



Christine Rowe, child development assistant, feeds 10-month-old Isaac Montoya his breakfast. Fees at the child development center cover breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack, as well as formula and baby food for infants.



Jan Kruppea, 2, climbs through a tunnel on the toddler playground. Each age group has a playground designed specifically for their height and abilities.



Larmont Green, 3, squeezes glue onto his paper for an art project in the pre-school room.



Jude Torrez, 9 months, climbs over a colored gym mat. Activities in the infant room help children learn to socialize with others.



Aleena Chenier, 1, takes a nap in the infant room.

# Caring for Holloman's children

by **Laura Pellegrino**  
*Sunburst staff writer*

If 185 children were left to themselves in three buildings on base, the result would be chaos. Luckily, at Holloman's two child development centers and child enrichment center there are 48 child development assistants to keep those children occupied with crafts, games and activities.

The child development center and its programs teach children to adjust to life away from their parents and to school, said Carol Ward, child development center director.

Some children come to school and all they've ever used before is crayons, Ward said. They've never used things like scissors, play dough or glue.

"If a child sees glue for the first time, they might just squeeze it all over their desk," she said. "It makes a big difference when they have experience with these items."

Parents who don't need the center for a full day of care can send their children to the child enrichment center. The enrichment center gives children a few hours of socialization each day.

Teachers at all of the centers encourage children to be creative with the tools they are given, Ward said.

"We don't just give them crayons and

a coloring book," she said. "We give them blank paper, sequins, feathers. We're not concerned about them staying in the lines; we're concerned that the child is able to be creative."

Each child development program assistant goes through an orientation before stepping into a classroom. They work through two training modules on child abuse and go to a first aid and CPR training class.

"Some people think this job will be a piece of cake," Ward said. "But some people drop out during training because of the amount of work it takes."

The training is self-paced, but they are required to complete a total of 15 training modules within 18 months, said Elaine Bryant, child development center annex director. Other training classes include safety, food handling, proper lifting and hand-washing.

"Because of inspections the child development center goes through, the caliber and quality of our service has to be high," Ward said. "Inspectors check everything from the playgrounds to the children's and teacher's records to make sure they are up to date."

The child development center is open from 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

For more information, call 572-7505.

Photos by Laura Pellegrino