

Intentional Teaching

What is Intentional Teaching?

Intentional teaching is an active process where teachers use their actions, language, and interactions in purposeful ways to build upon and extend children's unique interests, ideas, and strengths. Learning is promoted by intentional teaching during play and routines with an individualized, supportive approach. Intentional teaching practices are adaptable and allow for customized instruction that expands children's understanding of concepts and skills.

How can Intentional Teaching be promoted in the classroom?

- ❖ Providing plentiful free play experiences and joining in children's play
- ❖ Encouraging children to explore their own unique interests
- ❖ Recognizing individual differences, interests and abilities
- ❖ Avoid a one-size-fits all approach to teaching
- ❖ Allowing children to choose their own play materials and companions
- ❖ Asking open-ended questions, adding new vocabulary, and demonstrating concepts
- ❖ Provide a balance between teacher-initiated and child-initiated learning



Intentional Teaching Examples:

- ❖ During free play, the teacher approaches a child playing with blocks and starts a conversation by asking, "How can we make this building taller without it falling over?"
- ❖ A teacher and child are playing in the dramatic play center. The child brings over a stuffed animal and says, "I want to be a doctor for animals." The teacher responds, "That's called a veterinarian. They take care of animals when they're sick, just like your pediatrician takes care of you. What do you like about animals?"
- ❖ Children are beginning to line up at the door to go outside, and each child stands on a colored shape. As they begin to wait, the teacher asks children to raise their hand if they have a blue shape, then the group counts how many children have blue shapes. The activity continues until all children are in line.
- ❖ During lunch, two children talk about food they eat at home. The teacher listens and asks, "Why do you think your parents make you eat vegetables? That's right, they're healthy and make you strong. They contain vitamins and minerals that are good for your body."
- ❖ Two children are playing in the science center; one has a book about trees, and one has a magnifying glass. The teacher approaches the first child and says, "That looks like an Oak tree. Do you want to look out the window and see if you can find an Oak tree outside?" She then talks to the other child, showing him how to use the magnifying glass to look closer at different items.
- ❖ During free play, the teacher stops by a five-year-old with pattern blocks and says, "Look! Your triangle has three sides and your square has four sides. Which shape has more sides? Now can you show me a shape that has more than four sides?" Later she talks to a four-year old with a shape puzzle and says, "Which shape goes here? Let's count the sides and see which piece will fit."