

The background is a composite image. The top left shows a line of yellow school buses with 'SCHOOL BUS' written on the front. The bottom left shows a classroom with blue walls, decorated with colorful balloons and framed pictures. There are several small tables and chairs arranged in the room.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Action: Sowing the Seeds

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What to expect

- Objective
 - Define developmentally appropriate practice (DAP)
 - To discuss the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) six developmentally appropriate practices in action
 - Highlight our State, District, or Classroom's DAP Strengths

Who are you?

- Preschool Coordinator
- Preschool Teacher
- Instructional Assistant
- Principal
- Director of Special Education
- Early Childhood Coach

Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP)

- What is your elevator speech definition of DAP?
- What does DAP mean to your student?
- What does it mean to you when an administrator says is that developmentally appropriate?

Defining Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP)

NAEYC defines “developmentally appropriate practice” as methods that promote each child’s optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning. (NAEYC, 2020, p. 5)

- Lean Into
 - Strengths-based
 - Play-based
 - Engaged-learning



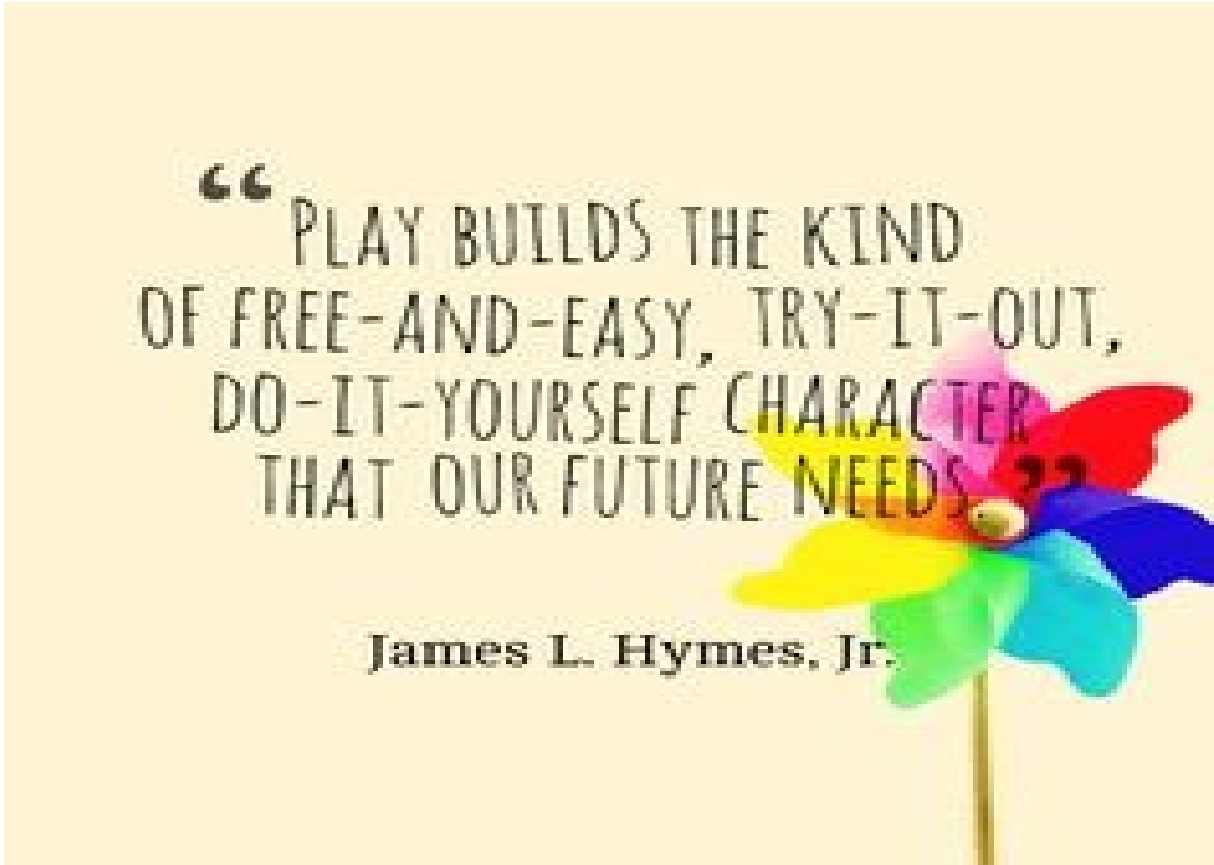
Strengths-based



Strength-based learning embraces the philosophy that “success builds success.”
(National Education Association, 2024)



