

DAP: 3 Core Considerations

Development and Learning

First, what is known about child development and learning – knowledge of age-related human characteristics that permits general predictions within an age range about what activities, materials, interactions, or experiences will be safe, healthy, interesting, achievable, and challenging to children

The Individual Child

Next, what is known about the strengths, interests, and needs of each individual child in the group – to be able to adapt for and be responsive to inevitable individual variation

Social and Cultural Context

Finally, knowledge of the social and cultural contexts in which children live – to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful, relevant, and respectful for the participating children and their families

DAP: 9 Principles

Nature AND Nurture

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

Domains

All domains of child development—physical, aesthetic, cognitive, social, emotional, 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

Play

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

Variations

Although general progressions of development and learning can be identified, variations due to cultural contexts, experiences, and individual differences must also be considered

Constructive Learning

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

Motivation

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

Integrated

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

ZPD

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

Tech

Used responsibly and intentionally, technology and interactive media can be valuable tools for supporting children's development and learning