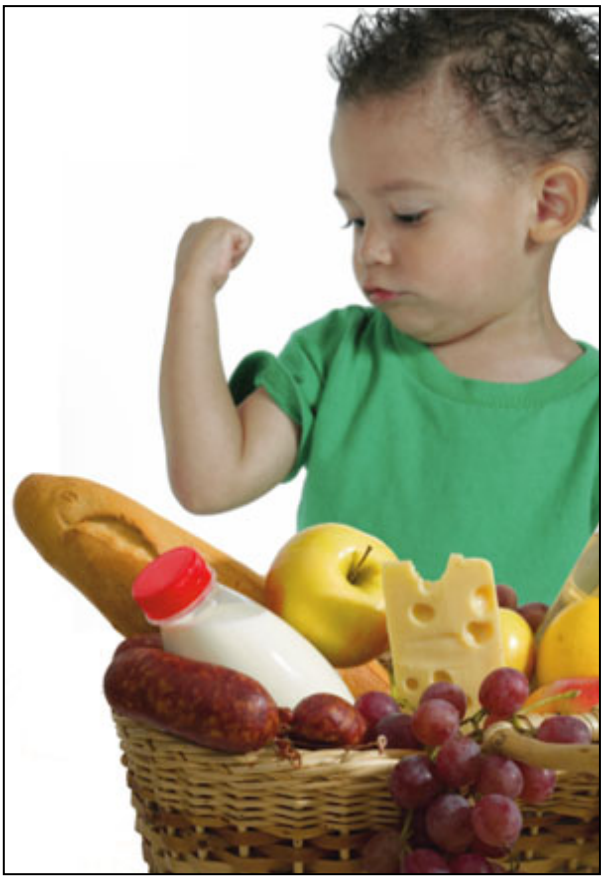
Three Rivers Community College
ECE K176 Health, Safety and Nutrition
Course Materials

Fall 2012



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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:00 - 10:00
or by appointment

Course Description:
Prerequisite: ENG* K101 eligibility; ECE* K101 and ECE* K182 recommended. The relationship between health, safety and nutrition and child development will be examined. Emphasis will be on the strategies needed to implement a safe, healthy and nutritionally sound program. Community agencies and resources that benefit the children through these domains will be explored through community service experiences.

Required Text(s):
Robertson, Cathie. (2010). Safety, Nutrition and Health in Early Education. 5th Edition. Wadsworth.
ISBN: 978-1-111-83252-0
Additional readings will be assigned throughout the semester.

Course Objectives:
- Acquire knowledge concerning health, safety and nutrition issues in early childhood classroom environments.
- Develop skills necessary to plan and implement health, safety and nutrition experiences and to integrate these experiences into the daily curriculum.
- Become aware of Connecticut State Licensing regulations concerning health and safety in an early childhood center.

Course Outcomes:
- Candidates will know and understand children's needs as it relates to health, safety and nutrition. (NAEYC Standard 1.a)
- Candidates will recognize the importance of engaging diverse families to support their role and build relationships. (NAEYC Standard 2.a and 2.c)
- Candidates will analyze the importance of being a continuous and collaborative learner. (NAEYC Standard 6.c)
- Candidates will understand the state licensing regulations and the role each individual plays in meeting these standards. (NAEYC Standard 6.a)

General Education Goals:
- Candidates will develop the skills and abilities to communicate effectively in writing.
- Candidates will develop information literacy to assess what information is needed to answer questions and to retrieve, evaluate, and use that information effectively.

Policies:
Active participation in class discussions and activities is required. Candidates are expected to complete assigned readings prior to class and come to class prepared to discuss them. Candidates **must utilize the Blackboard Learning System**, to review course materials, and view articles and other materials for the course. Throughout the course there will be other written assignments to help guide your studies which will be handed in and counted as part of your participation grade.

Class attendance is required. The greatest amount of learning occurs during class time, where group activities and interactive assignments allow for learning not covered by the text and required assignments. Two late arrivals or early departures may count as one missed class. For each class missed five to ten points may be deducted, upon the fourth absence you may be asked to withdraw from the class. Attendance is taken at the beginning of class. Lateness is disruptive, discourteous and usually unwarranted. Please be on time.

Candidates are urged to devote their time and energy to fulfilling stated class requirements. Please note that a credit hour 'work expectation' equates to one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out of class candidate work. **So for this three credit course you should expect to spend a minimum of three in class and six out of class hours (total of nine hours) per week on this course.**

Extra credit points may be considered if a candidate is active in the Early Childhood Education Club, participates in early childhood events, or tutors / supports another classmate in their understanding of course content. Additionally, with prior permission, there may be an opportunity to redo and resubmit an assignment. These opportunities will be decided on a one-on-one basis.

It is assumed that all assignments will be completed and turned in on time. Fifteen points will be deducted from a late assignment. Assignments will not be accepted beyond a one-week extension. Late assignments cannot be rewritten or resubmitted.

Spelling and grammar will be included as part of the grade for all written work. Thus, proper spelling and careful proofreading are important. A candidate's written work is expected to be original and done independently unless otherwise indicated. Citations and references must be used to **acknowledge the source and avoid plagiarism**. Violations of academic integrity will be referred to the dealt with in accordance with the college policy.

Take home tests will not be accepted beyond the scheduled due date. Make-ups for in class, scheduled tests is not allowed, unless arrangements are made with the instructor in advance. Make-ups must be done in a timely manner.

Lap top computers and tape recorders may be used during class time, with prior permission and for the purpose of note taking only. Computers and other forms of technology are prohibited during tests. Cell phones, pagers, ipods, and other similar devices must be turned off during class. **Texting or using your cell phones during class is not acceptable and you may be asked to leave the class.**

As part of the course, candidates may be required to spend additional time observing and/or working with children in actual or simulated child development settings.
The candidate is responsible for all materials covered in class as well as the assignments. If a candidate misses a class, it is the candidate's responsibility to get the notes from

another candidate. **Do not contact the Instructor and ask for a review of the class**. Learn to rely on your syllabus and / or another candidate. You may want to share your contact information with other candidates to help facilitate this process.
If you have problems with the course or material, please see me or call to arrange for an appointment. Candidates who are not able to complete the course need to speak to me immediately as we will try to work together to have you complete the class successfully.

Candidates with disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss options with the instructor as early as possible. You will need to provide written documentation of your disability to the Candidate Services Counselors (Disabled Candidate Counselor). Appropriate accommodations will be provided to candidates who have completed this procedure.

TRCC does not follow the local school closing schedule. The TRCC website offers the most updated information about school closings and / or early dismissals. It is recommended that all candidates sign up for the electronic notification system to receive instant alerts and messages. In the event that class is cancelled, separate from the college, the instructor may notify candidates using the Blackboard messaging system and / or the email contact available through TRCC. Please be sure the college has your updated contact information.

Please refer to the Institutional Policies available in the Office of the Dean of Candidate Development and Services as well as on line, which include regulations regarding candidate conduct and the disciplinary code.

This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be announced.

"Never under estimate the power of a loving teacher."
Taken from: Teachers Touch Tomorrow

Points given for requirements are as follows:
Please use this as a tool to keep a record of your progress in this course.

Assignment	Points	Due Date	Grade Received
* Program / Licensing Assignment	100		
* Learning Experience Plan Assignment	100		
First Test (Ch. 1-5)	50		
Second Test (Ch. 6-9)	75		
Third Test (Ch. 10-15)	75		
Attendance	50		
Participation *(article reviews incl.)*	50		
Total	**500**		

*Please note that as a special consideration students who get CPR/First Aid certified during this semester **may** have the option of waiving one or both of these assignments. To explore this opportunity please speak to the instructor.

Final Grade:
To determine your final grade take the total number of points and divide by five.

		A	93 - 100	A-	90 - 92
B+	87 - 89	B	83 - 86	B-	80 - 82
C+	77 - 79	C	73 - 76	C-	70 - 72
D+	67 - 69	D	63 - 66	D-	60 - 62
F	under 59				

Three Rivers Community College
ECE K176 Health, Safety and Nutrition
Professor DeFrance
Fall 2012
Course Content and Study Guide

Week	Activities / Assignments	Reading	Key Concepts	NAEYC
8/27	Orientation Review Course Syllabus Article Review Activity Review Program / Licensing Assignment **Friday class attends Convocation**		confidentiality participation	Supportive Skill 1 and 4
9/3	**No class on Monday** Review Program / Licensing Assignment	Chapter 1	holistic approach	Standard 1.b. and 1.c.
9/10	Article Review: Brain Development in Children	Chapter 2	safe environments	Standard 1.a., 1.c., 2.a., 2.b., and 2.c.
9/17	Article Review: Checklist for Safety in the Preschool Classroom	Chapter 3 and 4	indoor and outdoor safety	Standard 2.a. and 4.b.
9/24	Review Learning Experience Assignment	Chapter 4	playground safety	Standard 1.b. and 2.a.
10/1	Handout Test One	Chapter 5	emergency response procedures	Standard 1.c. and 4.a.
10/8	**Test One Due**	Chapter 6	nutrition	Standard 1.b.
10/15	**Program / Licensing Assignment Due** Article Review: Early Sprouts NAEYC Visit this week	Chapter 7 and 8	wellness diverse nutritional needs	Standard 1.b., 1.c., 2.c. and 2.b.
10/22	Article Review: How mothers in cultural groups…	Chapter 9	menu planning food safety	Standard 2.c.

Week	Activities / Assignments	Reading	Key Concepts	NAEYC
10/29	**Test Two**			Supportive Skills 1 - 5
11/5	Article Review: Universal Precautions	Chapter 10 and 11	promoting good health infection control	Standard 1.b. and 1.c.
11/12		Chapter 12 and 13	supportive health care	Standard 1.b. and 2.c.
11/19	Article Review: ADHD **No Class on Wednesday or Friday**	Chapter 13	special health care needs	Standard 2.c.
11/26	Article Review: DCF **Learning Experience Assignment Due**	Chapter 14 and 15	maltreatment mental health	Standard 1.b., 2.b., 2.c. and 3.c.
12/3	**Test Three**			Supportive Skills 1 - 5

This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class.

Three Rivers Community College

ECE K182 Child Development
Resource List
Dr. Jennifer DeFrance

_____. (1997). *FYI*. *Safety for child passengers.* Young Children. NAEYC.

_____. (2000). *Protecting children from infections: A guide for day-care providers.* National Association of Child Care Professionals.

_____. (2006). *Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework*: Comprehensive School Health Education and Physical Education. State of Connecticut Department of Education.

_____. (2007). *A Guide to Early Childhood Program Development.* State of Connecticut State Board of Education.

_____. (2008). *Fact Sheet: Universal Precautions.* Washtenaw County Public Health, CDC.

_____. (2010). *Preventing Childhood Obesity in Early Care and Education Programs.* AAP, APHA & NRC.

_____. (2010). *Use of World Health Organization and CDC Growth Charts aged 0-59 months.* CDC.

_____. (2011). *Brain Development in Children.*Buzzle.com.

_____. (2011). *Caring for Our Children*. National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs. AAP, APHA & NRC.

_____. (2011). *Nutrition Resources.* State of Connecticut Department of Education.

_____. (2011). *What mandated reporters need to know.* Connecticut Department of Children and Families.

_____. (2012). *Checklist for Safety in the Preschool Classroom.* EHow.

Aronson, S. (2002). *Healthy Young Children: A Manual for Programs.* NAEYC.

Blake, J.S. (2008). *Nutrition and You.* Pearson.

Bruton, S. (1998). *Every little bit counts: Supporting young children with special needs at mealtime.* Sacramento: California Department of Education.

Chrisman, K. & Couchenour, D. (2002). *Healthy Sexuality Development: A Guide for Early Childhood Educators and Families*. NAEYC.

Dickstein, S. & Martin, S. (2002). *What's for dinner? Family functioning, maternal depression, and early childhood outcomes.* Zero to Three.

Kalich, K., Bauer, D. & McPartlin, D. (2009). *Early Sprouts: Establishing Healthy Choices for Young Children.* Young Children. NAEYC.

Lucarelli, P. (2002). *Raising the bar for health and safety in child care.* Pediatric Nursing 22 (3) 239-241.

Marcon, R.A. (2003). Research in Review: *Growing children the physical side of development.* Young Children. NAEYC.

Martini, M. (2002). *How mothers in four American cultural groups shape infant learning during mealtime.* Zero to Three.

Novotni, Michele. (2010). *ADHD Toddlers: Signs and Symptoms of Attention Deficit in Young Children.* New Hope Media, NY.

Pica, R. (2006). *Moving and learning across the curriculum*. 2nd ed. Delmar Learning.

Robertson, C. (2010). *Safety, Nutrition and Health in Early Education*. 5th edition. Wadsworth.

Sanders, S.W. (2002). *Active for life: Developmentally appropriate movement programs for young children.* NAEYC.

Schenkleberg, E. (2003). *Teachers on Teaching: In a child's kitchen.* Young Children. NAEYC.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Growing up Healthy.* National Children's Study.

Weiner, E. (1999). *Taking food allergies to school.* JayJo Books, MO.

NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs
A position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children

Introduction

NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs represents a sustained vision for the early childhood field and more specifically for the programs that prepare the professionals working in the field. This 2009 revision of the standards is responsive to new knowledge, research and conditions while holding true to core values and principles of the founders of the profession. It is designed for use in a variety of ways by different sectors of the field while also supporting specific and critical policy structures, including state and national early childhood teacher credentialing, national accreditation of professional early childhood preparation programs, state approval of early childhood teacher education programs, and articulation agreements between various levels and types of professional development programs.

History

NAEYC has a long-standing commitment to the development and support of strong early childhood degree programs in institutions of higher education. NAEYC standard setting for degree programs in institutions of higher education began more than 25 years ago. This document is the third revision to NAEYC's Early Childhood Teacher Education Guidelines for Four- and Five-Year Programs (1982) and Guidelines for Early Childhood Education Programs in Associate Degree Granting Institutions (1985).

Standards Summary

Standard 1. Promoting Child Development and Learning

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs are grounded in a child development knowledge base. They use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs and of the multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child.

Key elements of Standard 1

- **1a:** Knowing and understanding young children's characteristics and needs
- **1b:** Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning
- **1c:** Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments

Supporting explanation

The early childhood field has historically been grounded in a child development knowledge base, and early childhood programs have aimed to support a broad range of positive developmental outcomes for all young children. Although the scope and emphasis of that knowledge base have changed over the years and while early childhood professionals recognize that other sources of knowledge are also important influences on curriculum and programs for young children, early childhood practice continues to be deeply linked with a "sympathetic understanding of the young child" (Elkind 1994). Well-prepared early childhood degree candidates base their practice on sound

knowledge and understanding of young children's characteristics and needs. This foundation encompasses multiple, interrelated areas of children's development and learning—including physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, and aesthetic domains; play, activity, and learning processes; and motivation to learn—and is supported by coherent theoretical perspectives and by current research.
Candidates also understand and apply their understanding of the **multiple influences on young children's development and learning** and of how those influences may interact to affect development in both positive and negative ways. Those influences include the cultural and linguistic contexts for development, children's close relationships with adults and peers, economic conditions of children and families, children's health status and disabilities individual developmental variations and learning styles, opportunities to play and learn, technology and the media, and family and community characteristics.
Candidates also understand the potential influence of early childhood programs, including early intervention, on short- and long-term outcomes for children.
Candidates' competence is demonstrated in their ability to **use developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments** for all young children (including curriculum, interactions, teaching practices, and learning materials).

Standard 2. Building Family and Community Relationships

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children's families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children's families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families and to involve all families in their children's development and learning.
Key elements of Standard 2

- **2a:** Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics
- **2b:** Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships
- **2c:** Involving families and communities in their children's development and learning

Supporting explanation
Because young children's lives are so embedded in their families and communities and research indicates that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with families and communities, early childhood professionals need to thoroughly understand and apply their knowledge in this area.
First, well-prepared candidates possess **knowledge and understanding of diverse family and community characteristics** and of the many influences on families and communities. Family theory and research provide a knowledge base. Socioeconomic conditions; family structures, relationships, stresses, and supports (including the impact of having a child with special needs); home language; cultural values; ethnicity; community resources, cohesiveness, and organization—knowledge of these and other factors creates a deeper understanding of young children's lives. This knowledge is critical to the candidates' ability to help children learn and develop well.

Second, candidates possess the knowledge and skills needed to **support and engage diverse families through respectful, reciprocal relationships.** Candidates understand how to build positive relationships, taking families' preferences and goals into account and incorporating knowledge of families' languages and cultures. Candidates demonstrate respect for variations across cultures in family strengths, expectations, values, and childrearing practices. Candidates consider family members to be resources for insight into their children, as well as resources for curriculum and program development. Candidates know about and demonstrate a variety of communication skills to foster such relationships, emphasizing informal conversations while also including appropriate uses of conferencing and technology to share children's work and to communicate with families.

Finally, well-prepared candidates possess essential skills to **involve families and communities in many aspects of children's development and learning.** They understand and value the role of parents and other important family members as children's primary teachers. Candidates understand how to go beyond parent conferences to engage families in curriculum planning, assessing children's learning, and planning for children's transitions to new programs. When their approaches to family involvement are not effective, candidates evaluate and modify those approaches rather than assuming that families "are just not interested."

Standard 3. Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment are central to the practice of all early childhood professionals. They know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence the development of every child.

Key elements of Standard 3

- **3a:** Understanding the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment
- **3b:** Knowing about and using observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches
- **3c:** Understanding and practicing responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child
- **3d:** Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues

Supporting explanation

Although definitions vary, in these standards the term *assessment* includes all methods through which early childhood professionals gain understanding of children's development and learning. Ongoing, systematic observations and other informal and formal assessments are essential for candidates to appreciate children's unique qualities, to develop appropriate goals, and to plan, implement, and evaluate effective curriculum. Although assessment may take many forms, early childhood candidates demonstrate its central role by embedding assessment-related activities in curriculum and daily routines so that assessment becomes a habitual part of professional life.

Well-prepared early childhood candidates can explain the central **goals, benefits, and**

uses of assessment. In considering the goals of assessment, candidates articulate and apply the concept of *alignment*—good assessment is consistent with and connected to appropriate goals, curriculum, and teaching strategies for young children. The candidates know how to use assessment as a positive tool that supports children's development and learning and improves outcomes for young children and families. Candidates are able to explain positive uses of assessment and exemplify these in their own work, while also showing an awareness of the potentially negative uses of assessment in early childhood programs and policies.

Many aspects of effective assessment require collaboration with families and with other professionals. Through **partnerships with families and with professional colleagues**, candidates use positive assessment to identify the strengths of families and children. Through appropriate screening and referral, assessment may also result in identifying children who may benefit from special services. Both family members and, as appropriate, members of inter-professional teams may be involved in assessing children's development, strengths, and needs. As new practitioners, candidates may have had limited opportunities to experience such partnerships, but they demonstrate essential knowledge and core skills in team building and in communicating with families and colleagues from other disciplines.

Early childhood assessment includes **observation and documentation and other appropriate assessment strategies.** Effective teaching of young children begins with thoughtful, appreciative, systematic observation and documentation of each child's unique qualities, strengths, and needs. Observation gives insight into how young children develop and how they respond to opportunities and obstacles in their lives. Observing young children in classrooms, homes, and communities helps candidates develop a broad sense of who children are- as individuals, as group members, as family members, as members of cultural and linguistic communities. Candidates demonstrate skills in conducting systematic observations, interpreting those observations, and reflecting on their significance. Because spontaneous *play* is such a powerful window on all aspects of children's development, well-prepared candidates create opportunities to observe children in playful situations as well as in more formal learning contexts.

Although assessment can be a positive tool for early childhood professionals, it has also been used in inappropriate and harmful ways. Well-prepared candidates understand and practice **responsible assessment.** Candidates understand that responsible assessment is ethically grounded and guided by sound professional standards. It is collaborative and open. Responsible assessment supports children, rather than being used to exclude them or deny them services. Candidates demonstrate understanding of appropriate, responsible assessment practices for culturally and linguistically diverse children and for children with developmental delays, disabilities, or other special characteristics. Finally, candidates demonstrate knowledge of legal and ethical issues, current educational concerns and controversies, and appropriate practices in the assessment of diverse young children.

Standard 4. Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on

children's ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child's development and learning.

Key elements of Standard 4

- **4a:** Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with children
- **4b:** Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education
- **4c:** Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching/learning approaches
- **4d**: Reflecting on their own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child

Supporting explanation

Early childhood candidates demonstrate that they understand the theories and research that support **the importance of relationships and high-quality interactions in early education**. In their practice, they display warm, nurturing interactions with each child, communicating genuine liking for and interest in young children's activities and characteristics. Throughout the years that children spend in early childhood settings, their successful learning is dependent not just on instruction but also on personal connections with important adults. Through these connections children develop not only academic skills but also positive learning dispositions and confidence in themselves as learners. Responsive teaching creates the conditions within which very young children can explore and learn about their world. The close attachments children develop with their teachers/caregivers, the expectations and beliefs that adults have about young children's capacities, and the warmth and responsiveness of adult-child interactions are powerful influences on positive developmental and educational outcomes. How children expect to be treated and how they treat others are significantly shaped in the early childhood setting. Candidates in early childhood programs develop the capacity to build a caring community of learners in the early childhood setting.

Early childhood professionals need **a broad repertoire of effective strategies and tools** to help young children learn and develop well. Candidates must ground their curriculum in a set of core approaches to teaching that are supported by research and are closely linked to the processes of early development and learning. In a sense, those approaches *are* the curriculum for infants and toddlers, although academic content can certainly be embedded in each of them.

Well-prepared early childhood professionals make purposeful use of various learning formats based on their understanding of children as individuals and as part of a group, and on alignment with important educational and developmental goals. A flexible, research-based **repertoire of teaching/learning approaches to promote young children's development** includes: 1)Fostering oral language and communication, 2) Drawing from a continuum of teaching strategies, 3) Making the most of the environment, schedule, and routines, 4) Setting up all aspects of the indoor and outdoor environment, 5) Focusing on children's individual characteristics, needs, and interests, 6) Linking children's language and culture to the early childhood program, 7) Teaching through social interactions, 8) Creating support for play, 9) Addressing children's challenging

behaviors, 10) Supporting learning through technology, and 11) Using integrative approaches to curriculum. All of these teaching approaches are effective across the early childhood age span.

Early childhood professionals make decisions about their practice based on expertise. They make professional judgments through each day based on knowledge of child development and learning, individual children, and the social and cultural contexts in which children live. From this knowledge base, effective teachers design activities, routines, interactions and curriculum for specific children and groups of children. They consider both what to teach and how to teach, developing the habit of **reflective, responsive and intentional practice** to promote positive outcomes for each child.

Standard 5. Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs use their knowledge of academic disciplines to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every young child. Candidates understand the importance of developmental domains and academic (or content) disciplines in an early childhood curriculum. They know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas, including academic subjects, and can identify resources to deepen their understanding. Candidates use their own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curricula that promote comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

Key elements of Standard 5

- **5a:** Understanding content knowledge and resources in academic disciplines
- **5b:** Knowing and using the central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of content areas or academic disciplines
- **5c:** Using their own knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curricula for each child.

Supporting explanation

Strong, effective early childhood curricula do not come out of a box or a teacher-proof manual. Early childhood professionals have an especially challenging task in developing effective curricula. As suggested in Standard 1, well-prepared candidates ground their practice in a thorough, research-based understanding of young children's development and learning processes. In developing curriculum, they recognize that every child constructs knowledge in personally and culturally familiar ways. In addition, in order to make curriculum powerful and accessible to all, well-prepared candidates develop curriculum that is free of biases related to ethnicity, religion, gender, or ability status—and, in fact, the curriculum actively counters such biases.