Play-Based



Play Filled vs. Play-Deprived

When classroom is	Play-Filled	Play-Deprived
Flexibility	Change brings new possibilities	Change creates resistance
Problem-Solving	Problems foster skill development	Problems are hidden or denied
Emotional Regulation	Stability in responses	Anger in responses
Perseverance	Internal learning drive	Boredom
Empathy	Others' feelings are recognized	Others' feelings are not recognized and escalate
Openness	Social cooperation	Withdrawn
Belonging	Teamwork and group play	Difficulty sharing – self-centered

Engaged Learning

TELL ME AND I FORGET
TEACH ME AND I REMEMBER
INVOLVE ME
AND I LEARN



BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



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Building Connections



Family Engagement

Are We Pushing Children to Read Before They Are Developmentally Ready?

Are we pushing kids down the stairs?

“Rigid teaching practices trickled down into preschool and kindergarten classrooms, replacing playful, child-initiated activities with more time spent at desks with pencil-and-paper tasks resulting in Kindergarten looking more like ‘the new First grade’” (Bassok, Latham, & Rorem, 2016 ,2).





Communicate and Document to Elevate

NAEYC states that there are six vital facets needed to put DAP into action:

- Create a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners
- Engage in Reciprocal Partnerships with Families and Fostering Community Connections
- Observe, Document, and Assess Children’s Development and Learning
- Teach to Enhance Each Child’s Development and Learning
- Plan and Implement an Engaging Curriculum to Achieve Meaningful Goals
- Demonstrate Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator. (NAEYC, 2022, p.108)

Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners

- Teacher-Child Relationships
- Relationships Among Peers
- Promoting Social and Emotional Competence
- Fair and Equitable Pedagogy
- Physical Environment





Relationships Among Peers

Greetings | Saludos



smile



high five



hug



superhero salute



thumbs up



happy dance



fist bump



wave hello



Physical Environment

- Loris Malaguzzi (Inspiring Spaces for Young Children by DeViney, et al)
“We value space because of its power to organize.... and its potential for sparking all kinds of social, affective and cognitive learning.”





Engaging in Reciprocal Partnerships with Families and Fostering Community Connections

- Engage with families to understand their perspectives and what they want for themselves and their children.
- Work with families' strengths.
- Listen, reflect, and consider other perspectives and feedback.



Observing, Documenting, and Assessing Children's Development and Learning

- Gather Information, Observe, and Assess
- Document
- Reflect



Teaching to Enhance Each Child's Development and Learning



- Utilize teaching practices that include a wide range of skills and strategies that are adapted to children's ages, development, and individual characteristics and considers the cultural and linguistic context of each child.
- Identify learning formats – including large and small groups, learning centers, routines, one-on-one interactions, child-initiated and teacher-directed that serve the purpose of learning, the individual skills and strengths of the student.
- Individualized universal design and scaffolding to benefit all children.

Scaffolding



- Hints
- Range of Responses
- Other Resources
- Breaking tasks into smaller steps.
- Connecting new ideas to previous experience.
- Self-talk when modeling.

Planning and Implementing an Engaging Curriculum to Achieve Meaningful Goals

- Explicit goals and objectives for meeting learning and developmental needs.
- Adaptations to ensure independent access and full participation for each child.
- Observation and documentation to inform ongoing assessment.
- Opportunities for play that foster emerging skills in active and social ways.
- A rich variety of materials to engage children's curiosity, interest, and motivation (NAEYC, 2018).





Demonstrating Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator.

- Develop and sustain the habit of reflective and intentional practice in their daily work with young children.
- Engage in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice.
- Know about and uphold ethical and other early childhood professional guidelines.





Joy (it's not just a dish soap)

Joyful! Positive affect is linked to increased executive functions, academic outcomes and brain flexibility. Play has been shown to regulate the body's stress response and reduce stress hormones such as cortisol.

How do you plan for joy in your classroom?



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**IF WE WANT OUR
CHILDREN TO
MOVE MOUNTAINS,
WE FIRST HAVE
TO LET THEM
GET OUT OF THEIR
CHAIRS.**

NICOLETTE SOWDER

Thank you!

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