

Q: What are some of the newer teaching trends in early childhood development?

A: "In the past, preschools have focused mostly on social activities," says Jane Brown, director of the early childhood program at Hathaway Brown School. "That's great, except that it shows very minimal academic benefits. And on the other end of the



Jane Brown

pendulum swing is a very direct instructional model of trying to teach primarily reading and math skills that are essentially a kindergarten curriculum. That also doesn't work. What

has emerged as most effective is a play-based approach that also incorporates clear benchmarks for learning aligned to research standards. It's very inquiry-based, because the teachers are going to take what the children know and what they're asking and extend that."