The teacher of children from birth through age 8 must be well versed in **the essential content knowledge and resources in many academic disciplines**. Because children are encountering those content areas for the first time, early childhood professionals set the foundations for later understanding and success. Going beyond conveying isolated facts, well-prepared early childhood candidates possess the kind of content knowledge that focuses on the "big ideas," methods of investigation and expression, and organization of the major academic disciplines. Thus, the early childhood professional knows not only *what* is important in each content area but also *why* it is important—how it

links with earlier and later understandings both within and across areas.
Teachers of young children demonstrate the understanding of **central concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas** needed to provide appropriate environments that support learning in each content area for all children, beginning in infancy (through foundational developmental experiences) and extending through the primary grades. Candidates demonstrate basic knowledge of the research base underlying each content area and of the core concepts and standards of professional organizations in each content area. They rely on sound resources for that knowledge. Finally, candidates demonstrate that they can analyze and critique early childhood curriculum experiences in terms of the relationship of the experiences to the research base and to professional standards.
Well-prepared candidates choose their approaches to the task depending on the ages and developmental levels of the children they teach. They use their own **knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum for each child.** With the youngest children, early childhood candidates emphasize the key experiences that will support later academic skills and understandings—with reliance on the core approaches and strategies described in sub-standard 4b and with emphasis on oral language and the development of children's background knowledge. Working with somewhat older or more skilled children, candidates also identify those aspects of each subject area that are critical to children's later academic competence. With all children, early childhood professionals support later success by modeling engagement in challenging subject matter and by building children's faith in themselves as young learners—young mathematicians, scientists, artists, readers, writers, historians, economists, and geographers (although children may not think of themselves in such categories). Designing, implementing, and evaluating meaningful, challenging curriculum requires alignment with appropriate early learning standards and knowledgeable use of the discipline's resources to focus on key experiences for each age group and each individual child.

Standard 6. Becoming a Professional

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.
Key elements of Standard 6

- **6a:** Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood field
- **6b:** Knowing about and upholding ethical standards and other professional guidelines
- **6c:** Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice
- **6d:** Integrating knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education
- **6e:** Engaging in informed advocacy for children and the profession

The early childhood field has a distinctive history, values, knowledge base, and mission. Early childhood professionals, including beginning teachers, have a strong **identification and involvement with the early childhood field** to better serve young children and their families. Well-prepared candidates understand the nature of a profession. They know about the many connections between the early childhood field and other related disciplines and professions with which they may collaborate while serving diverse young children and families. Candidates are also aware of the broader contexts and challenges within which early childhood professionals work. They consider current issues and trends that might affect their work in the future.

Because young children are at such a critical point in their development and learning, and because they are vulnerable and cannot articulate their own rights and needs, early childhood professionals have compelling responsibilities to **know about and uphold ethical guidelines and other professionals.** Well prepared candidates are very familiar with the NAEYC's Code of Ethical Conduct and are guided by its ideals and principles. This means honoring their responsibilities to uphold high standards of confidentiality, sensitivity, and respect for children, families, and colleagues. Candidates know how to use the Code to analyze and resolve professional ethical dilemmas and are able to give defensible justifications for their resolutions of those dilemmas. Well-prepared candidates also know and obey relevant laws, such as those pertaining to child abuse, the rights of children with disabilities, and school attendance. Finally, candidates are familiar with relevant professional guidelines, such as national, state, or local standards for content and child outcomes; position statements about, for example, early learning standards, linguistic and cultural diversity, early childhood mathematics, technology in early childhood, prevention of child abuse, child care licensing requirements, and other professional standards affecting early childhood practice.

Continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice is a hallmark of a professional in any field. An attitude of inquiry is evident in well-prepared candidates' writing, discussion, and actions. Whether engaging in classroom-based research, investigating ways to improve their own practices, participating in conferences, or finding resources in libraries and on Internet sites, candidates demonstrate self-motivated, purposeful learning that directly influences the quality of their work with young children. Candidates—and professional preparation programs—view graduation or licensure not as the final demonstration of competence but as one milestone among many, including professional development experiences before and beyond successful degree completion.

Well-prepared candidates' practice is influenced by **knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives*.*** As professionals, early childhood candidates' decisions and advocacy efforts are grounded in multiple sources of knowledge and multiple perspectives. Even routine decisions about what materials to use for an activity, whether to intervene in a dispute between two children, how to organize nap time, what to say about curriculum in a newsletter, or what to tell families about new video games are informed by a professional context, research-based knowledge, and values. In their work with young children, candidates show that they make and justify decisions on the basis of their *knowledge* of the central issues, professional values and standards, and research findings in their field. They also show evidence of *reflective approaches* to their work, analyzing their own practices in a broader context, and using reflections to modify and improve their work with young children. Finally, well-prepared candidates display a *critical*

stance, examining their own work, sources of professional knowledge, and the early childhood field with a questioning attitude. Their work demonstrates that they do not just accept a simplistic source of truth; instead, they recognize that while early childhood educators share the same core professional values, they do not agree on all of the field's central questions.

Finally, early childhood candidates demonstrate that they can engage in **informed advocacy for children and families and the profession.** They know about the central policy issues in the field, including professional compensation, financing of the early education system, and standards setting and assessment. They are aware of and engaged in examining ethical issues and societal concerns about program quality and provision of early childhood services and the implications of those issues for advocacy and policy change. Candidates have a basic understanding of how public policies are developed, and they demonstrate essential advocacy skills, including verbal and written communication and collaboration with others around common issues.

1) SELF-ASSESSMENT AND SELF-ADVOCACY

Associate degree candidates are often at a key decision point in their professional lives, entering or reentering higher education after extended work experiences or making decisions about further education beyond the associate degree. Therefore, skills in assessing one's own goals, strengths, and needs are critical, as is learning how to advocate for one's own professional needs.

Evidence of growth: Candidates' growth in these skills may be seen in assessments of changes over time and in the actual professional decisions made by candidates as they move through the program and beyond.

Indicators of strength:

- Candidates assess their own goals, strengths, and needs.
- Candidates know how to advocate for their own professional needs.

2) MASTERING AND APPLYING FOUNDATIONAL CONCEPTS FROM GENERAL EDUCATION

General education has value for its own sake—as part of the background of an educated person—and for the value added to practitioners' ability to implement a conceptually rich curriculum. Both in immediate employment as an early childhood professional and in preparing for further baccalaureate study, associate degree graduates are enriched by understanding foundational concepts from areas including science, mathematics, literature, and the behavioral and social sciences.

Evidence of growth: Candidates' acquisition of these skills may be seen, for example, in their successful mastery of general education objectives, in their written and oral rationales for activities, and in ratings of the conceptual accuracy and richness of their curriculum plans.

Indicators of strength:

- Candidates understand foundational concepts from areas such as science, mathematics, literature, and the behavioral and social sciences.
- Candidates can apply these concepts in their work as early childhood professionals.

3) WRITTEN AND VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS

Well-prepared associate degree graduates have strong skills in written and verbal communication. These skills allow them to provide positive language and literacy experiences for children, and they also support professional communications with families and colleagues. Candidates going on to baccalaureate study need skills sufficient to ensure success in upper-division academic work. In addition, technological literacy is an essential component of this set of skills.

Evidence of growth: Candidates' mastery of these skills may be seen, for example, in successful completion of relevant courses, performance on communication and technological aspects of assignments, and competent use of communication skills in field experiences.

Indicators of strength:

- Candidates have effective skills in written and verbal communication.
- Candidates are technologically literate.

4) MAKING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PRIOR KNOWLEDGE/EXPERIENCE AND NEW LEARNING

All professionals need these skills, but they are especially important in supporting the learning of associate degree candidates who have worked for years in early care and education. Well prepared associate degree graduates are able to respect and draw upon their past or current work experience and also reflect critically upon it, enriching and altering prior knowledge with new insights. These skills will, over time, enable graduates to respond to the evolving mandates and priorities of the early childhood field.

Evidence of growth: Progress in making productive connections may be seen in candidates' growing ability to articulate relevant theory and research that either affirms or calls into question their experience—often seen in journals and portfolios, but also in interviews and presentations.

Indicators of strength:

- Candidates respect and draw upon their past or current work experience.
- Candidates are able to reflect critically upon their experience.

5) IDENTIFYING AND USING PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

Even the best associate program cannot provide in-depth knowledge and skills in all areas. Therefore, well-prepared graduates should know how to identify and use credible professional resources from multiple sources, allowing them to better serve children and families with a wide range of cultures, languages, needs, and abilities.

Evidence of growth: Candidates' growth in this area may be evidenced, for example, by portfolio artifacts, resources used in lesson plans or other field assignments, or in class presentations.

Indicators of strength:

- Candidates know how to identify and use credible professional resources from multiple sources.
- Candidates use these resources to better serve children and families with a wide range of cultures, languages, needs, and abilities.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The mission of the TRCC ECE program is to offer a well rounded and rewarding post-secondary education which emphasizes: Teaching and Learning, Integrity and Service, Community and Diversity with an emphasis on critical thinking, and effective communication. The primary goal of the program is to prepare passionate educational leaders, providers and teachers to serves as community resources for people and institutions within the region. Successful candidates will demonstrate the disposition, temperament and high academic standards to create positive environments and relationships in diverse settings with all children ages 0-8 years.

The ECE program incorporates instruction that stresses connection to real life expectations in the field based on theoretical understanding of all aspects of developmentally appropriate practices. The ECE program promotions professionalism and supports the development of leadership through a program that stresses academic rigor through development of oral, written, expressive and receptive competencies. Candidates are encouraged to take responsibility for oneself, one's peers, one's colleagues and one's community.

The ECE program is a community based educational program that prepares, supports and embraces individuals in their pursuit of an early childhood education working with children ages 0-8. Trust and confidence in academic programs are built through an academic plan of study that involves observation and involvement in local schools and child care facilities from the onset of the ECE plan of study. TRCC faculty believes that all candidates are able to learn; although not everyone is ready to teach. The ECE program provides access for all regardless of age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, orientation, or disability. It is the TRCC ECE program's intent to graduate candidates who believe that all children are capable of learning.

Within the field of early childhood the following topics / research has most influenced how we teach 1) NAEYC standards and skills, 2) Intentional Teaching, 3) DAP / DCAP, and 4) Learning theories including but not limited to the socio-constructivist theory and multiple intelligences. The conceptual framework in conjunction with NAEYC standards and supportive skills has been designed to allow candidates the opportunity to apply concepts as they relate to best practice in a variety of activities and assignments to develop a foundation for real life application. The entire ECE program is to create a cohesive plan of study current in National and State Competencies and standards.

Three Rivers Community College
ECE K176 Health, Safety and Nutrition
Program / Licensing Poster Board Presentation

As part of this class you have explored the licensing regulations and different standards from the Caring for Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards. You have also used a variety of different materials from other classes around curriculum, Creative Curriculum, NAEYC developmentally appropriate practices, and NAEYC standards in this class as well. These are excellent sources but the challenge is to connect them all together. For this assignment you will be asked to apply this knowledge to a health, safety or nutrition topic and address how these resources support your position and how you would promote development with young children and families.

Assignment Requirements:

Each student is expected to choose and research a health, safety or nutrition topic. Topics are up to you, pick something that interests you and allows for you to explore an area that is relevant to you and either current or future experiences in early childhood. From this research you will be asked to brief paper as well as develop and prepare a poster board to share your findings with the rest of the class.

Answer each question with details utilizing any resources (use the one's listed above as a starting point) available to you. The more information you give to support your answer the better you will do. Reflect on the topic and focus on the impact licensing and / or the standards have on decisions made by child care providers and / or parents. Be sure that your responses identify that you understand and can apply the diverse materials we have used in this class.

1. What area of health, safety and nutrition did you focus on? *Be prepared to give background details along with references to the text.*

2. What did you learn about the topic? *You must include details here and on the poster board from your resources and CT licensing.*

3. Why is this important to you?

4. Why is this important to professional caregivers?

5. What impact does licensing have on how children and their families address this topic?

6. Other ideas around the topic/initiative to be considered.

Your research paper will be handed on the day of the presentation.

As this is a **scholarly paper** you must conduct research about the topic you have decided to write about. A scholarly paper requires you to use research (books, articles, and other resources) to develop a detailed explanation of the principle and how it relates and / or is supported by other early childhood resources.

You must include **at least two resources** to help you explain the principle and **at least two of the other resources as listed above. Include this information** throughout your paper; but be sure to cite appropriately. Think and reflect on what the article stated about the topic / theory and how it supports your position. Give important and relevant details from the articles as appropriate. *You must include the appropriate citations in either APA or MLA format. A reference list, in APA or MLA format must be provided at the end of the paper as well. If you are not sure how to do this then refer to the information on the TRCC website, visit the Writing Center or speak to me.*

Prepare a poster board to use as a tool to show how you would apply what you have learned about the topic to the early care setting. This could focus on materials, assessment techniques, environmental changes, communication techniques, etc.

Be creative with the visual aspect of the board; highlight key parts of what you learned.

Three Rivers Community College
ECE K176 Health, Safety and Nutrition
Learning Experience Plan Assignment

When working with young children you will be asked to develop a written plan that identifies what you plan to do with children. The format and expectations will vary from one center to another as well as from one age group to another. In many of the ECE courses here at TRCC you will be asked to develop either learning experience and / or lesson plans as a preparation for this part of teaching young children.

You must work in small groups to complete a detailed learning experience plan around a health, safety or nutrition topic. The topic is up to you but keep in mind the age group, setting, developmentally appropriate practices and the impact the environment has on learning. As this assignment has multiple components it is a group assignment. The learning experience plan will need to include the following pieces:

Classroom schedule	identify the part(s) of the day where the topic will be covered, transitions, etc.
Learning areas / centers	identify the areas of the classroom where materials, play equipment, etc. will be added to support the concept being introduced
Performance standard(s)	identify the standard being addressed as it pertains to any of the CT curriculum tools (ages and stages, preschool frameworks, benchmarks, etc.) be sure to identify these clearly and cite your sources
Individualization	identify how you would modify the activity(ies), instruction and environment based on different developmental abilities and possible special needs considerations
Bloom's Taxonomy	include information about encouraging children to develop a higher-order thinking

Include all the resources you used to support your lesson. Be sure your objectives and / or goals are based on specific standards as located on the Connecticut Department of Education website.

<u>Some things to remember are:</u>
Must be hands on and appropriate for your identified target audience (age and development).
You are teaching us a skill, based on any of the identified areas of development.
Be sure to include all your resources and reference information.
Make it fun and interesting, as well as focused on a health, safety or nutrition.

Section One

Chapters 1 – 5

Safety

Chapter 1 A Holistic Environmental Approach to Wellness

This chapter focuses on wellness and the interrelationships of health, safety, and nutrition in the care of young children. A holistic approach and an ecological perspective allow the teacher to view the total environment of the child. Efforts at the national, state, and local levels concerning health, safety, and nutrition help to clarify the role of the teacher.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define a holistic approach to the safety, nutrition, and health of children.
- Describe an ecological perspective and explain how the environment may affect the safety, nutrition, and health of a young child.
- Describe and discuss the differences between health promotion, protection, and disease prevention as they apply to early childhood education environments.
- Define risk and discuss how risk management is crucial to the safety, nutrition, and health of children in early childhood education environments.
- Discuss how a teacher can provide high-quality early childhood education for safety, nutrition, and health.

While studying **Ch 1** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

curriculum
holistic approach
ecological approach
environment
physical environment
social and emotional environment
cultural environment
economic environment
poverty
programs for young children to promote health and wellness
risk management
6 goals of high quality early education for children
CT state regulations (space, ratios, staffing, etc.) handout

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

Why should you look at early childhood education in a holistic manner?

What factors in a child's environment might pose risk to that child? Why are there an increasing number of children at risk?

What can teachers do to contribute to the quality of early childhood education?

Why are licensing requirements so important?

What have you observed concerning diversity in your local area? What impact does this have on early childhood education?

Why is it important to have standards such as those from NAEYC to guide those who are involved in early childhood education?

Poverty is a factor in the lives of many children today. What things might a teacher do to ameliorate some of the risk that comes from poverty?

Chapter 2 Creating Safe Environments

This chapter discusses how safety policies that manage risk and prevent injury help to maintain the safety level of the early childhood education environment. Teachers should be aware of the environmental hazards, such as accessories, behaviors, and conditions, as they are applied to their early childhood education environments. Teachers should understand and recognize how developmental levels and physical abilities or disabilities affect the safety of children.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define and discuss safety policies and their use as tools for safety, risk prevention, protection, and promotion.
- Discuss the importance of safe environments and describe a safe environment for all types of early childhood education.
- Discuss the factors involved in childhood injury and describe strategies for use in injury prevention.
- Explain the development of a safety plan for an early childhood education environment. Describe the importance of and strategies for education, supervision, working with families, and observation for maintaining a safe environment.

While studying **Ch 2** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

4 issues addressed in safety policies
infant safety
toddler safety
preschooler safety
school aged safety
safety curriculum
early childhood environments and injury prevention
community and family safety considerations
modify
monitor
SIDS
brain development
injury triad
three teaching tools for promoting behavior change

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

How does family early childhood education differ from center-based care when it comes to safety situations/risks?

Why is developmental level a consideration in risk management for early childhood education environments? How might this change if a child has disabilities or other special needs?

What types of behaviors on the part of a teacher can cause risk in care? How can some of these risks be avoided?

How do you construct a safety plan for an early childhood education environment? How would you follow that plan?

What can you as a teacher do to eliminate risk for SIDS in your early childhood education environment?

Explain why brain development is a factor in children's safety risk.

Chapter 3 Indoor Safety

There are a number of threats to indoor safety, including indoor equipment, toys, interpersonal behaviors, poisons, fires and burns. Safety policies are necessary for teachers to monitor and protect the environment. An understanding of the developmental levels of children present is essential. Teachers should use checklists to monitor and modify the early childhood education environment. All items, including cleaning supplies, pets, computers, plants, and art supplies should be examined for safety and removed if they present risk. Through the use of observation, supervision, education, and working with families, teachers can promote and practice safe behaviors in the early education environment.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe and discuss safety policies for indoor environments as tools for risk prevention, protection, and promotion.
- Indicate and discuss specific guidelines for making any indoor early childhood education environment free from risk and protected for safety.
- Relate and discuss the safety hazards of indoor equipment in early childhood education environments.
- Describe and discuss the importance of safe, risk-free toys for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.
- Describe and discuss clear rules of consequences of behavior and appropriate methods of conflict resolution.
- Indicate the methods and means of poison control and risk prevention in early childhood education environments.
- Describe and discuss methods of fire and burn prevention in early childhood education environments.
- Describe and discuss methods for engaging families and building curriculum for children in regards to indoor safety.

While studying **Ch 3** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

indoor environment risk management
age appropriateness
classroom pets
cleaning supplies and safety
security
water safety
choking and suffocation
art supply safety
CPSC – Consumer Product Safety Commission
poisoning occurs five ways

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

Why do lizards, parrots, and turtles pose a risk in early childhood education environments?

What should you do if you have a biting child in your care? How do you protect the other children and help the biting child?

Discuss the safety challenges of mixed-age early childhood education.

What would some common poison risks be in a family early childhood education site?

In what situations might guns be available in an early childhood education program? What could a teacher do to educate a child about how to prevent violence in the home and community?

Chapter 4 Outdoor Safety

This chapter deals with the risks in the outdoor environment. Risks can come from playgrounds, backyards, streets, automobiles, and water. Teachers should learn to monitor the outdoor environment and make modifications using safety checklists and safety devices that protect children in early childhood education environments.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe and discuss safety policies for outdoor environments as tools for risk prevention, safety protection, and safety promotion.
- Indicate and discuss specific guidelines for making the early childhood education playground environment free from risk and protected for safety.
- Relate and discuss the safety hazards of outdoor equipment as they relate to early childhood education situations and general safety.
- Relate the guidelines for safe transportation and traffic involved in early childhood education environments.
- Describe and discuss the water safety hazards in outdoor early childhood environments.

While studying **Ch 4** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

outdoor environmental hazards
outdoor safety hazards
continuum of violence
S.A.F.E. playgrounds
fieldtrip safety
water safety

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

How would the outdoor environment of a family child care home be different than center-based care?

How would you create an optimum condition for children to ride bikes in the early childhood education environment?

What are the proper shock absorbers for playground equipment? Do most early childhood education environments or public playgrounds comply with the suggestions for shock absorbers?

What could a teacher do in the outdoor environment to design a sun safety policy?

How would neighborhood violence affect an early childhood education environment in an inner city? What could you do to ameliorate some of the risks?

Chapter 5 Emergency Response Procedures

This chapter covers emergency response procedures needed for the early childhood education

environment. It helps the teacher learn to define an emergency and what necessitates first aid. The steps for addressing proper response order and how it is to be performed are given.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe and discuss safety policies for response to childhood accidents and injuries.
- Define and discuss the differences between what constitutes an emergency and what necessitates only basic first aid.
- Indicate the steps to go through in addressing the proper responses to a real emergency and how it is to be performed.
- Define, discuss, and summarize the methods of basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and first aid to infants and children.
- Discuss methods and practices for emergency care of children with disabilities and other special needs.
- Define, discuss, and summarize the basic methods of disaster preparedness for early childhood education environments.
- Indicate the need for engaging diverse families and building curriculum for children in regards to basic response procedures for childhood injuries and accidents.

<u>While studying **Ch 5** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:</u>

emergency
rescue breathing
CPR and First Aid training
emergency information
order of response
types of cuts and wounds
poison control center
evacuation
reactions to disaster

<u>Questions to ponder while reading the text:</u>

Why is remaining calm so important in an emergency, especially when you are working with children?

How would you recognize that a child might have inhaled a poison? What signs would you be looking for?

Why is scalding an issue for the early childhood education environment? List preventive measures to avoid that risk?

What natural disasters in your local area should you be prepared for, and how would you prepare for them?

Explain why might it be necessary to prepare for the survival mode of emergency response?

Brain Development in Children

Brain development in children happens gradually and every area of their brain begins to function efficiently with time. This article will cover all the aspects related to their early brain development.

Brain, the commander-in-chief of our body. The human body cannot function without the brain. Our body may remain alive with the heart being pumped artificially, but it won't be able to bat an eyelid, if the brain stops working. We are all born with a brain that is almost developed. There are many wires and connections within the brain that are connected and functional only during the infancy and toddler age. The brain development occurs due to the genes and environment of the growing child. The inherited gift (genes) of the child makes the structure of the brain possible, but it is the healthy diet and external stimulation of the surroundings that gets the brain connected in the most efficient way.

The ability of an infant to be able to speak, crawl, cry, laugh, walk, recognize, remember, etc., all is nothing short of a miracle. The brain is able to develop due to the interactions and the care provided by the parents. The simple gaze a mother gives her baby while feeding, the lullaby sung by a caring father, etc. form a stepping stone for the early brain development of a child.

Thus, not only the genetics and nourishment play a part in the development of our brain, but the daily interactions, physical activity, love and daily experiences help the brain development in early childhood. The brain develops with the help of the external factors of the surroundings. The five senses of vision, hearing, smell, taste and touch help in developing an unconnected brain structure. The child learns to recognize the faces of family members, the voice of his/her father, the smell of his/her mother's skin, the taste of the milk he/she drinks and the gentle caressing of his/her grandmother. This helps the brain get wired up accordingly and have an impact on the basic architecture of his/her brain.

There are over 100,000,000,000 cells in the brain when a child is born. These cells need to start

communicating with each other and during the miraculous changes, the brain follows the Darwinian theory of selection of the fittest. In other words, those synapses and connections that are seldom used by the child are deleted and those that are useful are developed further.

The prime time for the child to learn and understand concepts that will prove helpful throughout life are the early formative years. The brain of a 3 years old is two times more active than an adult. Thus, it is very important to encourage the various interactive activities that will help in brain development. The types of brain development in early childhood are:

Cognitive Development

- **Development of the Visual and Auditory Senses**: The vision and hearing senses are the first to be developed in children. To improve these senses the parents and guardians should ensure the child is exposed to different colors, shapes, and sounds. You can hang different vividly colored and shaped chimes over the child's cradle that have a visual appeal and a soft rhythmic sound that will help develop the child's vision and auditory senses.
- **Development of Language Skills**: The child begins to gurgle some sounds and moves on to some monosyllables like ma, pa, da-da, etc. The parents should develop these speech skills by talking to the child and encouraging him to speak. Reading out poems aloud and singing songs and lullabies help in the process. Although the infant may not understand their meanings, but will be able to grasp the different sounds of the words, registering them in his brain for future reference.
- **Development of the Motor Skills**: The child's brain begins to gain control of the muscles. The child starts moving his arms and legs in all directions playfully and this is part of his physical exercise and development of motor skills. The child begins to hold fingers and grasp toys, thus helping in his fine motor skills of the hands, fingers, toes and feet. The parents should help the child with physical activities that will help in the physical development of the body and the brain.
- **Development of the Emotional and Social Quotient**: The healthy, warm, caring and loving environment the child receives, plays an important role in the development of the child's emotional and social skills. It is very important for the parents to maintain a healthy environment in the house, as the child is very vulnerable to negative emotions around him. The child develops emotions of hatred, anger, fear, etc. as easily as love, trust and empathy by learning from his surroundings. Thus, provide the child with ample positive emotions and social skills that will help him adjust into the society easily.

