



The Reggio Emilia

◆◆◆ **PHILOSOPHY** ◆◆◆



# Origin & History

The Reggio Emilia philosophy, **pioneered by educator Loris Malaguzzi, emerged in post-World War II Italy**, where a community in Reggio Emilia sought to rebuild and redefine early childhood education.

Inspired by the progressive ideas of theorists like Piaget and Vygotsky, as well as the democratic principles of Maria Montessori, Malaguzzi and his colleagues established the first municipal preschool in 1945. This marked the beginning of a transformative approach that **celebrates children as curious, capable, and creative individuals.**



# Guiding Principles

Central to the Reggio Emilia philosophy are several key principles that guide its practice:

- Image of the Child
- Teachers as Co-Learners
- Collaboration and the Community
- Emergent Curriculum
- The Role of the Environment
- Documentation



# Image of the Child

At the heart of the Reggio Emilia philosophy is the **profound belief in the capabilities and potential of every child**. Children are viewed as curious, competent, and active participants in their learning journey. They are **seen as researchers and constructors of knowledge, capable of exploring, questioning, and making meaning of the world around them**.

This principle embraces the importance of providing children with rich, engaging experiences that honor their unique interests, strengths, and unique approaches to learning.



# Teachers as Co-Learners

Educators adopt a role as co-learners alongside children, actively engaging in reciprocal relationships that honor children's perspectives, interests, and voices. Educators embrace a stance of humility, curiosity, and openness to learning from and with children, valuing their unique insights and contributions.

By positioning educators as co-learners, the Reggio Emilia approach **promotes a culture of ongoing professional development, reflection, and growth**, ensuring that educators remain responsive, adaptive, and attuned to the ever-evolving needs and interests of the children they serve.



# Collaboration & the Community

Collaboration is a cornerstone of the Reggio Emilia philosophy, **extending beyond the classroom walls to encompass educators, families, children, and the broader community.** By fostering strong partnerships and relationships among all stakeholders, educators create a supportive learning community where diverse perspectives, experiences, and expertise are valued and integrated into the learning process.

**Collaborative efforts contribute to the co-construction of knowledge,** enriching learning experiences and promoting children's holistic development.



# Emergent Curriculum

The Reggio Emilia approach advocates for an **emergent curriculum that evolves from children's interests, questions, and experiences. Rather than following a predetermined set of lessons or activities**, the curriculum emerges organically from children's inquiries, discoveries, and interactions with their environment.

This approach **honors children's agency and autonomy, allowing for flexibility, creativity, and personalized learning pathways** tailored to their individual needs and interests. **Educators serve as facilitators, guiding and supporting children's explorations** while remaining responsive to their emerging interests and curiosities.



# The Role of the Environment

The physical environment is **considered the "third teacher," alongside educators and peers.**

Thoughtfully designed and intentionally curated, the environment serves as a dynamic and interactive space that stimulates curiosity, creativity, and inquiry.

Every aspect of the environment, from the layout and organization of materials to the aesthetic appeal and sensory experiences, is carefully considered to inspire children's exploration, discovery, and engagement with the world around them. Reggio Emilia inspired **spaces are calming and neutral, incorporating open-ended and natural materials,** while highlighting the children's work through thoughtful documentation.

# Loose Parts & Natural Materials

## Collecting, Sorting, & Exploring Materials



Our class has been thoroughly enjoying the outdoors, in which we observe children exploring various natural materials. To expand on their interest and learning, we decided to collect some natural materials to bring back to our classroom to keep the investigation going!



## The Hundred Languages of Self Expression



Understanding that all children have their own unique approaches to learning, we've offered our collection of loose parts and natural materials along with other artistic mediums, including, clay, paint, and glue, and craft items.



# Documentation

Documentation is a fundamental practice in the Reggio Emilia approach, serving as a **means of making children's learning visible, celebrating their experiences, and fostering deep reflection** among educators, children, and families.

Through various forms of **documentation such as photographs, videos, written observations, and children's work samples**, educators capture and showcase children's learning processes, inquiries, and discoveries over time. Documentation not only provides valuable insights into children's thinking and learning but also **serves as a catalyst for ongoing dialogue, reflection, and collaborative inquiry** among all members of the learning community.