

Need for innovation in early childhood education



Emphasising and nurturing young minds is essential from early childhood. For years, research has proven its importance time and again. However, in the world as dynamic as today, the definition of learning for children in their early years is undergoing a sea of change. There has been a shift from some basic alphabets, counting and rote learning approach to one based on experience, engagement and exploration. Hence preschools play a crucial role at this stage. Children today are growing up in a progressive world where the need of the hour is to enable them to be future ready. In keeping with the trends of tomorrow, preschools need to design a curriculum which lays a strong foundation for building 21st-century skills in children as they grow. Preschools have also started identifying experiential learning as the best way to impart knowledge as kids get the opportunity to learn as they do, which in turn makes learning fun. Preschools lay emphasis on guiding kids with a transformative learning experience by identifying and nurturing their natural talent and making learning a joyful experience.

A preschool is the child's first experience away from home, and this transition of the child between home and the school should be smooth. Hence a preschool should provide a holistic nurturing environment that gives the child a "second home" experience. Due emphasis needs to be given to a child's development, safety, security, hygiene and to establishing a close connection with the parents of each child. Providing a rich learning environment for children in their formative years should be the focus of every preschool which can be achieved by paying close attention to every detail of a child with a commitment of care and excellence.

Parents want the best early years education for their child and look forward to a preschool that is well equipped to give their children a safe and nurturing environment to play, learn and grow. Preschools today have introduced various learning programmes to make sure that kids are exposed to a learning experience that is both fun and tickles their curious minds. Using scientifically designed games, toys, and technology in the preschool curriculum has now become a necessity to offer children a fun and engaging learning experience.

Considering these factors, leading preschools in the country have been investing generously in terms of time and capital to enhance their curriculums from time to time. One such curriculum based on a beautiful thinking of the wholesome play of mind, body and soul is **EUNOIA**. This curriculum is structured around the Child First Ideology, where the innocent and beautiful mind of a child becomes the origin of everything that they do. The activities and initiatives integrated into this Mindful Curriculum are designed to nurture the mind of a child, keeping it healthy and well-balanced. The mind gets an opportunity to explore the world around with the help of Innovative methods which create a learning environment that helps every child utilise the pedagogy and achieve the milestones of learning and development.

It has been observed that children get deeply engrossed and focused on an activity of their interest, whether they are playing with blocks or listening to a story, they are attentive and unfazed by distractions. They are in a state of heightened **Awareness**. When a child learns a new skill, they take it as a challenge to practice that skill repeatedly, until they do it right. They repeat the same task over and over again. The more they do it, the more they retain it. This is the **Learning** phase. Finally, the child applies the newly-learned skill at varying touch points. He or she is curious to observe and learn from the various outcomes of the task. We realised that the **Application** phase is where a child puts into play what he has learned.

Such a curriculum structure is aimed at encouraging children to use their creativity and encourage them to explore their unique thoughts. This type of model can also help the teachers to understand their students better and judge the outcome of the learning, to provide a superlative learning experience. This would assist in the overall development of a child making them independent and ready to face the challenges ahead in their life and would encourage them to be more confident, smart, critical thinkers who are prepared for the opportunities that the future holds.

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