



WCMCA Head Start

Orientation

# CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT

INCLUDING WCMCA HEAD START PHILOSOPHY AND PROGRAM INFORMATION

## TWO KEY FACTORS IMPACTING ANY HEAD START CURRICULUM

- Theory and Research
- Philosophy
- WCMCA Head Start has selected Creative Curriculum as our base curriculum because it fits with our program beliefs and goals and is rooted in the educational philosophies and theories Early Childhood Theorist's: Piaget, Vygotsky and Erikson.



Jean Piaget, believed that children develop at different rates and that children do not benefit from being taught skills before they are developmentally ready.

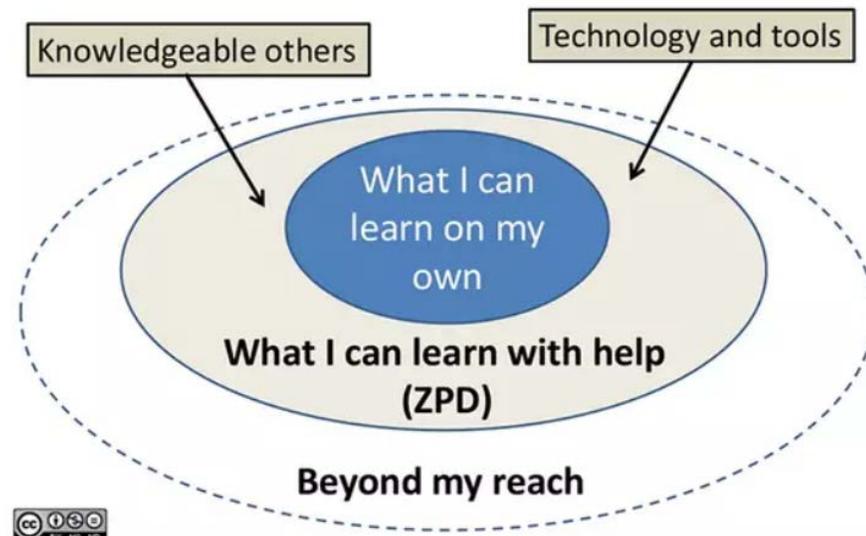
Implementing classroom practices based on Piaget's theories would:

- Structure the classroom environment and activities based on the children's cognitive development
- Provide a variety of materials that vary in complexity and would allow children to sort, arrange and describe objects by size, color, shape, weight (heavy or light), etc.

