

Basic Principles of the Reggio Approach

The Image of the Child

Adults see each child as unique, strong, and full of potential. The child's role in the classroom is to construct their knowledge and develop skills through exploration, self-expression and collaboration with their teachers and peers.

Symbolic Representation

As a means of enhancing their creative, social and cognitive development, a wide array of creative media and activities are introduced. These help children represent their ideas and emotions through many "languages" including spoken and written words, visual arts, drama, movement and more.

Education Based on Interaction and Collaboration

Education is experienced as a continuous cooperative interaction between those involved in the school community. Collaboration takes place between teachers and children, children and peers, teachers and other teachers, teachers and families, and the school and the community. All are important in the educational process.

The Project Approach

The children learn through cooperating with other children and their teachers in long term projects based on children's interests. Projects follow the children's questions, curiosity and understandings, and support the children's development as problem-solvers.

The Importance of Time

Projects and activities are not fragmented; rather they build upon one another over time, as the children revisit their original work and ideas, refining them further through new experiences, activities and forms of expression. Time is also important in building sustaining, collaborative relationships.

The Role of the Teacher

The teacher is a partner in learning with the child. The teacher's role is to act as resource, provocateur, and partner in learning with the children. Children's work, play and discussions are documented through notes, photos, recordings and videos. These are carefully reviewed by the teachers and guide their curriculum and project decisions based on the children's interests, ideas and developmental readiness to acquire new skills.

The Role of the Parents

Parents are active participants in the activities of the school and in children's projects. Parents are welcomed into the school and collaborate with teachers. They give of their time and talents and serve as advocates for the school in the community.

The Role of the Environment

Through conscious use of space, color, natural light, attractive and appropriate learning materials, and displays of children's work, the environment serves as another teacher and is inviting to children, teachers, families, and visitors.

Dr. Rosalyn Saltz, UM-Dearborn, 1994