Syllabus

Course Overview

Learn how your course work aligns with the P-12 program's vision to support your personal and professional growth.

Launch Presentation | Transcript

The way in which we care for and educate our young children from birth through the age of eight has changed quite dramatically over the last few decades. From the many longitudinal research studies that examine the multitude of social and cultural issues to the biological studies examining the brain, we have a much greater understanding of the complexities surrounding early child development.

Today's early childhood educational environment consists not only of physical elements related to safety and hygiene, but also has to allow for emotional and cognitive development opportunities that are in line with developmentally appropriate practices. The environment should allow children of all levels and needs to freely explore and learn but still adhere to necessary safety and health requirements. The diversity of all children, families, and teachers should be acknowledged and celebrated in respectful ways, and assessments of children should be appropriate to the age and development of the child. The environment must support these multiple facets of early child development and education.

In this course, you will examine various theories and practices related to the early childhood environment. You will also expand your knowledge of industry standards related to such organizations as the National Association of Young Children (NAEYC), and the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS). In addition, you will reach out to various professionals and students in the field and have opportunities to practice and hone your skills and ideas.

Access to a Classroom and Interviews

This course emphasizes learning beyond the courseroom and getting out into the early childhood education environment. Thus, you will need to have access to an early childhood education classroom and to a teacher who is willing to be interviewed. You will also need access to a child (either your own or a friend's) with whom you can conduct a one-on-one interaction.

Important Message About External Exam Requirement

The Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exam (MTLE) is an important program requirement for Capella learners who enrolled in the MS Reading and Literacy or Early Childhood Education programs, July 2012 and beyond. The MTLE serves as an external validation assessment, and learners must successfully pass the exam to ensure that they have gained the necessary knowledge prior to entering clinical practice.

It is ideal that you take the MTLE immediately following your last specialization course, so the information is fresh in your mind and you have the opportunity to re-take the exam, if needed. Your official passing score report will be a component of the graduation audit and will be needed as part of program completion.

Please note that Early Childhood Education learners are only required to take the **Content-Area Tests in Early Childhood Education (Birth to Grade 3)** and **not** the Pedagogy test. The Content-Area Test in Early Childhood Education (Birth to Grade 3) includes two subtests **(Test Codes 020 and 021)**. Candidates must take and pass both subtests to apply for practicum, to meet program requirements, and/or to qualify for a Minnesota license in this field. If you accidentally take the Pedagogy: Early Childhood Education (Birth to Grade 3) test, this test will not be accepted toward graduation and you will have to complete and pass the Content-Area Tests in Early Childhood Education (Birth to Grade 3).

Please read the MTLE document, Minnesota Teacher Licensure Exam – FAQs.

Course Competencies   **(Read Only)**

To successfully complete this course, you will be expected to:

1   Design a concept for an early childhood learning environment to meet the needs of young children.

2   Create supportive and nurturing learning environments.

3   Actively promote the child's responsibility for learning.

4   Create a secure, welcoming environment in which diverse students feel comfortable and thrive.

5   Use assessments appropriate to the development of the individual child.

6   Promote one's own and colleagues' continuous professional development.

7   Engage in inquiry sufficient to generate further questioning and knowledge.

Course Prerequisites

This course requires access to educational settings, programs, and/or practitioners with a focus on children from birth to age 8. Prerequisite(s): ED5405. Cannot be fulfilled by transfer except by coursework from Minnesota schools with approved licensure programs.

Syllabus >> Course Materials

Required

The materials listed below are required to complete the learning activities in this course.

Integrated Materials

Many of your required books are available via the VitalSource Bookshelf link in the courseroom, located in your Course Tools. Registered learners in a Resource Kit program can access these materials using the courseroom link on the Friday before the course start date. Some materials are available

only in hard-copy format or by using an access code. For these materials, you will receive an email with further instructions for access. Visit the Course Materials page on Campus for more information.

Book

Berk, L. E., & Meyers, A. B. (2016). *Infants, children, and adolescents* (8th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson. ISBN: 9780133936735.

Sayre, N., & Gallagher, J. D. (2001). *The young child and the environment: Issues related to health, nutrition, safety, and physical activity.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon. ISBN: 9780205302932.

Library

The following required readings are provided in the Capella University Library or linked directly in this course. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use Journal and Book Locator. Refer to the Journal and Book Locator library guide to learn how to use this tool.

- Hedrick, K. (2005). Staff development for differentiation must be made to measure. *Journal of Staff Development, 26*(4), 32–37.
- Love, J. M., Harrison, L., Sagi-Schwartz, A., van IJzendoorn, M. H., Ross, C., Ungerer, J. A., Raikes, H., Brady-Smith, C., Boller, K., Brooks-Gunn, J., Constantine, J., Kisker, E. E., Paulsell, D., & Chazan-Cohen, R. (2003). Child care quality matters: How conclusions may vary with context. *Child Development, 74*(4), 1021–1033.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- Classroom Quality Checklist [PDF]. Retrieved from https://www.nj.gov/education/ece/checkups/checklist.pdf
- National Association for the Education of Young Children. (n.d.). NAEYC Initial Licensure Standards. Retrieved May 2011 from https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/higher-ed/standards
- National Association for the Education of Young Children. (n.d.). Retrieved February 2008 from http://www.naeyc.org/
- Office of Head Start. (n.d.). History of head start. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ohs/about/history-of-head-start
- Zero to Three. (n.d.). Retrieved February 2008 from http://www.zerotothree.org/site/PageServer

Suggested

The following materials are recommended to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course, but they are aligned to course activities and assessments and are highly recommended for your use.

Optional

The following optional materials are offered to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) https://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html
- U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (n.d.). Summary of the HIPAA privacy rule https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/privacy/laws-regulations/index.html
- Wisconsin Medical Society: Savant Syndrome. null

Projects

Project ❯❯ Room Design

Project Overview

This final project is an opportunity for you to reflect and utilize the discussions and previous assignments in this course as you apply your learning to creating a room that could be utilized in an early childhood setting. It is a time for you to apply your knowledge and skills and create your own vision of a room that would demonstrate many of the necessary elements important in an ECE environment.

As you have previously done in this course, you may choose which age group you are most interested in, from birth to age eight years. You should also define the educational concept or concepts you want your room to embody. Think back to the one-on-one interaction you conducted with a child in Unit 3, the center design and materials you developed in Unit 5 and, of course, the evaluation of an early childhood environment that you visited in Unit 7. What aspects of those programs do you think best exemplified developmentally appropriate practices and research-based learning? What elements are vital to ensuring that the room meets state standards regarding safety, and also meets discipline standards such as those outlined by the National Association of the Education for Young Children?

