Are you looking for an early learning or child care program for your little one?

The principles of ideal learning can come to life in any setting. When choosing a program, look for these elements of high-quality early learning environments.

**Instruction is personalized**
- to acknowledge each child's unique development and abilities

**The teacher is a guide**
- nurturing presence, and co-constructor of knowledge

**Continuous learning environments**
- support adult development

**Young children and adults learn through relationships**

**Play is an essential element**
- of young children's learning

**Children construct knowledge**
- from diverse experiences to make meaning of the world

**Decision-making reflects a commitment to equity**

**The environment is intentionally designed**
- to facilitate children's exploration, independence, and interaction.

**The time of childhood is valued**

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Principles of Ideal Learning

[www.ideallearning.org](http://www.ideallearning.org)
### Principles

#### 1. Decision-making reflects a commitment to equity
- Home cultures evident in the classroom
- Teachers valuing differences and diversities in children’s work
- Teachers reflecting children's racial and ethnic backgrounds
- Educators facilitating all children's participation

#### 2. Children construct knowledge from diverse experiences to make meaning of the world
- Teachers integrating exploration into routines
- Classroom art, music, and literature reflecting diverse communities
- Children engaging in multiple sensory activities
- Children hypothesizing about the outcome of a particular event

#### 3. Play is an essential element of young children's learning
- Children planning their play
- A variety of materials that children can re-purpose to fit their ideas
- Children's play is not interrupted by adults
- Children participating in resolving social conflicts with educator assistance

#### 4. Instruction is personalized to acknowledge each child's unique development and abilities
- Children engaging in different activities based on interest and development
- Teachers observing children's behaviors and documenting their learning
- Children working individually or learning in small groups
- Teachers and parents regularly sharing about children's growth

#### 5. The teacher is a guide, nurturing presence, and co-creator of knowledge
- Teachers modeling meaningful activity as an example for children
- Children and teachers interacting in a positive manner
- Teachers encouraging children to develop and investigate their own interests
- Teachers providing guidance and direction, rather than didactic instruction

#### 6. Young children and adults learn through relationships
- Children engaging in conversation, listening and exchanging views
- Children and adults participating in communal meals
- Teachers, school staff, and families engaging in respectful conversations

#### 7. The environment is intentionally designed to facilitate exploration, independence, and interaction
- Children deeply engaged and content in their work
- Children interacting with the natural world
- Children engaging with a variety of hands-on materials
- Children understanding and maintaining the structure of the classroom

#### 8. Continuous learning environments support adult development
- Teachers sharing observations of children and engaging in peer learning
- Teachers actively seeking answers to their questions in professional literature
- Teachers and staff engaging in dedicated planning time
- Coaches observing other teachers both within and beyond their setting

#### 9. The time of childhood is valued
- Children engaging in uninterrupted learning and play
- Teachers allowing children to choose their focus and set their own pace
- Joyful, authentic materials, music, or stories about children and childhood
- Children observing beauty in the environment

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