

## What is Emergent Curriculum?

Parents who are not familiar with these words often ask.



Emergent curriculum is a way of planning curriculum that is based on the children's interest and passion at a certain point in time. Children thrive and learn best when their interests are captured. Learning occurs naturally. Planning emergent curriculum requires observation, documentation, creative brainstorming, flexibility and patience on the part of the Early Childhood Educator. Rather than starting with the lesson plan which is repeated every year regardless of the age, developmental

level or interests of the children, emergent curriculum starts with the children's interest. In short, it is a child-directed and teacher facilitated approach to planning the curriculum.

Emergent curriculum summons a lot of creativity and flexibility on the part of the teachers. There is no knowing where the learning will end up but this openness makes the curriculum more exciting for both teachers and children.

The emergent curriculum process starts when a teacher sees an interest "emerging" in the child. Once the "emerging" interest has been identified, the teachers brainstorm different ways for the children to study the topic in depth. Webbing a topic is often used because of its playful and flexible nature. A web does not show everything that will be learned but will show many things that could be learned. Webbing the curriculum opens the teacher to "possibilities" rather than "plan". Teachers brainstorm many possibilities for study sparked from the emerging interest of the children. Rather than a lesson plan, the teacher ends up with a "road map". Webbing all the activities together gives the teacher a road map full of possible journeys with no end in sight. The end comes when the children have moved their interest to another topic and a new "emerging" interest has again been identified.