How does the Brain Learn After Birth

The most common advice new parents are given is to cradle their baby's head very carefully. This is because the neck muscles cannot support the weight of the head. The brain is already one-fourth the weight of an adult's and the prenatal phase is when the neurons, axons and synapses form and connect. Let us see how the child goes through different milestones of growth.

Development During Early 6 Weeks

A newborn is totally dependent on the mother for its basic needs. The first 6 weeks is the time when they learn many things and form a bond with their mother and others. The baby pays close, very close attention to the surroundings and thus, make sure you treat him/her well. During this time the baby:

Can See: objects that are just 8 to 12 inches away. This means it can see the mother's face only when she holds him close to her body. Very soon the baby's vision will improve and you will observe him/her following all your movements. This is the time when the baby enjoys looking at bright, colorful as well as black and white images and objects.

Can Hear: voices and sounds around it. The baby could hear when it was inside the womb of its mother. Thus, the minute it is born, it recognizes its mother's voice instantly.

Can Feel: Touch is one important sensation that babies can understand. It is a way to build trust and bond with your baby. Give the baby gentle messages, hold him/her close as a way to make the baby believe loved and secure. Make sure your dress the baby appropriately with clothes that suit the weather. As babies are sensitive to temperature fluctuations.

Can Communicate: Crying, gargling, cooing are all forms of communication for the baby. When the baby feels hungry, tired, sleepy or is in pain, it will cry. When the baby wants talk to you, it will start cooing.

Development During 3 to 6 Months

At this age, the baby turns more social and will start playing simple games with parents. The baby realizes that its actions tend to stimulate its surroundings. Muscle control is better and thus, the child will try to explore the world around it. During this time, the baby:

Can See: as far as 3 feet. It will follow objects across, over or under him/her visually. The baby starts developing depth and distance perception, that is, can understand objects placed far away and near to him/her.

Can Eat: This is the best time to introduce them to solid foods after consulting with the doctor. The child should be made to sit upright, before feeding any solid food. These foods should be iron-fortified, single-grained, or baby vegetables.

Can Move: The baby starts to roll over, sit up with the help of support as well as learn to grab things. The baby starts playing with its hands and can reach for his/her toes. It begins to put things in its mouth and learn to explore the toys.

Can Communicate: The baby starts producing more sounds, vowels and starts to squeal. The facial expressions are more pronounced and may even gurgle when having a conversation. The child develops emotionally and starts reacting in a different manner when hearing the voice of a familiar person and a stranger.

Development During 1 to 2 Years

This is the phase when the child learns to walk and talk. Thus, the child needs to be supervised at all times during this phase. The toddler during this phase:

Can Eat: with the family 3 times a day. The appetite may decrease during this time and toddler will favor one type of food.

Can Move: The toddler learn to walk on its own. He/she will also learn to kick a ball and learn to climb stairs. The baby starts using its finger and learn to hold on to things like a spoon. This is the time when they love to draw and color. Make sure you provide the child toys to stack up, rings that fit in one another and simple puzzles to develop fine motor skills.

Can Communicate: This is the time when vocabulary increases. The child will use words when he/she recognizes certain objects in books or pictures. The pronunciation may not be correct, but encourage the child to speak more.
These were a few development milestones that occur during the child's growth phase. Let us now have a look at the milestones that happen within the brain according to the child's age.

Brain Development in Early Childhood
There are certain milestones that are achieved within the brain according to the age of the child. Let us see the different stages of child development according to age:

Development Milestones of Brain

- **Age 4 Months**: The brain starts responding to the different words or sounds produced in any language spoken.
- **Age 8 to 9 Months**: The infants brain begins to develop memory as they experience different activities like pushing a ball around or throwing a spoon.
- **Age 10 Months**: The child begins to focus on his own new language like ma, pa, da-da, ba-ba, etc. and pays little attention to the other languages spoken around him.
- **Age 12 Months**: The child begins to respond to words that are spoken in a child-like funny manner than flat, normal voices. For example, when the mother says, 'shee the moo-moo' the baby will look towards the cow more often than when he hears, 'see the cow'. Thus, it is often said a child should be spoken to in the language he understands.
- **Age 12 to 18 Months**: Babies and toddlers begin to explore their memories and carry out the forgotten activity. If the child seen a toy that needs winding up, the child will wind it till it finally begins to play.
- **Age 24 Months**: The toddler and preschoolers recognize the people around them and know their friends from strangers. They begin to cry when handled by people who are unknown to them.
- **Age 30 Months**: The child begins to develop a kind of map in his or her mind and knows, where the things are in his or her surroundings.
- **Age 36 Months**: The child begins to show two different emotions at one single time, like falling down while playing and feel like crying, but happy that he is having fun playing in the park.

The child's mental ability develops with specific types of learning. There are certain critical periods that help him absorb particular information at a faster rate. For example:

- **Emotional Intelligence**: The optimum period for development of the brain is 0 to 24 months and the next best age is 2-5 years. The EQ can further develop at any age.
- **Motor Development**: The optimum period is 0 to 24 years and then 2-5 years with the possibility of further development possibility decreasing with age.
- **Vision**: The optimum period of vision development is 0 to 2 years and then 2 to 5 years. The vision may remain constant or decrease with age.
- **Hearing**: 4 to 8 months is the optimum age period for development of early sounds. Then 8 months to 5 years is the next best age. The ability to recognize and understand sounds keeps developing with age.
- **Ability to Think**: The child begins to think from 0 to 48 months. Then the next best age period is 4 to 10 years when parents and other adults are bombarded with a million questions. This is the age when the child is actively thinking and questioning the happenings of the surroundings.
- **Second Language Skills**: The child can learn and understand a second language other than his mother tongue during 5 to 10 years of age. The child can further learn more language skills at any age.

The best way to influence the brain development is by contributing towards an active interaction with your child. You should, sing, talk, read and explain simple things to the child to help him develop his brains. The brain of a child is rightly called a plastic mold that can be shaped as the parents mold it. It is like a blank page and how well you write the script of knowledge, grasping power and emotional expressions on it is up to the parents and caregivers. You should provide ample opportunities to the child to help him develop his brain and flourish accordingly.

A warm home, loving family and good educational development will ensure a steady brain development in kids. No two children are alike. Thus, some may learn quickly or some may take time. Do not give up on any child, if he does not act according to your expectations. It is not about your wants, but the child's dreams. Let children learn at their own pace by always being there with a supportive hand. Just as Einstein took time to find his niche, you never know your child may take time to find his path. Encourage the brain development in early childhood with love and attention.

By Batul Nafisa Baxamusa
Last Updated: 2/18/2012

Checklist for Safety in the Preschool Classroom

Safety is one of the most important elements of a preschool classroom. Accidental injuries are one of the leading causes of death in children over the age of one, and many of these injuries can be prevented with a simple safety checklist. While children are in your classroom, their safety is your responsibility. Failure to provide a safe environment can result in more than child injury -- your business could face lawsuits and medical claims if a child is injured while attending your school.

Toys

All toys should live up to the standards set forth by the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Toys should be free of harmful paints or chemicals, should not have small parts that can be ingested or damaging to eyes and other soft tissue, and should be age-appropriate. Additional toy concerns in preschool classrooms include making sure toys do not splinter, shard, or break, and that toys will not cause injuries if accidentally fallen on or thrown.

Electricity

Electricity should be a major concern in your preschool classroom. Cover all exposed outlets to prevent children from sticking their fingers or other objects into them. Surge

protectors and other electrical cords should be mounted out of reach of children. Keep any electrical devices safe and out of reach to prevent accidental shocks.

Cleaning Supplies

The cleaning supplies necessary to keep your preschool classroom safe and sanitary should be stored in locked cabinets, far away from the reaching arms of your students. These chemicals can cause poisoning and other health problems if ingested and could even lead to the death. If you have to clean up something, put the chemicals back in the cabinet immediately after use.

Environment

The indoor and outdoor environment should have an abundance of soft surfaces to protect children from possible falls off equipment. Inspect your classroom for tripping hazards and sharp edges on tables and chairs. Every part of your classroom needs to be checked for strangulation hazards including cords from window blinds and any safety railings on stairs or equipment.

Supervision

No matter how safe your environment may seem, children will inevitably find a way to fall down, bump their heads, or scrap their knees. The number one priority in the safety of your preschool students should be constant supervision. Supervision can stop an incident before it occurs and provide helpful ideas on further improving safety.

Three Rivers Community College
ECE K176 Health, Safety and Nutrition
Article Review Questions

Throughout this course you will be given many different resources to review as a way to enhance the materials covered in class. You are responsible to read and familiarize yourself with these materials. To help you with this process I have developed some review questions to go along with some of the articles. These questions will need to be handed in and will count as part of your grade (participation). They will **not** be accepted late as they will be used to promote participation the day they are due.

Chapters 1 - 5

____. (2011). *Brain Development in Children.*Buzzle.com.

1. What was the main idea of the article? How did this information compare to what you read in the textbook?
2. What were some big changes that occur in the brain as the child grows: How can you "see" this and explain it to parents?
3. How would you use this information in the future?

____. (2012). *Checklist for Safety in the Preschool Classroom.* EHow.

1. Did this article cover a majority of the safety concerns identified in the textbook? What was missing?
2. What should be included or changed if thinking about infants?
3. What should be included or changed if thinking about toddlers?
4. What should be included or changed if thinking about school aged children?

Section Two

Chapters 6 – 9

Nutrition

Chapter 6 Basic Nutrition in ECE

This chapter considers the importance of nutritional knowledge for teachers. An increasing number of children rely on teachers to provide a good portion of their nutritional needs. Nutritional policies should be created for early childhood education environments that include the use of nutritional guidelines.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define and discuss basic nutrition policies and their use for the nutritional well-being of children.
- Describe the importance of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the MyPlate Food System, Daily Recommended Intakes, and other information sources that provide guidelines for nutritional well-being.
- Describe and discuss the basic nutrition process.
- Define the three basic macronutrients in the diet and discuss their importance to overall wellbeing.
- Define the three basic micronutrients in the diet and discuss their importance to overall wellbeing.
- Define and discuss the challenges micronutrient deficiencies such as dental caries and iron deficiency anemia.
- Indicate the need for engaging diverse families and building curriculum for children for to better understand proper nutrition to promote health and well-being.

While studying **Ch 6** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

nutritional guidelines
USDA
nutrients
MyPlate
ABC's of Nutrition
DRI
macronutrients
micronutrients
Diet Quality Index
National School Lunch Program
C.A.C.F.P
metabolism
calorie
proteins
vitamins
minerals

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

What can you do with a child who doesn't seem to like vegetables?

Discuss the importance of water in the diet. What are some ways a child can get more water in his or her diet?

Discuss basic nutrition and why it is important for the teacher to understand it in order to provide healthy, well-balanced meals.

Chapter 7 Protecting Good Nutrition and Wellness

This chapter looks at nutritional challenges that may pose risks to children and affect the early childhood education environment. Nutritional policies should consider the risks for hunger and malnutrition, obesity and the factors surrounding it, and lack of physical activity and exercise. Teachers should have a basic awareness of these risks and how they can help children in their environment by engaging diverse families employing cultural competence and other strategies and building curriculum for children that will keep them nutritionally well and physically fit.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define and discuss the nutritional challenges that pose risks for children in the early childhood education environment and the creation of policies to address these risks.
- Define and discuss nutrition in regard to the challenges of hunger and malnutrition as they apply to children in early childhood education.
- Define and discuss childhood overweight and obesity in regard to the impact it may have on the provision of food to children in the early childhood education environment.
- Define and discuss the importance of including physical activity and exercise as part of the diet in early childhood education environments.
- Indicate the need for engaging families and building curriculum for children for proper nutrition to protect health and well-being.

While studying **Ch 7** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

food security
hunger
food deserts
malnutrition
misnutrition
obesity
3 types of physical activity

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

What activities could you plan for four and five-year-olds so that they have plenty of physical activity and exercise?

How does childhood obesity impact the early childhood education environment?

During the less than stellar economic times there may be a number of children who are food insecure, not getting enough food to eat at home. How do you personally think you could identify a child that this might be happening to? What measures could you take to alleviate this issue for that child/those children?

Chapter 8 Providing Good Nutrition for Diverse Children

This chapter shows teachers how to practice good nutrition and develop nutritional policies for different age groups, including infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children. Teachers need to be aware of how they approach nutrition from their own perspective. Some children with disabilities or chronic illnesses may have to be accommodated, whereas others may need

nutritional services beyond early childhood education.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define and discuss the need for nutrition policies that address growth and development to prevent risk, provide protection, and promote nutritional well-being.
- Discuss breastfeeding, bottle feeding, and the introduction of solids into the infant's diet, including developmental implications and practices for the teacher.
- Discuss the impact of development on the feeding behavior of the toddler and describe strategies for the teacher to redirect that behavior.
- Discuss the food behaviors of the preschooler and the strategies for the teacher to guide the child to behaviors that foster well-being.
- Discuss the nutritional needs of the school-aged child and the strategies for the teacher to meet these needs that may be compromised by outside influences.
- Explain how disabilities and other special needs might affect the nutrition and feeding of a child and discuss specific strategies to meet the child's nutritional challenges.
- Describe and discuss methods for education, supervision, role modeling, and working with families to ensure good nutrition for children in early childhood education environments.

While studying **Ch 8** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

3 indicators for the need for wellness policies
benefits of breastfeeding
developmental skills for eating
autonomy and eating behaviors
preschoolers and the environment

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

How would you assist a breast-feeding mother whose three-month-old child is in your care?

What is the order of introducing solid foods to an infant? What types of vegetables would you introduce first?

How can you help toddlers be successful at learning to eat by themselves?

What should you do if a preschooler goes through a food jag?

Are there any problems with feeding children in mixed-age care? What types of foods would be good to feed these children?

Why do you think parents pack sack lunches with so much junk food or poor food choices? What might be done to change this?

Chapter 9 Menu Planning and Food Safety

This chapter prepares the teacher for planning menus and preparing for food safety. It also helps the teacher to be aware of food programs that can be accessed by early childhood education environments. Teachers will learn how to select healthy foods, plan adequate menus, and prepare food in a safe manner.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define and discuss nutritional policies in relation to menu planning and food safety in the early childhood education environment.

- Discuss the guidelines for subsidized food programs available for early childhood education environments.
- Indicate the importance of proper menu planning for children's well-being, including strategies for planning healthy breakfasts, snacks, and lunches.
- Summarize the need for food sanitation and safety and practice strategies for providing it in the early childhood education environment.
- Relate the strategies for providing safety and healthy meals in early education environments through education, observation, cultural competency, supervision, and working with families.

While studying **Ch 9** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

CACFP funding requirements
disabilities planning
religious considerations in menu planning
food allergies
lactose intolerance
anaphylaxis
ten areas of food safety to be considered
cooking with children

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

Discuss the problems with creating menus that resemble fast-food menus.

Why is safe food handling especially critical in the early childhood education environment?

What are some of the limitations or blocks to menu planning? Look carefully at the levels of issues, and then use what applies to you and what might apply to others. You may not be planning menus as yet, but if you were what might be the difficulties?

How can you make sure you are supplying the proper nutrients in the meals in your early childhood education environment?

How would you get children to eat foods that they may not have tried before?

How does a peanut-allergic child affect the early childhood education environment?

Karrie A. Kalich, Dottie Bauer, and Deirdre McPartlin

"Early Sprouts"

Establishing Healthy Food Choices for Young Children

Four-year-old Tyler and 5-year-old Cole eagerly tear the shiny green leaves of rainbow chard into small pieces to use in today's recipe: Cheesy Chard Squares. Earlier in the week the children harvested some chard from the play-yard garden and cut up the stalks with scissors. They sampled each of the different colors and talked about the similarities and differences.

It is late in the harvest season, and while they work, Janet, their teacher, discusses plans for next year's garden with the children. Cole wants to plant tomatoes. Tyler suggests cucumbers. Both children agree they want to grow rainbow chard again. They mix together several eggs, grate the cheese, and combine the ingredients in preparation for baking. Tyler announces, "I'm going to eat these squares for dinner!"

The preschool years are a critical period for the development of food preferences and lifelong eating habits. Between the ages of 2 and 5, children become increasingly responsive to external cues, such as television commercials that use popular cartoon characters to advertise foods, candy in supermarket check-out aisles, and fast-food restaurants offering a free toy with the purchase of a kid's meal. These environmental messages influence children's decisions about what and how much they should eat (Birch & Fisher 1995; Fisher & Birch 1999; Rolls, Engell, & Birch 2000). By the age of 5, most children have lost their innate ability to eat primarily in response to hunger (Rolls, Engell, & Birch 2000; Haire-Joshu & Nanney 2002) and have learned to prefer calorie-rich foods (high fat and high sugar)—foods often used as a reward or for comfort in American society.

Some adults offer children healthy foods, such as fruits and vegetables, in a negative or coercive manner. But vegetables become less appealing if children must finish them prior to having dessert or leaving the dinner table (Birch & Fisher 1996). Using a positive approach to foster healthy eating behaviors helps young children develop lifelong habits that decrease the risk of obesity and other related chronic diseases.

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The authors expand the story of their Early Sprouts project in a new book from Redleaf Press, *Early Sprouts: Cultivating Healthy Food Choices in Young Children.*

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Nutrition and young children

The current obesity epidemic in the United States is a fast-growing public health concern. For preschool-age children the prevalence of obesity has more than doubled in the past 30 years (CCOR 2006). Traditionally, early childhood educators have focused on the importance of meeting young children's nutritional requirements (Marotz 2009). With the increase in childhood obesity, there is a new call to early childhood educators to guide children and families in developing healthy eating and activity habits.

What we know now is that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables is recommended for achieving or maintaining a healthy body weight. The USDA (U.S. Department of Agriculture) recommends that preschool-age children eat 3 to 5 half-cup servings of vegetables and 2 to 4 half-cup servings of fruit daily (www.mypyramid.gov). However, on the average, preschool children consume approximately 2 servings of vegetables and 1.5 servings of fruit each day. Their diets are typically low in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and high in saturated fat, sodium, and added sugar (Enns, Mickle, & Goldman 2002; Guenther et al. 2006). In fact, studies have consistently shown that the diets of U.S. children do not meet national dietary recommendations (Gleason & Suitor 2001; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Agriculture 2005). While children ages 2 to 5 have somewhat better diets than older children, their diets still need improvement to meet the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Healthy Americans (Fungwe et al. 2009).

Children's gardens provide an ideal setting for nutrition education by allowing children to observe and care for plants and develop a connection to the natural world.

Role of early education in improving the diets of young children

Early childhood educators have the opportunity to improve children's food choices because they interact with children daily (Birch & Fisher 1998). Family members and teachers can influence the food preferences of young chil- dren by providing healthy food choices, offering multiple opportunities to prepare and eat new foods, and serving as positive role models through their own food choices.

Children's preference for vegetables is among the strongest predictors of vegetable consumption (Birch 1979; Domel et al. 1996; Harvey-Berino et al. 1997; Morris & Zidenberg-Cherr 2002). Sullivan and Birch (1994) found that it takes 5 to 10 exposures to a new food for preschool children to become comfortable and familiar with its taste and texture. When children have repeated opportunities to taste a new food, they often change their food reactions from rejection to acceptance (Birch & Marlin 1982; Sullivan & Birch 1994).

Children's gardens provide an ideal setting for nutrition education by allowing children to observe and care for plants and develop a connection to the natural world (Subramaniam 2002; Lautenschlager & Smith 2007). Children exposed to homegrown produce tend to prefer those vegetables (Nanney et al. 2007). Some early childhood garden projects also focus on caring for the environment and science education (Perkins et al. 2005; Nimmo & Hallett 2008). Other nutrition education approaches for young children feature tasting exotic fruits and vegetables (Bellows & Anderson 2006). As more educators bring gardening and nutrition projects into their classrooms, there is a need for additional teacher support and curriculum development (Graham et al. 2005).

The Early Sprouts program: An overview

Early Sprouts is a research-based nutrition and gardening curriculum for the preschool years, created by Karrie Kalich and developed in collaboration with the Child Development Center at Keene State College in New Hampshire. We designed the curriculum to encourage children's food preferences for six selected vegetables (bell peppers, butternut squash, carrots, green beans, Swiss rainbow chard, and tomatoes) and increase their consumption of these vegetables (Kalich, Bauer, & McPartlin 2009). The program's scope includes plant- ing raised organic garden beds, sensory and cooking lessons focused on the six vegetables, training and support for classroom teachers, and family involvement.

Through the curriculum we help children overcome an innate food neophobia (fear of new foods) through multiple exposures to the six vegetables. Additionally, the Early Sprouts model provides a "seed to table" experience by following the lifespan of the vegetables.

The garden features six vegetables that represent a variety of colors and plant parts and are easy to grow in our region (New England), available at farmers' markets, and affordable and available year-round in supermarkets.

One project goal is to expose the children to the six

Photos © Karrie A. Kalich

vegetables multiple times over the course of the 24-week curriculum. In preparation for the project, we developed recipes for cooking snacks and meals using the vegetables. The Early Sprouts recipes include a variety of healthy ingredients: low-fat dairy products, healthy fats (canola and olive oils), whole grains (stone- ground cornmeal and whole wheat flours), and reduced amounts of sodium and sugar as compared to commercially available snack products.

Based on feedback from field-testing among teachers and children in our program, we chose 24 recipes (four per vegetable). We adapted the recipes for classroom use and for family use in the Family Recipe Kits component of the project. Each recipe has an accompanying sensory exploration activity that features the same vegetable and involves children in exploring the plant parts by using all of their senses.

We begin the Early Sprouts project at each site by building raised garden beds on the playground and filling them with alternating layers of compost, humus, and topsoil. To ensure children's health and safety, we practice organic gardening techniques, such as using only organic fertilizers and hand-picking garden pests. With the groundwork complete, teachers implement the healthy food curriculum in their preschool classrooms.

How the Early Sprouts program works

The program begins when children help plant seeds and seedlings in late May and early June. This is followed by watering, weeding, watching, and waiting. After months of anticipation, the children harvest the vegetables from July through early October; thus they observe the complete growing cycle. The children make many discoveries.

The children are in the play- yard garden at harvest time. Janet, the preschool teacher, asks Rachel, age 4½, what she thinks the Swiss chard will taste like. Rachel pauses, then she speculates, "It will taste like nachos." She spontaneously takes a bite of the Swiss chard directly from the garden and then corrects herself, proclaiming, "It tastes more like celery!"

Each week the curriculum introduces one of the six vegetables. By the end of the entire curriculum, each vegetable has been featured four times. At the start of the week, the children use their senses to explore the vegetable. This exploration is followed by a cooking activity featuring an Early Sprouts recipe. At the end of the week, the children pack a Family Recipe Kit containing the recipe, tips for cooking with children, and many of the necessary ingredients to take home. The purpose of the kit is to help families reinforce the food preparation and healthy eating experience children have had at preschool. Here is one example:

Cooper, a cautious 3½-year-old, is hesitant to try any of the Early Sprouts vegetables but thoroughly enjoys all of the sensory and cooking activities. He almost never misses an Early Sprouts activity and spends time in the garden almost daily. His interest in the vegetables con- tinues throughout the 24-week experience, but so does his hesitancy to taste the vegetables. About five weeks before the end of the program, Cooper starts to cau- tiously lick the vegetables. Three weeks later, he tastes them. By the last two weeks, he has developed into a true vegetable lover. His family says that he requests and eats several vegetables a day.

Sensory exploration

The sensory exploration experiences safely introduce children to each vegetable. Their familiarity increases as they smell each vegetable, feel the shape and texture, touch its leaves and stalks, shake it and listen for sounds, and notice how it looks before tasting the raw food or the results of the prepared recipe.

