Early Childhood Education Today

THIRTEENTH EDITION

George S. Morrison

ALWAYS LEARNING

PEARSON

Correlation Matrix of ***NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation*** and Chapter Content of ***Early Childhood Education Today,*** 13th Edition, by George S. Morrison

Standard and Key Elements	Chapter and Topic	
1. Promoting Child Development and Learning 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	All Chapters: Accommodating Diverse Learners 1: Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning 2: Contemporary Issues: Children, Families, and You 2: Voice From The Field: How to Help English Language Learners Succeed: Competency Builder 2: Hot Topics in Early Childhood Education 2: Preventing Violence, Bullying, and Abuse 3: Voice from the Field: How to Evaluate Environments for Young Children 3: Developmentally Appropriate Assessment 3: Selecting Developmentally Appropriate Assessment Practices 3: Figures 3.8 and 3.9 5: Active Learning 5: Zone of Proximal Development 6: Demand for Quality Early Childhood Programs 6: The Montessori Method 6: HighScope: A Constructivist Curriculum 6: Reggio Emilia Approach 6: The Project Approach 7: The World of Child Care	9: What Are Infants and Toddlers Like? 9: Quality Infant and Toddler Programs and Environments 10: School Readiness and Young Children 10: Play and Preschool Children 11: Environments For Kindergarteners 11: What Are Kindergarten Children Like? 12: What Are Children in Grades One to Three Like? 14: Guiding Behavior in a Community of Learners 14: Voice from the Field: How To Guide Children to Help Ensure Their Success: Competency Builder 14: Voice from the Field: Teaching Peace and Conflict Resolution in the Classroom 14: Figure 14.3: Guiding The Whole Child 15: Teaching and Multicultural Infusion 15: Voice from the Field: How To Create Classroom Environments That Support Living and Learning 16: Children with Disabilities 16: Children Who Are Gifted and Talented 16: Children Who Are Abused and Neglected 16: Children Who Are Homeless 17: New Views of Parent/Family Partnerships
2. Building Family and Community Relationships 2a. Knowing about understanding family community characteristics 2b. Supporting and empowering families and community through respectful reciprocal relationships 2c. Involving families and communities in their children's development and learning	1: Standard 2: Building Family and Community Relationships 1: Voice from the Field: Tools for Teaching Tolerance to Young Children 2: Contemporary Issues: Children, Families, and You 2: Providing for Cultural Diversity 6: Providing for Diversity and Disability 7: Types of Child Care Programs 10: Why Are Preschools so Popular? 13: Parents and Technology 15: The Cultures of our Children	15: Multicultural Awareness 15: Foster Multicultural Awareness 15: Implement an Antibias Curriculum and Activities 15: Use Conflict-Resolution Strategies and Promote Peaceful Living 15: Welcome Parent and Community Involvement 17: New Views of Parent/Family Partnerships 17: Changing Families: Changing Involvement 17: Community Involvement 17: Parents, Children, and School Absenteeism
3. Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families 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	1: Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing To Support Children and Families 2: Voice from the Field: How to Help English Language Learners Succeed: Competency Builder 3: What Is Assessment? 3: Classroom Assessment 3: The Power of Observation 3: Assessments for School Readiness 3: What Are Critical Assessment Issues? 6: The Teacher's Role 6: Curriculum and Practices 6. Active Learning 7: Program Accreditation 10: School Readiness and Young Children	10: Early Intervention 11: The Kindergarten Today 11: Retention 11: The Kindergarten Curriculum 12: Common Core State Standards 12: Figure 12.3: The Three Tiers of Continuous Intervention/Instruction 15: Assess Your Attitude Toward Children 15: Select Appropriate Instructional Materials 15: Teaching English Language Learners 16: Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 16: Instructional Strategies for Teaching Children with Disabilities

THIRTEENTH EDITION
GLOBAL EDITION

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TODAY

GEORGE S. MORRISON
University of North Texas

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To

BETTY JANE

whose life is full of grace and who
lives the true meaning of love every day.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

GEORGE S. MORRISON is professor of early childhood education at the University of North Texas where he teaches early childhood education and development to undergraduates and mentors masters and doctoral students. He is an experienced teacher and principal in the public schools.

