



Circle Play & Learn Academy Preschool Curriculum

The Circle Play curriculum is inspired by the Waldorf education method as originally envisioned by Rudolf Steiner, but in keeping with his vision, the teachers of Circle Play have professional freedom to adjust the curriculum and lesson plans according to what they see as the children's needs through constant, casual, caring assessments of the children in class. (Fortunately, no formal assessments are conducted during Circle Play time, so teachers are free to develop lessons as they deem appropriate and focus on the children.)

Although there are a lot of academic goals embedded in the Circle Play preschool curriculum, the children are learning through age-appropriate methods with a heavy emphasis on play, art, and conversation. This curriculum develops self-confidence and a love of learning in the child. It is also responsive to the latest information about brain development that is becoming available through scientific developments and studies.

Academic Skills

- Memorization, recall
- Planning ahead, order of operations
- Listening, following directions
- Following rules
- Making something new

Social Studies

- World Cultures
 - Stories and songs from many countries around the world
- Holidays and Festivals
 - Michaelmas, Halloween, Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day, Saint Patrick's Day, Mardi Gras, Easter, May Day, Cinco de Mayo, Mother's Day
- Fairy Tales from around the world

Mathematics

- Counting to 20
- Geometry—recognizing and naming shapes, relating and fitting shapes together, straight/curved
- Weight, size, volume, and quantity comparisons and manipulations
- Simple, short patterns

Language Arts

- Pre-Literacy and Early Literacy skills
 - Holding books correctly, deciphering pictures in books
 - Drawing straight lines, curved lines, crossed lines, circles, etc.
 - Recognizing symbols

- Storytelling and retelling by both teacher and student
- Comprehension
 - Dialogue and discussion
 - Imagining what comes next
 - Relating stories to their own lives and experiences
 - Understanding point of view of various characters
- Rhyming, alliteration, rhythm, syllables, repetition, rhythm, meter

Science

- Weather
- Seasons
- Animals, Insects, Birds
- Plants
- Stones
- Food, growing and cooking
- Sorting, comparing/contrasting
- Astronomy (earth, moon, sun, stars)

Community

- Cooperative game playing
- Imaginative free play with friends
- Relationships: self, parent/child, stranger, inter-generational, friends, relatives, non-human, spirit
- Emotions
- Empathy, perspective (of others)
- Sharing, giving, receiving, generosity, gratitude
- Responsibility, household chores
- Manners, respect
- Giving instructions and making requests politely, expressing displeasure respectfully

Self

- Knowing own likes, dislikes, needs
 - Expressing self clearly and politely
- Courage
- Honesty
- Kindness
- Gratitude
- Joy, humor
- Love
- Trust/distrust
- Self-discipline

Health/Physical Education

- Sit/stand, Bend/straight, Push/pull, gentle/firm, throw/catch, balance/tumble, roll/expand, low/high, fast/slow, big/small
- Directions forward, backward, sideways, far, close
- Prepositions: in front, above, inside, outside, behind, below, beside, on, under
- Body parts
- Outdoor time for health of lungs, eyes, and large motor development, as well as increased impetus for creativity and confidence
- Character play
- Gross motor skills: jumping, skipping, stretching, bending, kicking, reaching, etc.

Humanities—Music, Art, Dance, Beauty

- Songs, poems, dance, fingerplays
- Instruments: Vocal, percussion, natural
- Skills of dexterity: painting, coloring, drawing, chalking, cutting, gluing, stamping, stickering, sewing, modeling
- Qualities of music: fast/slow, repetitive
- Colors: Light/dark, primary colors, color blends, rainbow/colorwheel
- Artistic appreciation, beauty, emotional expression/communication
- Finest quality art supplies for a beautiful feeling during creation and a high quality resulting product—expensive paintbrushes, watercolor paints, beeswax crayons, special paper, real clay
- Finest quality toys—playsilks of real silk, wooden toys, handcrafted toys, all-natural, soft to the touch, attractive

Discipline

For the most part, Circle Play & Learn teachers elicit positive behaviors from children because they create a comfortable and predictable daily rhythm, which makes the children comfortable. Additionally, they instruct through song and teach through example, modeling the behaviors they desire rather than lecturing about them. This is very successful. However, when a little extra guidance is needed, Circle Play methods veer slightly from traditional Waldorf education. We follow the recommendations put forth in No Drama Discipline by Daniel Siegel. Even as Circle Play teachers hold high standards and expectations of good behavior, they are very gentle in their guidance. The children respond very well and happily to this.