



HighScope

History

- Developed in the 1970s
- Based on Piagetian beliefs and constructivism
- Originally an early intervention program

Characteristics

- Focus on developmental stages of growth and learning of children
- Child-centred, family-centred, and play-based
- Plan-Do-Review program structure
- Long periods of play time (at least 2 hours) with variety of materials

Head Start

History

- Research in the 1950s on critical periods of child development and demand for equality, particularly racial equality, influenced the development of Head Start programs
- In the 1960s early intervention preschool programs began

Characteristics

- Focus on early intervention for at risk populations of children (e.g. low-income, disability, etc.)
- Four pillars: health and wellness, learning experiences, family involvement, and community partnerships

Montessori

History

- In the early 1900s Maria Montessori developed early learning programs after working with children who were institutionalized
- Montessori approach popularity rose in the 1960s

Characteristics

- Based on the concept that children seek order and structure
- Educators prepare the environment, introduce and model use of materials, and document learning
- Specific materials for each curriculum (practical life, sensorial, cultural, language, and mathematics)

Reggio Emilia

History

- Developed after the 2nd World War in an Italian town called Reggio Emilia
- Loris Malaguzzi advocated the first municipal run early learning program in 1963

Characteristics

- Cultural context of the Reggio approach is important for implementation in different areas of the world
- Children and educators are partners in learning
- Children are viewed as strong and capable
- Art and beauty are explored and expressed by children
- Family involvement is key

Waldorf

History

- The Waldorf curriculum was developed by philosopher Rudolph Steiner after the 1st World War
- The first Waldorf program opened in 1919 in Germany

Characteristics

- Wholistic approach to learning where the mind, body, and spirit are developed
- Early years programming focuses on play and imitation
- Educators remain with the same class for at least 2 years or more (known as looping)
- Revisit content and skills at different maturity levels (known as ascending spiral)

Emergent

History

- Formed from the ideas of Reggio approach and from scholars such as John Dewey

Characteristics

- Opposes thematic programming, instead a greater focus on programming that encompasses children's interests, strengths, needs, and lived experiences
- Play-based approach to learning, not teacher directed
- An examples of emergent curriculum is the Project Approach, which focuses on children's inquiries and follows a structure of planning, investigation, and culmination