

Montessori, Waldorf, Aistear and more

Complete guide to pedagogical methods and how the Pitanga Kids App uses them

por Fernanda Lucio | Pitanga Kids

Why does pedagogy matter?

For centuries, teaching meant transferring knowledge from adult to child. Modern pedagogy has turned this idea upside down. Today we know that children are protagonists of their own learning, and the adult's role is to create the right conditions for learning to happen naturally and respectfully (Montessori, 1912; Piaget, 1973).

Each methodology is a different way of seeing the child. There is no perfect methodology — there is the one that best responds to each child's moment and personality. This is exactly why the Pitanga Kids App works with multiple methodologies.

Montessori — Autonomy and Prepared Environment

Created by Italian doctor Maria Montessori in the early 20th century, this methodology believes the child has within them all resources needed to learn, as long as the environment supports them. The adult prepares the environment and observes; the child freely chooses, works at their own pace and learns by doing (Montessori, 1912).

Research shows children in Montessori environments develop greater autonomy, concentration and intrinsic motivation. Connection with nature is essential — Montessori wrote about ecology in education as early as 1912.

In the Pitanga Kids App: Montessori activities stimulate autonomy, concentration and practical learning — perfect for children who love exploring independently.

Waldorf — Imagination, Rhythm and Integral Development

Developed by Rudolf Steiner, Waldorf pedagogy sees the child as a whole being — body, soul and spirit. It deeply values imagination, the arts, nature and rhythm. There is no rush: each capacity should emerge at the right moment, naturally.

Contact with nature strengthens sensory perception and is integral to the child's emotional formation. The deepest learning happens when reason and sensitivity are in balance — the essence of Waldorf (Edukante, 2026).

In the Pitanga Kids App: Waldorf activities bring art, nature and narrative as learning tools — nurturing the child's imagination and inner world.

Aistear — The Irish Journey Through Play

Aistear (Irish word for "journey") is Ireland's national early childhood curriculum framework for children from birth to 6 years. It is based on robust research recognizing play as the most natural form of learning at this stage (NCCA, 2009).

Aistear organizes learning into four themes: Wellbeing, Identity and Belonging, Communication, and Exploring and Thinking. Studies show significant benefits in social, linguistic and cognitive development in child-led environments (Tandfonline, 2021).

In the Pitanga Kids App: Aistear inspires activities that start from the child's interests, strengthen identity and develop language through play.

Reggio Emilia — The Child has One Hundred Languages

Paint with the colors your heart chooses!
"Children are the color and light of our lives"

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Born in post-WWII Italy by pedagogue Loris Malaguzzi, this approach sees the child as "rich, strong and powerful" — capable and full of potential. The child has "one hundred languages" to express and understand the world: art, music, movement, words (Malaguzzi, 1993).

The environment is called the "third educator." Learning documentation is central. Activities emerge from children's interests; the adult is co-researcher. Research shows this approach promotes rich learning that stimulates creativity and autonomy.

In the Pitanga Kids App: Reggio Emilia inspires artistic and creative expression activities where the child is always the protagonist.

STEAM — Science, Technology, Art and Mathematics

STEAM combines Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics in an interdisciplinary way. It emerged in the US in the early 21st century and adapts perfectly to early childhood education, stimulating curiosity, creativity and problem-solving from an early age.

Inspired also by Reggio Emilia and Project-Based Learning, STEAM promotes organic learning through sensory experiences, construction and investigation of natural phenomena (Alphabetz, 2024).

In the Pitanga Kids App: STEAM activities combine scientific curiosity with creative expression — stimulating critical thinking in a playful and accessible way.

Social-Emotional Learning and Nature Education

Social-Emotional Learning is based on research by Goleman (1995) and Salovey & Mayer (1997) on emotional intelligence. Children who learn to identify, express and manage their emotions develop healthier relationships, better academic performance and greater wellbeing (Ayrton Senna Institute, 2023).

Nature Education believes contact with the natural environment is essential for healthy child development. Research shows outdoor play strengthens sensory perception, reduces stress and promotes creativity and connection with the world.

In the Pitanga Kids App: these approaches inspire activities that develop emotions, empathy and connection with nature — essential for the child's integral development.

How the Pitanga Kids App brings it all together

The Pitanga Kids App was developed with a clear vision: no single methodology can capture the full complexity of a child. The app's artificial intelligence selects and combines elements from different methodologies to create unique, personalized and pedagogically grounded activities for each child.

In the Jardim Plan, the AI automatically chooses the best approach. In the Pitanga Plan, you can choose the methodology that best suits your child's moment and personality.

Because every child is unique. And the most powerful learning is the one that respects who they are.

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