Photo © Karrie Kalich

Jackson, Caitlin, and José, all enrolled in an older preschool group, enthusiastically gather red, yellow, and green bell peppers. Janet, the teacher, guides each of the children in cutting open their peppers and exploring the seeds. José quickly asks if they can taste them. Each child cuts a piece of pepper and tastes it. Caitlin wants to taste the other colors. The children cut and share pieces of their peppers. Janet and the children discuss the various characteristics of the bell peppers, using vocabulary such as *crunchy, juicy,* and *smooth*. When they finish, the children describe the peppers' characteristics and agree they enjoy all the different colored peppers.

The sensory exploration experiences safely introduce children to each vegetable.

Cooking

After children explore and taste a vegetable in its raw form, most are eager and willing to participate in the cooking and tasting process. Teachers encourage the children to perform each step of the recipe preparation as is developmentally appropriate—measuring, cutting (with safe tools), mixing, and preparing the food for serving.

Children eagerly join Janet at the table after washing their hands. Janet helps them identify all the ingredients for making muffins. They use child-size table knives to dice the peppers and plastic graters to grate the cheese. Janet watches 5-year-old Jermaine as he breaks and mixes the eggs, while guiding 3½-year- old Thomas and 4-year-old Jocelyn in measuring and mixing the dry ingredients. All the children count to 10 as they take turns mixing the wet and dry ingredients.

Cooking experiences connect the Early Sprouts project to other curriculum areas, such as math, science, literacy, and social skills development (Colker 2005).

Two 5-year-olds, Annabelle and Carolyn, are deciding where to place the different colored pegs on the peg board. From across the room, Janet watches the children and admires their cooperative play. After a few minutes, she approaches and sees the girls using many colors. "We're planting a garden," they explain. The orange pegs are carrots; the green pegs are green beans; the red pegs are tomatoes. Janet asks them about the mixed-color assortment of pegs in one of the rows. The children look at her impatiently and exclaim, "Those are rainbow chard, silly!"

Family involvement

Social modeling by family (as well as peers) plays a particularly large role in the early development of food preferences (Birch & Fisher 1996). The Early Sprouts program supports families in encouraging children to make healthy food choices at home. One parent reports that as a result of the program, her whole family is eating better, even her "I-don't-eat-anything-green" husband.

The Early Sprouts monthly newsletter keeps families well informed of our activities. We also invite families to participate in garden planting; classroom-based sensory and cooking activities; food-based special events, such as the Stone Soup luncheon (made from the Early Sprouts vegetables); and a family nutrition education program. One father comments, "I used to battle with my child about eating vegetables. Now he requests specific vegetables at the store and at mealtimes."

The weekly Family Recipe Kits, which children help to pack, promote family-oriented nutrition education. They contain all needed ingredients and instructions to re-create the week's featured recipe with their child at home. The family experience reinforces the classroom activity and provides another opportunity for the child to taste the vegetable. At the end of the year, families receive a cookbook containing all of the Early Sprouts recipes. Through our weekly program surveys, parents tell us their stories.

Sydney, the mother of two Early Sprouts participants, writes, "On Friday we brought home this week's kit, and, as usual, my oldest child, Ava, excitedly asked about the contents. When I told her it was butternut squash pancakes, she wrinkled her nose and said she would not eat them. Of course Clay, the youngest and a finicky eater, turned his nose up too.

Sunday morning the children begged for "normal pancakes" but I told them that we were making the Early Sprouts pancakes. Three-year-old Clay wanted to help but kept saying he would not eat the squash. As the pan- cakes were cooking, Ava came to the stove and asked to see what they looked like. I ate the first (Yummy!), put the second on Clay's plate, and kept cooking. Then Ava said she wanted some too. Both children ate the pan- cakes. Their only comments were, "How soon until the next one?" and "He (she) got more pancakes."

Sydney described the pancakes as "delicious and so easy to make." She wrote, "I did not even serve them with syrup! My only complaint—they were so good I only got two pancakes! I feel good about serving them. I LOVE THIS PROGRAM! These are the only pancakes we will eat from now on!"

Cooking experiences connect the Early Sprouts project to other curriculum areas, such as math, science, literacy, and social Skills development.

Involving teachers and staff

Training professional and volunteer staff is important to the ongoing success of the Early Sprouts project. Because some adults are unfamiliar with the six vegetables and unsure about how to introduce them to the children, we provide detailed background sheets for each vegetable. We post guidelines in the classrooms to encourage staff and volunteers to serve as positive role models during snack and mealtimes when serving the vegetables and presenting new recipes (see "Early Sprouts Tasting—Suggestions for Teachers and Volunteers," p. 54). One experienced teacher even commented, "I know it is important to teach our children about nutrition, but I was never really sure how to do that before Early Sprouts."

Early Sprouts: What we have learned

A strong research component supports the Early Sprouts program and has evaluated the impact of the curriculum on the eating habits of young children and their families. At the start, midpoint, and conclusion of the 24 weeks of sensory

exploration and vegetable recipes, we measure children's preferences for the program's vegetables as well as dietary changes observed by families at home.

At the conclusion of the program, children are more willing to taste the Early Sprouts vegetables and express a greater preference for the six vegetables highlighted. Teachers describe a greater personal confidence in guiding young children in the development of healthy eating behaviors.

Ways to adapt Early Sprouts at your center

The Early Sprouts model can be easily adapted to other geographic regions. When selecting vegetables for your area, consider the available space, the length of the growing season, rainfall levels, and soil type. If outdoor space is limited, try container or window-box gardening, with dwarf cherry tomato plants, greens, or pole beans. Local greenhouses, community garden associations, community-supported agriculture programs, cooperative extension offices, and garden shops have information and are potential partners. There are many ways to engage children and families in a seed-to-table experience that is appropriate for your setting and location. Visit the Early Sprouts Web site (www.earlysprouts.org) for more information. We encourage you to be creative and innovative in your approach to using the Early Sprouts model. We change and grow ourselves!

Janet has hosted a Stone Soup luncheon for 10 years with children and families during the harvest season. In the past, children brought vegetables from home to contribute to the soup. The luncheon is a great family event. But the downside has been that the children rarely would eat or even taste the soup.

Now, with the Early Sprouts program, Janet notices that the children contribute many more vegetables and are especially focused on bringing in the Early Sprouts vegetables. Families have more interest because they feel involved in the cooking process. At the luncheon, almost all of the children eat the soup, and many request a second and even a third serving. They also eat up all the Confetti Corn Muffins baked to go with it.

Early Sprouts Tasting—Suggestions for Teachers and Volunteers

- Taste a portion of the Early Sprouts snack. Children will be more willing to try the new snack if you are eating with them and model how to try new foods.
- Invite children to serve themselves from a common bowl, first taking just one helping. Offer a second helping once the children have finished the first one.
- Be a positive role model and adventurous about trying new foods. The goal in providing recipes is to introduce foods creatively and engage all children in trying at least one bite.
- Share your enthusiasm and positive comments if you like the Early Sprouts snack. Even if you do not especially enjoy the snack, let your comments express that it some- times takes multiple tries to become accustomed to a new food. Explain that we want to give ourselves and the food a chance.
- Compliment the children on their preparation of the snack. Many of them participated in the activity. Thank them for their work and for making delicious food.
- Ask the children to explain how they made the food (the ingredients needed, the stirring, measuring, and so on). They will be eager to talk about what they did to follow the recipe.
- Engage the children in a pleasant conversation about the things they did in cooking, surprises they may have had, and what they'd like to cook next. Discourage negative criticism but invite suggestions for ways to vary the recipe another time. Talk about why we want to respect the feelings of friends and teachers who prepared the food.

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S IN AN RAL GROUPS EANT LEARNING DURING MEALTIMES

How Mother: Four Americ Cultu Shape Ini

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titions of this managed

Parents shape children's learning in many ways

ringing the bell." After several repe

routine, the baby spontaneously grasps and rings bells, rather than, say, sucking on them. He learns to ask for a bell by reaching, grasping the handle, and shaking it himself. Parents speed up the trial and error process needed to discover features of objects, such as the ability of bells to ring, by microstructuring the child's contact with the objects.

Bruner (1981), Bates (1976), and others provide many

(Bruner, 1981; Gauvain, 2000; Rogoff, 1990):

- explaining and demonstrating to children (the parents' understandings of) how the world works;
- directing children to attend to certain culturally valued aspects of reality and to ignore others;

:turally valued "goals for action" or
ıt a person should want to try to do,
t (i.e., teaching children that bells
ammers for hammering, spoons for
of for some other goals);
; actions to help them achieve and

examples of mothers and infants engaging in games (give-and-take, peek-a-boo, hi-and-bye on phone, etc.) that result in the infants taking on the same goals for action as suggested by their mothers. Bruner commented that parents microstructure their children's goal-directed actions constantly, each day, and that children's intentions or goals for

- demonstrating cul
definitions of wha
say, with an objec
are for ringing, ha
scooping, instead
- shaping children's

arents.

learn these desired actions;

- redirecting children away from performing socially/culturally undesired actions; and
- structuring children's day-to-day lives to expose them to particular people and activities

action come to closely resemble those of their p

at a glance

- Cultural beliefs influence parents' day-to-da

PHOTO: MARILYN NOLT

How Do Parents' Cultural Beliefs Influence How They Shape Learning?

Cultural beliefs influence the microstrucuring process. In particular, parents' conceptions of what a good, successful, mature adult is influence their day-to-day efforts to shape their children toward that image. The image of a competent, mature adult differs in some ways from culture to culture. For some time, I have been studying parents from 278 families in Hawaii who belong to four different cultural groups: Filipino-American, Japanese-American, Caucasian-American, and Native Hawaiian. I asked these parents to list the features they most wanted their children to acquire and to imagine that their children were now successful, young adults and to describe the characteristics of these successful adult-children.

Parents in these four groups report wanting their children to grow up to be somewhat different "successful adults" (Martini, 2002a):

- Filipino-American parents (n=50) differed significantly from parents in the other three groups in the extent to which they wanted their children to grow up to be obedient, good citizens who respect authority and conduct themselves well, displaying good manners.
- Japanese-American parents (n=120) most wanted their children to achieve, to live a well-ordered life in contact with family, and to master the demands in their lives.
- Caucasian-American parents (n=60) most wanted their children to become self-reliant, happy, spontaneous, and creative.
- Native Hawaiian parents (n=48) said they most wanted their grown children to be socially connected, happy in their networks, and self-reliant.

How Do Parents Shape Learning at Meals?

Reflecting on the similarities and differences in the aspirations parents from different cultural groups had for their children, I wondered whether – and how – these differences might be reflected in the ways parents shape their children's experience at mealtimes. Parents influence mealtime learning by how they organize mealtimes to: include particular participants; occur in specific settings; take certain amounts of time; and include specific activities, such as eating, feeding, playing, talking, or exploring. Parents highlight valued goals for action, and focus the infant's attention on valued aspects of the setting (for example, on the food, the other people, the activities, etc.). Parents set up and reinforce valued moment-to-moment routines (where to sit, what to eat, how to eat, how to interact with others at the table, etc.). Parents then microstructure infants' moment-to-moment actions. In doing so, they show their babies how to learn, interact, and think. I was curious to observe variations in how parents from the four cultural groups I have been studying set up and shape mealtime interactions with infants, and to learn how differences in parental behavior might be related to how children come to approach learning in these settings.

A Study of 90 Families' Weekday Evening Meals [1]

Using letters to preschools and an elementary school, and through professional and personal contacts, I recruited 90 families from four American cultural groups who had children from 3 to 23 months old. They identified themselves as identifying most strongly to one of four groups:

1 A full description of the study methodology and an analysis of findings are available from the author (mmartini@lava.net). Methodology details for the following studies are in Martini 2002b and 2002c).

-American (23
and Filipino-
a questionnaire
child-rearing
o cameras and
y evening meal"
ies were similar

An analysis of variance was conducted, comparing setting features, then maternal actions, and then child actions across families in the four cultural groups.

Findings About Mealtimes and Mothers' Styles

Our findings provide answers to six questions.

Japanese-American (26 families); Caucasian families); Hawaiian-American (21 families); American (20 families). Parents completed a on demographic features of the family and beliefs and practices. We lent families vide asked them to videotape "a typical weekda with their infants. The four groups of famil

es the family mealtime revolve
fants learn, in part, by interacting with
hat degree do mealtimes in the four
such attentive interactions?
in mealtimes were the most infant
fants in this study were fed before

in terms of the mean age of the infants (range 11.8-15.1 months) and the ratio of boys to girls. The groups were also statistically similar in terms of whether both parents were present at the evening meal (in 57% to 81% of the families), the average number of siblings present (.5 to 1.29), and the average number of other relatives present.

1. To what degree do around the infant? In attentive people. To w cultural groups enable

- Japanese-America

learned that 50% of Caucasian-American families had TV on during meals, compared to 48% of Filipino-erican families. Because we were interested in how nts approached learning in these lies, we selected for further analy- apes of families with infants who e 7 to 23 months old. We focused

centered. Many infants in this study were fed before the rest of the family ate, sitting in a highchair or infant seat on the table. Mothers sat face-to-face with the infant and attended solely or primarily to the infant. After feeding the infant and putting him or her down to sleep or

We lent video cameras to families from four American cultural groups and asked them to videotape "a typical weekday evening meal."

play, the Japanese-American mother would eat with and attend fully to older children and the father. Japanese-American fathers were significantly more likely than fathers in the other groups to help

on this older age group because we wanted to study infants who were old enough so that their signals and acting upon their intentions would be clearly visible on tape. We found 64 tapes in which we could analyze the infant's stream of behavior.

mothers feed the baby and care or older children. When apanese-American babies sig- to stop eating or get down, ficantly more likely than par- l groups in the study to respond o those cues and to let them

We focused our analysis of mothers' and infants' behavior on "communicative acts" (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). A communicative act is any action by one person directed at another person that can be seen as having a communicative function, such as "asking for information," "asking for help," "commanding," "offering

naled that they wanted their parents were sign ents from other cultura positively and quickly

colding" the other, or encouraging the other to do ng. After viewing the tapes repeatedly, we devel- ems to code the following:

- ures of the mealtime setting (number of people ent; which family members are present; whether family sits at the table, on the floor, in front of the

down.

- Filipino-American mealtimes were the next most infant centered. These babies, though, tended to be held on the mother's lap at the table, while the whole family ate. Families ate, relatively quietly, as large groups. Older children ate quickly and quietly. Adults

tended to talk to each other after the children had eaten and had left the table. The Filipino-American mother attended frequently to the baby on her lap, and spoon-fed infants and toddlers until they were 2 or 3 years of age. The mothers talked to other family

television; whether the baby is in a highchair, or lap, wandering);

- maternal actions during these feeding and learning interactions (mother responds to infant; mother di

[redacted]

: adult held a bowl of food for the
ıd fed him or her whenever the tod-
Ɔlder siblings helped direct and feed

:an mealtimes appeared to be "for
ere the least infant centered, as

sent family members.

- Japanese-American mothers were found to be most attentive. They directed 73% of all their communicative acts toward their babies.
- Filipino-American mothers directed 62% of their communicative acts toward their infants.

many families, one
roaming toddler a
dler approached. (
toddlers.
- Caucasian-Americ
talking." These we

[redacted]

an infants
or behind
l for them-
vls of soft
a as banging
ation of

were the least attentive. These mothers spent more time than the other mothers talking with spouses, older children, or other adults at the meal.

4. How responsive were the mothers in different groups? Mothers' communicative acts were coded as "responsive"

verbal, older children. Caucasian-Americ
tended to sit in highchairs, to the side of c
their mothers at the table. Infants "fendec
selves" with finger foods, utensils, and bov
food. Many infants used noisy tactics, such
the spoon or squealing, to attract the atte

[redacted]

the mother responded to infant cues and helped the
:, showed affection, praised the baby, played with the
watched the baby carefully, asked questions of the
or cared for the baby. Comparing the percent of all
ıunicative acts that were responsive, we found:
apanese-American mothers were the most responsive

family members who were talking animatedly throughout the mealtime.

2. How much exploration and experimentation can infants do at mealtime? Infants learn, in part, through exploring spaces and experimenting with objects. Mealtimes of these

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ore responsive than mothers
. These mothers were both
They watched their infants
l to their cues immediately.
d their goals, mothers tried to
ed. They subtly redirected

experiment with food, toys, or objects or explore the environment during the meal.

- Hawaiian-American mealtimes provided babies and toddlers with the most opportunities for exploration. Whenever they wanted the next bite of food, babies and toddlers were free to approach any adults or other

sive) and significantly mc
in the other three groups.
attentive and responsive.
constantly and respondec
Whenever babies signale
help them if they approv

[redacted]

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ber who held the child's bowl. These crawling or toddling children were also free to roam during the meal, exploring toys, people, and spaces.

- Japanese-American mealtime settings enabled the second most exploration and experimentation. Japanese-American infants were confined in highchairs, but

proved goals, and then praised infants for comply

- Filipino-American mothers were next most respons
- Caucasian-American and Native Hawaiian moth were the least responsive. Caucasian-American m ers were less attentive to their infants at mealtime than the Japanese-American and Filipino-Americ

[redacted]

provided with numerous toys and were
play with their food and utensils.
American babies were confined in high-
allowed to feed themselves and explore
and fingers, but were generally not provid-
s. Mothers said they worried that toys
act the infant from eating.

mothers, as they talked frequently with their husbands and older children. They did respond quickly whenever the infant initiated a "goal-directed" action (such as reaching toward what he wanted). Mothers tried to help infants when they signaled needing help, but sometimes infants needed to call quite loudly to receive parental attention.

many were
allowed to
- Caucasian-
chairs, and
with spoon
ed with toy
would dist

[redacted]

rican families,
ıost part, con-
feed themselves,

5. How directive were the mothers in different groups? Mothers' communicative acts were coded as "directive"

- During mealtimes in Filipino-Ame
infants and toddlers were, for the n
strained on laps and not allowed to

[redacted]

We asked five questions about infants' approaches to learning at mealtimes.

1. How much did infants in each group explore their environments? Infants explored their environments by: exploring space; experimenting with toys or objects; experimenting with foods while feeding themselves; and exploring social contact.

- Hawaiian-American infants were allowed to roam. They wandered around, fed themselves, and asked for bites of food from others. They engaged in a great deal of trial-and-error exploratory play in space and with objects.
- Japanese-American infants did the most experimentation with toys, objects, and food. Although they were restrained to highchairs, these infants were given toys and objects to play with and were allowed to try to feed themselves.
- Caucasian-American infants were constrained to highchairs and were not provided toys. However, they were allowed to feed themselves, were given many finger-foods to explore, and were enabled to explore social contact if they called for it loudly enough.
- Most Filipino-American infants were constrained to laps and were not allowed to play with objects or food during mealtimes

2. How much did infants in each group initiate and explore social contact? Cognitive exploration of objects occurs in a social world, structured by social others. During mealtimes parents helped and shaped infants when they played with objects, toys, or food. Infants often initiated these social-object play episodes by calling the mother's attention, demanding, using language to make requests, and gesturing requests.

- Caucasian-American infants were the most expressive. They often watched mothers, called attention to themselves, made eye contact, pointed, and gestured that they needed help by looking at a desired object, extended their hand, looking at the mother, and whining.
- Japanese-American infants were the next most expressive.
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  Japan
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- Japanese-Amer
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  and tray and turned this i
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  grown up. Hawaiian-Am
  dren to learn by trial and
  on their own during mea
  only if their actions disru
  the children's own safety.
- Caucasian-American mothers were

6. How expressive were the mothers in third aspect of maternal style was their e: Mothers' communicative acts were code whenever the mother expressed her wish preted or talked about the infant's or her own actio announced what she would do next.

- Caucasian-American mothers were significar expressive than mothers in other groups. The explained and demonstrated objects, events, own actions and motives. They interpreted t motives—what infants were trying to do, mo moment (as in, "Oh, you're trying to get those Cheerios") — far more than did other mothers.

How Did Infants Approach Learning in These Settings?

I next asked whether infants in the four cultural groups approached learning differently at mealtimes and if so, whether their approaches resembled their parents' teaching styles. Using videotapes of 64 families, we first coded the set-

• Caucasian-American infants engaged in joint play the

• Caucasian-American mothers were highly expressive.

They focused on and described their own intentions and those of their infants. They spent much of their mealtimes chatting with husbands and verbal, older children, but they responded quickly whenever infants signaled a wish or plan to do something. Caucasian-American infants explored the food and objects they

Caucasian-American infants engaged in joint play the second most frequently. Often, mothers attended to other children and their spouses, and were less responsive than Japanese-American mothers to their infants. However, when Caucasian-American infants loudly initiated play, mothers tended to join in.

• Hawaiian-American infants engaged in play routines

r own initiative as they wandered freely.
ained Filipino-American infants, who were
ged to eat quietly, engaged in joint play the
equently of the children

were provided and experimented with social contact by calling for and engaging in play episodes and by expressing what they wanted.

• Native Hawaiian mothers let their crawling and toddling infants wander, explore, and approach adults when they

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perative were infants in

The Filipino-American, Caucasian-American, Native Hawaiian, and Japanese-American parents I studied had different images of a good, successful, mature adult, and their different approaches to mealtime teaching seem to reflect their different cultural goals.

wanted food. Hawaiian-American infants learned through autonomous trial-and-error as they played with objects on their own. Mothers shaped infant behavior only when it began to disrupt the

each group?

Filipino-American, Caucasian-American, and Japanese-American infants had more occasions in which they could demonstrate cooperation than the freely wandering Hawaiian-American infants. In contrast

4. How coo

complied
ed in play
initiated by adults.

group harmony.

• Japanese-American mothers watched and responded to infant needs immediately. Japanese-American infants had more opportunities than children in other groups to experiment with toys and objects their mothers provided. Once

Filipino-American infants
most to being fed and shap
routines that were mainly

in each group resist being fed or

5. How much did infants
shaped?

mothers subtly shaped
used these objects in con-
ways. In other words,
ts experimented more but
re. Parents based their
tiated by the children,
ctivities themselves.

• Filipino-American infants, constrained on laps by parents who insisted that they eat certain amounts of food, were spoon-fed more than the other infants. They rejected or resisted a fair number of these attempts, but their mothers were persistent in their spoon-feeding.

• Caucasian-American infants were spoon-fed less, as they were encouraged to feed themselves finger foods.

Infants initiated play, the
their actions so that they
ventional and acceptable
Japanese-American infan
also accepted shaping mo
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ed adult shaping
groups.

However, they rejected many of th
that did occur, and mothers backe
rejected other attempts by adults t
Caucasian-American infants resist
more than did infants in the other

How Do Parents' Teaching Styles Relate to Stated Cultural Goals?

The Filipino-American, Caucasian-American, Native Hawaiian, and Japanese-American parents I studied had different images of a good, successful, mature adult, and the differences among parents' approaches to mealtime teaching seem to reflect stated cultural goals.

• Filipino-American parents differed fro

ing Styles

How Did Mothers' Teachi

Affect Children's Learning Styles?

n parents in the

Integrating our observations of mothers and infants, we

- Native Hawaiian parents differed from parents in other groups in the strength of their emphasis on solidarity and consideration of others in the family group. Hawaiian-American mothers allowed their infants to wander during mealtimes as long as they did not disrupt the group.
- Japanese-American parents differed from parents in the other groups in the strength of their emphasis on achievement and mastery. An early indicator of how they shaped children toward high-achieving behavior emerged in this study. Japanese-American adults watched infants carefully and tried to help them achieve their signaled plans. However, if the infant strayed toward undesired actions (such as throwing food or spilling), the adult quietly and subtly redirected this action into a more acceptable action and praised the infant for complying. Most of the Japanese-American learning episodes were based in exploratory actions initiated by the child, but then shaped by the adult.

Conclusions

Mothers in the four different cultural groups in this study conveyed different messages to their infants about how to learn, how to fit into the group, and how to be autonomous. Filipino- and Japanese-American mothers were highly attentive and affectionate toward their infants, but also either overtly (Filipino-American) or subtly (Japanese-American) controlling. Mothers conveyed the message that being a member of a tight family group involves both the warmth and attentiveness of belonging and also the obligations of conforming to adult wishes. The Caucasian-American mothers in this sample allowed more autonomy and were more relationally distant. They encouraged innovation as they focused on infants' completing their goal-directed actions—regardless of whether these disrupted the rest of the group. The Native Hawaiian mothers in this study enabled autonomy but also insisted on conformity when infant actions began to disrupt the group.

