



LNS Philosophy in Practice

October 18, 2022

Developing a learning community at LNS

At the beginning of the school year teachers strive to create a learning community among the children and adults by facilitating a sense of belonging. Children are making a shift from “me,” the individual, to “we,” the group.

Family Partners are asked to make the same shift from focusing on their child to developing relationships with the children in the Studio.

Your Image of the Child: Where Teaching Begins

- “Each one of you has inside yourself an image of the child that directs you as you begin to relate to a child. This theory within you pushes you to behave in certain ways; it orients you as you talk to the child, **listen** to the child, observe the child.”
- What is your Image of the Child?

PLAY

I Learn from Children by Caroline Pratt

- Every day, every hour of a young child's waking life is devoted to adventure, exploration, discovery of the world around him/her. This is how children learn.
- The play impulse in children is really a work impulse. Childhood's work is learning, and it is in his or her **play**-that a child works at his or her job.

Playing with others is a continual negotiation of agreements.
What happens during play?

- self directed learning
- problem solving
- self regulation
- building friendships
- outlet for complicated topics (death, divorce, environmental disasters ...)



Constructing Knowledge

Embarking on Research



Social-emotional learning in play based education prepares children for academic learning.

To understand why play is vital, it is important to understand the neurosequential development of the brain.

- Brain 1-brainstem-survival brain (0-6 mos)
- Brain 2-center of movement and coordination (6 mos -2 years)
- Brain 3 -limbic system or emotional brain (18 mos/2years-age 7 or 8)
- Brain 4 -frontal cortex-“everything that makes you brainy and a nice person.” (7/8- mid 20’s depending on gender)

The needs of the emotional brain(limbic system) is met with a social-emotional curriculum.

Research shows 3-7 year olds need to develop their social emotional skills. This is a time for:

- * Creative Thinking

- * Risk taking

- * Divergent Thinking

- * A child begins to having feelings about themselves as a learner.

Through play the social emotional brain of 3-7 year olds develop dispositions for:

- **creativity**
- **perseverance**
- **resilience**
- **access to higher executive functioning skills**

Child Development

Please listen to child development specialist David Wallis discuss the neuroscience of early childhood by clicking on the audio at the top of the webpage you were just on.

LNS Progress Reports

Domains:

Belonging & Participating — taking an interest, taking responsibility

Well-Being & Self-Regulation — taking care of oneself, physically and emotionally, and its effect on being involved

Problem-Solving & Innovating — persisting with uncertainty and challenge

Developing Literacies — expressing ideas and feelings

Child Development

Some Characteristics of 3-5 year olds:

- Curiosity: they are scientists! What are they trying to figure out?
- Social Awareness: through play they experiment with power and control which is often uncomfortable for adults.
- Thinking moves from Concrete to Abstract Thinking as their brains develop.
- Physical expressiveness - movement!
- Striving for independence
- Children live in the moment and benefit from previewing.

What are the unique gifts of childhood?

Our greatest problem is that we underestimate what children can do. We underestimate their will to make sense of themselves and the world around them.

Children are curious and want their curiosity satisfied.

But we don't [always] know the interests that arouse their curiosity, nor the learning process well enough to know how to respond to them.

[Documentation and reflection are tools, teachers use to help us discover children's interests so we know how to respond to them.]

[An effective classroom] should be filled with the stuff of what children know and what they want to know more about.

Donald Graves, 1985

Another way to ask:

What are the unique gifts of childhood?

What are our unique birthrights as human beings that seem to be especially alive in childhood?

What powers of creativity, imagination, curiosity, and empathy are especially strong in childhood?

What about the drive to play, the capacity for story, the search for meaning, the need to belong?

What interests and insights and perspectives do children have access to because of these unique gifts which may not be as strong in adulthood?

What might happen if we valued this stage of life for the particular wisdom that is available then - and replaced over time with other kinds of wisdom?

What might children help us remember to see, feel, and understand?

- Matt Karsen and Susan Harris MacKay, Story Workshop Studio,
facilitators of LNS professional development, 2021-22

What is LNS's pedagogy?

How do we teach? What guides our teaching practice?

- We teach by listening, observing children's play
- Inquiry-Teachers and children researching alongside each other
- We are inspired by the schools of Reggio Emilia – integration of many educational theorists.
- Your Image of the Child: Where Teaching Begins,
by Loris Malaguzzi -handout

Design Thinking for project based learning

LNS' DESIGN THINKING AGREEMENTS

1. Teachers set an intention
2. Teaching team brainstorm ideas.
3. Teachers create a hypothesis of what will happen.
What will the children do?
4. Teachers observe & document the children's response to the "provocation"- material/environment.
5. Teaching team interprets the children's work through reflection and critical analysis (including seeking multiple perspectives from colleagues).
6. Teachers adjust & relaunch this work, offering a new provocation to extend children's thinking

Documentation
makes
children's
thinking
visible.

Documentation
visible in the
Studios.



It swirls up again.
This one's cool, you see?
It's a square with a triangle inside.
Now it's just a triangle.
Hello, you're a triangle! Arniek

Documentation as books (teacher- created)

WHAT GOES IN PIPES?



by the Blue Class

HOW DO WE GET THERE?



by Cassius, Charlotte, Graeme
and Lilah

Documentation on Storypark

We hope that all parents read Storypark weekly so you can follow the children's engagement with the curriculum.

This is essential before family partnering.

Family Partnering

- Family Partnering will deepen your awareness of how profoundly interesting children are. Yet a child's repetition during play may feel boring at times to adults. We get it!
- Working alongside teachers, we learn a "language" that supports children's development.
- Please take the opportunity to ask teachers why they do what they do. Over the years, many parents have stated that parent helping is better than taking a course in child development!
- When you play with the materials, we ask that you refrain from teaching children how to copy your work.

Confidentiality

- We expect parents to respect the development of children and to honor their confidentiality.
- Please refrain from “parking lot” chatter. If you are approached by fellow parents about how the day went, please share activities and a general feel to the day not about difficulties a child(ren) may have had.
- Storypark consent form reads: “You will not share outside of Storypark any content, photos, videos or stories that feature or have been created by children other than your own, without the permission of those children’s parents or guardians.”