

# Letting My Body Do What it Is Capable Of Doing, Not What The Books Say!

My Philosophy is Play Based, Reggio inspired, sprinkled with nature. When I got the idea to develop this Outdoor Classroom, I really wanted something different than your average childcare. I hope that you will feel the love that went into that.

I believe that children that have a plan to help lead their day, grow to be critical, creative thinkers and work well with others, so they may succeed in this complex and ever-changing world. These attributes are major requests in large corporations when looking for prospective employees.

**Play Based Philosophy – Playing to Learn/Learning to Play:** I believe purposeful play is developmentally appropriate and a significant element of a child's day.

The following emphasizes the importance of play in a child's intellectual, social, emotional and physical development.

Play is a way of learning for children. During a typical day at our home there will be structured and unstructured periods, enabling children to learn through at their own rate.

Values that support learning through play include:

- Children are viewed as thinkers, reflecting about their world
- Purposeful play is when children learn through the process of their efforts
- Children gain knowledge by building on a path of ever increasing knowledge
- Children are encouraged to make choices and practice individual decision-making

Learning environments support purposeful play by:

- Blocks of various sizes and shapes
- Materials and time for dramatic, imaginative play
- Manipulative and table toys
- Art materials and tools to explore,
- Sensory play materials, including sand and water
- A library area, Ample and rich language and print
- Writing tools/materials.
- A quiet area for the child who needs to be alone
- Music and movement activities
- Cooking experiences
- Outdoor and gross motor play

**Reggio Emilia Approach:** This approach to education was started by the schools of Reggio Emilia, a city in Italy, after World War II and has become renowned as one of the best educational systems in the world. This approach places emphasis on the arts as children's symbolic language and an engaging learning environment. The concept of equal collaboration is very important to the success of Reggio Emilia Schools. In these schools, teachers, parents, and children, along with the community are seen as co-constructors of knowledge. Parents are partners in the education decisions and I truly believe that is valuable. The parent is the child's first and most important teacher therefore should have an important part in the process of that. Parents also add value in decision making, so if there's something you think could be done different or scaffolded to a different level please feel free to share with me.

**The Nature Part :** The sprinkled with nature is a bit Waldorf school approach. In our Outdoor Classroom children develop the capacity for creative thinking, problem-solving abilities and social skills through their free imaginative play. Simple, natural materials – pieces of wood, seashells, beeswax and handcrafted toys – encourages children to form their own games and stories.

So, if you put all that in a cup, shake it with the energy of a 3 year old. You will have a picture of what a day is like at GiGi's Nurturing Place. I look forward to helping your family.