

# Learning Through Play

## Creating Learning Environments to Engage Children



### Objectives:

- To understand the elements of a good learning environment for children.
- To understand the importance of physical, social-emotional learning environments for holistic development.
- To see classroom management strategies – e.g. space set-up, use of small groups, or play-based approaches.
- To understand why to use a Daily Routine and the transition between activities.



### What is a Good Learning Environment?

1. The curriculum promotes holistic child development in the four developmental domains each day.
2. Child-Led and Teacher-Led activities should be scheduled and child-led activities should be available for at least 50% -70% of the time.
3. Responsive interactions where teachers engage in warm supportive interaction with children and actively listen to their ideas and questions, where children feel valued and encouraged to explore and learn.
4. Positive Reinforcement: encouraging and recognising children's efforts and achievements builds confidence and motivation via verbal praise, conversational talks, rewards, or symbolic recognition to promote desirable behaviours and attitudes.
5. Inclusive Respectful Environment: promoting diversity, equity and inclusion to create a welcoming environment where all children feel accepted and valued.

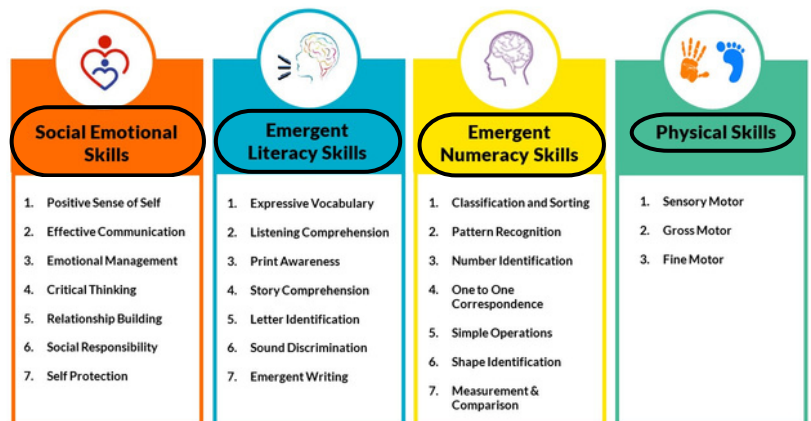
### Why use a daily routine?

1. The routine provides structure and helps the children know what to expect which helps children to manage their behaviour.
2. Teachers manage their time effectively when they follow a routine.
3. Children need a range of activities and materials to learn different skills, active times and quiet times.

### What activities are included in a daily routine?

- Welcome Time
- Literacy Circle
- Child-Led Play Learning Spaces
- Outdoor Play
- Maths Circle
- Goodbye Time

### Learning Skills Set



### How to create a good learning environment?

- Aligned to government curriculum for themes or areas of learning.
- Activities are set up on tables and on the floor.
- The learning environment is prepared before the children arrive so they can access the materials.
- Open-flexible activities where children can make choices and have some control over their learning to foster independence and self-regulation. Activities accommodate individual needs and interests, promoting a sense of autonomy and ownership over learning.
- Active areas for blocks, ball games, or imaginative play are located away from reading corners or puzzle areas.
- The teacher has more time to observe the children at play or join the children as they play when the learning environment is prepared.
- The same activities can be planned for two weeks as children enjoy returning to an area so they can practice a puzzle or game and build their mastery.

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### Creating Good Learning Environments for Children with Diverse Needs

- **Create and use a choice board** to offer a variety of activities during Child-Led Play. Children to choose activities in which they are interested in.
- **Provide open ended activities** to allow children opportunities for individual expression and development.
- **Encourage different materials and activities** for children to use the materials accordingly to their developmental level.
  - Drawing - Children are free to draw dots, scribbly lines, letters, or recognisable pictures instead of doing colouring sheets where they need to stay within the lines, which leads to frustration for the child and the teacher.
  - Children need to developed fine muscle skills to hold a pencil, chalk, or crayon. Children learn how much pressure they need to draw a line. These skills are needed before they start to write their names.

### Reflection questions for teachers on creating learning environments

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. What strategies do you use to prepare the learning environment for children?
2. What do you need to do to make an inclusive learning environment for children with diverse learning needs?
3. What did you learn from the video that you will add to your daily practice to ensure the learning environment is ready before the children come?