You will utilize a PowerPoint template to visually design your room. You will then to write a paper that explains and justifies your choices in the room, including practices that would create an environment that supports early childhood learning. You will want to place this project in your portfolio as an example of how well you are able to apply and utilize what you are learning in this program. It will be a visible example of your skills.

For this project you will:

1. Identify for yourself the concepts you want your room to demonstrate.
2. Use the Room Design Activity PowerPoint template to build the room you require for the age group you have chosen. Look at your own state guidelines or NAEYC for help with this. Ensure you have enough room for the number of children and teachers you desire and are allowed for by state mandates.
3. Look at the choices of learning centers, safety equipment, materials, and furnishings that are available to you. Select and position them in ways you feel are appropriate.
4. Save your Room Design Activity PowerPoint.
5. Use your Room Design as the basis of your paper. Write a 4–6-page report in which you describe and justify your room, including:
6. Concepts and Goals.
   ◦ Define the educational concepts you want your room to demonstrate and the goals your environment will support.
   ◦ Define the children your room will be serving, including their age and number.

7. Physical Space.
   ◦ Describe and justify the size of room, teacher to child ratio, safety additions such as fire exits, furnishings such as cribs or desks, number and type of learning centers, and any other elements you believe necessary in setting up a room for this age of child.

8. Practices.
   ◦ Expectations and modeling of respectful treatment of others.
   ◦ Support of cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity.
   ◦ Engaging students in their own learning through participation in a variety of experiences and stimuli.
   ◦ Ongoing assessment and monitoring of environment.

Use your classroom observations and course readings to support your justifications for the choices you made.

- **Style and References:** The project must be a scholarly piece of work with a cover page, APA style, citations, and references, and be free of grammatical errors.
- **Length:** The project must be 4–6 pages in length, double-spaced, not including cover page and references.
- **Visual Room Design:** The project must also include your visual representation of the room.

Unit 1 ≫ Early Childhood Education

Introduction

May I join you in the doghouse, Rover?
I wish to retire till the party's over.
Since three o'clock I've done my best
To entertain each tiny guest. My conscience now I've left behind me,
And if they want me, let them find me.
I blew their bubbles, I sailed their boats,

I kept them from each other's throats. I told them tales of magic lands,
I took them out to wash their hands.
I sorted their rubbers and tied their laces,
I wiped their noses and dried their faces. Of similarities there's lots
Twixt tiny tots and Hottentots.
I've earned repose to heal the ravages
Of these angelic-looking savages. Oh, progeny playing by itself
Is a lonely little elf,
But progeny in roistering batches
Would drive St. Francis from here to Natchez. Shunned are the games a parent proposes,
They prefer to squirt each other with hoses,
Their playmates are their natural foemen
And they like to poke each other's abdomen. Their joy needs another woe's to cushion it,
Say a puddle, and someone littler to push in it.
They observe with glee the ballistic results
Of ice cream with spoons for catapults, And inform the assembly with tears and glares
That everyone's presents are better than theirs.
Oh, little women and little men,
Someday I hope to love you again, But not till after the party's over,
So give me the key to the doghouse, Rover. (Nash, 1975, p. 85)

— *Children's Party* by Ogden Nash

Welcome to the world of young children. Our youngest humans are at one moment able to fill us with a sense of joy and amazement only to quickly have us tearing our hair out in exasperation and frustration. However, the more we learn and understand what drives these little minds and bodies, the better equipped we are to handle the hair-tearing moments. In this first unit, you examine the multitude of roles and jobs involved with educating infants through grade three (about eight years old) children. You also examine one of the leading theories in early childhood education (ECE), ecological systems theory, which takes the perspective that each individual is influenced by a variety of factors in his or her environment.

As you start to learn about the big picture of ECE, it is also important to self-assess your own strengths and weaknesses. We all bring a variety of past learning experiences to our current jobs. Understanding how those shape our current views helps us know if these are still the most current or appropriate reactions and behaviors to use in an ECE environment. As you read these chapters, think about your own plans within this career area and how you connect to it.

Reference

Nash, O. (1975). *I wouldn't have missed it: Selected poems.* Boston, MA: Little, Brown.

Learning Activities

u01s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your textbooks and the Internet to complete the following:

- In Berk and Meyers, read the first half of Chapter 1, pages 3–14. This chapter gives an overview of the depth and breadth that the focus of early childhood education covers. The age range for early childhood studies begins in infancy (and some would say prenatally) and runs through the age of eight years. Given how different education is for an infant compared to an eight-year old, explore the many aspects of what early childhood learning environments include (infant programs, head start K–3, public schools, and so on). What are some of the professional roles available and what does it take to be qualified to work in these roles?
- In Sayre and Gallagher, read Chapter 1, pages 3–15. This reading builds on your knowledge of early childhood environments, but addresses it from a physical and health aspect. It also introduces you to ecological systems theory, which is very important in this program.
- Watch Ecological Systems Theory. This interactive graphic will help you better understand this theory.

Capella Resources

Review the following Capella resources:

- Review Capella's Online Writing Center module on APA Style and Formatting, and browse the Writing Center's other resources. Your work in this course requires use of APA style.
- Review the module on Finding Articles in a Library Database to familiarize yourself with this process. You will use Capella's online library to conduct research for this course.

Preparation

In Unit 3, you will submit your plan and report of a one-on-one interaction you designed and then conducted with a child. Look ahead and begin thinking about the design of such an interaction. Also plan who you will conduct the interaction with; for instance, with a friend's child or with your own.

u01s2 - Preparation

Read the Room Design course project description to learn the requirements for your final project.

u01s3 - Your Online ePortfolio

Online ePortfolios serve two key purposes: 1) to support learning and reflection, and 2) to be used as a showcase tool. Your learning journey can be documented, and ePortfolios contribute to lifelong learning and growth through reflection and sharing. Online ePortfolios can also be shared with employers and peers to present artifacts that demonstrate your accomplishments at Capella.

Using ePortfolio to Prepare for Your Capstone

Your program may culminate in a capstone course. At that time you may be required to show evidence of your learning throughout the program by referring to multiple assessments that you have created. You will be telling a story about your learning throughout the program using artifacts you have collected during many of these courses.