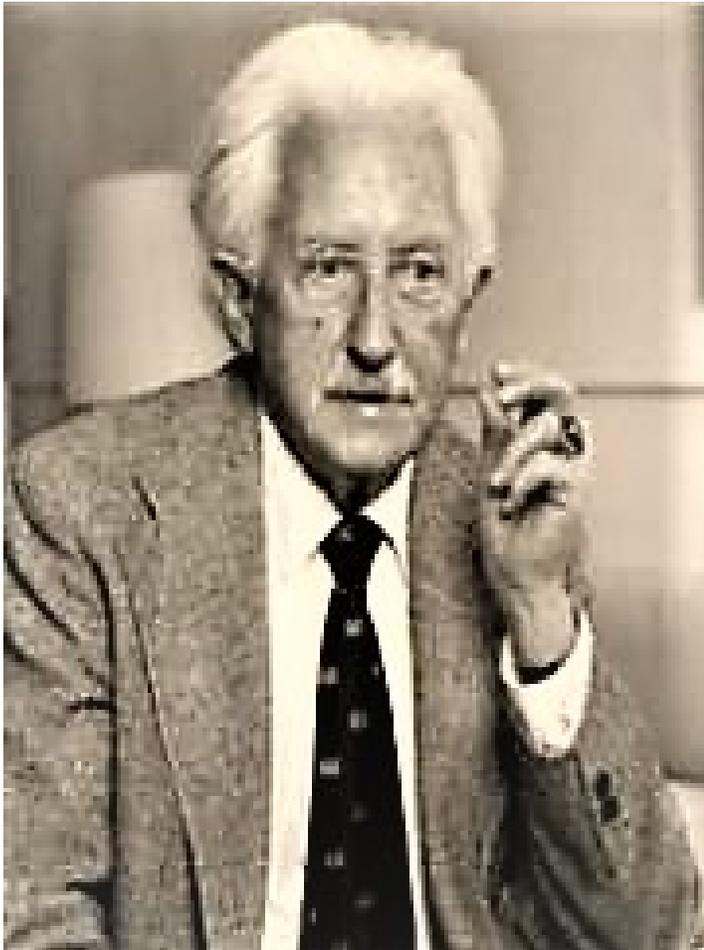


Lev Vygotsky, believed that “social interaction is the key to children’s learning” and developed a theory known as the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Vygotsky believed that when a student is in the ZPD for a particular task, providing appropriate assistance or scaffolding will give the child enough of a “boost” to achieve the task.

### ZPD and scaffolding



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Erik Erikson, developed “Eight Stages of Man” which defines 8 stages of socio-emotional growth from infancy to old age. As children develop from infants through preschool age, they pass through the following stages:

1. Trust vs. Mistrust
2. Autonomy vs. Shame/Doubt
3. Initiative vs. Guilt

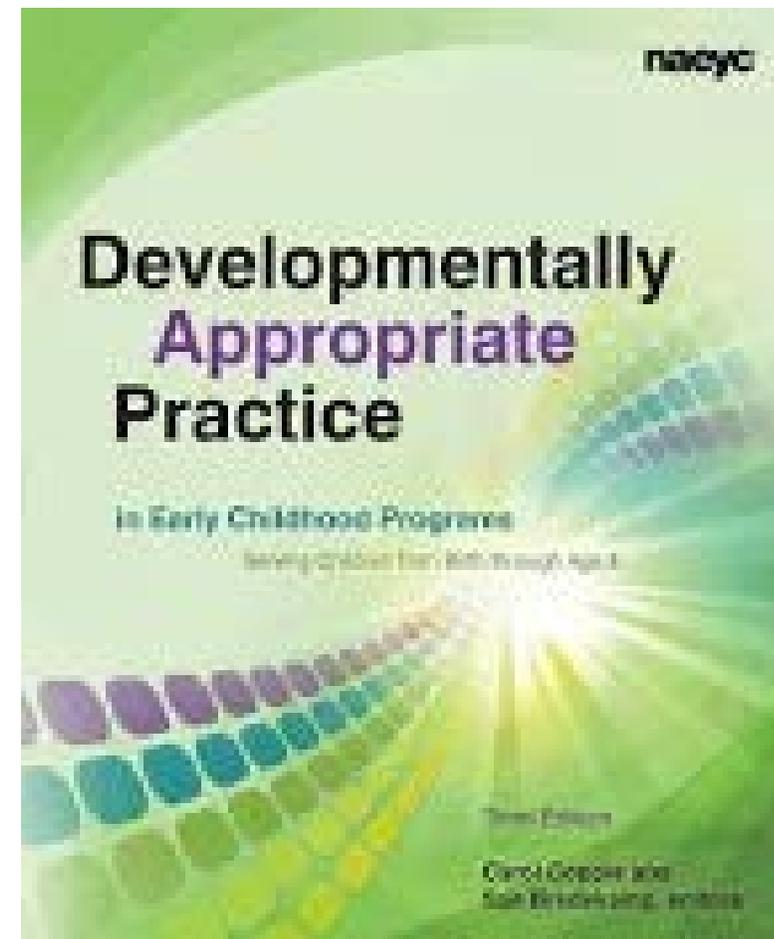
**In a preschool classroom, these early stages of development are supported by:**

- Nurturing, sensitive adults
- A consistent daily routine
- Freedom to explore their environment safely, independently & with others
- Specific praise and encouragement from adults who value children and play
- Developmentally Appropriate Practices and experiences.

# DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

WCMCA Head Start recognizes the research and principles behind Developmentally Appropriate Practice.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) is widely recognized for the work behind DAP, developing standards to support high-quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice and policy.