Mothers in this study also sent messages about appropriate ways to make contact with other people. Caucasian-American parents emphasized making contact through talking and calling out during meals. One purpose of mealtimes seem closely – and complexly – interrelated. Parents mediate their infants' learning by setting up learning environments – in this case, mealtimes – in particular ways, and shape their infants' moment-to-moment actions and interactions within these settings. Infants' approaches to learning are, in turn, affected by how their parents set up and shape mealtime interactions. Our study suggests that "a typical weekday evening meal" may be a microcosm of a family's culturally distinctive approach to shaping children's learning.

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Three Rivers Community College
ECE K176 Health, Safety and Nutrition
Article Review Questions

Throughout this course you will be given many different resources to review as a way to enhance the materials covered in class.You are responsible to read and familiarize yourself with these materials. To help you with this process I have developed some review questions to go along with some of the articles. These questions will need to be handed in and will count as part of your grade (participation). They will **not** be accepted late as they will be used to promote participation the day they are due.

Chapters 6 - 9

Kalich, K.A., Baure, D. & McPartlin, D. (2009). *Early Sprouts: Establishing healthy food choices for young children.* Young Children, NAEYC.

1. What is the early sprouts program?
2. Do you think it is comprehensive enough and can be easily used at other child care centers? Why or why not? Explain.
3. What would you add or change about the early sprouts program? Why?

Martini, M. (2002). *How mothers in four American culture groups shape infant learning during mealtime.* Zero to Three.

1. What were the differences in the parenting styles that were explained in the article? Why do you think there were differences?
2. What cultural differences were different than yours and what was your opinion (and why) of these practices?
3. How did this article impact/change the way you may consider mealtimes with young children?

Section Three

Chapters 10 – 15

Health

Chapter 10 Tools for Promoting Good Health

This chapter focuses on health policies needed for early childhood education. Health policies help teachers manage the environment for good physical and mental health. These policies should reflect high-quality early childhood education.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define and discuss health policies and their use as a tool for health prevention, protection, and promotion.
- Discuss the contents and importance of health records, including up-to-date immunizations.
- Discuss the importance of health policies for staff, including staff health records and promoting staff health.
- Describe and detail the processes of recording, appraisal, screening, and assessment.
- Summarize the components of a child's health and how they are assessed.
- Relate the importance of education, observation, working with families, and the use of appraisals, screening, and assessment to promote good health in children in early education environments.

While studying **Ch 10** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

health and wellness policies
appraisals
screening
early intervention
orientation
confidentiality
staff health
observations
assessment
referral
developmental norms
areas screened / checked in children

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

Since you are a college student, your stress may be different than that of someone who is not taking college classes. Do you think so? Why or why not?

What is the value of an orientation for the teacher?

What do you think is the most difficult occupational health hazard for a teacher?

How could you be more culturally competent in your own community? If you are working in an early childhood education environment, would this be difficult to accomplish?

How might you recognize children with stress?

Jamey has a fever and the first signs of a rash. How would you record this condition with precise words?

Why is the daily quick health check so important? Why should it be performed at the very beginning of the day as each child arrives?

If you suspected a child in your care of having lead poisoning, what symptoms would you be observing?

Chapter 11 Prevention of Illness through Infection Control

This chapter deals with health policies for infection control to maintain health and prevent some illnesses present in the early childhood education environment. Two practices that contribute to this are good hygiene and sanitary practices. Checking the immunization schedule is another preventive practice.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define and discuss health for the prevention of childhood infectious diseases.
- Explain the mechanisms of communicable disease spread.
- Relate the importance of immunizations in the prevention and reduction of communicable diseases.
- Summarize sanitation methods used in the prevention of spread of disease in the early childhood education environment.
- Discuss factors in the environment that quality control can help to curb the spread of disease.
- Describe the importance of education, supervision, working with families, and role modeling .

While studying **Ch 11** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

infection control
immunizations
hygiene
germs
four ways diseases are spread
secretions
vaccinations
universal sanitary practices
environmental quality control for water play
environmental quality control for play dough and clay
environmental quality control for air quality
environmental quality control for contamination

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

Historically, the appearance of head lice on a person has been associated with lack of cleanliness and low socioeconomic class. What effect does this have on a parent when he or she hears a child has lice?

What would you do in your early childhood education environment to protect other children if a parent refused to have her or his child immunized for religious purposes?

If you were a teacher whose director insisted you come to work on a day you were sick, what would you do? What should you do?

How might you help a family link to resources for health care in your community?

Why do you think that the American Association of Pediatricians is so opposed to water tables? If this is so objectionable why are they required for NAEYC accreditation? What can you do to protect children from them being a problem?

Chapter 12 Promoting Wellness through Supportive Health Care

This chapter focuses on what teachers need to do to prevent disease spread and how they should care for mildly ill children. Teachers need to form exclusion policies and understand reporting procedures. They need to determine whether they are able to care for children who become ill but are not contagious.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Describe and discuss health policies for the identification and management of childhood communicable diseases.
- Describe the methods and means of identifying childhood infectious diseases for early interventions and prevention of disease spread.
- Describe the methods and practices for managing childhood infectious diseases for early identification and prevention of disease spread.
- Summarize and indicate the importance of policies and protocols for care of mildly ill children in early childhood education environments.
- Indicate the need and importance of education, observation, supervision and working with families for early intervention to manage childhood communicable diseases in the early childhood education environment.

While studying **Ch 12** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

signs and symptoms of disease infection
identification and management of diseases (in class activity please review tables 12-1 through 12-4)
exclusion policy
three questions for mildly ill children
procedures for administering medication

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

Why is there a controversy today about excluding some children from early childhood education environments?

Is it possible to have a policy that allows for some nits?

How should pink eye be handled in the early childhood education environment?

What is the first line of defense in managing infectious diseases in the early childhood education environment?

If she has been exposed, what diseases should a pregnant teacher report immediately to her physician? Do teachers always know when they are exposed to illnesses?

Why might a child with a chronic illness pose a risk in the early childhood education environment?

Chapter 13 Providing for Special Health Care Needs

This chapter focuses on children with chronic health conditions who may be in the early childhood education environment. Teachers need to use a holistic approach as they work with children who may have a chronic health condition that requires extra vigilance. They can use different strategies to help manage the chronic health condition present.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define and discuss health policies in relation to caring for chronically ill children or other children with special health care needs in the early childhood education environment.
- Describe and discuss special considerations for caring for children with chronic health conditions.
- Using a team approach, describe and discuss whether or not a child qualifies for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and how the team would operate.
- Describe and discuss the inclusion of a health consultant in the early childhood education program and the advantages of having a medical home for every child.
- Indicate the need for and importance of engaging families for early intervention to manage childhood communicable diseases and to build curriculum for children to help them better understand and support others in the early childhood education environment who may have chronic health conditions.

While studying **Ch 13** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

chronic health condition
IDEA
conditions to qualify for special education
allergies
asthma
ADD and ADHD
diabetes
seizure disorders
IFSP
IEP

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

How might the ADA affect a family home early childhood education environment?

Why might a child with a disability or other special need pose a risk in the early childhood education environment?

How might a child with AD/HD act out? What can you do to lessen the impact of this child on the other children in care?

You have a friend who is thinking about getting pregnant. What would you tell her about fetal alcohol syndrome?

Several parents you know are reluctant to immunize their child because of the threat or perceived threat of autism. What would you tell them? How might you protect the children in the early childhood education environment if someone enters without the complete immunizations?

Chapter 14 Child Maltreatment

This chapter helps to raise the awareness of the teachers about child maltreatment and how it affects 3.6 million children every year in the United States. Teachers are provided preventive and protective measures that help ensure the children in the early childhood education environment the greatest level of protection. Policies should be created to help the teachers deal with child maltreatment.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define and discuss the need for policies for child abuse and neglect that may affect the early childhood education environment.
- Describe and discuss measures for preventing child maltreatment.
- Describe and discuss how to recognize, document, and report child maltreatment, and methods for caring for an abused child.
- Describe and discuss the common problems and their solutions that may arise in early childhood education environments when working with children from drug-abusing families.
- Describe and discuss the importance of engaging families and building curriculum for children on the sensitive topic of child maltreatment.

While studying **Ch 14** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

child maltreatment
mandated reporters
indicators of abuse (in class activity please review tables 14-3 through 14-6)
three types of substance abuse families

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

How might you recognize a child who is being or has been maltreated and needs help?

What is the importance of documentation?

What could you do if you saw a parent having difficulties that might lead to child maltreatment?

How can you recognize emotional maltreatment?

How can domestic violence affect a child, even if she or he is not personally being maltreated?

Why is communication so important if you are working with a family who is or has been abusing substances?

Chapter 15 Fostering Good Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being

Mental health is an area of health promotion that may be overlooked. About 10% of children are at risk for mental health difficulties. Early childhood mental health is related to a child's wellbeing in relation to social and emotional development and emotional well-being may be at risk due to societal forces that affect their families.

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

- Define and discuss policies for mental health policies and their place protecting the mental health and emotional well-being of children.
- Describe and discuss the issues that may threaten or cause concern for children's good mental health and emotional well-being.
- Describe the factors that may cause stress to children and how to help alleviate that stress in the early childhood setting.
- Indicate the importance that stable, responsive, and consistent caregiving and good communication has on providing children with an optimum environment for good mental health.
- Describe strategies for engaging families and helping children through communication, role modeling, and building curriculum to provide the best possible environment.

While studying **Ch 15** the following key words / concepts should be focused on:

mental health
temperament
self-esteem
stress in children's lives
teaching pyramid

Questions to ponder while reading the text:

What can a teacher do to become culturally competent, especially with an issue such as mental health and emotional well-being?

Discuss local resources that teachers might link parents to in order to help the children and families in regards to mental health and emotional issues of children.

What strategies can a teacher use to communicate successfully with parents, even difficult parents? With very young children?

Why is appraising a child for good mental health so important?

WASHTENAW COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH
...focused on prevention

Fact Sheet: Universal Precautions

What are universal precautions?

Blood and other body fluids (i.e., semen, vaginal fluids, saliva, urine, feces, vomit) can contain viruses and bacteria that can be passed on to another person through direct contact. Hepatitis B & C and HIV are diseases that can be transferred from one person to another through contact with infected blood and/or body fluids. Since there is no way to know without testing if a person has hepatitis B or C or HIV, it is recommended that you treat all body fluids as though they were infected.

Universal Precautions are actions that you take to place a barrier between yourself and potentially infected body fluids.

How are blood and body fluids passed from one person to another?

- Through open areas on the skin
- By splashing in the eye
- Through the mouth
- Unprotected sexual activity (oral, anal and vaginal)
- Injury with contaminated needles or other sharps
- Prenatally (mother to baby) and during delivery

How can I protect myself from blood and body fluids?

The easiest way to protect yourself from blood and body fluids is to have the injured person treat their own wound. If they are unable to take care of themselves, or they need some help, use latex gloves. If you do not have disposable gloves available, use a plastic bag (trash, shopping, or sandwich) over your hands to create a barrier. Your employer must provide appropriate personal protective equipment (gloves, goggles, disinfectant, etc.) for your use while at work. Know where these items are located so that you will be better prepared to protect yourself.

How do I safely handle a bleeding injury?

1. The child or adult should hold an absorbent material to the wound - a clean disposable diaper offers a good absorbent material with the added protection of a plastic backing. You can also use paper towels, tissue, or newspaper.
2. Have them hold pressure until the bleeding stops.
3. Assist with placing a bandaid or bandage over the wound if needed.
4. Dispose of bloody material in a plastic lined trashcan or sealed plastic bag.
5. Everyone should wash his or her hands with soap & running water as soon as possible (disinfectant waterless hand cleaners or towelettes may be used if soap and running water are not available).

How do I clean surfaces that have blood and body fluids on them?

1. WEAR DISPOSABLE GLOVES.
2. Wash the area with soap and water, and dry the area.
3. Disinfect the surface with a solution of one part bleach to ten parts water, or you can use a hospital-strength disinfectant (i.e., Lysol, Cavicide, or NABC). Allow the area to remain wet for at least 3 minutes, before drying. Consult the container label for differences in recommendations due to product strength.
4. Use disposable cleaning materials if possible, such as paper towels instead of cloth.
5. Dispose of cleaning materials and gloves in a sealed plastic bag.
6. Wash hands with soap and running water (disinfectant waterless hand cleaners or towelettes may be used if soap and running water are not available).

This fact sheet is for information only and is not meant to be used for self -diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information call your health care provider or call Washtenaw County Public Health at 734-544-6700.

Visit our website at:
http://publichealth.eWashtenaw.org
Or the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention at: www.cdc.gov
Washtenaw County Public Health 555 Towner Ypsilanti, MI 48198

revised 1/08

ADHD Toddlers: Signs and Symptoms of Attention Deficit in Young Children

"I suspect my toddler has ADHD, but how can I tell?" one parent asks. "Can ADHD toddlers be treated at such a young age?"

by Michele Novotni, Ph.D.

Symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADD/ADHD) can be seen in toddlers as early as 1 or 2 years of age. Signs include high levels of activity -- more than a typical child -- and problems sleeping and napping. Making the transition from one activity to another is another clue. Signs of inattentive ADD/ADHD are rarely detectable until much later when the child enters school.

Most doctors won't treat a toddler who has ADD/ADHD with medication until they are at least 5 -- except in cases where they present a danger to themselves or others. My son was so hyperactive and impulsive that the physician recommended he start taking medication when he was 2. He had been kicked out of every day care center in our area, and we had to hire two babysitters at a time to watch him. We didn't start him on medication, though, until he was 5.

If your toddler is younger than 5, these alternative treatments may be helpful:

Find activities that soothe and settle your child. Busy environments like a shopping mall or a crowded park, as well as listening to music, can calm a hyperactive child. Some may find classical music soothing, while others settle down with country or even hip-hop. Test it out and see what your toddler responds best to.

Engage in physical activities to help her burn off energy before sitting down at a restaurant or at someone's house. Before leaving the house, play tag or a physically intensive game on Wii or engage in a favorite activity your toddler likes to do with you. Brain Gym (braingym.com) movements, which engage the body to activate and calm your brain, may also be helpful.

Use a leash or harness to keep your child safe in public places, if a cart or stroller isn't available. I used a leash with my hyperactive son, and it helped a lot.

Change your schedule to limit activities that require your child to stay quiet and still. Perhaps your partner can stay home with your child while you shop or attend a local concert. When going out to dinner, select a place that is kid friendly -- Friendly's is better than a fine-dining restaurant. Another alternative: Call and order ahead to minimize waits at a restaurant. Many restaurants will accommodate the requests of parents with special-needs kids.

Some parents calm their hyperactive children by giving them a little caffeine -- like a glass of Mountain Dew -- or Benadryl. Check with your doctor before trying this.

A final note: It's important for parents of hyperactive toddlers to take care of themselves and to get support. Raising a special-needs child is a marathon, not a sprint!

Michele Novotni, Ph.D., is the former president and CEO of the national Attention Deficit Disorder Association (ADDA), a best-selling author, a psychologist, a coach, a parent of a young adult with ADD/ADHD, an ADDitude *magazine writer, and a contributor to* ADDitude*'s new ADHD Experts Blog.*

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN & FAMILIES

What Mandated Reporters Need to Know

Summary of Connecticut's Child Abuse Reporting Laws

The following is an outline of the legal requirements of "mandated reporters," those professionals who, because their work involves regular contact with children, are mandated by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect. For a complete copy of the law, refer to Sections 17a-101 through 17a-103a, inclusive of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Who Must Report

Connecticut law requires certain citizens to report suspected child abuse and neglect. These mandated reporters are people in professions or occupations that have contact with children or whose primary focus is children. The law requires that they report suspected child abuse or neglect. Under Section 17a-101 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the following are considered mandated reporters:

- Any person paid to care for a child in any public or private facility, child day care center, group day care home or family day care home which is licensed by the State.
- Battered Women's Counselors
- Chiropractors
- Dental Hygienists
- Dentists
- Department of Children and Families Employees
- Department of Public Health employees responsible for the licensing of child day care centers, group day care homes, family day care homes or youth camps.
- Foster Parents
- Judicial Department Employees (Family Relations Counselors, Family Counselor Trainees, Family Services Supervisors *as of 10-01-2010)
- Licensed/Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselors
- Licensed/Certified Emergency Medical Services Providers
- Licensed Marital and Family Therapists
- Licensed or Unlicensed Resident Interns
- Licensed or Unlicensed Resident Physicians
- Licensed Physicians
- Licensed Practical Nurses
- Licensed Professional Counselors
- Licensed Surgeons
- Medical Examiners
- Members of the Clergy
- Mental Health Professionals
- Optometrists
- Parole Officers (Juvenile or Adult)
- Pharmacists
- Physical Therapists
- Physician Assistants

- Podiatrists
- Police Officers
- Probation Officers (Juvenile or Adult)
- Psychologists
- Registered Nurses
- School Employees - *as stated in* section 53a-65 *(subsection 13)* "School employee" means: (A) A teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or a private elementary, middle or high school or working in a public or private elementary, middle or high school; or (B) any other person who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in (i) a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the local or regional board of education, or (ii) a private elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the supervisory agent of such private school.
- Sexual Assault Counselors
- Social Workers
- School Coaches or Coaches of Intramural or Interscholastic Athletics
- The Child Advocate and any employee of the Office of the Child Advocate.

What Must Be Reported

Mandated reporters are required to report or cause a report to be made when, in the ordinary course of their employment or profession, they have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child under the age of 18 has been abused, neglected or is placed in imminent risk of serious harm. (Connecticut General Statutes §17a-101a)

Child abuse occurs where a child has had physical injury inflicted upon him or her other than by accidental means, has injuries at variance with history given of them, or is in a condition resulting in maltreatment, such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment. (Connecticut General Statutes §46b-120)

Child neglect occurs where a child has been abandoned, is being denied proper care and attention physically, emotionally, or morally, or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his well-being. (Connecticut General Statutes §46b-120)

When making a report, a mandated reporter is required to provide the following information, if known:

1. The names and addresses of the child and his parents or other person responsible for his care;
2. The age of the child;
3. The gender of the child;
4. The nature and extent of the child's injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
5. The approximate date and time the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect occurred;
6. Information concerning any previous injury or injuries to, or maltreatment or neglect of, the child or his siblings;
7. The circumstances in which the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect came to be known to the reporter;
8. The name of the person or persons suspected to be responsible for causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
9. The reasons such person or persons are suspected of causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
10. Any information concerning any prior cases in which such person or persons have been suspected of causing an injury, maltreatment or neglect of a child;
11. Whatever action, if any, was taken to treat, provide shelter or otherwise assist the child (PA 11-93 §15).

How to Report

Mandated reporters must report orally to the Department of Children and Families' (DCF) Hotline or a law enforcement agency within 12 hours of suspecting that a child has been abused or neglected and must submit a written report (**DCF-136 form**) to DCF within 48 hours of making the oral report. When the Mandated reporter is a member of the staff of a public or private institution or facility that provides care for children or a member of a public or private school, they must also provide written notification to the head of the facility or institution where the alleged victim is enrolled or registered. DCF is required to tape record all reports to the Hotline.
Special reporting requirements may apply for staff members of a public or private institution or facility that cares for such child, or a public or private school. (See pages 4-5).
Police must report to DCF immediately upon receipt of any oral report of abuse or neglect.
Upon receipt of any oral report alleging sexual abuse or serious physical abuse or serious neglect, DCF must report to the appropriate state or local law enforcement agency within 12 hours.

Anonymity

Mandated reporters are required to give their name when they make a report to DCF, however, reporters may request anonymity to protect their privacy. This means that DCF would not disclose their name or identity unless mandated to do so by law (Connecticut General Statutes, Sections 17a-28 and 17a-101). Unless a reporter gives written consent, his or her name will not be disclosed except to:

- a DCF employee
- a law enforcement officer
- an appropriate state's attorney
- an appropriate assistant attorney general
- a judge and all necessary parties in a court proceeding
- a state child care licensing agency, executive director of any institution, school or facility or superintendent of schools

If DCF suspects or knows that the reporter knowingly makes a false report, his or her identity shall be disclosed to the appropriate law enforcement agency and the person may be subject to the penalty described in the next section.

Immunity and Penalty

Mandated reporters are required to make a referral to the DCF Hotline as soon as practical **but no later than 12 hours after the mandated reporter becomes aware of or suspects abuse/neglect or imminent risk of serious harm to a child or children.** Any person required to report who fails to make such report or fails to make such report within the time period prescribed (in sections 17a-101b to 17a-101d), could be fined not less than five hundred dollars ant not more than two thousand five hundred dollars and could be required to participate in an educational and training program (pursuant to subsection (d) of section 17a-101). The Department shall promptly notify the Chief State's Attorney when there is reason to believe that any such person has failed to make a report in accordance with this section.

Mandated reporters identified as a **school employees** (as defined in section 53a-65 (subsection 13) of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS), can be subject to an investigation and the penalties stated above if they fail to make a report (OR) if they fail to make a report within the 12 hour timeframe. The Commissioner of the Department of Children and Families, or the commissioner's designee, shall promptly notify the Chief State's Attorney when there is reason to believe that any such person has failed to make a report in accordance with this law.
Immunity from civil or criminal liability is granted to people who make required reports in good faith. Immunity is also granted to people who in good faith have not reported.

Anyone who knowingly makes a false report of child abuse or neglect shall be fined up to $2,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or both. The identity of any such person shall be disclosed to the appropriate law enforcement agency and to the perpetrator of the alleged abuse.

Employers may not discharge, discriminate or retaliate against an employee for making a good faith report or testifying in an abuse or neglect proceeding. The Attorney General can bring a court action against any employer who violates this provision, and the court can assess a civil penalty of up to $2,500 plus other equitable relief.

Informing the Family

Mandated reporters are under no legal obligation to inform parents that they have made a report to DCF about their child. However, depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary and/or beneficial to do so.

- When a child is suspected of being abused, neglected or placed at imminent risk of serious harm by a member of the staff of a private or public school or an institution that cares for the child, the person in charge of the school or facility must notify the child's parent or other person responsible for the child's care that a report has been made. It is DCF's responsibility to notify the head of such school, facility or institution that a report has been made.
- Health care professionals may need to talk with parents to assess the cause of the child's injury(ies). Mental health professionals or members of the clergy may want to talk with the parents to offer support and guidance.

However, in cases of serious physical abuse or sexual abuse, it may not be wise to talk with parents before reporting the case to DCF. This may put the child at greater risk and could interfere with a potential criminal investigation.

Investigation of Abuse or Neglect Report

DCF is responsible for immediately evaluating and classifying all reports of suspected abuse/ neglect/imminent risk. If the report contains information to warrant an investigation, DCF must make its best effort to begin an investigation within two hours if there is an imminent risk of physical harm to a child or another emergency; and within three days for all other reports. In all cases, DCF must complete the investigation in 30 calendar days.

When conducting a child abuse or neglect investigation, DCF or a law enforcement agency must coordinate activities to minimize the number of interviews with any child.

DCF must obtain consent from the parent, guardian or person responsible for the child's care for any interview, unless DCF has reason to believe such person or a member of the child's household is the alleged perpetrator. When such consent is not required, the interview must be conducted in the presence of a 'disinterested adult' (typically, a person who is impartial and has no self-interest in the case). If a disinterested adult is not available after reasonable search and immediate access is necessary to protect the child from imminent risk of serious harm, DCF or a law enforcement agency will still interview the child.

If, after the investigation has been completed, serious physical abuse or sexual abuse is substantiated, DCF must notify the local police, and either the Chief State's Attorney/designee or a state's attorney in the judicial district in which the child resides or in which the abuse occurred. A copy of the investigation report must also be sent.

Suspected Abuse By a School Employee

Mandated reporters are required to report any suspected child abuse, neglect or imminent risk of serious harm directly to DCF or the police. This includes situations when the alleged perpetrator is a school employee. DCF must notify the head of the school that a report has been made, unless such person is the alleged perpetrator.

Investigations of suspected child abuse, neglect or imminent risk of serious harm by a school employee as stated in CGS section 53a-65 (subsection 13) are conducted by DCF. If, after such investigation, DCF has reasonable cause to believe that a child has been abused by a school employee who holds a certificate,

permit, or authorization issued by the state, DCF shall notify the employing superintendent and the Commissioner of Education of such finding and shall provide him or her with records concerning such investigation. Please use this link for additional information and changes contained in Public Act 11-93 as it pertains to suspected abuse by a school employee.

