Beliefs

“Play is the work of the child.”

Learners

They’re engaged
Children are active participants in their own learning by exploring the environment, learning to communicate, and building relationships.

They’re capable
Every child is unique, constantly learning, resilient, confident, and self-assured.

They’re responsive
Children are open to opportunities and experiences and can develop a positive sense of their own identity and culture.

Learning Environments

They’re inclusive
They foster inclusivity for all children and their adult partners.

They’re individualized
They provide opportunities to gather, filter, analyze and reflect on the information provided and comment on this knowledge for individualized comprehension.

They’re relevant
They offer stimulating resources that are relevant to the children’s cultures and communities.

They’re physical
They balance safety and risk by finding the widest territory for secure trial-and-error exploration.

They’re attractive
They provide materials that are clean, natural, beautiful, and alluring to the child.

They’re peaceful
You see children deep in concentration as they choose an activity and work with it until they are satisfied. Movement is slow and purposeful.

Role of the Adult

Adults should follow the child’s lead, extending and elaborating what the child is working on.

Museum Learning Framework

Mission

To engage all families in educational, hands-on experiences that connect curiosity, creativity and discovery.

Vision

Community Level:
To be the informal early childhood education leader in Boulder County.

Child Level:
To engage children in hands-on learning experiences that foster creative and innovative thinking and problem solving: to nurture a love of learning and sense of confidence and competence.

Values

We value and respect all children and families. Our environment provides an opportunity for young children to practice the skills they will need to succeed in school and in life:

Collaboration
Communication
Creativity
Citizenship

Learning

It’s experiential
Children learn through open-ended experiences with potential for multiple outcomes.

It’s dynamic
It builds on itself and changes over time as the child develops.

It’s social
Children learn in relationship with others, through talk, interaction, and information sharing.

It’s physical
It involves physical actions and experiences, risk-taking, and failure.

It’s emotional
It’s shaped by feelings, motivations, and interests.

It’s cultural
It’s shaped by cultural contexts and values.

Key Elements of the WOW! Learning Environment

- Encourages continued exploration at home or in the community
- Opportunities and invitations for adults to engage in play
- Evidence of community input and contributions
- Materials that are natural and locally meaningful
- Provides opportunities to explore, manipulate, investigate and reflect
- Invites repetition and changes
- “What will happen if...?”
- Role of the Adult
  - Adults should follow the child’s lead, extending and elaborating what the child is working on.

Contributors:
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