at the Hawai'i State Public Library [www.librarieshawaii.org](http://www.librarieshawaii.org)

### 'Ono Stuff: A Sing Along with Foods of Hawai'i

by Tiana Kamen

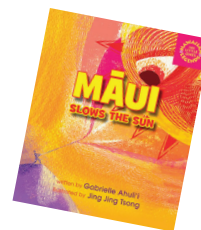
This joyful sing-along book introduces keiki to five traditional Hawaiian foods—taro, sweet potato, breadfruit, banana, and sugar cane. Each page celebrates a plant with vibrant photos and engaging song verses that share fun facts about nutrition and how the foods are used.



### Māui Slows the Sun

by Gabrielle Ahuli'i

In this introduction to Hawaiian legends, Māui, the demigod, uses his olonā rope and catches the sun to convince him to slow his travels across the sky.



### My Kalo Has Lau, Big and Green

by Pua Aquino

This picture story book shares the cultural value of the kalo (taro) plant, the “staff of life.” Through pictures and song, keiki learn about growing and harvesting the kalo plant.



### 'Ohana Means Family

by Ilima Loomis

This beautifully illustrated book captures how a family prepares for a lu'au, beginning from growing the kalo to making the poi. The repetitive, rhythmic text written in the cumulative style of “The House that Jack Built” makes it an ideal read-aloud for young children.



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