The Superintendent must suspend such employee. The suspension shall be with pay and will not diminish or terminate the employee's benefits. Within 72 hours after such suspension, the Superintendent shall notify the local or regional board of education and the Commissioner of Education of the reasons for and conditions of the suspension. The Superintendent shall disclose the DCF records to the Commissioner of Education and local or regional boards of education or their attorney for purposes of review of employment status or certification. The suspension must remain in effect until the local Board of Education takes action.

If the employee's contract is terminated, the Superintendent shall notify the Commissioner of Education or his representative within 72 hours. The Commissioner of Education may then commence certification revocation proceedings.

The Superintendent may suspend any other school staff member in similar circumstances.

The State's Attorney must notify the Superintendent, or supervising agent of a non-public school, and the Commissioner of Education when a certified school employee, or any person holding a certificate issued by the State Board of Education, is convicted or a crime involving an act of child abuse or neglect.

Suspected Abuse By a Member of An Institution or Facility Providing Child Care

Mandated reporters are also required to report when they have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any child has been abused or neglected by a member of the staff of a public or private institution or facility that provides care for children. DCF must notify the head of the institution or facility providing child care that a report has been made, except in circumstances when such person is the alleged perpetrator.

Whenever DCF, based on the results of an investigation, has reasonable cause to believe that that a child has been abused or neglected by a staff member of a public or private institution or facility providing child care, DCF shall notify the executive director of the institution, school, or facility in not less than five working days. DCF shall also provide records concerning the investigation to the executive director**.** If the facility is licensed by the state for the caring of children, DCF shall notify the state agency that licenses it and provide records concerning the investigation. Please use this link for additional information and changes contained in Public Act 11-93 as it pertains to suspected abuse by a member of an institution or facility providing child care.

TRAINING

DCF provides Mandated reporter training to all providers in the state of Connecticut upon request. For additional information regarding Mandated Reporter training for your organization, agency, or facility, please use this link.

WHERE TO CALL

The Department has a single point of contact statewide for the reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. This Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline operates 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Anyone who suspects that a child has been abused or neglected or is in danger of abuse or neglect is strongly encouraged to call the Hotline.

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Three Rivers Community College
ECE K176 Health, Safety and Nutrition
Article Review Questions

Throughout this course you will be given many different resources to review as a way to enhance the materials covered in class. You are responsible to read and familiarize yourself with these materials. To help you with this process I have developed some review questions to go along with some of the articles. These questions will need to be handed in and will count as part of your grade (participation). They will **not** be accepted late as they will be used to promote participation the day they are due.

Chapters 10 - 15

_____. (2008). *Fact Sheet: Universal Precautions.* Washtenaw County Public Health, CDC.

1. After reading this handout what struck you as the most important piece of information?
2. What areas do you feel confident to address? Why?
3. What areas do you feel you need more training and / or preparation with? How would you go about getting this information?

Novotni, Michele. (2010). *ADHD Toddlers: Signs and Symptoms of Attention Deficit in Young Children.* New Hope Media, NY.

1. What was the author's main idea?
2. Have you had experience with a young child who you suspect has ADD / ADHD? Please explain.
3. How would you use this information in the future?

_____. (2011). *What mandated reporters need to know.* Connecticut Department of Children and Families.

1. Are you a mandated reporter? In what roles that you currently or plan to be in, do you fit the mandated reporter requirement?
2. What training do you require to be a mandated reporter?
3. In early childhood education who do you think you will be working with to report cases of child maltreatment to DCF? How about in public schools?
4. Thinking about your prior experiences do you feel you have had an event that should have been reported (or that you did report)? What would have been a challenge for you / how was this experience challenging? Please explain but remember confidentiality when sharing in class.

Early Childhood

A Guide to Early Childhood Program Development

State of Connecticut
State Board of Education 2007

DECISIONS ABOUT PRACTICE: ENVIRONMENT, SCHEDULING, MATERIALS AND CLIMATE 3

"We value space because of its power to organize, promote pleasant relationships among people of different ages, create a handsome environment, provide changes, promote choices and activity, and its potential for sparking all kinds of social, affective, and cognitive learning. All of this contributes to a sense of well being and security in children. We also think as it has been said that the space has to be a sort of aquarium that mirrors the ideas, values, attitudes, and cultures of the people who live within it."(In the words of Loris Malaguzzi)
(Edwards, Grandini and Forman, 1998)

MAKING DECISIONS

Classroom environments must be carefully planned, prepared and maintained to invite children into learning experiences. The environment must send two important messages: this space is for children; and this space was purposefully created, based on how young children learn.

Discovery, exploration, creation, experimentation, observation and sustained engagement take place in well-planned early childhood classrooms. Materials are well chosen with intention and purpose. Areas are arranged to accommodate and support the work of children and adults, and time is scheduled to allow children full access.

Early childhood classrooms should have work areas – or centers – for blocks, dramatic play, art/creative experiences, science and investigation, mathematical thinking, literacy experiences, writing, large- and small-group activities, small-group snacks, quiet alone times, sand/water/clay experiences, woodworking, construction and music making. When establishing work areas, teachers must carefully choose locations, considering the purposes, materials and experiences anticipated in each. Characteristics such as quiet/noisy, messy/neat, private/small-group/large-group or fragile/sturdy are as important as the allocation of space and the general flow of traffic and movement through the centers and the classroom.

Early childhood environments must reflect the amount of time children and adults spend together. The space reflects the goals of the program, the age of the children, the daily traffic patterns and the climate of the class. This section will guide teachers as they make decisions about materials, scheduling and creating quality environments.

PLANNING QUESTIONS

To maintain a well-planned classroom environment, teachers should periodically ask themselves the following questions.

- What areas in the room are rarely used or used inappropriately?
- Can the children be independent in this area?
- How are the children using the materials and the space?
- Which areas are sources of frustration for children due to high demand by other children?
- Do the areas stimulate ideas?
- Are the areas of the room reflective of the culture and families of the children?
- How can areas be created to encourage collaborative work?
- Is this classroom visually appealing when you stand in the doorway?
- Does the classroom invite you in?
- Are some areas created from children's ideas and questions?

INDOOR ENVIRONMENT

When planning new spaces or evaluating present ones, the following characteristics should be considered.

Children's Interests And Cultures

Children are learning about themselves, their abilities and preferences as they interact with materials within the classroom environment. Room arrangements and materials should reflect and support their interests, skills, cultures and family values.

- Encourage children to bring materials from home. Sharing their cultures and family experiences with others broadens each child's choices and reflects the community's diversity.
- Purchase and select materials that accommodate varying abilities and cultures.
- Periodically review and examine the space. Is it dynamic and responsive to the learners' current abilities and interests.
- Be sure that props are culturally inclusive and inviting for both boys and girls.
- Avoid always using stereotypical clothing and props.
- Organize equipment that can be manipulated and moved by the children for easy storage and accessibility.

Climate And Comfort

Appropriate materials and equipment invite children to come together with others, to interact and problem solve. Aesthetic elements of light, texture and color are important. Quality early childhood environments are organized, yet inviting.

- Create an environment that resembles a home.
- Wherever possible include natural lighting.
- Present children's work and all visual information for learning at children's eye level.
- Locate areas and materials so all children have access.

- Provide inviting spaces with pillows, rocking chairs and rugs for quiet and individual activities, such as resting and reading.
- Provide seating areas and storage spaces for the personal needs of staff members.
- Create and maintain a parent area for announcements, information, resources, teacher biographies and the sharing of ideas from parent to parent.
- Create a balance between soft/hard, large/small and high/low workspaces.

Curriculum Focus And Content

Creation of an early childhood environment that is responsive to content areas (numeracy, science, language and literacy) is based on the knowledge that children learn best through active exploration and discovery, aided by a supportive teacher.

- Develop centers and arrange furnishings with intentionality, keeping in mind goals and anticipated activities. (For example, the science area should include measuring cups and containers to encourage discussion of full/empty and estimation of how many cups will fill various containers.)
- Place related areas adjacent to one another. Often, dramatic play and blocks are placed in close proximity because block structures often lead to dramatic play. Art may be placed near dramatic play if the children are creating costumes or props, or near the writing area if they are publishing books.
- Plan the environment to encourage manipulation and transformation. Depending on the imagination, needs and interests of the children and adults, furniture can be rearranged or used for new purposes.
- Maintain dedicated space for children to store long-term projects or unfinished work.
- Choose materials, balancing open-ended with structured and specific. Include "real-life" objects in each area.
- Select materials and equipment that can be used in multiple ways and encourage curiosity, experimentation and imagination.
- Ask yourself if the materials are inviting and interesting. In how many different ways can the learner use the materials? Encourage creativity by including items that do not specifically denote a particular use, such as pieces of fabric or a variety of hats.
- Provide materials for children to create labels, signs and other representations of their work.
- Consider a variety of senses, (touch, smell, visual and hearing) when choosing materials.
- Create labels and photos to help children recognize areas and materials.
- Rotate materials for variety and provocation of new ideas.
- Change displays occasionally to avoid items becoming "wallpaper ".
- Avoid commercial images, cartoon characters or posters that are adult-created.
- During planning look for opportunities to "seed" the learning areas; to challenge and provoke the learners to further exploration and inquiry.
- Consider expanding current drama, art, reading and writing activities to the outside.

Safety And Accessibility

Safety should be an overriding concern in setting up an environment for young children. The materials and physical arrangement of the classroom should create a sense of belonging. It is important that children feel this is an exciting and interesting place where they can try new things.

- The environment should be safe, healthy and sanitary, in compliance with state and local licensing requirements and fire safety codes.
- The physical environment should promote inclusion of all children.
- Equipment that is not heavy or dangerous should be flexible. Children should be able to transform this equipment to support new ideas.
- Children should be guided and supervised in using equipment appropriately and safely.
- Floor coverings provide warmth and softness, but should not impede wheelchair movement.
- Consider storing common supplies in several places for children who have difficulty getting to them.
- Keep an emergency contact list by the classroom door and in an outdoor bag that holds emergency numbers and first-aid supplies.

- Consider whether project areas should be near electrical outlets, light sources and/or water.
- Sinks and toilets may need to be lowered. Consider installing assistive devices to promote hygiene independence.
- Classrooms should be large enough for at least 35 square-feet of usable space per child.
- Children should be easily visible in all areas to enable proper supervision.
- Model concern for the environment by attending to common areas, such as the entranceway, halls and outside.

Independence And Movement

Space should be adaptable, welcoming and organized. It must allow children to make choices and easily access materials. This allows children to feel some control over their learning.

- For each center, plan the best number of children to comfortably work in the space.
- Create areas that can serve more than one purpose at different times of the day.
- Eliminate visual clutter. Plan carefully what will be placed on boards and wall space.
- Use clear containers for storage, so items are visible and easily organized.
- Use shelves, dividers, carpet and tables to create discrete yet flexible work areas that allow children to work alone or in small groups, without concern that their work will be disturbed.
- Find opportunities to place mirrors and natural elements in different locations to spark interest or a "new use."
- Give each child a defined and labeled place for personal belongings.
- Ease transitions by guiding children when changes to the environment are made.

OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT

The outdoor environment is essential to accomplishing learning outcomes and fulfilling the need of children to be active. Outside, children have the advantage of fresh air, sunshine, room to move about and be loud. Outdoor activities can foster the development of gross motor skills, stimulate spontaneous play with friends, and strengthen emerging abilities in all developmental domains. These outdoor learning experiences also present natural opportunities for scientific inquiry.

Suggestions for outdoor experiences that promote physical growth, contribute to social/emotional growth, and promote cognitive development follow.

Physical Growth. Encourage children to dig and explore. Even the smallest area of grass offers a wide array of possibilities for discovery and collecting. Helping children to realize that living things are everywhere is a way to spark discussion about care and respect for our environment. Bring balls, buckets, hoops and ribbon outside. Engage children in creating, throwing, catching and other cooperative games to challenge upper and lower muscles.

Social/Emotional Growth. Create a box of props for the outdoors. Include hoses, hard hats, vehicles, boxes and fabric to stimulate dramatic play possibilities. From time to time suggest a favorite story as a possible theme for outdoor play. Bring a tape player, sticks, cymbals, class-made instruments, balloons, streamers, etc. Children love to make music and to march.

Cognitive Development. Bring reading and writing materials outdoors. Take advantage of what is happening near the school to link literature, drawing and research. For example, children who love construction vehicles might eagerly draw a bulldozer or find the exact piece of equipment in a resource book. Use outdoor space for movement experiences. Create cooperative games in which children can experiment with speed, directionality and other large-muscle movement, such as skipping, leap-frogging or crawling.

LIST OF SUGGESTED MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

Material selection and arrangement strongly influence children's learning opportunities. In selecting materials and equipment for each work area or center, teachers should give consideration to:

- *safety*: nontoxic, smooth edges, cushioning and age-appropriate;
- *quality and durability*: able to withstand daily use by many children over several years;
- *flexibility*: easily transformable for many uses; and
- *instructional value*: appropriate for the age and developmental abilities of the children.

Woodworking

Work bench
Hammer, saw, screwdriver
Vice clamp, hand drill
Ruler
Wood
Dowels
Styrofoam
Nails, Golf tees
Goggles

Sand/Water

Sand tables
Sifters, Funnels
Shovels, pails
Rakes, molds
Measuring cups
Rice, beans, other materials to sift & pour
Garden tools
Plastic tubing
Pitchers
Pumps
Eye droppers
Food coloring
Water wheel
Bottles
Trays

Audiovisual Equipment

Listening center with headphones
Cassette recorder
Record player
Overhead projector
Transparencies
Filmstrip projector and filmstrips
Screen
Computer & software
Digital camera

Library Corner

Fiction & nonfiction books
Books on tape
Books made by children
Chairs, rocking chair, rug
Book racks, shelves
Reading "boat" or bath tub
Magazines
Audiotapes & records
Big books
Multicultural representations

Art Supplies

Modeling clay, play dough & tools
Easels
Scissors, paste & glue
Finger paints, tempera paints & brushes
Crayons, water colors, markers, chalk
Yarn, ribbon, string
Newsprint & manila paper
Color construction paper
Burlap & fabric scraps
Collage materials
Color tissue & crepe paper
Wallpaper scraps
Cardboard & oak tag
Magazines, catalogs
Smocks, drying rack

Music

Rhythm & musical instruments
Autoharp &/or piano
Records &/or tapes
Scarves & other dance props
(See also AV equipment & gross motor)

Cooking

Electric hotplate, toaster oven
Electric frying pan
Measuring cups & spoons
Bowls, utensils, pots & pans
Recipes
Mixer
Refrigerator

Literacy Materials

A variety of crayons, pens, markers and pencils
Different sizes and types of paper and envelopes
Manipulative letters of wood, crepe, foam and plastic
Dictionary
Index cards for word banks
Games: matching alphabet, lotto, initial consonants
Chart stand with paper
Puppets and puppet stage or frame
Stuffed animals associated with books
Picture file and art productions
Sentence strips
Letter stamps
Alphabet cards
Teacher-prepared blank books
Small chalkboards
Flannel board with cutouts
Computer/printer
Typewriter

Gross Motor Play
(Some of these may be used outdoors or in the gym)

Balance beam (low)
Rocking boats
Climbing structures
Slide
Stairs
Floor mats
Wheel toys, pedal toys, wagons, ride-on vehicles
Scooter board
Parachute
Games: ring toss, bean bags, bowling
A variety of balls
Jump ropes
Plastic paddles and large bats
Fabric tunnels
Sawhorses
Hula hoops

Mathematical Resources/Problem Solving Manipulatives/Building Materials

Pattern blocks
Various objects to sort
Unifix or multi-link cubes
ESS wooden attribute blocks
Geoboards and geobands
Color cubes
Beansticks and loose beans
Base ten blocks
Tangrams
Primer (balance) scale
Tools for measuring length, area, perimeter, volume and time
Counters, chips
Parquetry blocks
Lacing boards
Beads and string
Set boards
Peg boards and pegs
Games and puzzles for counting, numeral recognition, etc.
Tabletop building toys: Legos, small block sets, building sets, puzzles and accessories
Lincoln Logs/Legos/Bristle blocks
Real and play money
Objects for sorting, classifying and ordering food and/or other items to stack to develop concepts of part/whole, size/quantity
Other building materials
Counters, such as buttons, chips, checkers, etc.

Construction	Dramatic Play	Science/Investigation and Discovery Materials
Wooden unit blocks Signs Large, hollow wooden blocks Planks Rug Large empty boxes Carpet pieces (various sizes) Wheel toys for riding Steering wheel Block play props: vehicles, toy animals, people and furniture Materials from nature – rocks, sticks	Opened-ended furniture Multiethnic dolls and clothes Kitchen appliances: wooden stove, sink, refrigerator and cupboard Table and chairs Broom, dust pan, ironing board and cleaning equipment Telephone, pots and pans, clock, food containers, dishes, and silverware Doll bed, blankets and pillow Dress-up clothes and uniforms Calculator Occupational props: fire hoses, doctor's kit, cash register and play money Typewriter Doll house and accessories Full-length mirror Real props, such as menus, ordering pad, clip board Scarves and hats	Scales (balance and other types), magnifying glasses, measuring tools Rice, beans and oatmeal to vary sand play Simple machines: pulleys, gears, inclined plane, wheels Gardening tools and supplies Magnets Collections of rocks, shells, nests, insects, etc. Color paddles and prisms Batteries, wires, bells, flashlight bulbs Animal environments and animals Water tub and accessories, such as plastic tubing, small pitchers, hand pumps, spray bottles, funnels, measuring cups, eye droppers, sponges, food coloring, containers of various sizes Thermometers Globe Old appliances, tools, paper, writing materials, clipboard Plants Prisms, nonfiction resource books Nails, hammers, screwdrivers, screws Wood, string, boxes Rubber bands, tin cans

TIME: SCHEDULING THE DAY

The daily schedule sets the stage for the early childhood classroom. Balance, consistency and routine are key to planning a schedule that meets children's needs. Effective daily schedules feature learning experiences for large groups, small groups and individual children. Parts of the day are group-oriented, teacher-directed and teacher-supported. Blocks of time allow for exploration and discovery, and for children to pursue their own interests and activities. The schedule includes indoor and outdoor play, opportunities for large-muscle and small-muscle activities, and time for investigation and collaboration. A rhythm of active and quiet activities offers busy, challenging work interspersed with rest, relaxation and socialization. The daily schedule provides consistency and an external structure that also allows children to develop inner control and an ability to plan. Most importantly, a consistent daily schedule creates an atmosphere of predictability that fosters trust. Young children require visible clues and sufficient transition times between daily events.

Sample Schedule: Full Day

7:30 ***Arrival.*** Selected activities for children to choose during breakfast and while student arrivals continue.

9:00 ***Group meeting or circle time.*** Morning routines are conducted with individuals or small groups, with a quick recap for the whole group. Plans for the day are discussed. Children receive information about planned experiences, including special activities and open centers.

9:15 ***Planned curriculum experiences.*** Children are encouraged to choose from available centers. Children may become engaged in an investigation or project, and are able to participate in a small-group snack experience.

10:30 ***Outdoor activities and curriculum experiences.*** Teachers should be prepared to take some planned activities and projects outdoors so children can continue their work in a new setting.

11:15 ***Transition.*** Children wash up, use the bathroom and prepare for lunch.

11:30 ***Lunch.***

12:15 ***Transition.*** Children clean up, use the bathroom and prepare for rest.

12:30 ***Story***. Large- or small-group story time.

1:00 ***Rest.*** Children nap or rest. Children may have quiet toys or books with them while they rest.

2:30 ***Transition.*** Children wake up, use the bathroom and get ready for next activity.

2:45 ***Small-group and individual experiences.*** Children chose among activities and may participate in a small-group snack.

3:45 ***Transition.*** Children clean up, use the bathroom and prepare to go outdoors.

4:00 ***Outdoor experiences and activities.***

4:45 ***Transition.*** Children finish activities, prepare to go indoors and use the bathroom.

5:00 ***Story.***

5:15 ***Closing circle or group time.*** Children prepare to go home.

5:30 ***End of Day.***

Sample Schedule: Half-Day

7:30 ***Arrival.*** Selected activities for children to choose during breakfast and while student arrivals continue.

9:00 ***Group meeting or circle time.*** Morning routines are conducted with individuals or small groups, with a quick recap for the whole group. Plans for the day are discussed. Children receive information about planned experiences, including special activities and open centers.

9:15 ***Planned curriculum experiences***. Children are encouraged to choose from available centers. Children may become engaged in an investigation or project, and are able to participate in a small-group snack experience.

10:15 ***Story.*** Large- or small-group story time.

10:30 ***Transition.*** Children clean up, use the bathroom and prepare to go outdoors.

10:45 ***Outdoor activities and curriculum experiences.*** Teachers should be prepared to take some of the planned activities and projects outdoors so children can continue their work in a new setting.

11:15 ***Transition.*** Children finish activities, prepare to go indoors and use the bathroom.

11:30 ***Closing circle/group time.*** Children prepare to go home.

11:45 ***End of day***.

BEST PRACTICES: SCHEDULING

Teachers

- Create a schedule with large blocks of time for children's activity times.

- Provide a schedule that allows for active and quiet, individual and small-group, indoor and outdoor, independent, child-directed, teacher-initiated and adult-directed activities.
- Plan each day's schedule to include opportunities for learning in physical, social, emotional and cognitive areas.
- Plan transition times to avoid children moving in large groups or waiting for others.
- Monitor and adjust the daily routine to create a comfortable, unhurried pace.
- Post a typical schedule for parents and visitors.
- Create visual reminders (photos, drawings) of the day's sequence for children and review it with them daily.
- Plan ahead. Be prepared for the unexpected in the daily routine, and be flexible.
- Develop routines with children. Provide signals and warning times so they can easily participate in transitions.
- Allow time for children to assist one another and develop independent learning behaviors.
- Provide opportunities for self-selected activities that promote independence and decision-making skills.

Administrators

- Organize a master schedule for all classes to ensure that each group has planned times for common spaces.
- Review each class schedule with the teaching team and provide suggestions to ensure that group size, type and tempo of activities are varied throughout the day.
- Allocate personal and planning time for teachers.
- Help teachers develop systems for observing and recording children's progress.
- Work with faculty and staff members to create community guidelines for outdoor play and use of equipment.
- Develop emergency procedures with staff input. Include information on first aid, notifying parents and completing accident reports. Provide training in first aid and CPR.
- Provide playground guidelines to substitutes.
- Inform parents about playground safety.

ESTABLISHING A POSITIVE CLASSROOM CLIMATE

Children often behave in certain ways as a means of accomplishing a desired goal. Such goals include:

- getting attention;
- avoiding an activity;
- showing an emotion;
- gaining acceptance; and
- feeling competent and powerful.

Children's behaviors may be explained as a result of examining their circumstances. For example:

- the physical environment is unfamiliar, restrictive or lacking in stimulation;
- materials are insufficient or lacking in variety;
- the child's basic needs may be unmet because of feelings of inadequacy, abuse or hunger;
- curriculum and behavioral expectations are inappropriate and frustrating; or
- cultural and family values may conflict.

Children also may attempt to communicate a message with their behaviors. For example:

- *This is too difficult*;
- *I don't understand*;
- *I want something*;
- *I don't know how or don't want to wait*; or
- *I need attention* (Strain and Hemmeter, 1997).

Once teachers determine what a child is trying to communicate or achieve, they can better intervene and, more importantly, examine how to prevent the behavior in the future. The key to prevention is knowledge, which must be gained through observation. Careful observation and note taking should answer the following: What takes place prior to the unwanted behavior? What is the unwanted behavior? What takes place as a result of the behavior? This method of observing the antecedent, behavior and consequence is often referred to as "ABC analysis" (Bijou, Peterson and Ault, 1968).

Close examination makes it possible to reshape the environment and anticipate so that a plan can be created to intervene prior to the undesired behavior. If it is not possible to intervene, an alternative is to change the consequences following the behavior, and teach the child a more appropriate way to achieve the desired goal. For information on maintaining a positive classroom environment, please read Chapter 10 of this

guide on social and emotional development, which includes possible sentence starters, responses to avoid in guiding behavior, and best practices for promoting positive classroom behaviors.

