

My Philosophy

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Introduction

As an ECE I will use my “professional knowledge of child development, learning theories and pedagogical and curriculum approaches to plan, implement, document and assess child-centred inquiry and play-based learning experiences for children” (College of Early Childhood Educators, 2017, p. 10). I believe in incorporating evidence-based, child-centred approaches that are informed by ongoing research and set the stage for positive interactions. My pedagogy centres on the four foundations of learning: belonging, well-being, engagement and expression (Ministry of Education, 2014, p. 23).

Belonging and Inclusion

I believe in the statement that “young children experience their world as an environment of relationships, and these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development” (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2009, p. 1). In my practice as an Early Childhood Educator I will strive to implement approaches and create environments that are warm, welcoming and supportive for children and families, that reflect their rich individual identities, promote inclusion, and celebrate diversity. I see families as “important contributors with unique knowledge, experiences and strengths” (Ministry of Education, 2014, p. 25) who form the foundation and continuity for growth and development. I believe that a child's family,

community and culture should be reflected in the fabric of the program and that programs should be universally accessible, inviting and reflective of children's individual identities.

An Inquiry Stance

My goal is to create a nurturing environment characterized by patience and keen observation skills where children feel safe to explore the world, make discoveries and have their learning recognized in a natural context. I believe in supporting a developmentally appropriate curriculum which grows out of the curiosities and imaginations of children. From the first schemas, to exploring the movement of shadows, to turning up rocks in the forest, I believe that “inquiry is not a set of processes and skills but a pervasive approach or stance, a habit of mind that permeates all thinking and learning throughout the day.” (Ministry of Education, 2016, p. 18).

Two Key Elements of my Philosophy

<p><i>I believe in supporting an emotionally safe environment</i></p> <p>Guidance: Young children are just beginning to learn how to interact with others, manage impulses and use their memory and learned experience effectively (Gartrell, 2011, November, p. 59). As a guidance professional I believe in providing children with the strategies, environment, relationship and a positive self-image to process strong emotions in a safe and productive way (Gartrell, 2011, March, p. 64). Guidance ensures that children still feel that they are heard and a valued part of the community, even when they have strong feelings.</p> <p>Self-regulation: I believe in supporting children to identify, understand and learn to</p>	<p><i>I believe a key part of my role as an educator is to create an environment that allows children to demonstrate their competencies</i></p> <p>Play and Inquiry Based Learning: I believe that “children are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential” (Ministry of Education, 2014). Play is a vehicle for learning (Ministry of Education, 2016, p, 18) and my goal is to create a responsive, developmentally appropriate environment that supports open-ended, play based experiences that are guided by the children's interests.</p> <p>Child Guided: I believe in setting the stage for children to develop and show their learning at a natural pace. I am excited about concepts such as the use of loose parts,</p>
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<p>recover from stressors (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 20) to assist children in self-regulating. I will do this by designing environments that are attuned to children's various sensitivities, arousal states, and need for maintaining a calm, focused, and alert state (Ministry of Education, 2014, p. 33).</p> <p>Attachment: Promoting and supporting the concept of healthy attachment is a key part of my philosophy and underpins my views of an emotionally safe environment. I believe in both supporting parents, and as a professional, building responsive relationships with young children and infants. I believe that nurturing interactions early in life sets the stage for a child's development, neurological health and allows children to recognize and engage in healthy relationships as they grow older (Fanshawe College, 2016, p. 226).</p>	<p>natural and open-ended materials, provocations, and invitations to play, (Dietze, 2012, p. 152, 118, 75) and believe in children directing this learning through our collection of pedagogical documentation which helps us to “discover what we did not yet know how to see” (Ministry of Education, 2013, p. 28).</p> <p>Guided Risk: I believe that children can learn to assess and mitigate risk while seeking to understand their own physical capabilities (Ministry of Education, 2014, p. 33). I will do this by recognizing the importance of children exploring manageable risk, while being vigilant about safeguarding from hazards (Ongov, 2014). I believe in facilitating children's engagement in risky and meaningful outdoor play and the importance of children discovering their ability to recognize and overcome difficult challenges.</p>
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Conclusion

I view my role as an active participant in learning together with children and providing a nurturing environment. To me, being an Early Childhood Educator means sharing in the joys of a lifelong pursuit of learning. From my own childhood experiences, I believe that when a child discovers a love of learning, it will follow them long past their early years. I cannot think of a more fulfilling profession than sparking children's curiosity.

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