

A circular wreath of various botanical illustrations surrounds the central text. The wreath includes green ferns, yellow flowers, red leaves, purple flowers, and green leaves with small white flowers.

Josh Thompson, Ph.D. (he/him)

# Have We Embraced DAP in Texas Policy?

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Drawn from NAEYC (2020), TEA,  
CLI Engage, & DAP Lab

# Texas AEYC



Nov  
2023

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Montessori Man (Primary 3-6year olds)

Parent of 4, Billy to 13, husband of 1



*Safe Space Ally*

My passion is to promote and protect childlike wonder and love of learning through play.



# Land Acknowledgement

The land I live and work on has been cared for by Indigenous peoples, Caddo, Comanche, Kikapoi, Tawakoni, Wichita, and others.

Today, we are on land of the Jumanos, Coahuiltecan, Nʌmʌnʌ Sookobitʌ (Comanche), Ndé Kónitsʌqáíí Gokíyaa (Lipan Apache), Tonkawa

<https://native-land.ca/>



# Agenda

In today's session, we will explore:

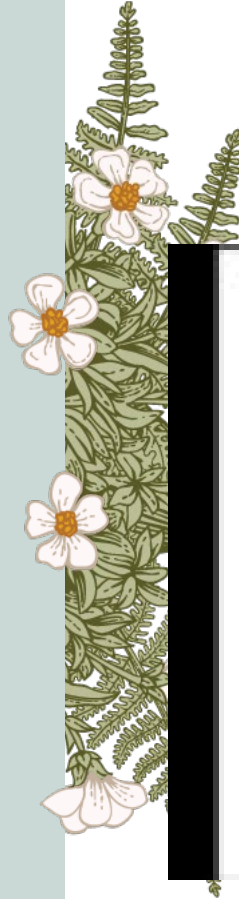
- Developmentally

Appropriate Practice

- Policy in Texas

- Action Steps

B



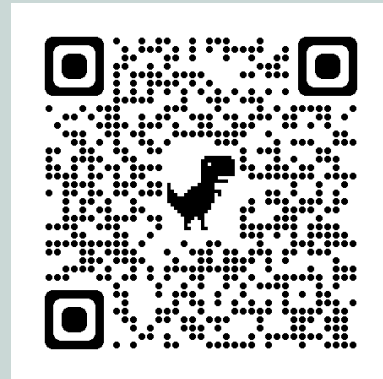
THE  
**BOOK VINE**  
FOR CHILDREN

**90 Second Book Look**  
*Back to School!*



# Co-LAB

A collaboration of scholars, international, multi-disciplinary, exploring insights from Developmental Psychology, and bringing those insights into Early Childhood Care and Education.







# Our study of DAP

Stanković-Ramirez, Z. & Thompson, J. (2018). Rethinking developmental domains to improve classroom observations. *Texas Child Care Quarterly*, 42(2), 20-27.

Thompson, J., & Stanković-Ramirez. (2021). What early childhood educators know about developmentally appropriate practice. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 103(2), 20-23.

Stanković-Ramirez, Z., & Thompson, J. (2022). A new view of Developmentally Appropriate Practice: What early childhood educators know about waves, individuals, and equity. *TEPSA Leader: Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association* 35(2), 1-7.

<http://faculty.tamuc.edu/jthompson/dap>

Please take our Survey: What Educators Know about DAP





# Developmentally Appropriate Practice (4<sup>th</sup> edition, 2022)

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) published *Developmentally Appropriate Practice* (DAP) Position Statement in 1986 and continues to revise and improve DAP aimed at helping early childhood educators.

expanded 1987, revised 1997, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 2009, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. 2022