MAKING THE MOST OF CIRCLE TIME

Early childhood programs frequently gather children together, usually on a carpeted area, to have discussions, read stories and make plans for the day. Large-group circle time is a useful teaching strategy first discussed in the work of Frederick Froebel, the father of kindergarten. To maximize the benefits of circle time, teachers should consider:

- the amount of time they are asking children to come together in a group;
- the age and developmental abilities of the group;
- how to provide learning experiences that are valuable; and
- whether plans are engaging and relevant to the children's interests.

Circle time may be used to:

- provide information on the schedule of the day;
- encourage an understanding of time within the framework of discussions on the calendar, the days of the week and the weather; or
- introduce new concepts and provoke ideas for project work.

During circle time, children should have opportunities to:

- share ideas, engage in conversation and practice communicating meaningful messages;
- listen to others and develop their skills as members of a social group;
- practice, strengthen and reinforce their abilities to share information and tell stories; and
- gain information and knowledge from peers and adults in a group setting.

Children at 3 and 4 typically can sit still in a large group and attend for about 15-20 minutes. During this time it is essential that they are active and participating, engaged in the activity or task, and involved in discussion and questioning.

Teachers often plan circle times to include calendar activities highlighting days of the week and requiring children to repeat phrases such as "today is…". Children learn little from this activity despite a teacher's best intentions. It is a challenging task for children to sit still during a calendar presentation and, consequently, teachers often spend an inordinate amount of time on managing behavior rather than on productive and engaging activities.

Children at 3 and 4 do not have an ability to understand the concept of time. Rote recall is not sufficient to enhance their learning. "Young children's reasoning is tied to what they are seeing and experiencing; that is, young children are dependent on concrete, observable events (physical knowledge) to help them 'figure things out'" (Vanscoy and Fairchild, 1993). The calendar can be better understood as a literacy tool, a chart of sorts. Since time concepts cannot be seen, heard or felt, they are difficult for young children to construct. It is, in fact, the process of using the calendar as a reference tool where learning can occur.

Designing a calendar so the pieces can be manipulated and rearranged provides children with a more active engagement in understanding the labels for the days, months and dates. Ongoing conversations and opportunities to think about and experience temporal concepts are more worthwhile and lasting. The following experiences can be included within the daily calendar:

- shared experiences, such as field trips where children have an opportunity to discuss *before and after*, *first this happened and then this*, etc.;
- birthdates of classmates; and
- special occasions in the lives of the children.

Suggested Circle Time Procedure

8:45 The children are gathered on the rug with a familiar gathering song. This can be as easy as using a familiar tune and inserting the words, "Let's all gather together, let's all gather together, let's all gather together and begin our day." Clapping a beat, the teacher greets each child by name and asks, "Jeff, how are you today?"

8:50 As everyone settles on the carpet, the teacher begins with a comment on something that has already occurred that morning and elicits conversation from the children.

8:52 For a few minutes children are given an opportunity to spontaneously share what is on their minds. Then the teacher gently pulls the children back to the group and mentions that she has brought to circle some interesting items she would like to share, especially since they have been spending time watching their new

pet snails. The teacher lays out two small balance scales, several magnifying glasses, small pre-made journals and pieces of fruits and vegetables on a plate. As she is putting these items in the circle, she is encouraging the children to consider what the class might do with the items and how they might be of use with the snails. The children discuss what they have been noticing and wondering about the snails, and how these items might help them answer their questions.

9:02 The teacher points out what areas will be closed and open for center time. As the teacher begins to wrap up circle time, she notes that Joshua is the calendar person for this week and that he is going to come up and point to the spot on the calendar that represents today. Joshua does this by saying, "I drew a dog in the box for today because my mom is going to take my dog to the doctor." (Note: Joshua did not know this calendar information on his own. Earlier that morning the teacher spent five minutes with him alone to get this ready.) The teacher says thank you and that she hopes Joshua will tell everyone tomorrow how his dog did at the doctor. The teacher announces that it is center time and suggests that today she will clap out people's names, and when they hear their names they may go to a center of their choice.

Valuable class discussions are important for 3- and 4-year-old children. Teachers must recognize class meetings as a teaching strategy that requires an intentional plan for asking questions and setting the stage to engage discussion that makes children think. The process of encouraging children to sustain a question, to toss back the idea in a discussion, to think about their thoughts and those of their peers, requires teacher guidance, re-direction and, most important, a hesitancy on the teacher 's part to deliver the "answer " (Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 1998). Children will create and re-create their perceptions of the world based on these conversations and further experiences. This social discourse, which Vygotsky describes as sociocultural theory, is the bridge between the child's world and his or her cognitive development (Berk and Winsler, 1995).

Tips For Successful Circle Time

1. Try breaking the group into smaller numbers to hold two circles simultaneously. The teaching team can meet earlier to quickly review the key points and reminders for the day, and provide the children with a more pleasant and productive circle.
2. Choose areas in the classroom that are free from distracting toys and materials and provide children with enough comfortable space to be good listeners.
3. Be sure that all children can see when props are displayed or materials shared. Advance planning prevents frustration.
4. Start before all children have joined the circle. Others will then become interested and transition more easily.
5. Keep the group time to 15 minutes. Be prepared to end circle time on any day when the dynamics and plans are not working. Watch and attend to children's behaviors during circle times. They will indicate their ability to listen and participate.
6. Avoid lengthy demonstrations and discussions where the teacher does most of the talking. Remember the goals: to engage children and provide opportunities for oral language development and listening skills.
7. Plan circle time to include active participation. Music and movement, story retellings and reflecting on shared experiences can prompt enthusiastic responses, where many children can be heard.
8. Remember, your approach sets the tone for the group. If you are in a managing mode and not excited about getting together, the children most likely will not be enthusiastic either.
9. If you are committed to calendar activities, consider including them only once or twice a week as a full group. On the other days work with children individually on skills of numeral writing and counting to keep the calendar up to date.
10. Plan across the week's schedule to provide interesting and valuable tasks and activities during circle time. This can be another way to provide intentional instruction time in many areas of the curriculum.

    a. Monday – oral language games
    b. Tuesday – calendar
    c. Wednesday – music and movement
    d. Thursday – Big Book with a discussion about ongoing projects in the classroom
    e. Friday – retelling the story with chanting and puppets.

Remember that each circle time can include several brief, valuable and engaging

activities. Other possibilities include a shared writing story, dramatization of a favorite story with props and puppets, group collaborative games, discussion of a current science investigation or a mathematical problem encountered by a classmate.

11. Consider planning a closing circle at the end of the day or morning. This brings everyone back together to reflect and process events and consider what they have in mind for tomorrow. Lillian Katz once said "Look at a classroom at the end of a day and describe what it is that the children are coming back to tomorrow".
12. If show and tell is planned for circle time, keep in mind:

    - children should be the primary talkers;
    - not everyone needs to share each time;
    - promote discussion and sharing rather than children presenting and sitting down; and
    - sharing might include not only an item, but also an experience, problem to be solved, or simply a child's thoughts that are of importance to him or her.

Teachers need to make circle times so wonderful and exciting that children can't wait until it is time for another experience.

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AESTHETIC & PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT 9

"Today's children do need planned playgrounds to compensate for crowded conditions in urban areas, to provide reasonably safe play areas, and to help ensure that children play."
(Frost, 2000).

HELPFUL TERMS
AESTHETIC AND PHYSICAL DOMAINS
CREATIVE DRAMATICS
MUSIC
VISUAL ARTS
PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
MOVEMENT

HELPFUL TERMS

Aesthetics	Awareness and appreciation of pleasant sensory experiences, including the ability to perceive, respond and be sensitive to one's natural environment.
Balance	The ability to maintain an even distribution of weight.
Body Awareness	The awareness of one's body in space in relation to others, and an understanding of how to move in the environment.
Beat	A steady succession of units of rhythm in a musical piece.
Coordination	The skill of regulating movement of large and small muscles in an effective manner.
Directionality	The ability to understand movement and direction.
Dynamics	Changes in loudness of music: loud and soft.
Elaboration	The ability to stretch and expand on ideas and projects.
Form	The way all visible aspects of a visual artwork are united to create its distinctive character.
Harmony	Different pitches performed simultaneously to create musical sound.
Imagination	The ability to form internal images or concepts of experiences, people and things.
Inventiveness	The ability to produce or create, using various materials or ideas.
Large/Gross Motor Development	Development of the muscles in the arms, legs, head and trunk.
Pitch	The highness or lowness of sound.
Reggio Emilia	A town in central Italy widely known for its high-quality municipal early childhood system. Considered to be one of the most noteworthy and innovative approaches to early childhood education, Reggio Emilia schools focus on the importance of a team approach; involvement of family, community and teachers; and commitments to research, experimentation, communication and documentation (Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 1998).
Representation	A process where one thing is used to stand for (or represent) another. Use of pictures, models, images, symbols and language are all examples of representation.
Rhythm	Repetition of a beat in a pattern.

(Continued on next page)

HELPFUL TERMS, continued

Small/Fine Motor Development	Development of the muscles in the fingers, hands, wrists and arms.
Spatial Awareness	An understanding of space, and movement within that space.
Tempo	The speed of music: fast, slow or gradual.
The Arts	The four visual and performing arts: dance, music, theatre and visual arts.

AESTHETIC AND PHYSICAL DOMAINS

Young children learn through active exploration of their environments. Curriculum must include both hands- on and minds-on experiences. In early childhood curriculum planning art, music, movement and drama are woven together throughout projects, themes and centers in the classroom. Engaging children's senses, using more than one avenue for learning, and physical involvement allow young learners to make connections with previous experiences and build bridges to new learning. Whether performance standards are tied to dance, music, movement, visual arts or physical skills, the child is making decisions, solving problems, communicating and representing. When early childhood curriculum plans provide varied experiences that acknowledge the aesthetic and physical developmental domains, each child (with his or her learning style, intelligence, culture, language and ability) is given an opportunity to understand and represent his or her learning.

"We know people truly understand something when they can represent the knowledge in more than one way" (Checkley, 1997). Early childhood educators in Reggio Emilia observe and reflect on the "languages" of the child. "Languages are the multiple ways in which the child understands, interprets and represents his or her learning. Each provides the child with an opportunity to express him or herself. They are, in fact, drawing, dancing, speaking, moving, singing and many more. Active use of these forms also paves the way for the child to use verbal language, to read and to write" (Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 1998). Teachers must guide children in understanding their strengths and the many avenues available for representing their learning.

Each of these disciplines (art, music, movement and drama) offer children opportunities to express their thoughts and abilities in ways that are unique to who they are as learners. When teachers plan with aesthetic and physical performance standards in mind children are provided with:

- language to represent their thinking;
- opportunities to use more than one avenue for learning;
- chances to collaborate and problem-solve with peers;
- avenues for integrating their experiences;
- ways to communicate, in addition to their verbal responses; and
- opportunities to think about their learning, make decisions and connect information.

Although there are many connections, this guide presents the aesthetic and physical domains as separate disciplines, each with its own body of knowledge and skills. The following chart outlines preschool development in these domains and their connections with Connecticut's K-12 curriculum frameworks.

AESTHETIC DOMAIN

Connecticut's Preschool Curriculum Framework Creative Expression/Aesthetic Content Standards	*A Guide To K-12 Program Development in the Arts* Program Goals
Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to: • *exhibit* curiosity about and *explore* how materials function and affect the senses; • *create* (imagine, experiment, plan, make, evaluate, refine and present/exhibit) works that express or represent experiences, ideas, feelings and fantasy using various media; • *represent* fantasy and real-life experiences through pretend play; • *engage* in musical and creative movement activities; and • *describe* or *respond* to their own creative work or the creative work of others.	**As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:** • *create* (imagine, experiment, plan, make, evaluate, refine and present/exhibit) art works that express concepts, ideas and feelings in each art form; • *perform* (select, analyze, interpret, rehearse, evaluate, refine and present) diverse art works in each art form; • *respond* (select, experience, describe, analyze, interpret and evaluate) with understanding to diverse art works and performances in each art form; • *understand* and use the materials, techniques, forms (structures, styles, genres), language, notation (written symbol system) and literature/repertoire of each art form; • *understand* the importance of the arts in expressing and illuminating human experiences, beliefs and values; • *identify* representative works and recognize the characteristics of art, music, theatre and dance from different historical periods and cultures; • *develop* sufficient mastery of at least one art form to continue lifelong involvement in that art form not only as responders (audience members), but also as creators or performers; • *develop* sufficient mastery of at least one art form to be able to pursue further study, if they choose, in preparation for a career; • *seek* arts experiences and participate in the artistic life of the school and community; and • *understand* the connections among the arts, other disciplines and daily life.

CREATIVE DRAMATICS

Creative dramatics and fantasy play emerge as soon as children begin to play. *"Creative dramatics is defined as the youngster's ability to improvise and act out feelings, emotions and attitudes creatively and expressively, using verbal actions and/or motoric movements"* (Yawkey, 1981).

A 2-year-old child will use one object to represent another, or behave as if she or he were another person. At about 3 years of age, children begin to perform in ways that have a theme, or take on the roles of significant people in their lives. Their play is with actions and words, and social interactions develop with others. At around 4 to 5 years of age, dramatic play becomes highly complex and self-directed. A story may even emerge within their dramatic endeavors (Wagner and Heathcote, 1976).

Creative dramatics is typically integrated within other curriculums to provide children with a way of expressing their thoughts and feelings, rather than for performance.

Suggested Experiences

Role Play. This is an informal acting out of a situation, problem, story or scene. The teacher is often the leader in role play; setting the stage, initiating ideas, setting limits and guiding the discussion.

Finger Plays. These are most familiar to early childhood teachers and include songs, chants and rhymes that are recited and acted out.

Story Building and Storytelling. Storytelling is common for children in everyday life. As children's stories are heard they develop a repertoire of vocabulary and ideas to communicate with others. By using his or her own story, each child's voice is honored and reinforced, leading to increased self-esteem and risk-taking. Elaboration by parents, teachers and other children continues to build on creative thinking and problem solving.

Puppetry. Many of the benefits gained in role-playing are offered through puppetry, except that the child is talking or acting through the puppets. Puppets encourage expression of ideas and provide an opportunity to observe and evaluate the behavior of the others in a variety of roles. Children are naturally attracted to puppets, and enjoy thinking that the puppet may, in fact, be real!

Best Practices

Early childhood educators are urged to consider the following best practice recommendations in the discipline of ***creative dramatics***.

- Provide time for children to play in settings with costumes, masks or puppets.
- Create a story by passing it around the circle, with everyone adding one part of the story. Encourage a beginning, middle and end. Write the story on big chart paper or sentence strips. Write each part on a page of the "book" and then encourage children to illustrate the story.
- Collect and organize for easy use a collection of fingerplays like *Five Little Monkeys*, *Going on a Bear Hunt*, *I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed a Fly*, and *Ten in the Bed*. Play music while you are reciting the rhyme, encouraging the children to "act out" the words. Ask the children to recall the beginning, middle and end of the fingerplay.
- Create play opportunities out of large cardboard boxes. Provide materials for the children to paint and decorate the boxes to make them into a store, a spaceship, a house, etc.
- Using puppets, dramatize situations where rules are broken or friends disagree. Encourage the children to decide how to resolve the situations.
- From time to time change the items in the dramatic play area. Consider just having hats or scarves to encourage different ideas.
- Use drama yourself in reading or during circle time or transitions. Let the children see how much fun "acting" can be.
- Provide classroom space that is open and has materials that are open ended and flexible, such as blocks, scarves and cardboard boxes.

MUSIC

Making music provides children with opportunities to express their feelings, investigate rhythm, develop an understanding of their bodies in space, explore movement and strength, and experience concepts such as loud and soft, fast and slow, and high and low. Musical experiences provide arenas for children to connect with their own bodies and with their peers. Music can be used to soothe, excite and interpret feelings. Music and movement can foster the development of listening skills, promote oral language, strengthen auditory discrimination, and provide countless opportunities for problem solving. Music and movement go hand in hand in early childhood classrooms. Young children need to be "hands-on" as well as "minds-on".

> *In a nutshell, the evidence is persuasive that (1) our brain may be designed for music and the arts and (2) a music and arts education has positive, measurable and lasting academic and social benefits. In fact, considerable evidence suggests a broad-based music and arts education should be required for every student in the country* (Jensen, 1998).

The National Association for Music Education reminds teachers that:

- all children have musical potential;
- children bring their own unique interests and abilities to the music-learning environment;
- very young children are capable of developing critical thinking skills through musical ideas;
- children come to early childhood music experiences from diverse backgrounds;
- children should experience exemplary musical sounds, activities and materials;
- children should not be encumbered with the need to meet performance goals;
- children's play is their work;
- children learn best in pleasant physical and social environments;
- diverse learning environments are needed to serve the developmental needs of many individual children; and
- children need effective adult models (MENC, 1994).

When parents and teachers speak and sing to children, they foster awareness and the development of musical intelligence. Experiences such as bouncing to a steady beat, rocking, and dancing to music all build sensitivity to beat, rocking, and dancing to music all build sensitivity to beat, rhythm, tempo, pitch, etc. It is not surprising that children who grow up in homes with a variety of opportunities for singing and listening become more interested in music and look for experiences that involve signing and listening.

Children also distinguish sounds in their environments. As children collect a repertoire of musical sounds they begin to experiment with sound. This same experimentation is found when children play with sounds, words and rhymes. Early childhood classrooms build upon these playful opportunities and provide children with numerous experiences playing with, hearing and recognizing the sounds of language. Research has indicated that the more proficient a child is with sounds, rhymes and language patterns, the more likely she or he is to be successful in later reading skills (Neuman, Copple and Bredekamp, 2000).

Effective music teaching in the prekindergarten should:

- support the child's total development -- physical, emotional, social and cognitive;
- recognize the wide range of normal development in prekindergarten-age children and the need to differentiate their instruction;
- facilitate learning through active interaction with adults and other children as well as with music materials;
- include learning activities and materials that are real, concrete and relevant to the lives of young children;
- provide opportunities for children to choose from among a variety of musical activities, materials and equipment of varying degrees of difficulty; and
- allow children time to explore music through active involvement (MENC, 1994).

Group experiences in music are only one aspect of a good music curriculum. Musical instruments and materials provide children with opportunities to explore sound. As children become more familiar and comfortable with exploring vocal and other sound sources, guided experiences can help develop understanding, skills and vocabulary.

Early childhood music curriculums also can develop listening skills. Paying attention to directions in a song, trying to keep a steady beat, and playing musical games all require listening and responses. Children enjoy such musical experiences and often find success in the new and the different.

Individual opportunities for music exploration should be available just as blocks, dramatic play, sand and water are available in an early childhood setting. Experimenting with sound and how to produce it with instruments real and "home-made" provide children with opportunities to learn about sounds, tones and pitch. The classroom setting can encourage children to feel free "to get into the music" and interpret it in their own ways. It may sound like children are making noise, but this is part of free experimentation in music, the language of sound.

Best Practices

The following best practices in ***music instruction*** are recommended for consideration by early childhood educators.

- Make music a daily and natural part of the classroom by playing music often, even as background during other experiences.

- Demonstrate musical concepts through stories, e.g., using high and low character voices in the *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*.
- Encourage singing and dancing as part of other routines and activities, such as during dramatic play or on the playground.
- Encourage children to notice rhythms in their environments, such as birds, rain or construction crews outside.
- Provide children with the vocabulary of music, e.g., high and low for pitch; loud and soft for dynamics; and fast and gradual for tempo.
- Use children's literature, such as *Down By the Bay* or *A Hunting We Will Go*, that can be sung or played.
- Sing songs of many cultures, especially those represented by the children in the group.
- Help children to discover ways to make sounds on instruments. Make your own instruments using materials like boxes, sticks, rubber bands, sandpaper and beans. Use instruments and "sound-makers" to create rain, thunder, birds and other sounds to accompany stories.
- Create a music center that includes tapes, a tape recorder, songs on charts, and stories with accompanying music. Add props to use when enjoying a song, such as felt cutouts to represent the characters in songs like *The Wheels on the Bus*.
- Avoid attempting performances that require long rehearsals, because these can create stress for parents.

VISUAL ARTS

Young children draw, narrate and create stories, actions and ideas with images. Children are spontaneous image-makers, using any available medium to create marks that have meaning for them. From these visual experiences come the abilities to read, use mathematical symbols, read musical notation, and reconstruct and assimilate experiences. In addition to symbolic representation, children use artwork to explore visual order and organize shapes, forms, colors and textures. Children's interactions with paper, writing utensils, clay and other art media are all encompassing. Their thinking cannot be separated from what they are feeling. In this way, the visual arts contribute to children's emotional well-being, giving form to their thoughts. Through such experiences children come to understand themselves in relationship to the world.

> *I used to draw like Raphael, but it has taken me a whole lifetime to learn to draw like a child.*
>
> (Picasso, date unknown)

Children spontaneously begin to work in both two- and three-dimensional representation, including drawing, painting, collage, working with clay, and construction with paper or other media. Their efforts at representing what they think and know allow children to:

- work with purpose and maintain a focus;
- respect themselves and their achievements;
- communicate feelings and ideas with others;
- appreciate the contributions of different cultural groups;
- create change in their environments using a wide range of media; and
- make aesthetic discoveries and render evaluative judgments.

Best Practices

Early childhood educators are encouraged to consider use of the following best practices in the ***visual arts***:

- Analyze and describe illustrations in books. Encourage children to try to create in the style of familiar illustrators such as Eric Carle.
- Encourage children to examine elements of art such as line, color and contrast.
- Become scientists, even in the art area. Explore the mixture of colors, paper, collage and clay.
- Avoid the "arts and crafts" approach to providing children with art experiences. Ask yourself, *Is this art or is it an assembly task*?
- Provide opportunities for students to self-select art media and projects.
- Avoid ready-made models or ways of doing things. Allow the children to feel satisfaction in their own ideas and efforts.
- Provide a variety of model-making materials, such as clay, blocks or wood scraps.
- Provide time and support for children to explore and gain skill with tools.
- Make sure children have an opportunity to display and talk about their works of art.

- Incorporate culturally diverse materials, and encourage families to contribute items from home that may be interesting additions to the collage area.
- Model and encourage experimenting with materials and various media. Encourage children to realize that mistakes are OK and trial and error is common when one is creating.
- Save children's artwork as important windows into their growth and development.
- Most importantly, emphasize that process is more important than product.

PHYSICAL DOMAIN

Connecticut's Preschool Curriculum Framework Performance Standards	*The Connecticut K-12 Physical Education Framework Content Standards*
Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to: • *demonstrate* competence in a variety of activities that require coordinated movement using large muscles; • *perform* activities that combine large-muscle movements with equipment; • *combine* a sequence of several motor skills in an organized way; • *choose to engage* in physical activity that is child-selected or teacher-initiated; • *perform* fine-motor tasks that require small-muscle strength and control; • *use* eye-hand coordination to successfully perform fine-motor tasks; • *show* beginning control of writing, drawing and art tools; • *move* through an environment with body control; and • *demonstrate* spatial awareness in fine-motor activities.	**As a result of education in Grades K-12, students will:** • *physical activity* – become competent in a variety of, and proficient in a few, physical activities; • *human movement* – understand and apply principles of human movement to the learning and development of motor skills; • *fitness* – use fitness concepts to achieve and maintain health-enhancing levels of physical fitness; • *responsible behavior* – exhibit responsible personal and social behaviors in physical activity settings; • *respect for differences* – exhibit an understanding of and respect for differences among people in physical activity settings; and • *benefits of physical activity* – identify and understand how physical activity provides personal enjoyment, challenge, self-expression and social interaction.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

The preschool child is always in movement. During the early years significant physical development is occurring. Large-muscle skills improve and the small muscles of the hands and fingers become stronger and more controlled. Basic movement skills such as running, jumping, throwing and kicking develop over time.

Physical activity is influenced by the environment, as well as by the child's developing abilities. Early childhood teachers must provide experiences for physical development for children who may not have opportunities for such experiences at home. Early childhood curriculums should provide many and varied opportunities for experiences that promote physical development, including:

- *gross motor* – using large muscles for throwing, catching, kicking, jumping and swinging;
- *fine motor* – using fingers and hands for cutting, buttoning, hammering, pouring and drawing;
- *body awareness* – identifying or naming body parts or performing other tasks that promote an understanding of how the body works and what the different parts of the body do;
- *spatial awareness* – moving fast, using different parts of the body to move about, and other activities that promote an understanding of how bodies occupy space and how to move and explore in space around others and objects;
- *directional awareness* – following directions about moving left, right, up, across, front or back; or performing other tasks that encourage understanding of an object's or body's location and direction in space; and
- *balance* – bouncing or using beams to learn about controlling movement on different surfaces (Frost, 1992; Gallahue, 1993).

