NAEYC’s guidelines and recommendations for developmentally appropriate practice are based on the following nine principles and their implications for early childhood education professional practice. These principles reflect an extensive research base that is only partially referenced here.13 Because these principles are interrelated, this linear list does not fully represent their overall complexity. <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/dap/principles> (edited for content)

1. **Development and learning are dynamic processes that reflect the complex interplay between a child’s biological characteristics and the environment, each shaping the other as well as future patterns of growth.**
2. **All domains of child development—physical development, cognitive development, social and emotional development, and linguistic development (including bilingual or multilingual development), as well as approaches to learning—are important; each domain both supports and is supported by the others.**
3. **Play promotes joyful learning that fosters self-regulation, language, cognitive and social competencies as well as content knowledge across disciplines. Play is essential for all children, birth through age 8.**
4. **Although general progressions of development and learning can be identified, variations due to cultural contexts, experiences, and individual differences must also be considered.**
5. **Children are active learners from birth, constantly taking in and organizing information to create meaning through their relationships, their interactions with their environment, and their overall experiences.**
6. **Children’s motivation to learn is increased when their learning environment fosters their sense of belonging, purpose, and agency. Curricula and teaching methods build on each child’s assets by connecting their experiences in the school or learning environment to their home and community settings.**
7. **Children learn in an integrated fashion that cuts across academic disciplines or subject areas. Because the foundations of subject area knowledge are established in early childhood, educators need subject-area knowledge, an understanding of the learning progressions within each subject area, and pedagogical knowledge about teaching each subject area’s content effectively.**
8. **Development and learning advance when children are challenged to achieve at a level just beyond their current mastery and when they have many opportunities to reflect on and practice newly acquired skills.**
9. **Used responsibly and intentionally, technology and interactive media can be valuable tools for supporting children’s development and learning.**