

HOW CHILDREN LEARN

We believe that children learn most effectively when they are *directly involved in their own learning*. The philosophy of the June Roush Pierson Laboratory Nursery School at Dutchess Community College is built on the following assumptions.

1. Children are naturally curious and are eager to explore their environment freely.
2. Learning is not done *to* the child but *by* the child.
3. Active exploration and manipulation are necessary to early learning.
4. PLAY is the child's form of work.
5. Children have both the ability and the initiative to make certain decisions regarding their own learning.
6. Children learn and develop according to their own unique rates and styles.
7. Learning occurs best as it proceeds from the concrete to the abstract.
8. Most facets of an individual's learning are best evaluated through direct observation of a child at work (play), rather than paper and pencil tests.
9. Learning to interact and cooperate as a group member is essential to the growth of an individual.
10. Education must take place in an environment communicating trust, kindness, warmth, courtesy, respect, openness, and security.