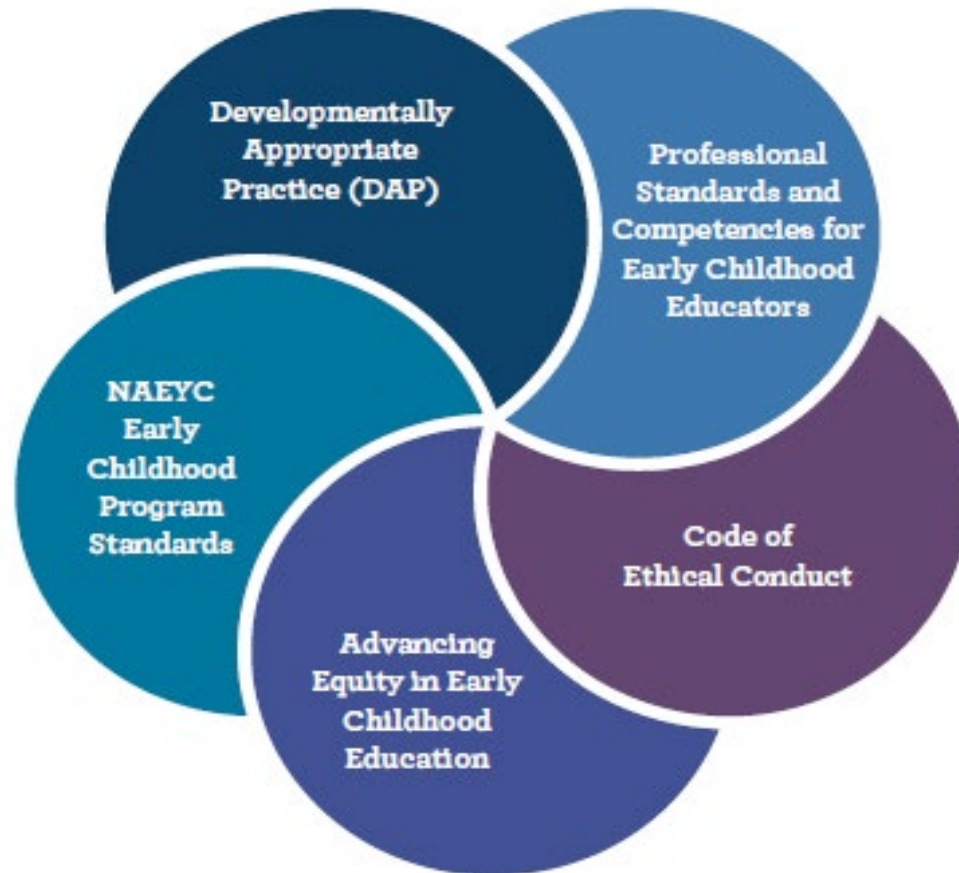
**DQ1: How and when did you first come across DAP?**







## NAEYC's Foundational Documents





DAP = 3 Core + 9 Principles





## 3 Core Considerations





# Developmentally Appropriate Practice

“Developmentally appropriate practice requires early childhood educators to seek out and gain knowledge and understanding using three core considerations. These core considerations apply to all aspects of educators’ decision-making in their work to foster each child’s optimal development and learning” (NAEYC, 2020, 6).





# I. Commonality

*First, what is known about child development and learning — knowledge of age-related human characteristics that permits general predictions within an age range about what activities, materials, interactions, or experiences will be safe, healthy, interesting, achievable, and also challenging to children.*





## II. Individuality

*Next, what is known about the strengths, interests, and needs of each individual child in the group – to be able to adapt for and be responsive to inevitable individual variation.*







### III. Context

*Finally, knowledge of the social and cultural contexts in which children live – to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful, relevant, and respectful for the participating children and their families.*





# DAP: 9 Principles





# 1. Nature AND Nurture

Development and learning are dynamic processes that reflect the complex interplay between a child's biological characteristics and the environment, each shaping the other as well as future patterns of growth.





## 2. Domains

All domains of child development—physical, aesthetic, cognitive, social, emotional, and linguistic development (including bilingual or multilingual development), as well as approaches to learning—are important; each domain both supports and is supported by the others.