Using ePortfolio to Build Your Career

As you are preparing to tell your story in the professional world, leverage your ePortfolio artifacts to demonstrate the knowledge and competencies you have gained through your program in professional conversations, performance reviews, and interviews.

To do that, reflect on the knowledge and skills you have gained from your courses and the elements you have put in your portfolio, along with how you have already applied these things to your professional life or how you might apply them in the future.

Next, create your story or talking points to tell your professional story.

Saving Your Documents to ePortfolio

You will need a place to store your documents in an organized fashion so that you can access them at a later date. Do not rely on the courseroom to store your assignments for you as you will lose access to the courseroom after you have completed the course. Capella uses a cloud-based portfolio platform to facilitate your organization of the artifacts you create throughout your program.

To make an online portfolio useful, it is essential that it is organized clearly and that important files of any format are accessible. Read the Online ePortfolio Guidelines [PDF] to ensure you set up your online portfolio correctly. For more information on ePortfolio visit the Campus ePortfolio page.

Privacy Statement

Capella complies with privacy laws designed to protect the privacy of personal information. While you may voluntarily share your own information publicly, you are obligated to protect the personal information of others that may be associated with your academic or professional development. Before sharing information and material in any ePortfolio that is set up to be shared externally to your program at Capella, please consider privacy obligations in relation to protected populations who may be included or referenced in your academic or clinical work. Refer to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and/or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) if you have specific questions or concerns about your choices.

u01d1 - Work Environments

Read the Discussion Participation Scoring Guide to learn how the instructor will evaluate your discussion participation throughout this course.

Introduce yourself, and then describe your current workplace or the place where you would like to work. Based on the information you obtained in this unit's study activity, describe how this workplace relates to early childhood education.

Response Guidelines

Look at the variety of places and work environments your peers are posting about, and respond to at least two learners who work or would like to work in a job similar to yours. Comment on what you relate to in what they describe or what strikes you as different about their workplace.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u01d2 - Skills and Traits

From the initial readings, it is obvious that those working in ECE need a variety of skills. Think about your own personal qualities and examine how those skills and traits can apply or be helpful to the necessary knowledge required to teach in the early childhood environment.

Response Guidelines

Review the posts of other learners and examine how similar or dissimilar their skills and backgrounds are to yours. Respond to at least two learners by reflecting on their post as compared to your own. Add anything else you can think of that ties their skills to those needed for early childhood education.
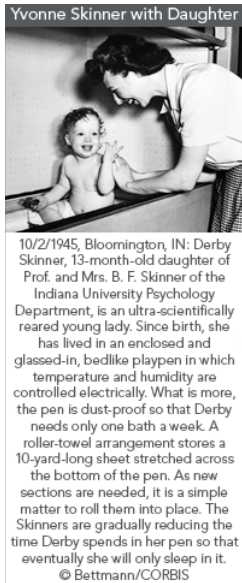
Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 2 ➤➤ Individual Differences and Theoretical Approaches

 Introduction

Yvonne Skinner with Daughter

10/2/1945, Bloomington, IN: Derby Skinner, 13-month-old daughter of Prof. and Mrs. B. F. Skinner of the Indiana University Psychology Department, is an ultra-scientifically reared young lady. Since birth, she has lived in an enclosed and glassed-in, bedlike playpen in which temperature and humidity are controlled electrically. What is more, the pen is dust-proof so that Derby needs only one bath a week. A roller-towel arrangement stores a 10-yard-long sheet stretched across the bottom of the pen. As new sections are needed, it is a simple matter to roll them into place. The Skinners are gradually reducing the time Derby spends in her pen so that eventually she will only sleep in it.
© Bettmann/CORBIS

What do you think of this experiment based on the leading thinking of the time? Can you imagine teaching in a school with rows of glassed-in units filled with naked babies and toddlers waving at each other? While slightly science fiction in nature, it is actually a vision from our theoretical past, and from what we know, only one child (B. F. Skinner's daughter) actually spent prolonged time in one of these climate controlled pens.

It is important to realize how our beliefs and practices of infant and child development are shaped by the leading theories of the time and by our society. Some, such as the Skinner pen, were short-lived and did not stand the test of time (although behaviorism, which B. F. Skinner did study and write about, is still a strong theoretical perspective in psychology today). Others have shown to be more tested and worthy of continued use in today's world. Socio-emotional theories—such as John Bowlby's attachment theory and Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory—are vital to understanding how young children's emotions and feelings develop within the context of their own society. Cognitive theories—such as Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development and Lev Vygotsky's theory of social development—are necessary to understanding how children's mental processes unfold. These theories also allow us to shape learning experiences to better match the stage a child is at (or near, as in the case of Vygotsky).

Many more theories are available to help us create suitable and developmentally appropriate learning environments. Understanding which ones have stood the test of time across multiple societies gives us more evidence of which should be continued and encouraged.

Your goal as you read this week is to examine the variety of approaches and theories in this field and start to identify where your own beliefs best fit.

Reference

Ormrod, J. (2004). *Human learning* (4th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Learning Activities

u02s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your textbooks to complete the following:

- In Berk and Meyers, read the second half of Chapter 1, pages 14–47. This chapter introduces you to different aspects of child development and the current theories that drive our ideas in the field.
- In Sayre and Gallagher, read Chapter 2, pages 17–36. This reading gives an introduction to the idea of developmentally appropriate philosophy, which is vital to understanding and is greatly tied in to the other readings concerning current theories.

Video

Click **Launch Presentation** to watch the Videatives video titled *Early Counting Part 1: Counting to Determine Quantity* (6 minutes, 29 seconds). In this video, four-year-olds work with their teacher to assign prices to cartons of eggs while exploring size, more, less, and other mathematical aspects. Viewing this kind of interaction may be helpful while you start to develop your One-on-One Interaction Plan in this unit.

Then, review the accompanying Videatives Classroom Clips document and examine some of the issues that are raised.

Early Counting Part 1: Counting to Determine Quantity

u02s2 - Preparation - One-on-One Interaction Plan

Design an assessment, play, or interaction activity that allows you to interact with a child age eight or younger in a one-on-one situation. Create a plan that allows you to demonstrate and see one of the theories from this week's readings in action (for example, Piaget, Gardner, Vygotsky, Skinner). Your interaction should help promote the child's role in directing his or her learning.

In this unit, you will design your one-on-one interaction activity and share it with peers in this week's discussion. Then, you will interact with the child and write your results and reflection to submit in Unit 3.

u02d1 - Theoretical Perspectives

You have been reading about various theoretical perspectives and have watched the video about one of these. Choose one of the perspectives appropriate to early childhood and explain how you would utilize these ideas in your own ECE environment. Why does this resonate with you so well? Describe the pros and cons of the theory.