Three- and 4-year-old children need consistency, repetition and many opportunities to practice emerging skills. In the past, it had been thought that children develop physical skills by playing games on their own. More careful planning, however, has been found to be required, as children get frustrated trying to play games without sufficient skills. As with all teaching and learning experiences for children in early childhood settings, a combination of planned and unplanned experiences are necessary, both indoors and out. Some activities focus on a motor or movement goals, while others may be naturally integrated within the other developmental domains and goals of the daily curriculum (e.g., a planned experience focusing on color and patterning also involves fine-motor and eye-hand coordination). Although children need abundant time for free play indoors and outdoors, teachers cannot assume that this will fully promote physical development without careful observation and intentional planning.

Planning requires careful consideration to match activities to the physical characteristics of each child. The play environment, the materials and the expectations for performance are all based on knowledge and understanding of each child's abilities. Children with physical disabilities that require a wheelchair or leg supports may need a teacher to facilitate movement around an outdoor environment. A visually impaired child benefits more from facilitation with sensory clues. Planning ahead and considering each child's needs helps to ensure that he or she experiences indoor and outdoor physical activities that enhance growth and development.

Best Practices

Early childhood educators are urged to consider implementation of the following best practices in the domain of ***physical development***.

- Plan a variety of activities each day to keep children active and involved.
- Plan daily, intentional, integrated and natural opportunities for physical development.
- Attempt to keep group size small to enhance teacher support, especially if a particular skill or movement is being introduced for the first time.
- Remember that children of this age learn through repetition.
- Plan activities that include opportunities for walking, balancing, hopping, jumping, running, climbing, crawling, riding wheeled equipment, swinging, throwing, pouring, cutting, tracing, painting, connecting (legos, puzzles, geoboards), zipping, pulling and rolling.
- Regularly maintain equipment to ensure safety.
- Observe carefully to determine when to intervene, support, challenge or reinforce to promote success.
- Plan opportunities for children to work in pairs or small groups to complete physical tasks or games.
- Prepare outside activities for small-muscle development such as weaving with branches and yarn or painting.

- Acknowledge integration in your plans, e.g., the writing area emphasizes small-muscle development, oral language skills, and concepts about print and visual arts.

MOVEMENT

At the beginning of life, movement allows a child to explore the world and separate the *me* from the *not me*. Movement and learning are inseparable. Infants repeat and refine movements to develop control of this tool for learning and outlet for emotions. Providing a safe, open environment for movement exploration is critically important. "Children need opportunities to express intent – to plan and talk about what they are going to do before they act. They need opportunities to carry out their plans and then recall what they have done. Planning and awareness are keys to thoughtful, purposeful movement" (Weikart, 1989).

> *Movement is part of our social language by which we are able to communicate with others. The art form of dance is a way of forming and sharing the way we respond to the world in which we live by paying particular attention to experiences and giving them significance, particularly those experiences that can be organized and ordered in bodily movement* (Lowden, 1989).

Fundamental movement abilities include: steady beat independence, coordination, aural/visual processing, attending and concentrating, spacial awareness, language acquisition, creativity and problem solving, planning and decision making, and energy and vitality. Movement experiences need to be engaging, enabling and extending (Weikart, 1989). Creative movement education:

- develops neural networks necessary for future learning;
- increases the child's movement vocabulary, leading to competent and confident movement;
- increases the language vocabulary, particularly verbs and adverbs;
- is a source of personal meaning, significance and power through self-concept;
- offers opportunities to solve problems through physical action;
- provides opportunities to develop relationships with others through leading, following, allowing time and space for others, and being a contributing member of a group;
- releases high energy or tension, leading to relaxation; and
- provides imaginative ways to explore or practice concepts and skills from other subjects (Weikart, 1989).

Movement experiences are noncompetitive. Children learn about working with others and about how to share space without interfering. They learn about their own bodies in space and how to control movement, direction and tempo. Confidence, creative ideas and self-esteem all result from quality music and movement curriculums.

Best Practices

The following best practices in the areas of ***creative movement and dance*** are recommended for use by early childhood educators.

- Provide children with a vocabulary to describe their movements: high, low, under, as slow as, etc; and provide opportunities for children to talk about their movements.
- Move to show placement, e.g., over, around, through, on, in, next to; and to show emotions such as anger, fear and happiness.
- Give directions for movement. Start with one step and gradually increase the complexity of the directions as children's skills develop. Start with large-motor coordination and build a movement vocabulary before focusing on small-motor coordination.
- Use a variety of music, from classical or jazz to world music, to stimulate different types of movement. Encourage children to notice changes in pitch and tempo and to adjust their movements.
- Involve all children in movement activities, but allow a choice of participation.
- Be prepared for the excitement that movement activities create. Begin slowly and be patient.
- Describe and label the children's movements to encourage new and more elaborate movements (e.g., *Xavier is walking on tip toes*. *Holly is spinning like a helicopter*. *Sam is stopping when the music stops and listening before he begins again*.).
- Use movement to illustrate the characters and action of stories. Sing songs with structured movements such as *Bluebird, Rig a Jig Jig, I'm a Little Teapot*, or *Head, Shoulders, Knees & Toes*.
- Move to music of different cultural groups, especially those represented in the class.

- Play mirror games, by having pairs of children mirror one another. Children try following directions visually, while keeping up with a friend's actions (e.g., *Follow Your Partner*, *Follow the Leader*).
- Prepare children in advance to understand appropriate responses during movement activities. Some children will see this time as an opportunity for physical stunts. Help children to understand where to move, how to move, and when to start and stop.

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NUTRITION AND HEALTH 11

The preschool years are a time when children learn to eat and enjoy a variety of foods. In pleasant surroundings, with patient, supportive adults, young children eventually learn to enjoy most foods. Preschool children need fewer calories but the same variety of foods that older children and adults require. ***MyPyramid*** *can suggest meal and snack choices for young children. By paying attention to their bodies, children learn to eat the right amount without overeating. It's up to children to choose* ***how much to eat from what is offered****. It's up to adults to decide* ***what foods*** *to offer children and* ***when****.*

Children develop their attitudes, beliefs, and eating habits from other people: parents, childcare providers, older siblings, and other caregivers. Role modeling is a powerful tool for helping children learn about healthful eating and active living. Hands-on experiences with food help children explore and enjoy a variety of foods.

USDA 2002

HELPFUL TERMS
NUTRITION GOALS
DEVELOPMENTAL APPROPRIATENESS
INVOLVING CHILDREN
SIX BEST PRACTICES

HELPFUL TERMS

Dietary Guidelines for Americans	The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (2005) provide general diet and lifestyle recommendations for healthy Americans ages 2 and over (not for younger children and infants). They were developed by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services, and form the basis for federal nutrition policies and programs.
MyPyramid	*MyPyramid* (USDA, 2005) is a tool for implementing the *Dietary Guidelines*. *MyPyramid* organizes food into five major groups (grains, vegetables, fruits, milk and meats) and provides a recommended number of daily servings. It translates the *Dietary Guidelines* into a **total diet** that meets nutrient needs from food sources and aims to moderate or limit dietary components often consumed in excess.

NUTRITION GOALS

Nutrition education is an essential component of early childhood education because nutrition influences how well children grow, develop and learn. Early childhood settings present ideal opportunities for teaching children about food, nutrition and lifelong habits for good health. Nutrition education from an early age can help children learn to make healthy food choices, resulting in:

- consumption of a balanced diet;
- achievement of optimal growth and intellectual development;
- increased physical performance;
- maintenance of healthy weight; and decreased risk of nutrition-related diseases.

Connecticut's Preschool Curriculum Framework (1999) recommends that all children practice appropriate eating habits by the end of preschool. To accomplish this goal, classroom experiences should ensure that preschool children recognize and eat a variety of nutritious foods. Early childhood teachers will encourage healthy lifestyles by helping children learn the skills for healthy eating, providing opportunities to practice these skills, and by making nutrition fun. Effective nutrition education has the following characteristics for curriculum and content areas.

Curriculum:

- connects ideas and information to prior knowledge;
- ensures that the child is actively involved in the experience and not just a bystander; and
- uses ideas that spring from the child's questions.

(More information on appropriate curriculum planning can be found in Chapter 2.)

Content:

- teaches children the relationship between food and health;
- helps children understand their growing bodies and how to take care of themselves through healthy behaviors;
- exposes children to a variety of learning experiences about where food comes from and how it can be prepared; and
- helps children develop sound attitudes and knowledge about food, nutrition and health.

Developing a plan for nutrition education is key to success. This plan should include opportunities for children to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to make appropriate food choices. It is most effective when the plan is the shared responsibility of all preschool staff members, teachers, administrators and food service personnel. This plan should:

- introduce children to new food and eating experiences;
- provide food- and health-related learning activities that can be connected to experiences the child has at home; and
- encourage children to talk with their families about their food experiences in childcare.

For preschoolers, nutrition education can be organized around three basic nutrition concepts: food keeps me healthy, food gives me energy and food helps me grow. Nutrition activities should be based on these concepts and provide concrete experiences such as exposure to new healthy foods and building skills in choosing healthy foods. The ultimate goal is **behavioral**. Preschoolers can easily begin to understand basic health concepts. But while children may *know* that fruits and vegetables make them healthy, they must actually *eat* fruits and vegetables to obtain health benefits.

Nutrition education should reflect a variety of cultural and ethnic foods and practices, including everyday customs, traditions and celebrations. Serving dishes from different cultures broadens children's food experiences and helps teach children about new foods. Children are more likely to relate to the concepts being taught when food experiences include familiar foods and customs.

Preschool nutrition education activities should be designed to achieve the following outcomes for young children:

Educational/Attitudinal

- Tries new foods
- Enjoys a variety of healthy foods
- Enjoys active play

Behavioral

- Gradually increases variety of foods eaten
- Eats healthy foods
- Participates in active play

(continued on next page)

Health

- Improves motor skills, coordination and muscle tone
- Grows and develops at an appropriate rate
- Maintains good health

From *Bright Futures In Practice: Nutrition*, by Story, Holt and Stofka. Used with permission from National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health and Georgetown University, 2002.

DEVELOPMENTAL APPROPRIATENESS

Nutrition education experiences should be fun, taking into consideration children's developmental abilities in motor and language skills. Children reach predictable milestones throughout their early development. These milestones can help teachers plan experiences that meet children's needs and stimulate learning in all developmental areas. The following chart highlights specific milestones and characteristic behaviors related to food and nutrition activities.

Developmental Milestones Related To Food And Nutrition

3- to 4-Year-Olds	*4- to 5-Year-Olds*
• Eat without help. Prefer eating finger foods. Drink from cup. (Note: spills are normal.) • Select foods from limited choices. • Begin to share and take turns. • Help other children in need, e.g., passing food at mealtime. • Explore and experiment with new ways to do things. • Play is dramatic, solitary and models grown-up activities (play house, grocery shopping). • Describe color, shape and texture of food, if present. • Imitate adults and other children, e.g., mealtime behavior. • Name, identify and sort foods. • Learn by doing; need concrete experiences; understand only what they can see, smell, taste and touch or do. • Hesitate to try new foods. • Verbalize food preferences. • Eat independently with some help. • Easily distracted in groups. • Ask adults for more helpings of food and drink when desired.	• Eat with less mess and spills. Use fork and spoon. • Manipulate packages and containers. • Use self-help skills to take care of needs. • Describe color, shape and texture of food in greater detail. • Speak clearly and express themselves to others about experiences, interests and needs. • Learn by doing and applying new information to new experiences. • Follow more complex directions, e.g., cooking activities. • Begin to experiment with new foods. Take more than they can eat. • Initiate new food selections. • Require less help at the table. • Eat more comfortably in groups. Able to concentrate. • Use fork and spoon. Pour own juice.

Adapted from: *Tickle Your Appetite: Team Nutrition's Education Kit for Child Care.* United States Department of Agriculture, 1998.

INVOLVING CHILDREN

Children are much more likely to try something new if they have been involved in the preparation process. Cooking activities are invaluable to the learning process because they encourage children to taste new foods and promote independence in eating. Preparing food gives children:

- *experience* with sharing as they take turns;
- *creative outlets* – changing flour and other ingredients into raw dough, then into a cookie or muffin that can be decorated;
- *self-esteem* – a sense of accomplishment when a project is completed and there is something to show for it;
- *fine- and gross-motor skills* – rolling bread dough, mashing fruit, scrubbing, tearing, breaking and snapping vegetables, etc.;
- *knowledge about safety* – injury prevention, food safety and sanitation;
- *knowledge about parts of plants* – stems, skins, seeds, etc.;
- *knowledge about science* – how plants, animals and people grow;
- *knowledge about math* – counting, measuring, etc.; and
- *knowledge about language and literacy* – describing characteristics of fruits and vegetables, reading stories about food, etc.

Adapted from *Making Food Healthy & Safe for Children: How to Meet the National Health and Safety Performance Standards – Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs*. National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health, 1997.

Food preparation is better suited to small groups of children rather than an entire class. Teachers should keep in mind that the *process* is more important than the *product*. While adult supervision is required, children learn more and gain more satisfaction from doing something themselves than from producing a perfect end product.

To ensure learning and fun, food preparation activities must be well planned and match children's abilities and interests. Recipes should be pre-tested; all necessary food and equipment should be assembled; an appropriate time frame should be determined; and safety must be considered. Younger children can scrub, wrap, pour and mix, while older children can measure, cut, grind or beat. For example, a 2-year-old can scrub potatoes and tear lettuce while a 4-year-old can shuck corn, roll dough or cut bananas with a plastic knife. Everyone can work together, but the more difficult tasks should be given to children with the strongest fine- motor skills.

SIX BEST PRACTICES

Nutrition activities should promote positive attitudes about good nutrition and health, provide fun learning experiences, and offer opportunities for putting knowledge into action. Meals and snacks provide opportunities to integrate learning by connecting the classroom to meals served, and opportunities for hands- on practice of food and nutrition principles learned in the classroom. Teachers should incorporate the following strategies, which will be described in detail on subsequent pages:

1. Focus on developmentally appropriate out-comes;
2. Provide hands-on sensory experiences;
3. Integrate nutrition into existing curriculums;
4. Create a learning environment that promotes nutrition;
5. Promote physical activity; and
6. Engage families in healthy nutrition and physical activity practices.

1. Focus On Developmentally Appropriate Outcomes

Instructional Strategies	*Suggested Experiences*
Discuss properties of food (taste, smell, textures, colors, shapes) during mealtime and curricular activities.	• Eat with the children, pointing out different characteristics of foods. Encourage children to describe their food and to talk about what they like best and why.
Help children learn about healthy food choices by using *MyPyramid*.	• Use the terms *everyday foods* (e.g., fruits, vegetables grains, milk) and *sometimes* foods (e.g., cake, candy, cookies), rather than "good" or "bad" foods. Hands-on activities and real foods should be used as much as possible.
Encourage children to try new foods. (Take note of children's food allergies and diet-related issues.)	• Have food-tasting parties to introduce new foods in conjunction with nutrition education activities. • Be a good role model. Children are more likely to try new foods that they see adults eating and enjoying. If a food is rejected, avoid making an issue of it. Simply serve it again later. The more familiar it is, the more easily children will accept it.
Involve children in food preparation.	• Have children choose, wash, prepare and serve food. Children learn more, and are more likely to taste something new, if they are involved in preparation. Helping to prepare foods also can teach other skills like counting, measuring, sorting and following directions. • Try "cup cooking" or "baggie cooking," a fun way for children to make their own snacks, e.g., apple salad or vegetable salad.

2. Provide Hands-On Sensory Experiences

Instructional Strategies	*Suggested Experiences*
Young children learn best through hands-on sensory experiences—tasting, smelling, feeling, seeing and hearing. Provide hands-on experiences that help children learn about foods using their five senses.	• Have a tasting party. Let children choose foods to cook based on shape or color. • Help children compare the taste and texture of raw and cooked fruits or vegetables. • Have children break, snap, tear or chew foods and listen to the sounds. • Have children close their eyes and identify foods by smell, sound or feel. • Have children close their eyes and guess what made the sound – biting an apple, pouring milk. • Have children reach into a "mystery bag" to feel foods of different sizes, shapes and textures. Have them describe what they feel, and identify the food. • Ask children to identify foods by smell. Foods that are easier to identify include onions, garlic or citrus fruit, such as oranges or lemons. • Take field trips to the local grocery store, fish market, bakery or nearby farm to see items before they reach the table. • Sprout seeds or grow vegetables in the classroom. • Identify parts of a fruit, e.g., skin, rind, meat, seeds. • Section fruits, count the parts, and discuss concepts of *whole* and *part*. • Teach about size, smell, shape, color and growth as children "explore a potato." (Sources: National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health, 1997; American Dietetic Association, 1999.)
Coordinate nutrition education activities with the preschool food service program.	• Take children on a "field trip" of the kitchen to learn about preparing healthy meals. • Incorporate multicultural learning experiences with the menu, e.g., children are learning about a country, and ethnic foods are featured on the preschool menus.

3. Integrate Nutrition Into Existing Curriculums

Instructional Strategies	*Suggested Experiences*
Integrate nutrition throughout the preschool curriculum to provide children with daily exposure to nutrition concepts and messages. For example, these suggested experiences show how the important nutrition message, *Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables a day for good health*, can easily be integrated into various subject areas to reinforce the important concepts.	• **Language and Literacy Development** – Read books with fruit and vegetable themes, such as *Eating the Alphabet: Fruits and Vegetables from A to Z,* or *Oliver's Vegetables*. Discuss the colors, shapes, textures and tastes of the different types of fruits and vegetables featured in these books. • **Music** – Sing songs that involve fruits and vegetables, such as "*I like to Eat Apples and Bananas*," or make up your own words to familiar children's tunes. Songs can be sung during any activity, such as cooking with the kids, working on arts and crafts projects, or washing hands before meals. • **Mathematics** – Have children track how many servings of fruits and vegetables they eat for two days by placing stickers on a class chart. Count the number of fruits and vegetables. Have children determine which fruits and vegetables are eaten most often. • **Science** – Plant bean seeds in a shallow pan. Tape a number to a penny and place over each seed. Ask children, "What do you think might happen? Why do you think that?" (Sources: Ehlert, 1989; Hall, 1983; Palmer and Edmonds,

4. Create A Learning Environment That Promotes Nutrition

Consider all the ways in which young children learn about food and nutrition: through the physical environment (play areas, toys, books, games, etc.); adult role modeling; the preschool menu (breakfast, lunch and snack); and food served for holidays, parties and other celebrations. Teachers should integrate all of these as they plan nutrition education.

Meals and snacks provide opportunities for hands-on practice of food and nutrition concepts learned in the classroom and make a statement about what is appropriate to eat. Foods served for meals and snacks, at parties and on holidays, and foods entering the program from home, all provide nutrition messages. These choices can either broaden or limit children's choices about foods and healthy eating. At a minimum, all meals and snacks should meet the requirements of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and follow the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (USDA, 2005).

Because children learn not only from teachers and books, but also from their experiences at meals, snacks and parties, early childhood programs should have policies regarding food that is offered to children in the preschool environment. These policies should follow the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (USDA, 2005), and encourage children to eat foods of high-nutrient density (containing a variety of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients) that encompasses a variety of choices from *MyPyramid* (USDA, 2005). The following guidelines should be considered:

- restrict foods of minimal nutritional value, such as candy, gum and soft drinks;
- limit foods high in sugar, such as highly presweetened cereals;
- limit foods high in fat, saturated fat and sodium, such as cakes, cookies, doughnuts, chips and processed foods;

- increase intake of foods high in fiber, such as vegetables, fruits and whole-grain products;
- increase intake of foods and beverages that are good calcium sources; and
- serve 100 percent juices instead of fruit drinks, punches and lemonade.

Early childhood programs also should develop nonfood-related strategies to reward and discipline children. Using food as a punishment (e.g., withholding dessert) or reward (e.g., handing out candy to children who do well, or "bribing" children to eat vegetables to get dessert) does not help to promote healthy eating habits. A child who is rewarded or punished with food may overeat or place too much importance on desserts. Desserts should be served casually, as part of the meal. Suggestions for nonfood rewards are found in *Alternatives to Food as Reward* (Connecticut State Department of Education, revised 2007).

Instructional Strategies	***Suggested Experiences***
Create a physical learning environment that promotes nutrition.	• Read books, show videos and play games that portray healthy eating and physical activity. • Include "healthy" toy foods (e.g., fruits, vegetables and grains) in kitchen and housekeeping play areas. • Use pictures and posters that promote positive nutrition.
Reinforce nutrition concepts by modeling good eating practices in the preschool environment.	• Serve meals family-style, and eat with children. • At mealtimes, model appropriate eating patterns and communication skills (e.g., enjoying a variety of foods, being willing to taste new foods, avoiding comments about disliked foods). • Do not use food as reward or punishment.
Broaden children's food experiences by exposing them to multicultural foods.	• Include ethnic foods and cooking utensils (e.g., wok and rice bowls) in the kitchen play area. • Create and sample ethnic foods. • Read stories that include multicultural foods. • Have children draw pictures of their favorite ethnic dishes.
Provide many healthy foods for children to taste in an enjoyable social context.	• Provide foods for parties, holidays and other celebrations that promote and reinforce healthy eating messages. • Provide families with ideas for healthy snacks and party foods. For additional information on healthy parties, holidays and celebrations, see *Healthy Celebrations* (Connecticut State Department of Education, revised 2007).

5. Promote Physical Activity

Young children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily. An important part of good health, physical activity complements good nutrition practices and helps children to maintain a healthy weight. Participating in healthy physical activity is one of the goals of *Connecticut's Preschool Curriculum Framework* (1999). To accomplish this goal, preschool programs should provide opportunities for a wide variety of gross-motor activities that are both child-selected and teacher-initiated. More information can be found in Chapter 9.

6. Engage Families In Healthy Nutrition And Physical Activity

Children's eating habits are strongly influenced by family behaviors and interactions. Preschool programs can improve the success of nutrition education by actively engaging families and providing education, resources and support.

Instructional Strategies	*Suggested Experiences*
Help families understand general child health, nutrition, hygiene and safety.	• Provide basic nutrition, health and safety information in the preschool environment (e.g., posters, bulletin boards and artwork). • Send nutrition information home with children (e.g., handouts, brochures, "Dear Family" letters, articles, newsletters). • Set up a nutrition resource center with materials that families can borrow. • Discuss children's food likes, dislikes, cultural preferences, food allergies and diet-related problems as part of the enrollment process. • Discuss children's eating behaviors at both school and home.
Encourage family/home involvement in preschool nutrition education activities.	• Inform families of daily nutrition education activities. Suggest other simple activities that families can use at home to reinforce key messages. • Ask families to share special food traditions and family recipes for a tasting party or class cooking activity. • Invite families to participate in nutrition education.
Promote family involvement in providing healthy foods at the preschool and at home.	• Display or distribute menus of meals and snacks. • Provide information on the food program, including approaches to feeding children and nutrition policies. • Invite parents to eat lunch with the children. • Provide ideas and recipes for nutritious foods when meals, snacks or party foods are brought from home. • Relate nutrition education activities to healthy recipes for families to try at home. For example, send home child-friendly vegetable recipes when teaching children about vegetables. • Ask parents to send in healthy recipes to compile and share with all families.

Ideal Age For Learning

Good nutrition plays a significant role in maximizing each child's potential for success. Young children are at the ideal age to start learning about healthy eating, and opportunities for nutrition education and physical activity abound in the early childhood classroom. By providing healthy and safe foods daily, a variety of nutrition education activities, and an environment that reinforces positive nutrition messages and active play, preschool programs can encourage young children to develop eating and physical activity habits for a lifetime of good health.

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Resource Library

The Connecticut State Department of Education's, Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education maintains a nutrition resource library to assist in the implementation of all nutrition education activities. Resources include a wide variety of educational materials, such as curriculums, videos, books, audiovisuals, puppets and games. A catalog of materials is available at http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320754#Resources. For more information, contact the Connecticut State Department of Education, at (860) 807-2075.