# **Virtual Kit: Developmentally Appropriate Practice**

**Kit QT**

Early childhood educators make important decisions everyday regarding the appropriateness of the learning environment, curriculum, and the best strategies for supporting individual learners to meet the goals of the program. It is a very complex job, which requires the teacher to know their students and families well, as well as a vast knowledge regarding how children learn and develop. With this knowledge teachers are prepared to arrange the best learning experiences they can for the children in their classroom. By using Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) principles teachers can be confident that the decisions they are making are in the best interest of the children they serve.

DAP means teaching young children in ways that meet them where they are at developmentally, both as individuals and as a group, and then taking them to the next level by helping each child reach challenging and achievable goals that continue their developmental and academic progress (Copple & Bredekamp, 2006). Moving children toward the next stage in their development and learning requires the teacher to be intentional in everything they do. This includes setting up the environment, infusing the day with learner outcomes, creating a schedule that includes both intentional instruction and ample time for students to learn through play, as well as seeing those teachable moments when working with a child and responding in a way that supports the learner in developing a deeper level of understanding. For children with disabilities, DAP means providing individualized instruction and scaffolding of learning in order for them to be successful in an inclusive environment.

This Virtual Kit on DAP was created to assist early childhood educators in understanding best practice in early childhood and provide support to create a classroom where all students achieve to their highest potential.

#### Show me now! (I need this tomorrow.)

If you are looking for some quick resources on DAP the following websites are a good place to begin.

* [Key Messages of the Position Statement](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/KeyMessages.pdf) (.pdf)
* [The Core of DAP](http://www.naeyc.org/dap)
* [DEC/NAEYC joint position paper on inclusion](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/DEC_NAEYC_EC_updatedKS.pdf) (.pdf)

#### What does this look like in practice? (I have a little more time to read about this.)

* [Complete NAEYC DAP Position Statement](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSDAP.pdf) (.pdf)

#### What does the ECRC have on this topic?

Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S., (2006). Basics of developmentally appropriate practice an introduction for teachers of children 3 to 6. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S., 2009). Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age 8 (Third ed.). Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Cook, R. E., Kein, M. D., Tessier, A., & Daley, S. E. (2004). Adapting early childhood curricula for children in inclusive settings (Sixth ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Grisham-Brown, J., Hemmeter, M. L., & Pretti-Frontczak, K. (2005). Blended Practices for Teaching Young Children in Inclusive Settings. Baltimore, MA: Brookes Publishing.

Gronlund, G. (2010). Developmentally appropriate play guiding young children to a higher level. St. Paul, MN: Red Leaf Press.

Hyson, M. (2008). Enthusiastic and engaged learners approaches to learning in the early childhood classroom. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

[Visit the Early Childhood Resource Center for a complete listing.](http://opac.libraryworld.com/cgi-bin/opac.pl?command=signin&libraryname=KITS%20ECRC)

#### How can I get training on this topic?

* To find out if there might be an upcoming training related to this topic, go to the KITS Training Calendar on the KITS website.
* [Connect Modules](http://community.fpg.unc.edu/connect-modules/learners/module-4)
* For a fee NAEYC offers [online training](https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pd) with or without CEUs

#### If you thought this kit was helpful you might also like:

* [Position statements on Curriculum, Assessment and Program Evaluation](http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/cape) (.pdf)

#### Evaluation

Please take a minute to complete the brief survey on the Virtual Kits page on the website to let us know what you think about this virtual kit, and what other topics you would like to see addressed in the future.

#### References:

Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S., (2006). Basics of developmentally appropriate practice an introduction for teachers of children 3 to 6. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S., (2009). Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children birth through age 8 (Third ed.). Washington, DC: NAEYC.