# UNDER THESE STANDARDS AND PRINCIPLES OF OUR PROFESSION, DAP INCLUDES PRACTICES THAT SUPPORT...



CHILDREN LEARNING AT THEIR OWN PACE  
THROUGH ACTIVE INTERACTIONS



A PROGRAM THAT USES A WELL PLANNED  
ENVIRONMENT INCLUDING A RICH  
VARIETY OF MATERIALS AND CHOICES



STAFF WHO ASK QUESTIONS THAT  
EXPAND/EXTEND THE CHILDREN'S PLAY  
AND SUPPORT A POSITIVE SELF-CONCEPT

# CURRICULUM AND HEAD START PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

**Head Start Performance Standards require programs to consider the following when determining curriculum...**

- Goals for each child's development and learning
- Experiences through which they will achieve these goals
- How staff and parents can support those goals
- Materials needed to support the implementation of the curriculum

# PHILOSOPHY

## **Activity:**

- You are on a flight to an isolated island to start a new birth to age five early childhood center. The pilot reports you are low on fuel and you must dump cargo to make it safely to your destination. Your cargo includes a case of books, a case of art supplies, and a case of blocks.
- Take a second to answer the following...
- If you are only able to save one case of materials, which do you choose?



# Surprise!

There is no ONE right answer...you could make a case for saving any of the three materials.

However, if you did have a preference as to what material you would save, it likely says something about your philosophy.

Philosophy, or viewpoints and ideas, are just a few key factors impacting curriculum.

# IT IS THE PHILOSOPHY OF HEAD START THAT...

Young children learn best by  
doing

Learning requires active thinking  
and experimenting to find out  
how things work

Play lays the foundation for  
academic learning



STAFF SUPPORT THE “HOW” BY ENCOURAGING CHILDREN TO:



# CURRICULUM

- Based on theory, research and philosophy; WCMCA Head Start has adopted and currently implements the following curriculums:

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- Your Head Start/Classroom Supervisor(s) will be introducing you to several additional trainings and resources around curriculum as part of your ongoing professional development.

## *The Creative Curriculum® for Infants, Toddlers & Twos and Partners for a Health Baby Home Visiting Curriculum*



## *The Creative Curriculum System for Preschool*



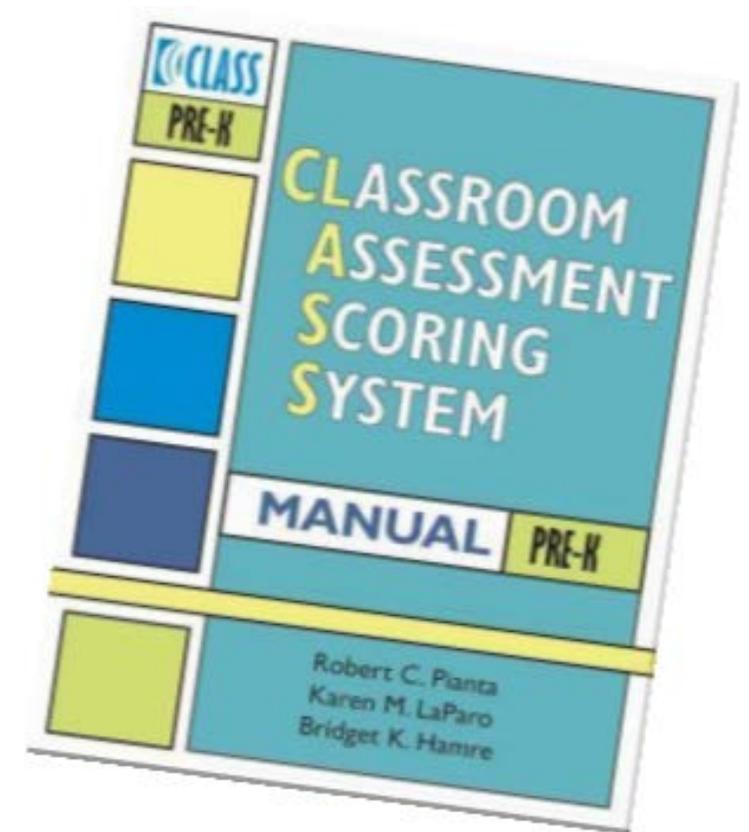
## SECOND STEP

- WCMCA Head Start has adopted Second Step to support our curriculum in the area of Social- emotional learning.
- Children need social-emotional skills to thrive both in the classroom and in life. Social –emotional learning (SEL) curricula teach children techniques to:
  - Gain confidence
  - Set goals
  - Make better decisions
  - Collaborate with other in work and play
  - Navigate the world more effectively



# CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT SCORING SYSTEM (CLASS)

- In addition to a research based curriculum, the Office of Head Start mandates that a program is monitored using "a valid and reliable research based observational instrument" to assess the quality of teacher/child interactions in center-based classrooms.
- This includes assessment of staff in creating positive, well organized, and high-quality instruction. WCMCA preschool classrooms are assessed by reliable CLASS observers for the purpose of professional and program improvement. CLASS practices become embedded in everyday teaching during formal and informal times.



