Philosophy

My philosophy of early childhood education has been developing through my interactions and observations of children. I have worked with children in multiple learning environments that range from an in home daycare to a Montessori preschool setting, infancy through school aged. From these places of learning, I have gathered my own ideas of how children learn, and in what setting I believe they will be exposed to benefit their full potential.

Children learn through their play and interactions with others and materials. The environment the child is exposed to should encourage their play, and support their interactions. In the Montessori environment they focus on “work” and that of choosing a work (to work on by self), mastering it, and then moving to another piece of work to learn. Children in that setting of learning don’t “play” or interact with others unless the work calls for another. While I see the benefits of teaching children how to work at a young age, they are missing a key ingredient to life: social and emotional interactions; and children learn that by giving, taking, and negotiating with others. They need to be free to express themselves as they please. Not all children learn the same, is something to remember. If you place a child in a box that does fit them proportionately they will fail to develop to their fullest.

I think children need to have a range of choices in what they can choose to do, giving them a sense of choice and independence. Children are highly capable of doing most things once they have been given the opportunity to try it. Never limit a child on their own interest. Encouraging children to expand on their thinking is a way to broaden their intelligences. Follow their lead, they are the captain of their learning anyways, let them pioneer it while supplementing in other areas. The Highscope curriculum, I believe, provides the child with a variety of options and interests to engage all children in learning. Highscope encourages child-adult interactions in play which is a key ingredient. Scaffolding is a
way teachers will teach thru play. While actively engaging in their play, teachers can take children’s thinking to another level by supporting their thoughts and details.

The environment must meet the educational needs of multiple aged children at different stages. The zone of proximal development will benefit all children in the care and needs to be taking into consideration while planning the materials available to them. I think a variety of children different ages together provides positive benefits. The older children learn how to be respectful and responsible of the younger children, while the younger child has someone older to look too: younger will have an example of what to aim for, and usually reach for it sooner when learning it from their peers. That is where I believe young children in a home setting could be more beneficial. In the home, they have a safe environment that they can trust: a consistent reliable person who they can go to, to answer their needs. Trusting relationships with children is the key ingredient in the Childs early development. In the home children learn to interact with others among them, they are exposed to materials and choices thru play, and experience the nature and nurture of a family.

All of my beliefs have come from my observations and interactions with children, and the underlining development of children. I have just begun to discover my passion in early childhood, and these are the roots of my processes. With all due respect to the child, whatever environment they are in will benefit them, if they have a trusting relationship to grow from. Give them lots of love and limits, tools and experiences, respect and encouragement, and they will have a sturdy foundation to build on.