Professor Morrison's accomplishments include a Distinguished Academic Service Award from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Outstanding Service and Teaching Awards from Florida International University, and the College of Education Faculty Teaching Excellence Award at the University of North Texas. His books include *Early Childhood Education Today*; *Fundamentals of Early Childhood Education,* Seventh Edition; and *Teaching in America,* Fifth Edition. Professor Morrison has also written books about the education and development of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers; child development; the contemporary curriculum; and parent/family/community involvement.

Dr. Morrison is a popular author, speaker, and presenter. He is Senior Contributing Editor for the *Public School Montessorian.* His research and presentations focus on the globalization of early childhood education, the influence of contemporary educational reforms on education, and the application of best practices to early childhood education. Professor Morrison also lectures and gives keynote addresses on early childhood education and development in Thailand, Taiwan, China, South Korea, and the Philippines.

Professor Morrison with mentor teacher Wendy Schwind, intern Meagan Brewer, and children at Caprock Elementary, Keller (TX) ISD. Professor Morrison regularly supervises student interns from the University of North Texas and participates in various school-based activities.

PREFACE

Changes are sweeping across the early childhood landscape, transforming our profession before our eyes! These changes create exciting possibilities for you and all early childhood professionals. We discuss these changes in every chapter of *Early Childhood Education Today*, which is designed to keep you current and on the cutting edge of early childhood teaching practice.

Changes in early childhood education and development bring both opportunities and challenges. Opportunities are endless for you to participate in the ongoing re-creation of the early childhood profession. In fact, creating and re-creating the early childhood profession is one of your constant professional roles. This means you have to create and constantly re-create *yourself* as an early childhood professional. *Early Childhood Education Today* helps you achieve this professional goal. The challenges involved in reforming the profession include collaboration, hard work, and constant dedication to achieving high-quality education for *all* children. I hope you will take full advantage of these opportunities to help all children learn the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in school and life. I believe how you and I respond to the opportunities we have in front of us today will determine the future of early childhood education. This text helps you learn what it takes to understand and teach young children and how to provide them the support they and their families need and deserve.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

In the thirteenth edition, you can expect the following:

- Increased focus on *practical and applicable content,* which provides you with instructional practices you can take into the classroom. Every chapter specifically outlines and identifies through *Implications for Teaching* headings what teachers can do in their classrooms to help children learn and grow.
- Seven new *Voice from the Field* and *Voice from the Field: Competency Builder* features.
- A refocused emphasis on the *professional goals and responsibilities* of early childhood teachers today. Every chapter focuses on the *contemporary societal and educational issues* that influence what teachers teach and how they teach and the professional practices teachers need to be successful.
- An expanded discussion of *teaching with standards*, including state standards, Common Core State Standards, and professional organization standards. Teaching today is truly standard-based, and this new edition provides you with an understanding of how important standards are in today's classroom.
- An increased emphasis on how teachers can incorporate *culturally appropriate and respectful practices* into their teaching and learning.
- An expanded discussion of the integration of *technology* through teaching and learning. This expanded discussion is demonstrated by more examples of how teachers use technology to teach and by a new 5E lesson plan specifically designed around teaching with technology.

- An expanded discussion with many examples of the teacher's role in observation and assessment of children's learning and how to use observation and *assessment* to enhance instructional practices.
- New *Ethical Dilemmas* at the end of the chapters which involve you in issues and dilemmas from contemporary classrooms.

THEMES OF THIS BOOK

Early Childhood Education Today, Thirteenth Edition, integrates thirteen critical themes that are foundational to the field today.

1. The importance of *children's literacy development*. As more school districts move toward complying with legislation that requires children to read on grade level by grade 3, you must know how to promote children's reading achievement so that all children can learn and be successful.
2. The growing number of *diverse children* in America's classrooms today and implications of this demographic shift for your teaching and learning.
3. The importance of *developmentally appropriate practices (DAP)* and the application of these practices to all aspects of early childhood programs and classroom activities. With today's emphasis on academic achievement, this text anchors your professional practice in DAP, beginning in Chapter 1.
4. The effects of the Great Recession on children and their families. More children and families have slipped below the *poverty* line. Many of your children will come to school unprepared to meet the challenges of preschool or kindergarten. This text helps you educate all children and close the achievement gaps that exist between children in poverty and their more economically advantaged peers.
5. The integration of the fields of *special education* and early childhood education. Increasingly, special education practices are influencing early childhood practices. This text helps you understand the integration of the two fields and how this integration provides enhanced opportunities for you and the children you teach.
6. The *inclusive classroom* movement. You will teach in an inclusive classroom. This text prepares you to be an inclusive teacher of all young children regardless of disability, in the least restrictive environment possible.
7. *School readiness*. How to help families get their children ready for school and how to promote children's school readiness is at the forefront of issues facing society today. This text provides you with helpful information, ideas, and strategies that enable you to close the readiness gaps that exist across ethnic, gender, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
8. The emphasis on *teacher accountability for student achievement*. Today, early childhood teachers—indeed, all teachers—are accountable for how, what, and to what extent children learn. This text helps you meet this challenge confidently and boldly; it provides you with step-by-step strategies for helping all children learn in developmentally appropriate ways.
9. The integration of *STEM* (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) subjects into the curriculum. STEM subjects are considered to be of great importance by the nation's business leaders and constitute the foundation for providing a well-trained and educated workforce.
10. A renewed emphasis on providing for *children's mental health*. With the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School and other violent tragedies around the nation, society is demanding that the nation's schools provide for children's healthy social and emotional development.

