



# NURTURING PROTECTING TEACHING



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Early Childhood Education  
**CURRICULUM STATEMENT**

YMCA OF SAN FRANCISCO



## CURRICULUM STATEMENT

**We believe that children learn best when they are having fun, given opportunities to explore, experiment, investigate, and problem solve through developmentally appropriate activities. Our teachers use the following curriculum framework that is aligned with our philosophy. These curricula are scientific-research and evidence-based as well as best practices and approaches used in the field on how to teach and care for young children. We use the Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP), Program for Infant-Toddler Caregivers (PITC), Creative Curriculum, and inspirations from Reggio Emilia, all of which are implemented in our programs through play and by creating a positive indoor and outdoor learning environment and experiences for children.**

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### **DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICES (DAP) FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN® (NAEYC)**

DAP is an approach to teaching. It is based on the research on how young children develop and learn. We use the DAP framework when planning the indoor and outdoor environment and for curriculum planning to ensure a safe and nurturing environment that focuses on the whole child to meet all aspects of their learning and development. Our program provides opportunities for learning and exploration in a safe and nurturing environment where materials for individual skill levels, and a variety of developmentally and age-appropriate activities are available for children to access throughout the day.

### **PROGRAM FOR INFANT-TODDLER CAREGIVERS® (PITC)**

PITC was developed collaboratively by WestEd and the California Department of Education. For the youngest learners in our care, infants and toddlers, we incorporate the PITC core values by using their relationship-based approach. Our staff understands, honors, and celebrates the diversity of the children and families in our program. Our staff's primary focus is to provide responsive care, to engage and partner with families in developing and creating an individualized plan for their child. The plan is created with parents to include how to best support and meet infant or toddler's needs while they are in our care.

### **CREATIVE CURRICULUM®**

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool by Teaching Strategies is embedded in the California Learning Preschool Learning Foundation. The Learning Foundation is created by the California Department of Education to provide a framework and strategies for school readiness aligned with our teacher's use of the Creative Curriculum to encourage and prepare preschool for kindergarten, to provide positive learning experiences so children can learn, and develop a positive attitude towards school and learning. The Creative Curriculum is a research-based curriculum framework that emphasizes and encourages exploration and discovery as a way of learning allowing children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. The framework provides teachers guidance, instructional techniques, and strategies to use on how to plan and implement curriculum activities, how to create and utilize the classroom environment as the child's third teacher, and to help teachers select DAP materials and activities that will support children's learning, development, and growth. The Creative Curriculum is a comprehensive, research, and evidence-based curriculum that aligns with our play base approach in which opportunities for exploration and discovery are provided as a way of learning.

### **REGGIO EMILIA INSPIRED**

The Reggio Emilia philosophy and educational approach was founded by Loris Malaguzzi. The preschool was in a town named Reggio Emilia in Italy. We implement inspirations from the Reggio Emilia philosophy mainly in our preschool environment and learning materials. The emphasis in our preschool environment is to use colors, fabrics, lights, natural materials, and furniture. We set up our classroom in a homelike environment that is inviting children to explore. Teachers implement the project-based approach by observing children's interests and designing their curriculum around those interests to keep them engaged with self-initiated play while also encouraging creativity, promoting positive self-esteem and self-expression. Our staff provides clear, easily understood expectations and boundaries for the children and a wide variety of age-appropriate activities in a predictable routine schedule.