2.1: Introduction

Children are born observers and are active participants in their own learning and understanding of the world around them from the very beginning of their existence. Today’s children are active participants in their own learning, not just recipients of a teacher’s knowledge. Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP), as outlined by NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children), challenges early childhood professionals to be intentional in their interactions and environments to create optimal experiences to maximize children’s growth and development. Under this umbrella of DAP, knowledge is based upon discovery and discovery occurs through active learning and abundant opportunities for exploration! Through a “hands-on” approach and using play as a vehicle, children will develop skills in domains necessary for positive growth and development.

Figure 2.1: Play is active learning. (Image by HaiRobe on pixabay)