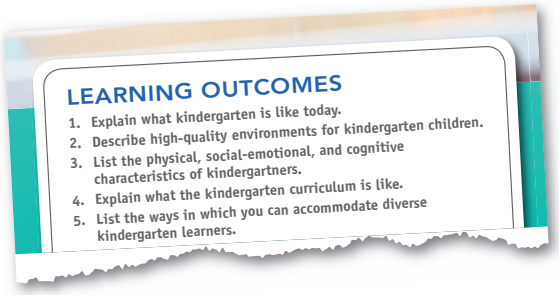
11. The use of *technology* to support children's learning. Contemporary teachers are savvy users of technology to promote children's learning and their own professional development. This text helps you gain the technological skills you need to teach in today's classroom. Practicing teachers provide you practical technological examples for how to use technology to support teaching and learning in *Voices from the Field* as well as in Chapter 13.
12. *Ongoing professional development*. As an early childhood professional, you will be constantly challenged to create and re-create yourself as society and professional practices change. *Early Childhood Education Today* helps you be the professional you need to be by explaining the competencies you'll need in the classroom today. See Seventeen Competencies for Becoming a Professional in Chapter 1 (Figure 1.6), which can guide your development.
13. *Guiding children's behavior* and promoting children's ability to be responsible for their own behavior.

TEXT FEATURES

The thirteenth edition of *Early Childhood Education Today* includes numerous features designed to illustrate developmentally appropriate practice and provide a framework for you to reflect on and apply the chapter content. Here are a few things to look for:

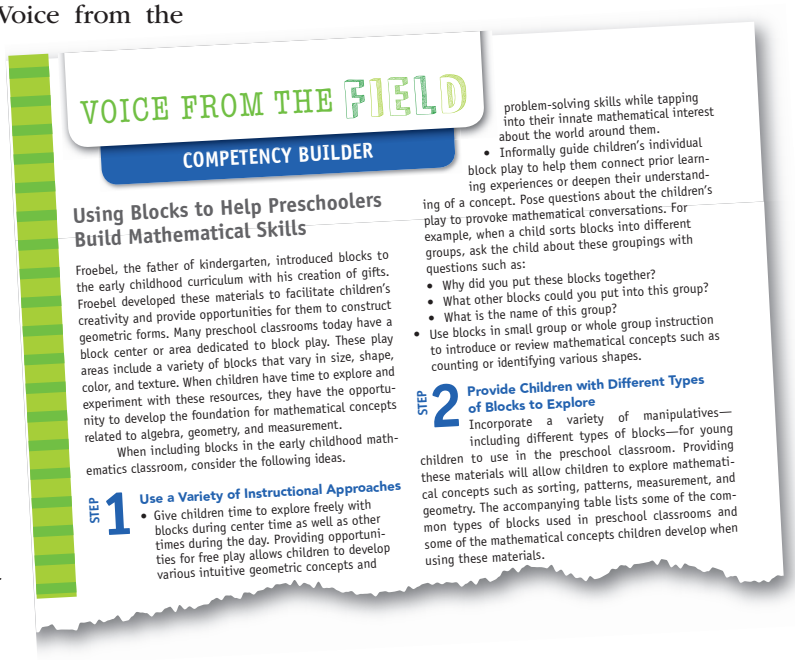
A new modular chapter organization built around critical learning outcomes and aligned to professional standards

- **NEW CHAPTER-OPENING LEARNING OUTCOMES.** Clarifying exactly what you will learn in the chapter, these learning outcomes align with the major text sections of the chapter.



