

Andrea Lemajić
Martina Stojanac
Antonija Vukašinović

Fakultet za odgojne i obrazovne znanosti, dislocirani studij u Slavonskom Brodu

PREMISE OF ENCOURAGING AUTONOMY IN CHILDREN'S WORK AND OPINION

Abstract

The main purpose of this work is to notice certain methods which could contribute to the developing of autonomy in children's activities and to the developing of their own critical thinking. The individual abilities of children – their affinities towards specific fields – are kept in mind while preparing an encouraging spatial-material environment. By dividing the space into numerous different centres, the children are able to choose between individual works and work in smaller groups on their own. By supporting self-initiate activities stemming from a simulating surrounding, the children are enabled to gain new knowledge, to construct knowledge, as well as to make their decisions individually, to control the course of activities, and they are made to take responsibility for the realization of those activities. By asking questions, emphasizing the importance of the child's activity, and giving support for the next level of the child's reflection, the child is shown that there is an existing interest for what he or she is doing. This gives incentive to the child's self-confidence and autonomy. On top of ensuring a spatial-material surrounding and supporting self-initiated activities, the preschool teacher supports and recognizes children's work on projects resulting from their own interest. Children's work on a project, as a method of absolute autonomy, allows for an atmosphere that will result in realizing the project without pressure and should take into consideration the children's opinion about the further development of the project. The results of the observation through a certain period have shown that using this method makes children feel accepted, their confidence is strengthened, they construct their own understanding, they learn about dialogue, freely express their own opinions and attitudes and propose new hypotheses, and more and more enter the next levels of upgrading their overall development.

Keywords: *autonomy, project, spatial-material environment, kindergarten room, role of kindergarten teacher*