

# TALS

## A Reggio Emilia Inspired Early Childhood Program



2012-2013

LOCATION

The TALS Reggio Emilia Inspired Early Childhood Program is located just past the Annapolis Mall, close to Rolling Knolls Elementary School & the community of Carriage Hills. Keeping in the tradition of Reggio Emilia, the program is located in a home environment. Families not enrolled in the program are asked to call 410.266.6132 for an appointment before visiting. TALS is intentionally a small program. For the safety and well being of program participants, unfortunately drop in visits cannot be accommodated.

AGES OF CHILDREN

3- 4's Class- Meet Monday, Wednesday & Friday from 9:30am-1:00pm September through May. This program is for children who turn 3 by September 1st, 2012.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Hands on experiences are key to the TALS approach. Children's enthusiasm & excitement for learning come from making 'real world' connections that are personal & meaningful to them. Through play, dialogue, journaling, reflection, documentation, instruction, exploration, and field trips, the love of learning comes alive in math, science, social studies, the arts, language, literature, technology & the environment. Both the classroom & teaching are inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education.



The Reggio approach is grounded in the belief that a child's learning environment needs to be valued and created to facilitate interactions & relationships. Educators who use this experiential approach recognize and appreciate all of the ways in which children communicate & experience these relationships. This approach is rooted in the view that children are extremely capable from very early on.

## ADVANTAGES

- Small Class Size
- Teacher has Masters in Early Childhood Education & Bachelors in Theatre & Music
- Located in a home setting
- Program is based on children's abilities, skills & motivation
- Children have the opportunity to work in small groups
- Children are recognized as unique & valuable
- Bases learning, both formal and play-based, on children's' true interests
- Approach nurtures and encourages curiosity in children
- Children are exposed to many materials (clay, wire, paper, paint, shadows, etc.) that offer children tools with which to express themselves
- Promotes early literacy development
- Promotes a sense of family & community
- Children are highly valued; recognized as unique & regarded as extremely capable



## ACADEMICS

- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- The Arts  
(visual, graphic representation, music)
- Language
- Literature
- Technology
- The Environment



## ENVIRONMENT

- Art Studio
- Light Exploration Center
- Writing Center
- Music Center
- Book Nook
- Listening Center
- Science Center
- Discovery Table
- Block Center
- Dramatic Play Area
- Technology Corner



SCHEDULE

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
9:30-9:50	Arrival Outdoor Play	Arrival Outdoor Play	Arrival Outdoor Play
10:00-10:15	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting	Morning Meeting
10:15-11:15	Choices/Project Work & Snack	Choices/Project Work & Snack	Choices/Project Work & Snack
		Clean-Up (11:05-11:15)	Clean-Up (11:05-11:15)
11:15-11:25	Clean-Up	Music	Movement(11:15-11:30)
11:30-11:40	Group Meeting	Group Meeting	Language
11:40-11:50	Dialogue & Reflection	Dialogue & Reflection	Group Meeting
11:50-12:00	Story	Library/Book Nook	Dialogue & Reflection
			Story
12:00-12:20	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:20-12:50	Outdoor Play	Outdoor Play	Outdoor Play
12:50-1:00	Final Reflection Closing Circle Pack-Up/ Dismissal	Final Reflection Closing Circle Pack-Up/ Dismissal	Final Reflection Closing Circle Pack-Up/ Dismissal

**TALS**

*Where Children Become Their Own Inspiration*

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# What Is Reggio Emilia?

## History & Basic Principles of The Reggio Emilia Approach

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### **Brief History:**

Reggio Emilia is a city in northern Italy where educators, parents and children began working together after World War II to reconstruct society and build an exemplary system of municipal preschools and infant-toddler centers (New, 1993). Under leadership of the visionary founding director, Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994), the system evolved from a parent cooperative movement into a city-run system that exercises a leadership role in Italy and throughout Europe, and now increasingly in Asia, Australia, North America, and other parts of the world (New, 2000). The Reggio Institute in Stockholm, Sweden, is known as a source of innovation and reflection (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999). Programs in Reggio are family centered and serve children at infant-toddler and preschool levels (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1998; Gandini & Edwards, 2001), with first priority given to children with disabilities or social service needs. Reggio Emilia is not a formal model like Waldorf and Montessori, with methods, teacher certification standards, and accreditation processes. Instead, educators in Reggio Emilia speak of their evolving "experience" and see themselves as a provocation and reference point, a way of engaging in dialogue starting from a strong and rich vision of the child (Edward, Gandini, & Forman, 1998; Katz & Casarone, 1994; New, 2000). Reggio Children/USA is the North American arm of Reggio Children S.r.l., the Italian organization set up in 1994 to protect and enrich the educational theory and practice. 1

### **Principles In Brief:**

- All children are extremely capable and unique in their own way
- Teachers try to be deeply aware of childrens' potentials and create environments that respond appropriately
- Education has to focus on each child in relation to family, other children, teachers, the environment of the school, with the community and society
- Children have a right to care and an education that supports their development and potential
- Parents are considered an essential component of the program; parent's participation is expected and supported
- The school conveys the message that thought has been put into the quality and instructive power of space; there is a sense of well-being; the environment is highly personal
- Teachers are aware that children learn a great deal in exchanges with their peers-especially in small groups
- Children's sense of time & personal rhythm are considered when planning & carrying out experiences & projects
- The idea of cooperation is a powerful mode that makes possible the goals of the Reggio approach
- Teachers see themselves as researchers gathering information about their work with children by means of continual documentation
- Things are organized with precision and care
- Teachers ask questions and discover the children's ideas, hypotheses, and theories; learning is seen not as a linear process but as a spiral progression
- Teachers consider themselves to be "partners in the process of learning"
- To be truly respectful of children's and teachers' ideas and processes of learning, the curriculum cannot be set in advance
- The process of documentation is an integral part of the daily experience
- Documentation is made visible
- The teacher is called an atelierista
- There is a special workshop or studio called an atelier
- Smaller spaces may be called mini-ateliers
- Projects provide the backbone of the children's and teachers' learning experiences
- Learning by doing is of great importance
- Group discussion, revisiting ideas & experiences are an essential way of gaining better understanding of learning
- Projects can last from a few days to several months
- Project ideas may start either from a chance event, an idea or a problem posed by one or more children, or an experience initiated directly by teachers

### **References**

- 1-Edwards, Carolyn (2002). Three approaches from Europe: Waldorf, Montessori, and Reggio Emilia. *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, 4 (1), p.4-5.
- Gandini, Lella (1993). Fundamentals of the Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. *Young Children*, 49(1), 4-8.

**Website:** <http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/poptopics/reggio/reginfo.html>