In working with young children it is important that you understand how children learn and develop. The National Association for the Education on Young Children (NAEYC) has created **12 Principles of Child Development and Learning**.

As you review these principles determine how you will incorporate this information into your teaching strategies.
1. All areas of development and learning are important.
2. Learning and development follow sequences.
4. Development and learning result from an interaction of maturation and experience.
5. Early experiences have profound effects on development and learning.
6. Development proceeds toward greater complexity, self-regulation, and symbolic or representational capacities.
7. Children develop best when they have secure relationships.
8. Development and learning occur in and are influenced by multiple social and cultural contexts.
9. Children learn in a variety of ways.
10. Play is an important vehicle for developing self-regulation and promoting language, cognition, and social competence.
11. Development and learning advance when children are challenged.
12. Children’s experiences shape their motivation and approaches to learning.
You will hear the term Developmentally Appropriate and Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) used throughout the early learning field. DAP is an approach to teaching grounded both in the research on how young children develop and learn and in what is known about effective early education. Its framework is designed to promote young children’s optimal learning and development. It is important that you understand what that means.
Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has developed the guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice. They have created a book that lists the appropriate and inappropriate practice for all age groups.

There are three considerations that are used when discussing DAP.
Knowing about child development and learning.

Knowing what is typical at each age and stage of early development is crucial. This knowledge, based on research, helps us decide which experiences are best for children’s learning and development.
Infants and toddlers have specific needs depending on the age of the child:

- Young infants (0 to 9 months) seek **security**.
- Mobile infants (8 to 18 months) are eager to **explore**.
- Toddlers (16 to 36 months) are working on their **identity**; they want to know who they are and who’s in charge.
# Theories of Child Development

## Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

1. Preschoolers show astonishing gains in cognitive and language skills. They will take greater interest in feelings, express their emotions and empathize with others when they can experience new materials, roles, ideas, and activities especially in pretend play.

2. Five- and 6-year-olds make great intellectual leaps. They go through a major shift, allowing them to develop more personal responsibility, self-direction, and logical thinking.
Best practices in first, second, and third grades involve balancing children’s need for focused instruction with their need to build on what they already know.

Primary grade children benefit from concrete hands-on experiences. They need to see and make connections, especially across subjects. An integrated curriculum not only fosters connections between concepts and areas of learning but also makes learning fun.
Knowing what is individually appropriate.

What we learn about specific children helps us teach and care for each child as an individual. By continually observing children’s play and interaction with the physical environment and others, we learn about each child’s interests, abilities, and developmental progress.
Knowing what is culturally important.

We must make an effort to get to know the children’s families and learn about the values, expectations, and factors that shape their lives at home and in their communities. This background information helps us provide meaningful, relevant, and respectful learning experiences for each child and family.
Theories of Child Development

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

Acknowledge what children do or say. Let children know that we have noticed by giving positive attention, sometimes through comments, sometimes through just sitting nearby and observing. (“Thanks for your help, Kavi.” “You found another way to show 5.”)

Effective DAP Teaching Strategies assist you in meeting the needs of the children in your program.
Encourage persistence and effort rather than just praising and evaluating what the child has done. ("You’re thinking of lots of words to describe the dog in the story. Let’s keep going!")

Effective DAP Teaching Strategies assist you in meeting the needs of the children in your program.
Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

Give specific feedback rather than general comments. (“The beanbag didn’t get all the way to the hoop, James, so you might try throwing it harder.”)
Model attitudes, ways of approaching problems, and behavior toward others, showing children rather than just telling them (“Hmm, that didn’t work and I need to think about why.” “I’m sorry, Ben, I missed part of what you said. Please tell me again.”)

Effective DAP Teaching Strategies assist you in meeting the needs of the children in your program.
Theories of Child Development

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

Demonstrate the correct way to do something. This usually involves a procedure that needs to be done in a certain way (such as using a wire whisk or writing the letter P).

Effective DAP Teaching Strategies assist you in meeting the needs of the children in your program.
Create or add challenge so that a task goes a bit beyond what the children can already do. For example, you lay out a collection of chips, count them together and then ask a small group of children to tell you how many are left after they see you removing some of the chips. The children count the remaining chips to help come up with the answer. To add a challenge, you could hide the chips after you remove some, and the children will have to use a strategy other than counting the remaining chips to come up with the answer.

To reduce challenge, you could simplify the task by guiding the children to touch each chip once as they count the remaining chips.
Ask questions that provoke children’s thinking. (“If you couldn’t talk to your partner, how else could you let him know what to do?”)

Effective DAP Teaching Strategies assist you in meeting the needs of the children in your program.
Give assistance (such as a cue or hint) to help children work on the edge of their current competence (“Can you think of a word that rhymes with your name, Matt? How about bat . . . Matt/bat? What else rhymes with Matt and bat?”)

Effective DAP Teaching Strategies assist you in meeting the needs of the children in your program.
Provide information, directly giving children facts, verbal labels, and other information. (“This one that looks like a big mouse with a short tail is called a vole.”)
Give directions for children’s action or behavior. (“Touch each block only once as you count them.” “You want to move that icon over here? Okay, click on it and hold down, then drag it to wherever you want.”)
This slide show is complete.

Click on next page to continue with the training.