Response Guidelines

Review the posts of other learners and gain a sense of which perspective is resonating most with your peers. Is there one that stands out as being the favorite? Discuss this with at least one other learner who has chosen the same theorist as you.

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u02d2 - One-on-One Interaction Feedback

Share your One-on-One Interaction Plan with peers and use feedback to adapt your plan as necessary. Include the following in your post:

- The theory you are demonstrating.
- The goal of the activity.
- How the activity addresses the child's role in directing his or her learning.

Response Guidelines

Review other learners' plans and provide them with feedback and guidance. Give substantive feedback to at least one other learner, including how the activities might be improved to better address the three bullet points above.

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Introduction

The five-second rule is the idea that bacteria will not transfer to food if the food is picked up off the floor within five seconds. How many among us have dropped food on the floor and wondered if that rule was true and if it was true for that particular food type and flooring? I remember once seeing a mother pick up a piece of luncheon meat her child had dropped at an indoor play area snack bar and hand it back to the child to eat. The meat had been on the floor for a good 5 to 10 minutes; certainly not 5 seconds!

Did you know that this rule, though, has been scientifically tested? Sure enough, researchers at Clemson University recently tested the survival and transfer rates of salmonella bacteria from wood, tile, or carpet onto bologna and bread. The findings were not reassuring for anyone who has pushed this idea, as the study showed bacteria can survive and cross-contaminate other foods for up to four weeks on dry surfaces and transferred almost immediately on contact.

So what does this mean for early childhood learning environments? Well, simply that this study, along with a large amount of data we currently have, shows the importance of understanding health and hygiene factors related to ECE. Your readings this week address safety from various angles, including the environment, infection, and nutrition. Understanding aspects of good nutrition is, of course, vital, not only in knowing not to pick up bologna off the floor for young children, but also why bologna is probably not a good choice to actually feed to young children in the first place.

Reference

Dawson, P., Han, I., Cox, M., Black, C., & Simmons, L. (2007). Residence time and food contact time effects on transfer of Salmonella Typhimurium from tile, wood and carpet: Testing the five-second rule. *Journal of Applied Microbiology 102* (4), 945-953.

Learning Activities

u03s1 - Studies

Reading

In Sayre and Gallagher, read Chapter 4, pages 69–92 and Chapter 8, pages 153–177. These chapters help expand your knowledge about health and safety in ECE, specifically as it relates to physical education, nutrition, environmental safety, and infection control.

Optional – Reading and Web Site

- In Sayre and Gallagher, read Chapters 3, pages 41–67 and Chapter 5, pages 92–115.

u03a1 - One-on-One Interaction Plan

Design an assessment, play, or interaction activity that allows you to interact with a child age eight or younger in a one-on-one situation. Create a plan that allows you to demonstrate and see one of the theories from last week's readings in action (for example, Piaget, Gardner, Vygotsky, Skinner). Your interaction should help promote the child's role in directing his or her learning.

In Unit 2, you were tasked with designing your one-on-one interaction activity and sharing it with peers. This week, you will interact with the child and then write your results and reflection for submission at the end of the unit. Include in your reflection your analysis of the communication techniques you used during the interaction, such as verbal, nonverbal, and listening techniques, and how these interactions led to improved learning for the child.

Write a 2–4-page paper in which you present three sections:

1. Describe the interaction and intended goals, linkintextg them back to the theory you intended the interaction to demonstrate.
2. Describe the implementation of the interaction and the child's reaction to it.
3. Analyze the interaction and describe what worked well to improve the child's self-directed learning, what did not work well, and what you would adapt if doing it again. Remember to always tie this back to your theory.

To protect confidentiality, please do not mention real names of those with whom you conduct the activity.

📖 **Portfolio Prompt:** You are required to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio.

u03d1 - Strategies

Suggest two strategies for assessing physical development and two strategies for increasing a child's interest in physical activity. How would you incorporate these strategies into an overall plan based on improving motor skills as well as coordination, strength, and endurance?

Response Guidelines

Review the postings of other learners to see the variety of strategies. In your responses to two other learners, comment on what you like about their strategies and add any ideas you have about how they could be improved.

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 4 ❯❯ Developmentally Appropriate Practices and Resources

Introduction

Mother and Son Playing

BEIJING - JULY 23: A mother and her son play with a 2008 Beijing Olympics toy during an animation fair on July 23, 2007, in Beijing, China. (Photo by Guang Niu/Getty Images)

When was the last time you played? Not just handed a toy to a child and watched him or her handle it, but really got down on the floor or sat at a table and used the toys or materials yourself to play. Perhaps you have adult toys to play with; musical instruments, art material, fun cooking equipment, or craft supplies. Try to remember the feeling in which you last just lost yourself in this play and time seemed to stand still. Children are very good at doing this, and often become totally engrossed in their activities. We call these activities play, but they are actually deep learning times (shh, do not tell the children).

With adults, we often do not acknowledge this immersion into an activity as being play. But it has been identified as an adult state of mind and described as the concept of flow by Mihly Cskszentmihlyi. Flow involves intrinsic motivation (that which comes from inside us) and can be thought of as being in the zone or in the groove. Time seems to both fly past and yet remain static. We often are lost in the activity and look up only to be shocked at how much time has passed. Of course, this idea of flow is an old one for young children who practice it frequently, but it also has roots in religion. Zen Buddhists have long recognized this need to connect to the moment of what you are doing. And now flow is expanding onward, and we are seeing it applied to video gaming. A search for flow will uncover a Flash online game that could pull plenty of people into its zone. Just do not use this as an excuse for not completing the coursework!

Learning Activities

u04s1 - Studies

Reading

In Berk and Meyers, read Chapter 9, pages 310–354. This chapter discusses cognitive development in Early Childhood to include the importance of play and introduces curriculum ideas and ways to approach learning in the ECE environment. As you read, pay attention to how these approaches acknowledge and integrate the role of children's ideas, needs, and desires.

Video

Click **Launch Presentation** to watch the Videatives video titled *Early Symbolization: A Case of Learning Through Pretense* (1 minute, 54 seconds). In this video, you will watch four-year-old girls play with dolls while pretending to be a doctor and patient. As you watch, try to see how children's everyday play reflects real-life learning activities and how children communicate with each other about these events.

