

Reggio-Inspired Educator Internship Program (6 Months)

The Circles & Cycles Internship Program is a six-month immersive learning experience designed for individuals interested in early childhood education and the Reggio Emilia approach.

Interns learn through **observation, reflection, collaboration, and hands-on facilitation**, working alongside experienced educators in our learning environment.

The program supports interns in developing the foundational skills needed to become **thoughtful, reflective facilitators of child-led learning**.

Program Structure

The internship is organised into **six learning phases**, each building on the previous one.

Interns begin by learning to **observe and understand children's thinking**, and gradually move toward **designing learning experiences and facilitating sessions independently**.

Phase 1: Educator Workshops

(Pre-Internship Requirement)

All interns must complete **Educator Workshops 1 and 2** before beginning the internship.

Workshops 3 and 4 may be completed during the internship.

Workshop 1: Reclaim Your Childhood

This workshop introduces the philosophy behind the Reggio Emilia approach and invites participants to reflect on their own experiences of learning.

Key ideas explored:

- Children as competent learners
- Child-initiated learning
- Educators as researchers and collaborators
- The environment as the third teacher

Workshop 2: Interpret the World

This workshop explores how children make meaning through their **“Hundred Languages”** ; the many ways they communicate ideas, emotions, and understandings.

Participants reflect on:

- Observation and interpretation
- Multiple forms of expression
- Supporting children’s thinking through materials and environment

Workshop 3: To Be Present

This workshop focuses on the educator’s role in **listening, observing, and responding thoughtfully to children’s ideas.**

Participants

- Observe and explore different ways to document using tools introduced in Workshops 1 and 2
- Explore documentation examples
- Practice creating pieces of documentation

Workshop 4: (Advanced Reggio Practice)

This workshop focuses on how to create learning environments that reflect the values and philosophy of the Reggio Emilia approach. Participants explore how the physical environment, programs, and relationships within a school community work together to support meaningful learning experiences.

Participants explore:

- Designing environments that support curiosity, exploration, and inquiry
- Setting up physical spaces and selecting foundational resources
- Aligning programs, curriculum, and learning objectives with Reggio values
- Collaborating with facilitators, specialists, and pedagogistas
- Building a culture of reflection through peer collaboration and coaching
- Strengthening relationships with parents, caregivers, and the wider school community

Phase 2: Observation & Reflection

Duration: 4 weeks

Observation is the foundation of Reggio-inspired practice. In this phase, interns focus on learning how to **observe and interpret children's thinking**.

Interns observe across all Circles & Cycles programs, including:

- Parent-Toddler programs
- Preschool environments
- After school programs

Following each session, interns:

- Participate in discussions with Facilitators
- Share observations and questions
- Complete written reflections

With the support staff,

- Learn how materials are **prepared and maintained**
- Understand **daily operational flow**
- Participate in **setting up and resetting learning spaces**

Interns also attend **coaching sessions with the pedagoga or mentor**, focusing on:

- noticing children's interests
- identifying patterns in play
- interpreting learning through observation

At the end of this phase, interns are assigned to **one primary program** for the remainder of the internship.

Phase 3: Provocations & Learning Invitations

Duration: 4 weeks

Interns learn how educators design environments and materials that **invite curiosity, exploration, and inquiry**.

Working alongside facilitators, interns:

- Observe how the **physical environment supports children's exploration**
- Reflect on how materials influence children's thinking
- Assist facilitators in **arranging and resetting learning spaces**
- Help curate **loose parts and open-ended materials**
- Participate in creating a **small learning corner or provocation area**

This phase develops understanding of how **intentional environments support child-led learning**.

Phase 4: Documentation & Interpretation

Duration: 4 weeks

Documentation is an essential part of Reggio-inspired practice. It helps educators make children's thinking visible and reflect on learning processes.

Interns learn how to:

- capture meaningful moments of learning
- write daily documentation
- interpret children's conversations and actions
- organise documentation for reflection and discussion
- Share observations for report card writing and parent conferences

Interns begin developing pieces that may later become part of a **learning documentation panel**.

Phase 5: Facilitation & Child Study

Duration: 8–10 weeks

In this phase, interns take a more active role in the classroom while continuing to work closely with experienced facilitators.

Interns gradually begin facilitating parts of the session, including:

- story time
- Circle Time
- small group literacy, numeracy and STEM activities
- supporting children's exploration during provocations

Interns also complete a **Child Study**, where they follow one child across several sessions to observe:

- interests and learning patterns
- social interactions
- forms of expression
- engagement with materials

Regular feedback sessions with facilitators support ongoing reflection and growth.

Phase 6: Inquiry Project & Portfolio

Duration: 4–6 weeks

In the final phase, interns undertake a small **inquiry project** based on children's emerging interests.

Interns:

- design a provocation or learning experience
- observe how children engage with it
- document the learning process
- reflect on their role as educators

Interns compile a **professional portfolio** that includes:

- observation reflections
- documentation samples
- provocation planning
- child study insights
- how space influences learning
- how materials support inquiry
- how educators intentionally design environments
- personal reflections on the Reggio approach

The program concludes with a **presentation and discussion with the Circles & Cycles team**.

Mentorship & Reflection

Throughout the internship, interns participate in regular:

- coaching sessions
- reflective discussions
- feedback meetings with facilitators

These conversations help interns develop the habits of **thoughtful observation, collaboration, and reflective teaching**.

Outcomes

By the end of the internship, participants will have developed:

- strong observation and reflection skills
- an understanding of Reggio-inspired pedagogy
- experience designing provocations and learning environments
- practical facilitation experience with young children
- skills in educational documentation

Most importantly, interns will begin developing their identity as **reflective educators and lifelong learners**.