



# Identifying and Creating Child Centered Environments

Shared with you by Lisa Murphy *the ooey gooey lady*®  
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Lisa Murphy's *Ooey Gooley*® Philosophy is play-based, hands-on & child-centered. We are committed to creating early childhood environments that are based on the following framework:

Principle 1: TIME

Children are provided with long periods of uninterrupted free time for exploration and interaction within their learning environment.

Principle 2: OUTDOORS

There is lots of outdoor play time. The outdoor environment is not considered a separate space, but instead is seen as an extension of the indoor space. It is understood that the outdoor environment is just as credible of a classroom as the one inside.

Principle 3: RULES

Children have the freedom to explore this environment with few restrictions. We have one overarching rule: "People are not for hurting." We are able to provide this level of freedom because...

Principle 4: THE SECRET

The secret to good teaching is learning how to control the environment, not the little people in it. The "no-no's" have been removed. Consequently the child has freedom to explore within the environment that the adult has set up.

Principle 5: FACILITATING

Teachers are serving as facilitators within this space, deepening the child's investigations and providing activities and materials that reflect the needs and interests of the children in the room. Their role is much deeper than "the keeper of keys to the cupboard".

Principle 6: ARTICULATION/BEING INTENTIONAL

Teachers are aware of their language & actions and can articulate the intention behind what they are doing in the classroom. They ask 3 questions: WHAT am I doing? WHY am I doing it? And WHO am I doing it for? Their answers go beyond, "that's how we've just always done it," and deeper than, "because it's so cute".

Principle 7: THEORISTS

Teachers understand child development theory & know the history of their profession. They are aware of those who have "paved the way" in our development of play based, hands-on environments.

Principle 8: KEEPING IT REAL

We celebrate the concrete. Children are provided with engaging experiences that are (literally) *real*. If you want it in their head, it must first be in their hands. You will see children exploring real objects. Not coloring dittos of them. Activities must engage all the senses!

Principle 9: THE SEVEN THINGS

Children are provided time each day to: create, move, sing, discuss, observe, read and play. And it is believed that these seven things create the *foundation* that supports the *house* of academics.



## Lisa Murphy Contact Information

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**Ooey Gooley®**  
**A silly name....**  
**A serious message!**

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*I saw a man pursuing the horizon;  
Round and round they sped.  
I was disturbed at this;  
I accosted the man.  
“It is futile,” I said,  
“You can never - -”  
“You lie,” he cried,  
And ran on.*

*-Stephen Crane*