

What is play-based curriculum?

Toddler- and preschool-aged children learn through their 5 senses. They need to be able to touch, feel, smell, see, & taste. Play-based curriculum is derived from this concept. Children learn by doing what they do best...playing. A play-based curriculum is developed around DAP.

Play Activities that Promote Learning:

matching games & puzzles

(fine-motor skills, social skills, & memory skills)

creative expression

painting, drawing, & coloring

(fine-motor skills, self-discovery, & writing readiness)

playdough, blocks, etc.

(math & science)

computer activities

(thinking skills & fine-motor skills)

science & discovery activities

(perception & thinking skills)

books & stories

(language development, reading readiness)

musical instruments, songs, & finger plays

(logical thinking, social skills, fine-motor skills)

educational videos and television shows

(visual stimulation, logical thinking, some physical movement)

free play, creative play, and dramatic play

(cooperation, self-discovery, social skills, self-help)

outdoor play

(large-motor development, science, & social skills)

dot-to-dots, mazes, color-by-number

(fine motor skills, problem solving skills, & following directions)

~These activities are not considered to be DAP appropriate; however, if they are of interest to the children, they may be used~

learning can also come from spontaneous

activities such as:

clean-up time games

(pick up toys by color or pick up a specific number of toys)

meal and snack times

(count number of food items or identify colors of food)

What is DAP?

DAP stands for Developmentally Appropriate Practice. What this means is children need to learn in a way that is meaningful to them. For instance, a preschool child is not going to learn about apples by looking at a picture of an apple. They will, however, learn about an apple if you give them an apple. This is the principal behind DAP. Used properly, DAP helps to ensure children develop the skills they need to be successful in their journey through life.

Preschool learning is about discovering through science and math. It's about developing language skills, social skills, self-help skills, fine and gross motor skills, and most importantly it's about developing a good self-esteem. All this can be learned through play, providing it's meaningful. It is not our job to teach the children the skills they need, but rather to guide them in the direction they need to go to learn these skills for themselves.

Activities should be open-ended to allow the children the opportunity for self-accomplishment as well as self-discovery.

If a program is done correctly, children will also learn fundamental basics (A,B,C's, etc.). The difference between DAP teaching and traditional teaching is they will learn them in a more meaningful way.