### 3. Play

Play promotes joyful learning that fosters self-regulation, language, cognitive and social competencies as well as content knowledge across disciplines. Play is essential for all children, birth through age 8.





## 4. Variations

Although general progressions of development and learning can be identified, variations due to cultural contexts, experiences, and individual differences must also be considered.







## (4.) Waves of Development Rather than Stages

The notion of “stages” of development has limited utility; a more helpful concept may be to think of waves of development that allow for considerable overlap without rigid boundaries (NAEYC 2020, 10).

The concept of stages does not accurately reflect the way development takes place ... These waves consist of spurts of development interwoven with periods of little apparent growth (NAEYC 2022, 36).

<http://faculty.tamuc.edu/jthompson/co-lab>





## 5. Constructive Learning

Children are active learners from birth, constantly taking in and organizing information to create meaning through their relationships, their interactions with their environment, and their overall experiences.





## 6. Motivation

Children's motivation to learn is increased when their learning environment fosters their sense of belonging, purpose, and agency. Curricula and teaching methods build on each child's assets by connecting their experiences in the school or learning environment to their home and community settings.





## 7. Integrated

Children learn in an integrated fashion that cuts across academic disciplines or subject areas. Because the foundations of subject area knowledge are established in early childhood, educators need subject-area knowledge, an understanding of the learning progressions within each subject area, and pedagogical knowledge about teaching each subject area's content effectively.





## 8. ZPD

Development and learning advance when children are challenged to achieve at a level just beyond their current mastery and when they have many opportunities to reflect on and practice newly acquired skills.





## 9. Tech

Used responsibly and intentionally, technology and interactive media can be valuable tools for supporting children's development and learning.

DQ2: How does your use of technology enhance children's development and well-being?







# DAP: 3 Core Considerations





I. Commonality  
II. Individuality  
III. Context





# DAP: 9 Principles





# 1. Nature AND Nurture

2. Domains

3. Play

4. Variations

5. Constructivist

6. Motivation

7. Integrated

8. ZPD

9. Tech





DQ3: Do you see DAP show up in Texas classrooms, schools, and early learning spaces?

Have we embraced DAP in Texas policy?

If so, how?





# Texas Policy in Practice

Learner Standards

Curriculum

Assessment

Teacher Competencies







# Texas Policy in Practice

Learner Standards



TEKS  
Texas Essential  
Knowledge and Skills



Pre-Kindergarten  
Guidelines    Infant/Toddler  
Early Learning  
Guidelines



ELA/R and Math  
Adopted by 41 other  
states





# Texas Policy in Practice

## Curriculum

<https://tea.texas.gov/academics/early-childhood-education/high-quality-prekindergarten>

High Quality PK Curriculum

Quality programs utilize challenging but achievable curriculum that actively engages students in all developmental domains.

If the district's locally-designed curriculum aligns with the 2015 Texas Guidelines, the district meets the Prekindergarten regulation's requirement.





# Texas Policy in Practice

## Assessment



Texas Planning for  
Individualized  
Instruction Project



 TeachingStrategies® |  txaeyc Texas Association for the  
Education of Young Children



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness





# Texas Policy in Practice

## Assessment

### 3. Observing, Documenting, and Assessing Children's Development and Learning

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(2020, 19); (2022, chapter 8, 159-180)





# Texas Policy in Practice

## Teacher Competencies



Texas Core  
Competencies (9)  
Practitioner Training



**Texas**  
Educator Certification  
Examination Program

PK-Grade 3  
Core Subjects EC-6  
ESL, Bilingual



Compensation  
Training and Support  
Working Conditions







## Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators

### 3 Introduction

- 4 Relationship of Five Foundational Position Statements
- 6 Purpose
- 6 The Position
- 7 Design and Structure