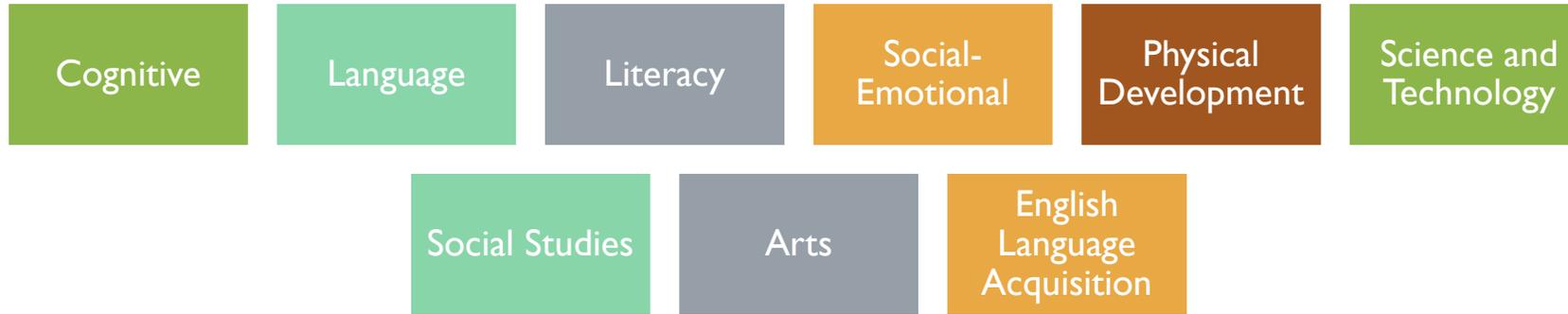
# ASSESSMENT AND INDIVIDUALIZATION

MyTeachingStrategies™



- Staff must use a variety of strategies to promote and support children's learning and developmental progress based on the observations and ongoing assessment of each child. Performance Standard I 304.2(c)(2)
- WCMCA Head Start has selected and implemented My Teaching Strategies GOLD.
- Staff will receive online training within this system for professional development and to become a reliable observer.
- Children are assessed on the following areas of development and information is entered into a secure electronic database.

