

The Loris Malaguzzi spirit

My Reggio Emilia experience brought me lots of inspirations. The magnificence of Italy's lifestyle and the uniqueness of Reggio Emilia gave more awareness how culture signifies the whole educational make up of a country. Reggio Emilia is a province but with a very strong convictions on how they mould and raise their children, their future leaders. The most appealing for



me apart from the authentic leather bags and boots on that study tour was the respect the community regard their children's thinking and intelligence. Teachers, parents and the community work hand in hand to make everything possible. They were not afraid to challenge what they do and understand that there is more than one way to do things when children are concerned. They were excited to face the day to day crisis and turn it into a meaningful moment in life. Dialogues were infinite and always the most effective tool in coming together. The protagonists (children, parents and teachers) find time to connect and find new meanings without conforming to what is called normal or the right way.

The Reggio Emilia approach is always open to negotiation because it is all about the image of the child, a competent, active, critical child, a child who is challenging because he produces change, movement, in the system he is involved in. Sometimes we wonder why a child acts and responds differently from others and we would say, 'he shouldn't because he is already four. We are trapped to the predefinition of a how children should act when they reached a certain age. For me, it is unfair to the child, they have rights. Right to be upset, right for sleep, right to be a human being but also the right to be guided when they slip away from appropriate behaviour. Adults need to investigate together and listen to each others points of view before suggesting each other what to do. Have a dialogue and come up with shared meanings. What I truly loved in the tour was the confirmation that we don't need experts to tell us that we are doing the right thing, let the child tell us through their movements in the environment provided to them. Who are we to judge them.....[Let us listen to them through all our senses, it is only then we'll understand what they really want to share with us. This is a challenge for all of us but if we work together, everything is possible.

By Chai Martin

*The child is made of one hundred.
The child has a hundred languages,
a hundred hands,
a hundred thoughts,
a hundred ways of thinking, of playing, of
speaking.*

*A hundred, always a hundred,
ways of listening,
of marvelling,
of loving,*

*a hundred joys for singing and
understanding,*

*a hundred worlds to discover,
a hundred worlds to invent,
a hundred worlds to dream.*

*The child has a hundred languages
(and a hundred hundred hundred more),
but they steal ninety nine.*

*The school and the culture separate the
head from the body.*

They tell the child:

to think without hands,

do without heads,

to listen and not to speak,

to understand without joy,

*to love and to marvel...only at Easter and
Christmas.*

They tell the child:

*to discover the world already there and of
the hundred they steal ninety nine.*

They tell the child:

that work and play,

reality and fantasy,

science and imagination,

sky and earth,

reason and dream,

are things that do not belong together.

*And thus they tell the child that the hundred
is not there.*

The child says no way. The hundred is there.

Loris Malaguzzi, 1994

Introducing... Loris Malaguzzi and the Reggio Approach

The Reggio Approach derives its name from its place of origin, Reggio Emilia, a city located in Emilia Romagna in Northern Italy. Shortly after the Second World War, Loris Malaguzzi, a young teacher and the founder of this unique system, joined forces with the parents of this region to provide child care for young children. Originally inspired by the need of women to return to the work force, over the last 50 years, this education system has developed into a unique program that has caught the attention of early childhood educators worldwide.

The Reggio Approach is a complex system that respects and puts into practice many of the fundamental aspects of the work of Dewey, Piaget, and Vygotsky and many others. It is a system that lends itself to: the role of collaboration among children, teachers and parent, the co-construction of knowledge, the interdependence of individual and social learning and the role of culture in understanding this interdependence. (Baji Rankin 2004).

At the heart of this system is the powerful image of the child. Reggio educators do not see children as empty vessels that require filling with facts. Rather they see children as full of potential, competent and capable of building their own theories. The Rights of Children as written by Loris Malaguzzi best describes how children are viewed.

Children have the right to be recognized as subjects of individual, legal, civil, and social rights; as both source and constructors of their own experience, and thus active participants in the organization of their identities, abilities, and autonomy, through relationships and interaction with their peers, with adults, with ideas, with objects, and with real and imaginary events of intercommunicating worlds. All this while establishing the fundamental premises for creating "better citizens of the world" and improving the quality of human interaction, also credits children, and each individual child, with an extraordinary wealth of inborn abilities and potential, strength and creativity. Irreversible suffering and impoverishment of the child is caused when this fact is not acknowledged.