Features contributed by early childhood educators that demonstrate authentic developmentally appropriate practices from around the country

- **VOICE FROM THE FIELD.** Teachers' authentic voices play a major role in illustrating authentic practices. Voice from the Field features enable practicing teachers to explain to you their philosophies, beliefs, and program practices. These teachers mentor you as they relate how they practice early childhood education. Among the contributors are professionals who are Teachers of the Year, have received prestigious awards, and have national board certification.
- **VOICE FROM THE FIELD: COMPETENCY BUILDER.** The Voice from the Field features that are labeled as Competency Builders are designed to build your competence and confidence in performing essential teaching tasks, step by step.


VOICE FROM THE FIELD

COMPETENCY BUILDER

Using Blocks to Help Preschoolers Build Mathematical Skills

Froebel, the father of kindergarten, introduced blocks to the early childhood curriculum with his creation of gifts. Froebel developed these materials to facilitate children's creativity and provide opportunities for them to construct geometric forms. Many preschool classrooms today have a block center or area dedicated to block play. These play areas include a variety of blocks that vary in size, shape, color, and texture. When children have time to explore and experiment with these resources, they have the opportunity to develop the foundation for mathematical concepts related to algebra, geometry, and measurement.

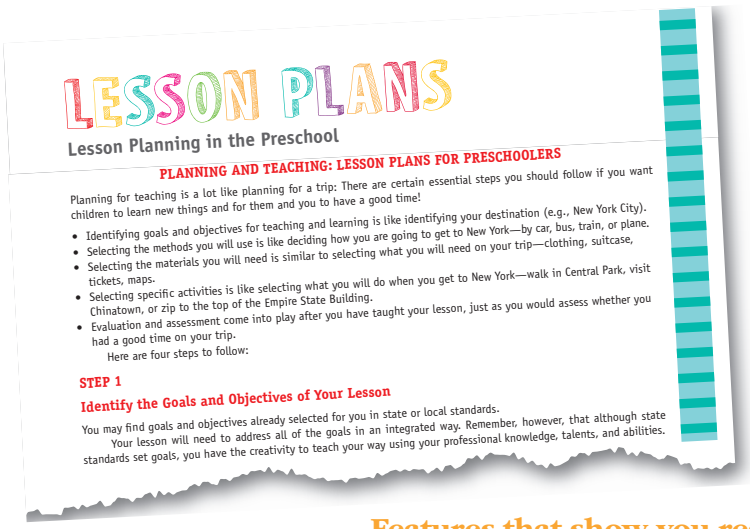
When including blocks in the early childhood mathematics classroom, consider the following ideas.

STEP 1 Use a Variety of Instructional Approaches

- Give children time to explore freely with blocks during center time as well as other times during the day. Providing opportunities for free play allows children to develop various intuitive geometric concepts and problem-solving skills while tapping into their innate mathematical interest about the world around them.
- Informally guide children's individual block play to help them connect prior learning experiences or deepen their understanding of a concept. Pose questions about the children's play to provoke mathematical conversations. For example, when a child sorts blocks into different groups, ask the child about these groupings with questions such as:
  - Why did you put these blocks together?
  - What other blocks could you put into this group?
  - What is the name of this group?
- Use blocks in small group or whole group instruction to introduce or review mathematical concepts such as counting or identifying various shapes.

STEP 2 Provide Children with Different Types of Blocks to Explore

Incorporate a variety of manipulatives—including different types of blocks—for young children to use in the preschool classroom. Providing these materials will allow children to explore mathematical concepts such as sorting, patterns, measurement, and geometry. The accompanying table lists some of the common types of blocks used in preschool classrooms and some of the mathematical concepts children develop when using these materials.



LESSON PLANS

Lesson Planning in the Preschool

PLANNING AND TEACHING: LESSON PLANS FOR PRESCHOOLERS

Planning for teaching is a lot like planning for a trip: There are certain essential steps you should follow if you want children to learn new things and for them and you to have a good time!

- Identifying goals and objectives for teaching and learning is like identifying your destination (e.g., New York City).
- Selecting the methods you will use is like deciding how you are going to get to New York—by car, bus, train, or plane.
- Selecting the materials you will need is similar to selecting what you will need on your trip—clothing, suitcase, tickets, maps.
- Selecting specific activities is like selecting what you will do when you get to New York—walk in Central Park, visit Chinatown, or zip to the top of the Empire State Building.
- Evaluation and assessment come into play after you have taught your lesson, just as you would assess whether you had a good time on your trip.