Then, review the accompanying Videatives Classroom Clips document and reflect on the many things that are happening in this short segment. Play is amazing work!

Course Resources

Early Symbolization: A Case of Learning Through Pretense

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u04s2 - Preparation - Center Design and Materials Report

Create a list of materials needed for one center or area of a classroom that could be utilized in an early learning environment. Research your list, using your course materials and the Internet, justifying why the materials are needed and where to purchase them, and create a budget that will be needed to accomplish this. Describe what educational concept and goals these materials help achieve.

As you create your center, keep in mind issues related to developmentally appropriate practices and how your center or area can contribute to an environment in which diverse students feel comfortable and thrive.

You will be asked to share this center design with an administrator in the ECE field and gather input and feedback as to whether your design would be useful or practical.

Then, you will create a report that includes your plan and the administrator's feedback. The report should be 2–4 pages in length and written in scholarly and APA style. It will be submitted as an assignment in Unit 5.

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u04d1 - Role of Play

Life must be lived as play."

— Plato

What is play? Why is it important in the lives of children, and what role should it hold in education? How can play help promote diversity? Use this unit's video and readings to help you in this discussion.

Response Guidelines

How do other learners feel about play? Can you see diverse opinions in our beliefs about this activity? Respond to at least one other learner, discussing your commonalities.

Reference

Balkin, J., & Noveck, B. (2006). *The state of play: Law, games, and virtual worlds.* New York: New York University Press, p. 85.

Course Resources

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u04d2 - ECE Programs and Your Own Beliefs

Engaging in professional development involves exploring different approaches and seeing how they fit or challenge your beliefs. Explore one of the ECE approaches or programs such as Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Waldorf, etc. . Find at least one Web site that elaborates on this approach. Then, describe the basic ideas and philosophy behind the program or approach and why it resonates with or challenges your own beliefs.

Response Guidelines

Review the approaches described by your peers. Choose one learner's post that covers a different program than your own, and respond in depth to that person, comparing and contrasting their presentation to your own.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u04d3 - Field Experience Requirements

As you know, your ECE portfolio must show that you have gained field experiences with the three age groups (infant/toddler, preschool, and early elementary) as well as experiences in settings providing diversity in socioeconomics, race, and special needs. Please take this time to discuss how you have met this requirement so far and what your plans are for fully meeting this requirement by the end of your program.

Response Guidelines

Review the plans of other learners and provide them with encouragement and guidance. Give substantive feedback to at least one other learner.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 5 ❯❯ Developmentally Appropriate Practices for the Early Years

Introduction

More than 55 percent of mothers with infants under the age of one year are in the workforce and utilize nonparental childcare of some sort (Driscoll & Nagel, 2007).With this many babies needing infant care, priority on discovering what is the most appropriate type is vital. While many parents do struggle (as you may find out in your interviews) with finding infant care, for the most part, families are quite lucky in the United States to have access to various types of care.

Many children in countries around the world do not have this luxury, and are often in less than optimum situations. In some countries, older siblings care for children, but these child-nurses are often still very young themselves. If the child-nurse can take the infant to the mother's workplace (usually the fields), then the child has a better chance of surviving (DeLoache & Gottlieb, 2000). In other countries, such as in South America, babies may be left at home while the mother does outside menial work, and often do not eat all day. It is thought that about 11 percent of these babies die (DeLoach & Gottlieb, 2000).

The picture represents normal child care procedures for many children in the world. While we may think this is very far removed from U.S. institutions, we have to remember that families who are new to this country and are from cultures dissimilar to our own may have different beliefs about what is

necessary in child care. We have to find ways to bridge these gaps, being respectful of cultural differences while still maintaining developmentally appropriate practices.

Panama City, Panama: Two babies sleep in a poor neighborhood in Panama City October, 21, 2006. (Photo ORLANDO SIERRA/AFP/Getty Images)

References

DeLoach, J., & Gottlieb, A. (2000). *A world of babies: Imagined childcare guides for seven societies.* Cambridge University Press.

Driscoll, A., & Nagel, N. G. (2008). *Early childhood education, birth – 8: The world of children, Families and Educators.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Learning Activities

u05s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your textbooks and the Internet to complete the following:

- In Berk and Meyers, read Part 3: Infancy and Toddlerhood, pages 158–282.
- Read Love and colleagues' 2003 "Child Care Quality Matters: How Conclusions May Vary with Context" from *Child Development*, volume 74, issue 4, pages 1021–1033. This article examines aspects of the huge study still underway by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, looking at a wide range of issues that could be affected by out-of-home care for young children.

Video

Click **Launch Presentation** to watch the Videatives video titled *Early Communication: A Drumming Dialogue Between Toddler and Adult* (1 minute, 36 seconds). You will see a simple but valuable learning interaction between a one-year-old child and her teacher as they tap a drum in a call and response pattern.

Then, review the accompanying Videatives Classroom Clips document and see the depth of learning that happened in this respectful interaction. The infant was playing with toys that may not have initially seemed like a baby toy (the adult drum). As you think about your materials list in your Center Design and Materials Report, you may want to think how you can expand upon traditional age group material (when appropriate).

Preparation

In Unit 7, you will be asked to submit an observation and assessment of an early childhood classroom environment. Begin making arrangements to conduct such an observation.

Optional

If you have time, informally interview a mother or father who has had to find infant or toddler childcare in the past. Where and how did they locate the caregiver? What was their experience in finding this care? What was the care experience like, and what would their recommendation to other new parents be? This will provide you with perspective on parents' experiences with childcare.

Course Resources

Early Communication: A Drumming Dialogue Between Toddler and Adult

u05a1 - Center Design and Materials Report

In Unit 4, you were tasked with creating a list of materials needed for one center or area of a classroom that could be utilized in an early learning environment.

You researched your list using your course materials and the Internet, justifying why the materials are needed and where to purchase them, and created a budget that will be needed to accomplish this. You described what educational concept and goals these materials help achieve.

As you created your center, you were asked to keep in mind issues related to developmentally appropriate practices and how your center or area can contribute to an environment in which diverse students feel comfortable and thrive.

In this unit, please share this center design with an administrator in the ECE field and gather input and feedback as to whether your design would be useful or practical.

Next, you will create a report that includes your plan and the administrator feedback. The report should be 2–4 pages in length and written in scholarly and APA style. Submit the report in this unit in the assignment area.

u05d1 - Infant and Toddler Care Options

More than 55 percent of mothers with infants under the age of one year are in the workforce and utilize nonparental childcare of some sort (Driscoll & Nagel, 2007). Explore some of the issues related to finding infant or toddler care. What options are available? What can caregivers do to help families feel secure when leaving their infants with them?