Reference: www.reggiokids.com/about/about_approach.php

Parents Evening!!!



Dear Parents,

We would love to meet, so we can share a glass of wine or two together! So talk to your babysitter and let us know if you are able to come.

It is going to be a relaxed, however quite informative evening, as Mrs. Shelley Quinlivan, Deputy Principal at Epsom Primary, will answer your questions with regards to the expectations public Primary Schools have for new entrants.

Looking forward to catching up with you, on Thursday, the 3rd of June 2010, between 7.00-8.30pm!!! Thank you.

Parent-Teacher Interviews

Thank you to all the parents who attended our Parent-Teacher Interviews at the end of April. Thank you for your feedback and support. If you were unable to attend, contact your child's Lead Teacher and arrange a suitable time for both parties.

We will be having another session of Parent-Teacher Interviews at the end of October. We will continue to limit the interviews to 15 minutes so that we can make time for all parents. Thank you.

Important Reminders:

- Winter is only a couple of weeks away and we would like to still be able to enjoy daily

outside play. “The more we see, touch, feel, smell, and taste, the more we discover and learn...” (Ursula Koelbe). Children love the rain, they love puddles and mud...**MUD!!!** ...

There is so much they can explore; there are so many learning opportunities... Raincoats and gumboots will enable them to enjoy these seasonal opportunities better!!!

- All children should have their own bag- a medium sized one preferably. Please make sure you place everything carefully in the bag and have everything clearly labeled. We cannot take responsibility for things that get lost and are not named. We do endeavour to place the children’s clothing back into their bags each day, however we do encourage children to be responsible for their own belongings. If you are missing an item please ask one of the teachers.
- Medication: please be aware that no medicine containers/ foils should be left in your child’s bag. They must always be given to the teachers or placed in the Medicine cabinet.
- Please be reminded that invoicing is always a week in advance as per policy.

Healthy Eating Options:

- Whereas nuts are highly nutritious, they are not an acceptable option while at Bright Sparks, due to the fact that several of our children have life threatening allergies to all nuts.
 - Bright Sparks Childcare Henderson regards boxed/ packaged meals as unhealthy eating options and we strongly discourage them as viable dietary alternatives for their breakfast, lunchboxes or dinner.
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Astron and Stellar appeal:

- We would like to move away from a “fixed” morning tea towards a concept of “grazing” over a period of an hour and a half (i.e. providing the children with the opportunity to choose when they want to have morning or afternoon tea). Children will be invited to select their choice of fruit and vegetables, cut them up, thus encouraging greater independence. By changing to a more relaxed, self-service style of dining, we believe this will support children’s uninterrupted engagement in learning experiences. To support this, please provide a **named ceramic mug** from home for your children so they can have access to their own mug during the day. Thank you.

Article of the month: The right to have a midday nap or rest

Sufficient sleep and resting improve performance, health, and learning and simply makes us feel better. Research has shown that:

1. Our bodies seem to be programmed to sleep after lunch. We all tend to get a bit sleepy sometime mid afternoon, because of a slight drop in body temperature. Statistics show that more accidents happen in the mid afternoon, and are often related to sleepiness. In addition, overall performance has been shown to be at the lowest point of the day about an hour or so after lunch.
2. Research has shown that even a 10 minute nap can increase performance, alertness and concentration.
3. Night sleep improves. Children have better sleep at night if they take a short nap during the day simply because they are not as exhausted when bedtime comes. Being “over tired” is a common reason for insomnia, which a short nap may alleviate.
4. Napping and resting improve the ability to learn. The National Sleep Foundation has reported research from Harvard that shows that sleep is key to learning, and that napping in

addition to nighttime sleep can improve the ability to retain what you have experienced/engaged in.

5. It reduces stress – Since stress is often tied to being tired and overwhelmed, a short nap during the day can be a great stress reliever.