

Pinnacle Curriculum's Philosophy and Core Concepts

Pinnacle® Curriculum is a research-based early childhood curriculum, designed with both teachers and students in mind. Based on the works of Piaget, Gardner, and Erikson, Pinnacle® provides early childhood educators with lessons that engage children in developmentally appropriate activities. Pinnacle® is published in an easy-to-use, reusable format that includes lesson plan guides, activity enrichments, and long range goals linked to key standards. Developmentally appropriate curriculum programs are offered for Infants, Toddlers, Two's, Three's, Four's, and School-Age children.

Pinnacle is based on the following beliefs about children, learning and teaching:

- Each child is an individual. Because children grow, develop, and learn at different rates and in different ways, it is the teacher's goal to discover each child's special abilities through careful observation and interaction, developing an individualized education plan that guides them to their potential.
- The learning environment should be filled with a variety of enrichments, materials, and equipment that appeal to the children's varying interests. Careful consideration is given to how each child responds to his or her environment physically, cognitively, socially and emotionally. Through an individualized approach to curriculum planning, children are encouraged to explore the environment at their own pace.
- The teacher's role in the classroom is to guide and facilitate learning, always balancing teacher-directed activities with child-initiated experiences, and planned experiences with those guided by the children's interests. Teachers actively participate in the child's self-discovery by asking open-ended questions that encourage children to think independently.
- Learning is an active process and children learn best through exploring, creating, thinking, and problem solving. Sufficient time must be given for children to make choices, engage in activities, and/or to use materials and resources.
- When teachers build upon what children already know and challenge them with tasks at a level appropriate to their skill development, they promote a continued interest in learning.
- All early educational experiences should build self-esteem in young children. A learning environment that is nurturing, encouraging and allows children to grow confident and independent, helps contribute to the sense of security needed for children to enter the larger community with healthy self-esteem.
- Parents are partners in the educational process and need many opportunities to be actively involved in the preschool program. Teachers should encourage and foster parent-child relationships and solicit parental involvement in various aspects of programming such as curriculum planning, information about family traditions and culture, and fund-raising.