Response Guidelines

Review the posts by your peers and respond in depth to at least one learner who had options and ideas that helped expand your own thinking in this area.

Reference

Driscoll, A., & Nagel, N. G. (2008). Early childhood education, birth – 8: The world of children, Families and Educators. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 6 ≫ Developmentally Appropriate Practices for the Later Years

 Introduction

It has become quite an accepted belief that we all have varying learning styles and perhaps are blessed with different or indeed multiple intelligences. Howard Gardner was one of the first to put these ideas into a clear and succinct theory—the theory of multiple intelligences (MI theory). Gardner's work focuses on an original list of eight intelligences, including linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. Understanding each of these and how they can be applied to the learning environment can be very helpful in curriculum planning.

An interesting support to Gardner's ideas is the research he looked at regarding children who are autistic savants. Savants often have very heightened intelligence or ability in one specific area, such as art or math, while lacking basic abilities, such as reading. Some savants even have mental or physical disabilities. One line of thought is that a trauma upset the brain, shifting normal intellect around and allowing a heightened intelligence to come through. You may want to look at the Wisconsin Medical Society's Web page on savant syndrome for some good video examples demonstrating various people who are autistic savants.

As you read more about MI theory, think about how it can apply in all classrooms and help children of all ages and abilities demonstrate their personal and inherent abilities. Does the class you visit and evaluate address any of these intelligences specifically?

You may also want to ponder your own abilities and see your own strengths.

Keep these ideas in mind as you get ready to visit a classroom and use a checklist to assess the environment. How does the teacher address (or not address) MI theory?

Learning Activities

u06s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your textbooks and the Internet to complete the following:

- In Berk and Meyers, read Chapter 8, pages 284–308, and Chapter 10, pages . These chapters examine physical, emotional, and social development in ECE.
- Read NAEYC Initial Licensure Standards, pages 1–31. This gives an overview of the field's leading standards and will allow you to see how all the theories you have been learning about are reflected in this national organization's goals.

Optional – Web Site

Wisconsin Medical Society: Savant Syndrome.

u06s2 - Preparation - Field Observation

Using a checklist that allows you to assess the use of developmentally appropriate practices and materials, spend some time in an early childhood education environment evaluating what you see happening.

You may search for an existing checklist used in state or national evaluations, or create your own from existing ones. Remember to focus on the environment, which includes physical set-up and how the teacher sets expectations and models respectful treatment or how the teacher encourages students to understand ideas from different perspectives.

The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) [PDF] is one excellent example.

Then create a report in which you:

1. Explain how the assessment was appropriate for the environment being assessed and evaluate what you found (include the checklist).
2. Offer suggestions about what you would change to improve the learning environment for both students and teachers. If you were an administrator, how might you address these issues with a teacher? Are there professional development opportunities for teachers that would improve the learning environment?
3. Identify other questions about early childhood education environments raised by your observation that would require further study or research to answer. What interests you about these questions and why are they important?

Remember to tie your suggestions back to your readings and developmentally appropriate practices. The report should be 2–4 pages in length, not including the checklist, and should be written in scholarly and APA style.

Submit this report at the end of Unit 7.

These findings will help guide your final project for this course.

u06d1 - Application of Guidelines

Using the information from the NAEYC Standards document, specifically Sub-Standard 4c: Understanding Content Knowledge in Early Education, choose one content area and explain how you would apply these guidelines to a K-3 classroom. Create an in-class assessment that would use these guidelines while also addressing the individual learning styles and intelligences of young children.

Response Guidelines

Imagine you are a school administrator reviewing in-class assessments. Choose one of your peer's assessment responses and give feedback as if you were his or her school administrator. Remember to give feedback that will help the other person feel comfortable and nurtured while still allowing for growth and learning.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u06d2 - Checklist Feedback

Share with your peers the checklist you intend to use in your classroom observation assignment and the place in which it will be utilized. How have you adapted your checklist (if at all) to match your chosen site? Why have you chosen the site you have? Use peer feedback to better prepare for your upcoming visit.

Response Guidelines

Review other checklists and provide one learner with comprehensive feedback about their ideas. Use ideas you garner from other learners about your work to update (if necessary) your own document.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 7 ▶▶ Early Childhood Education, the Family, and the Local Community

Introduction

Most of us would agree on the importance of our young children's learning environments as being safe, welcoming, friendly, and accepting. But how we approach this for all children may take more thought than simply putting up pretty pictures. See what you think of this example from a Capella faculty member who spent time in the Middle East:

> "I had the pleasure of being an invited visitor to a government model kindergarten while living in an Arabic Gulf State. The Minister of Education and a delegation of dignitaries and faculty were shown around the new school that housed about 10 classes of kindergarten children in a bilingual program of Arabic and English. Beautiful hallways and classrooms infused with light and new furnishings held 250 or so smiling children; every one of them black-haired, black-eyed beauties. Teachers were similarly dark eyed but hair color was naturally unknown as they all had their shaylas (shawls) demurely covering their hair. As we walked down the main hallway, the director of the school proudly showed us a huge bulletin board with a big cutout title of "My Family" pasted on top. It was filled with premade cardboard pictures of laughing children and mothers, fathers, grandparents; all waving merrily at us—a very festive picture that certainly brightened a school hallway. My initial vision was positive, but gradually I came to the realization that every single picture on the "My Family" board had white-blonde hair and blue eyes, and the women's hair flowed freely. I wondered what all the children and teachers thought as they looked at this picture?"

Do you think there is anything wrong with this bulletin board? Would the children and faculty have articulated anything about it, or would the lessons learned from this perhaps be more quietly absorbed? We often take many things for granted in our world, but through educational processes, such as readings and staff development, our eyes are opened more fully to how many things we must pay attention to.

The chapters you will read in this unit look at the impact of the family on the young child, as well as the importance of a total healthy environment. Play, learning, and nutrition are all elements that are bidirectional between home, school, community, and cultural group. Thus, we must be conscious of how all work together.

One issue that is becoming a great problem in the United States, as well as in many countries around the world, is that of obesity. Take a look at the interactive chart in the unit activities to see how the problem is increasing across the United States for adults. These numbers are affecting children as well, not only in the poor health of their parents (which has physical and economic impact), but also in how many children are now classified as obese. These issues will have to be addressed in our early childhood programs in various ways that are culturally and developmentally appropriate.

