

# Child Care Philosophies

## A Resource Guide

### Child Care Philosophies

A philosophy helps child care providers determine their goals for the education of children and the method as to which education is delivered. This document is not all inclusive but rather highlights the more known philosophies that programs look to implement.



*Click on the lightbulb icon or scan the QR codes in the document as you read to be directed to more resources!*

### Play-Based Learning

The play-based philosophy emphasizes the importance of play in a child's intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development. Purposeful play is a developmentally appropriate way of learning for children. Play-based sites use a variety of materials for imaginative and manipulative play.



**Major Infuencer:** Friedrich Froebel



### Montessori

Montessori is based on the belief that children have a natural desire to learn and that, when they are placed in an enriched environment with specially designed materials and highly trained teachers, they learn quickly and easily through hands-on experience. Montessori classrooms utilize specifically designed materials to create their interactive sites.



**Founder:** Maria Montessori



### Waldorf/Steiner

The Waldorf/Steiner philosophy strives to stimulate childrens' bodies, spirits, and souls with a nurturing, homelike environment that engages all five senses. Each child remains with the same teacher from 1st through 8th grade creating a deep relationship with their students. All materials in the classroom must be made of natural materials such as shells, rope, beeswax, crayons, or wooden (not plastic) toys.<sup>1</sup>



**Founder:** Rudolf Steiner



<sup>1</sup> <https://childcareanswers.org/resources/ece-philosophies/>

## Reggio Emilia

The Reggio Emilia approach is driven by the interests of the children. The primary goal of this method is to create learning conditions that help children develop abilities through all manner of expressive, communicative, and cognitive experiences. These programs value parents and the wider community and their collective responsibility to the development of children.<sup>1</sup>



## Faith-Based

Local religious organizations may offer faith-based child care programs for their members or the general community. The level of religious focus depends on the school itself, though many allow talk of God and religion without restraint. The curriculum may not focus on developing the spiritual beliefs of the child but remain open to incorporating church values and stories into their lessons.<sup>2</sup>



## Nature-Based

The Nature-Based philosophy curriculum is based in the natural world. a typical day's curriculum includes extensive time spent outdoors participating in teacher-lead environmental education practices. Additionally, natural materials will be found throughout the indoor and outdoor classroom space.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>1</sup> <https://childcareanswers.org/resources/ece-philosophies/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/report/faith-based-child-care/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.samarael.com/nbece>