### 8 Professional Standards and Competencies

- 9 Summary
- 11 **STANDARD 1:** Child Development and Learning in Context
- 13 **STANDARD 2:** Family–Teacher Partnerships  
and Community Connections
- 15 **STANDARD 3:** Child Observation, Documentation, and Assessment
- 17 **STANDARD 4:** Developmentally, Culturally, and  
Linguistically Appropriate Teaching Practices
- 20 **STANDARD 5:** Knowledge, Application, and Integration of  
Academic Content in the Early Childhood Curriculum
- 24 **STANDARD 6:** Professionalism as an Early Childhood Educator







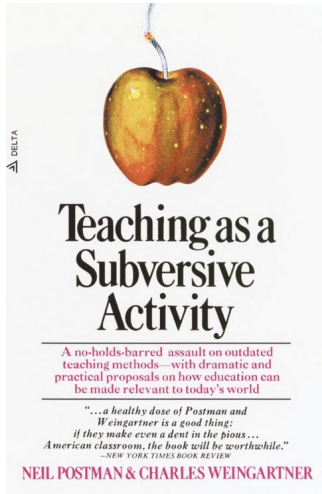
# Action Steps

A simple liberating thought came to our aid,  
namely that things about children and for  
children are only learned from children.

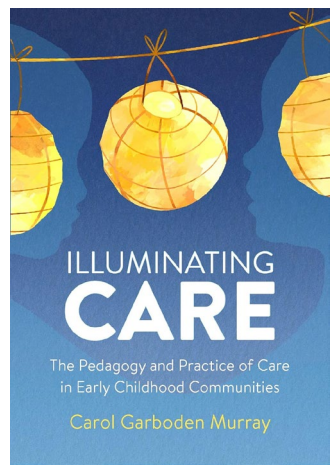
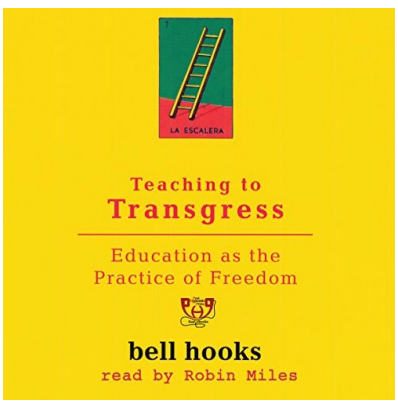
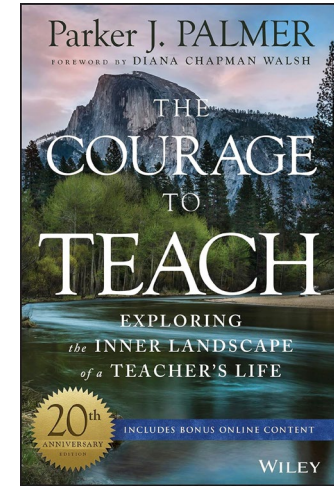
## Follow the child

Malaguzzi (1998, 51)





# Action Steps





Exchange

# Action Steps

**ROW** REIMAGINING  
OUR WORK





DQ4: Are you an advocate for DAP in Texas classrooms, schools, and learning spaces? How will you show up for the child?





# Summary

In today's session, did we explore?

- Developmentally

Appropriate Practice

- Policy in Texas

- Action Steps





# Resources

All resources and our articles are available here:

<http://faculty.tamuc.edu/jthompson/dap>

Take our Survey: “What EC teachers know about DAP”

Co-LAB: PEEQ, Texas AEYC, NAECTE, NAEYC,

World Forum, Texas Rising Star, SRCDD





A circular white frame is centered on a light blue background. The frame is surrounded by a detailed botanical illustration border. The illustration includes various plants: a large red leaf, a green leaf with a white flower, a fern frond, a cluster of yellow flowers, a large green leaf, a red leaf, a purple flower, a green leaf with a white flower, a fern frond, and a cluster of small pink flowers. The text is centered within the white frame.

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# How Have We Embraced DAP in Texas Policy

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Thank you

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