Learning Activities

u07s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your textbooks and the Internet to complete the following:

- In Berk and Meyers, read pages 68–89 and pages 496–506, which examine family dynamics across the early years and then early elementary.
- In Sayre and Gallagher, read Chapter 9, pages 181–198. In this reading, you will look at the importance of healthy lifestyles for young children. Play, meals, and disease prevention are all discussed. You may start to see how so many of these issues are connected to each other and to the place of learning and the home. Education is a much larger system than simply the school building.
- Watch CDC U.S. Obesity Trends 1985–2009.

Optional – Reading

You may want to read more about head start, which is a wonderful program some of you may work with. It is an important program to know about and to understand the wrap-around services that are offered. Please read about the history and the important work this program does at the Office of Head Start.

u07a1 - Field Observation

Use a checklist that allows you to assess the classroom environment and the use of developmentally appropriate practices and materials. Spend some time in an early childhood education environment evaluating what you see happening and the way the classroom is organized.

You may search for an existing checklist used in state or national evaluations, or create your own from existing ones. Remember to focus on the environment, which includes physical set-up and how the teacher sets expectations and models respectful treatment of others, or how the teacher encourages students to understand ideas from different perspectives.

The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS) [PDF] is one excellent example.

Then create a report in which you:

1. Explain how the assessment was appropriate for the environment being assessed and evaluate what you found (include the checklist).
2. Offer suggestions about what you would change to improve the learning environment for both students and teachers. If you were a school administrator, how might you address these issues with a teacher? Are there professional development opportunities for teachers that would improve the learning environment?
3. Identify other questions about early childhood education environments raised by your observation that would require further study or research to answer. What interests you about these questions and why are they important?

Remember to tie your suggestions back to your readings and developmentally appropriate practices. The report should be 2–4 pages in length, not including the checklist, and should be written in scholarly and APA style. To protect confidentiality, please do not mention real names of those you observe or their school.

These findings will help guide your final project for this course.

u07d1 - Family Life and Learning

Our world today is rich in diversity. Families exist in varying forms and a multitude of races, cultures, and economic status. Research shows how all of these aspects of family life impact our educational path. Describe your own family of origin and how this impacted or steered your early learning experiences. How may your own race or culture affect your teaching beliefs and practices today?

Response Guidelines

Review your peers' responses, looking for similarities across family differences. What elements of our early experiences are shared even though our families may look different? Share these thoughts with at least one other learner.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 8 ≫ Early Childhood Education and the Broader Community

Introduction

"Surely there is enough for everyone within this country. It is a tragedy that these good things are not more widely shared. All our children ought to be allowed a stake in the enormous richness of America. Whether they were born to poor white Appalachians or to wealthy Texans, to poor black people in the Bronx or to rich people in Manhasset or Winnetka, they are all quite wonderful and innocent when they are small. We soil them needlessly."

— *Kozol, 1991, p. 233*

Children in all geographical areas and from multiple cultures and socioeconomic levels are all susceptible to experiencing stress and problems that can limit their emotional, physical, and cognitive growth, either immediately or years in the future. Sometimes the problems seem insurmountable for one person to help with, but NAEYC has suggested five steps that anyone can take to become a child's advocate. These include:

1. Speak out on behalf of children.
2. Help one child beyond your family.
3. Be an informed voter in your community.
4. Explore the service opportunities within the organization of which you are a member.
5. Encourage others to join in supporting young children and the availability of services and resources for young children (NAEYC, 1995, as cited in Driscoll & Nagel, 2008, p. 114).

Perhaps we all need to keep these suggestions in mind as we think about the ways to advocate for children. What are the ways you do this personally? Reading any of Jonathon Kozol's books cannot help but fire you up to want to help in some way.

References

Driscoll, A., & Nagel, N. G. (2008). *Early childhood education, birth – 8: The world of children, families and educators.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Kozol, J. (1991). *Savage inequalities.* Harper Perennial: New York.

Learning Activities

u08s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your textbooks to complete the following:

- In Berk and Meyers, read Chapter 12, pages 429–470. In this last chapter, you will look at ECE in the older age range of the children. Particularly review the pages on children's learning in school from page 459 onward and how these practices tie to the larger field of ECE and your own work. Think about this information too as you start to develop your own classroom.
- In Sayre and Gallagher, read chapter 10, pages 201–214. This culminating chapter also ties ECE to the larger community with a focus on families, schools, and communities working together in partnerships.

Message from the Dean

u08s2 - Project Preparation

Download the Room Design Activity template, a tool you will use in your final project. Also review the Room Design course project description and start to gather material you may need to complete this final project. You will share a draft of your project in Unit 9.

Course Resources

Room Design Activity template [PPTX]

u08d1 - Program Changes and Educational Experiences

Early Head Start, Head Start, Title 1, Welfare Reform, and No Child Left Behind are all examples of programs that directly affect young children and their families but are influenced by the existing political climate. Choose one governmental program to research in greater depth and show the historical development and changes and how these changes alter young children's educational experiences. Share this with your peers.

Response Guidelines

Choose at least one other learner's example that is different from your own. How does it compare and contrast to your own findings?

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u08d2 - Strategies for Communication

Home and school communication has been shown to be vital to positive educational outcomes. Given the diversity of American demographics, communication between schools and homes can sometimes encounter roadblocks. Research and share some strategies that teachers and administrators can implement to facilitate and enhance increased communication with parents who may be from different cultures or may not have English as their primary language.

Response Guidelines

Review your peers' responses, looking for ideas that you had not previously identified (give credit to the creator of the idea). Share these additional ideas with at least one other learner and discuss ways of expanding home and school communication.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Unit 9 ›› Applying Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Introduction

"You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation."

— Plato

During this unit, you are asked to share your work and give constructive reviews to other learners' final projects. This can feel a little uncomfortable at times, yet it is an important activity to become comfortable with because you may have to do this in real-life work situations. With a graduate degree in Early Childhood Education, you may soon (if not already) be in a supervisory position and have to evaluate staff members and provide guidance to them about their work. Finding your own style and how to share ideas and suggestions respectfully is vital.

Just as young children need developmentally appropriate activities, adults also need to have their own staff development adjusted to meet their own needs based on their career stage. Some theorists have proposed that the types of staff development needed differ by career stage, and that these stages can be categorized, thus allowing us to adjust training to meet needs better (Hedrick, 2005). It is helpful to keep these varying needs in mind as you start to develop training programs for staff, and also for yourself as you seek out ways to expand your own knowledge. What used to be helpful may have changed as you have grown.

