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Educational Philosophy

There is a quote that I've heard throughout the years stating, "Knowledge is Power". Educating anyone is essentially giving them the power to make a difference in this world, no matter how small. Education provides children access to discovering things they may never have discovered without school; by providing children with experiences to foster curiosity and a sense of the world around them while instilling a love for learning I'd be reaching some of my goals as an educator. Teaching a child is not just about providing them with only a good academic curriculum; teaching a child means teaching the whole child and caring for who they are physically, emotionally, and socially as well.

Intellectually, children are more capable than most adults sometimes realize. They are constructors of knowledge and are receptive to all the things going on around them, as they grow older their expressive knowledge grows along with their receptiveness. They develop a sense of curiosity, awareness, the cognitive ability to think logically, and communication skills to express themselves. Some of these abilities they develop naturally but to strengthen the ones that they do not, experiences and opportunities should be provided. Emotionally, children are developing a sense of self: a sense of self regulation, self expression, self esteem, and having a personal point of view. Our job as teachers is to make sure that a child feels safe and comfortable in the learning environment and is able to express himself or herself without fear of being put down. Socially, children are learning some social "norms", how to relate to others, how to handle diversity, how to respond to conflict, and how to work together.

To meet these educational and developmental goals, teachers need to provide children with opportunities and tools to explore these areas. Usually the academic curriculum is taught in the classroom through activities, discussion, exploration projects, teaching by example, first hand experiences, etc. The ways of reaching children in their areas of development are almost through the same processes but do not always have to be taught directly. For instance, one way values can be taught to a class indirectly is through having good character and modeling them for students.

Classrooms and learning environments should provide a space for these areas of development to be encouraged as well. A comfortable, inviting, child based space should be created. Small, welcoming areas designated for a few children to play in at once encourage social interaction. Multiple centers encourage freedom in choosing what to work with individually or as a group. Outdoor play fosters a connection with the natural world and exploration of it. Exposure to the arts allows for a different approach to self expression and understanding. Conversation leads to communication skills and developing relationships.

One of the most important relationships you can develop other than with your students is one with their families. At a young age, it is helpful to know a bit on the background of your child, their home life, and their family's beliefs and values. Developing a good family relationship also makes it comfortable for the family to ask you any questions or vice versa.. Positive adult interactions model relationships for students and create a clear understanding of what is best for all of the children in a class.