# MY TEACHING STRATEGIES GOLD

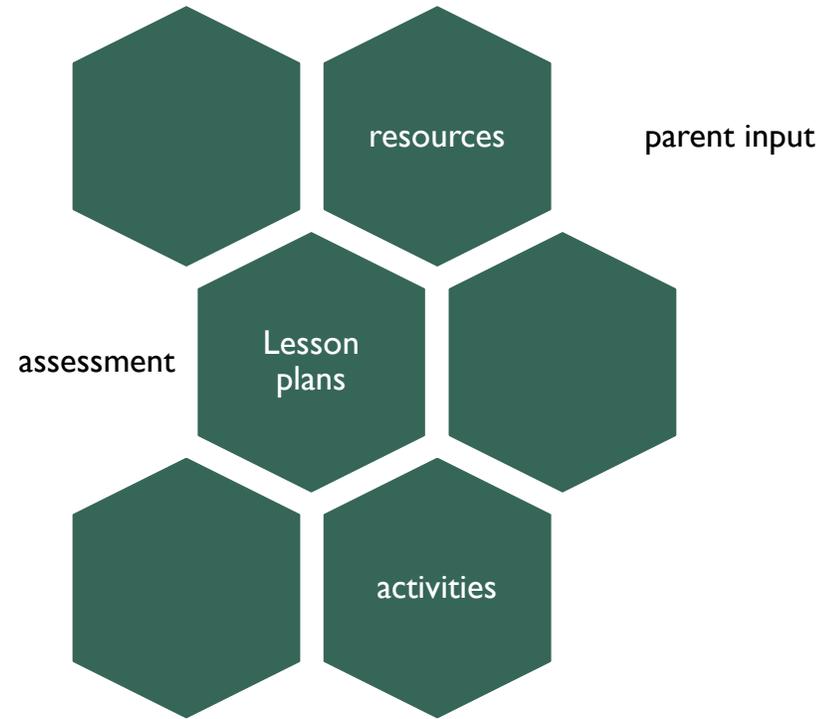


WCMCA has developed School Readiness Goals designed to meet MN state wide expectations. School Readiness Goals were designed to align with the following:

- \* MN Early Child Indicators of Progress
- \* Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework
- \* Parent-Family-Child Education Framework

Additionally, learning objectives within My Teaching Strategies are aligned with each of the above domains and are used for assessment purposes.

WITH THIS IN MIND, THE HOW BEHIND LEARNING BECOMES AS IMPORTANT AS THE WHAT;  
SO CHILDREN WILL CONTINUE TO BECOME SELF-MOTIVATED LEARNERS THROUGHOUT THEIR  
LIFETIME



Assessment is congruent with and relevant to the goals, objectives, and content of the program.

Assessment is sensitive to the cultural background of the child and family.

Assessment involves early, regular, and periodic observation of the child in a wide variety of circumstances that are representative of the child's abilities and behavior in the program over time.

Assessment results in benefits to the child

- Curriculum adjustments
- Individualized instruction
- Improvement in the program

## GUIDELINES FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

# INDIVIDUALIZATION...THE ROAD TO OUTCOMES

**As soon as a child is enrolled, staff and families begin sharing information about the child's:**

- Abilities
- Family, culture and home language
- Health status
- Likes and dislikes
- Needs
- Preferred learning styles
- Special interests, often based on life experience
- Strengths
- Temperament

## ■ STEP I: SCREENING

The process of using multiple sources of information to learn about a child's individual characteristics and developmental, sensory, and behavioral history and status.

- Initial screenings and completed in collaboration with each child's parent, and within 45 calendar days of the child's entry into the program, agencies must perform or obtain linguistically and age appropriate screening procedures to identify concerns regarding a child's
  - developmental
  - sensory
  - behavioral
  - motor
  - language
  - social
  - cognitive
  - perceptual and
  - emotional skills



Agencies must obtain direct guidance from a mental health or child development professional on how to use the findings from a screening to address identified needs.

Information about each child's growth, development, and learning is systematically collected and recorded at regular intervals.

## ■ STEP 2: EVALUATION

Evaluation is the diagnostic testing and/or examination of a child for observable, known, or suspected health, developmental, sensory, and/or behavioral problems

- For some children, further evaluation is a result of getting to know the child through the screening process.
- When further evaluation is needed, a release of information is signed by the parent, and referral to the appropriate provider is made.

## STEP 3: PLANNING

Planning begins as soon as a child is enrolled. Planning may include developing strategies for responding to health related needs.

**Individualizing allows for staff and families to plan a curriculum:**

- Schedule
- Environment
- Materials
- Interactions
- Routines
- Activities

## ■ STEP 4: ONGOING ASSESSMENT

The use of multiple sources of information to track a child's progress and to keep up with his or her changing characteristics.

**Ongoing assessment utilizes an array of tools and a variety of processes**

- Collections of children's work
- Records of systematic observations by teachers
- Records of conversations and interviews with children
- Teacher's summaries of children's progress as individuals and as group

# WHAT HAPPENS TO INFORMATION COLLECTED?

Observations for each child's learning will be documented on lesson plans and in My Teaching Strategies by all staff.



Family and Child Health information will be entered by Family Education Specialists into Child Plus, a secure online database.



All information gathered will be used to monitor progress, individualize for each child, make referrals as necessary and to share with families.



All information for each child will stay with them throughout their time in our program, regardless of transferring sites, or transitioning from Early Head Start to Head Start.



## What if I have questions?

Supervisors are always ready and willing to answer questions. Please don't hesitate to reach out in person, call, email or text.

Connect with others who share your role. They are a great resource for learning and bouncing ideas off of.