Male Teacher in Chinese Kindergarten

CHANGCHUN, CHINA: Huo Chengming, a teacher at the Golden Sun Bilingual Kindergarten, plays games with children on July 6, 2006, in Changchun of Jilin Province, China. Twenty-year-old Huo, who graduated from Jilin University in 2003, is the only male teacher in the kindergarten and can speak fluent English. According to state media, male teachers are being sought for preschool education. Although in recent years kindergartens in China's big cities have recruited a number of male teachers in the traditionally female-dominated profession, male teachers in most regions of the nation are still rarity. (Photo by China Photos/Getty Images)

References

Hedrick, K. (2005). Staff development for differentiation must be made to measure. *Journal of Staff Development, 26*(4), 32-37.

Levine, K., & Chedd, N. (2007). Replays: Using play to enhance emotional and behavioral development for children with autism spectrum disorder. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, p. 21.

Course Resources

Hedrick, K. (2005). Staff development for differentiation must be made to measure. *Journal of Staff Development, 26*(4), 32–37.

Learning Activities

u09s1 - Studies

Readings

Use the Internet to complete the following:

- On the NAEYC and Zero to Three Web sites, read guidelines concerning how we apply many of the ideas discussed in this course to creating early childhood programs:
  - Zero to Three.
  - National Association for the Education of Young Children.
- Review your own state guidelines for early childhood environments that you found in Unit 3.

Web Search

Explore your own state and national guidelines regarding health and safety in an early childhood environment. Find one Web site that provides guidance regarding your own state. You will use these guidelines later in the course.

Video

Click **Launch Presentation** to watch the Videatives video titled *Early Science: Damming Water in a Flume* (5 minutes, 41 seconds). In this video, you will see two children playing with their teacher to explore how water pools and cascades down a chute.

Then, review the accompanying Videatives Classroom Clips document and think about how the teacher uses the materials to interact and teach the children early scientific principles.

Optional Article

Read Hedrick's 2005 "Staff Development for Differentiation Must Be Made to Measure" from *Journal of Staff Development*, volume 26, issue4, pages 32–37.

Course Resources

Early Science: Damming Water in a Flume

u09d1 - Room Design Draft

Share a draft of your Room Design with your peers and provide feedback to each other. This will be the basis for the paper you will submit as the final project at the end of Week 10. When posting your draft, list any specific questions you have about your design on which you would like feedback. Post your draft earlier in the week so others have the opportunity to respond.

Response Guidelines

Use the Peer Review Feedback Form provided and attach it to your response. Give in-depth feedback that is constructive but also coaches and nurtures the learning process of at least one of your peers.

Course Resources

Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

Peer Review Feedback Form

Room Design Activity template [PPTX]

u09d2 - State Guidelines

Each state has its own set of guidelines regarding ECE. Explore your own state guidelines concerning practices, teacher/child ratios, room sizes, fire codes, health and hygiene guidelines, and so on. Pay particular attention to whether or not your state has guidelines that address physical education and nutrition requirements. Share your findings with your peers.

Response Guidelines

Compare your own state's guidelines to at least one other learner's response. How are they similar and how do they differ (if at all)?

Unit 10 ▸▸ Reflecting on Early Childhood Education Issues

Introduction

"The best way to keep children home is to make the home atmosphere pleasant—and let the air out of the tires."

— Dorothy Parker,
US author, humorist, poet, & wit (1893-1967)

CHANGCHUN, CHINA: Huo Chengming, a teacher at the Golden Sun Bilingual Kindergarten, plays games with children on July 6, 2006, in Changchun of Jilin Province, China. Twenty-year-old Huo, who graduated from Jilin University in 2003, is the only male teacher in the kindergarten and can speak fluent English. According to state media, male teachers are being sought for preschool education. Although in recent years kindergartens in China's big cities have recruited a number of male teachers in the traditionally female-dominated profession, male teachers in most regions of the nation are still rarity.
(Photo by China Photos/Getty Images)

Do you remember Ogden Nash's question from the Unit 1 poem: "May I join you in the doghouse, Rover?" Have you had times during the course when the myriad of issues that we have to address in Early Childhood Education makes you want to climb into that doghouse? It can be overwhelming, but just try to remember the NAEYC advocate steps from Unit 8 and do small things to help children and improve the field. Just by taking and completing this course, you are already way ahead and have demonstrated a high level of commitment to your own learning and to improving the lives of children. So reach around and pat yourself on the back for that (and do not forget to congratulate your peers, as in an online community we have to remember to reach out and do that).

Your discussions this week focus on reflecting on what you have learned and thinking about your own strengths and weaknesses. Understanding those help us to improve constantly and to seek out new development areas that can help offset any gaps in our abilities or strengths. Good luck in the future in all your endeavors.

"We don't receive wisdom; we must discover it for ourselves after a journey that no one can take for us or spare us."

— Marcel Proust,
French novelist (1871-1922)

References

Gruwell, G. (Ed.). (2007). The gigantic book of teachers' wisdom. New York: Skyhorse Publishing, p. 663.

Nash, O. (1975). *I wouldn't have missed it: Selected poems*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown.

Maggs, J. (1999). *Health risks and developmental transitions during adolescence* (L. Chassin, J. Schulenberg, J. L. Maggs, & K. Hurrelmann, Eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 139.

Learning Activities

u10a1 - Room Design

As appropriate, integrate the feedback you received from your peers into your Room Design. Then complete the final project assignment and submit it in the assignment area.

Portfolio Prompt: You are required to save this learning activity to your ePortfolio.

Course Resources
ePortfolio
Room Design Activity template [PPTX]

u10d1 - Skills and Traits Revisited

Review the response you gave for the second discussion in Unit 1 regarding your own personal strengths and skills in relation to early childhood education. After all your reading and work in this course, how do you feel your initial statements regarding your own strengths will help you? Do you see any personal areas that you need to strengthen in preparation for this role?

Response Guidelines

Give feedback to your peers about their own self-reflections. Respond to at least two other learners.

Course Resources
Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

u10d2 - Application of Learning

Reflect on the many elements related to early childhood education we have discussed. What is the most memorable issue you will take away with you from this course, and how will you apply or use that learning in the future?

Response Guidelines

Identify with at least one other learner who shared a similar memorable issue and discuss why this is important to you both.

Course Resources
Graduate Discussion Participation Scoring Guide

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