



Early Childhood Classroom Assistant Teacher (ECCAT): Child Development

- ▶ **Audience:** Early Childhood Classroom Assistant Teacher (ECCAT)
- ▶ **Type:** 13-Week Time-Bound Course
- ▶ **Duration:** September 7, 2022-December 13, 2022 and January 4, 2023-April 4, 2023

Description: The Early Childhood Introduction to Childhood Development course has been specifically designed for early childhood educators working in West Virginia Universal Pre-K and teacher assistants working in WV Pre-k and kindergarten classrooms who are seeking the Early Childhood Assistant Teacher Authorization. This includes collaborative classrooms and educators seeking courses to meet the needs for the Community Program Authorization. Participants of this course will be able to facilitate developmentally appropriate activities that will promote an understanding of how children develop their physical, social-emotional, cognitive and language domains.

Course Goals:

- ▶ Develop an understanding and working definition of early child development.
- ▶ Investigate how understanding developmentally appropriate practices and the developmental progression of children birth-8 years of age impacts the caring for and teaching of young children.
- ▶ Describe how a developmentally appropriate environment will impact your role as an early childhood educator and the experiences of students in your classroom.
- ▶ Understand the influence of the learning environment as it is used to encourage children to move their bodies, explore their surroundings, and develop fine and gross motor skills.
- ▶ Analyze the impact of the use of structured movement experiences as they are intentionally facilitated in the classroom environment.
- ▶ Relate the importance of the time spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity during the daily routine.
- ▶ Discover ways of building positive relationships with children.
- ▶ Explore environments that support social emotional behavior.
- ▶ Understand the importance of promoting positive social emotional teaching practice.
- ▶ Understand that cognitive development is influenced by other developmental factors.
- ▶ Understand that exploration is the key to learning.
- ▶ Understand that cognitive skills develop through processes as assimilation and accommodation.
- ▶ Consider the benefits of a positive classroom environment to promote language development.
- ▶ Gain an awareness of how other developmental domains effect language development.
- ▶ Identify strategies to promote children's communication and oral language development.
- ▶ Develop an awareness of how utilizing literature can impact children's vocabulary.
- ▶ Utilize the knowledge gained from each domain of child development to describe a comprehensive approach to an early childhood program.
- ▶ Correlate current West Virginia Content Standards to child development domains.



Session Overviews

▶ **Session One - Introduction to Early Child Development**

Early childhood development refers to the many skills and milestones that children typically achieve by the time they reach age eight. These milestones include accomplishments such as learning how to run, how to talk using simple sentences, and how to play with others. In most cases, this type of development occurs naturally when children are provided multiple high-quality experiences across all learning domains, including social/ emotional, gross and fine motor, cognitive, and language development.

▶ **Session Two - Physical Development in the Early Childhood Years**

This domain focuses on how the brain and muscles coordinate as the child becomes physically active. Gross motor skill development includes crawling, jumping, hopping, galloping, climbing, balancing, throwing, kicking, and catching skills. Fine motor skills include learning how to control small muscles in the hand, coordination of eye-hand movement and utilizing tools for writing and drawing. Fine motor skills are developed and strengthened during the early childhood years.

▶ **Session Three - Social Emotional Development in the Early Childhood Years**

Social and emotional milestones are often more difficult to identify than signs of physical development. This domain emphasizes skills that increase self-awareness and self-regulation. Research shows that social skills and emotional development (reflected in the ability to pay attention, make transitions from one activity to another, and cooperate with others) are components that are part of a child's development and are often indicative of later success in life.

▶ **Session Four - Cognitive Skills in Early Childhood Development**

Cognitive development is the progression of abilities in thinking, reasoning, problem-solving, judgment, and symbolic thinking. Young children use knowledge gained from previous experiences to begin thinking in more abstract ways. Abstract thinking involves the ability to recall experiences not immediately in front of them. As children develop cognitively, their logical thinking, as well as their representation and symbolic thinking abilities increase, and they begin to actively engage in challenges such as classifying objects, recognizing repeating patterns, and playing make-believe.

▶ **Session Five - The Individual Language Development in the Early Childhood Years**

Language is essential to every aspect of a child's life. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are elements of language development in children. It is important that children have opportunities for hearing and discriminating the sounds of language, understanding and following directions, answering and asking questions, and actively participating in conversations. Educators need to model excitement and enjoyment in reading, create a literacy-rich environment that encourages an appreciation for and understanding of print concepts, and develop learning activities for students that stress comprehending and interpreting meaning from books and other texts, as well as writing letters and words.

▶ **Session Six - An Integrated Approach to Child Development**

This session serves as a conclusion to the course and provides educators the opportunity to reflect on early childhood development and an integrated approach to learning as they create a newsletter for parents.

Course Grades

All grades in the course gradebook must be a checkmark for successful course completion. A checkmark indicates that all work has been completed and the work meets the expectations for that assignment. Quiz scores must meet the minimum expectations as stated in the course.