Here are four steps to follow:

STEP 1

Identify the Goals and Objectives of Your Lesson

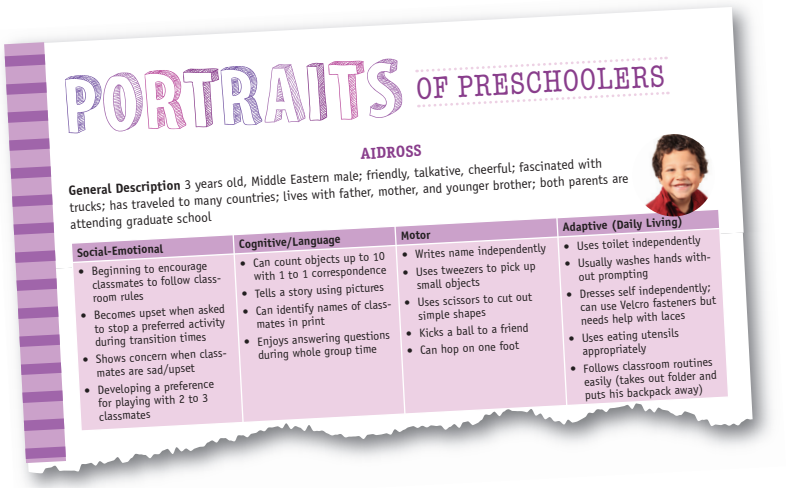
You may find goals and objectives already selected for you in state or local standards.

Your lesson will need to address all of the goals in an integrated way. Remember, however, that although state standards set goals, you have the creativity to teach your way using your professional knowledge, talents, and abilities.

- **LESSON PLANS.** Planning for teaching and learning constitutes an important dimension of your role as a professional. This is especially true today, with the emphasis on ensuring that children learn what is mandated by state standards. The lesson plans in this text, found in chapters 9–13, follow the 5E Model (engage, explore, explain, extend, and evaluate). They enable you to look over the shoulder of experienced teachers and observe how they plans for instruction. These award-winning teachers share with you plans to ensure that their children learn important knowledge and skills.

Features that show you real children and early childhood settings in action.

- **NEW VIDEO EXAMPLES.** In each chapter at least one video is included that illustrates text concepts and provides a window into the real world of teaching young children.



PORTRAITS OF PRESCHOOLERS

AIDROSS

General Description 3 years old, Middle Eastern male; friendly, talkative, cheerful; fascinated with trucks; has traveled to many countries; lives with father, mother, and younger brother; both parents are attending graduate school

Social-Emotional	Cognitive/Language	Motor	Adaptive (Daily Living)
• Beginning to encourage classmates to follow classroom rules • Becomes upset when asked to stop a preferred activity during transition times • Shows concern when classmates are sad/upset • Developing a preference for playing with 2 to 3 classmates	• Can count objects up to 10 with 1 to 1 correspondence • Tells a story using pictures • Can identify names of classmates in print • Enjoys answering questions during whole group time	• Writes name independently • Uses tweezers to pick up small objects • Uses scissors to cut out simple shapes • Kicks a ball to a friend • Can hop on one foot	• Uses toilet independently • Usually washes hands without prompting • Dresses self independently; can use Velcro fasteners but needs help with laces • Uses eating utensils appropriately • Follows classroom routines easily (takes out folder and puts his backpack away)

- **PORTRAITS OF CHILDREN.** In a text about children, it is sometimes easy to think about them in the abstract. The Portraits of Children found in Chapters 9 through 12 are designed to ensure that you consider children as individuals as we discuss how to teach them. The features present authentic portraits of real children from all cultures and backgrounds, enrolled in real child care, preschool, and primary-grade programs across the United States. Each portrait includes developmental information across four domains: social-emotional, cognitive, motor, and adaptive (daily living). Accompanying questions challenge you to think and reflect about how you would provide for these children's educational and social needs if they were in your classroom.

Chapter-ending *Activities for Professional Development.*

- **ETHICAL DILEMMAS.** As an early childhood professional you will inevitably face difficult choices in your career that require you to have a solid understanding of ethical responsibility and best practices. To that end, each chapter includes an ethical dilemma based on facts, current issues, and real-life situations faced by early childhood professionals today. They present difficult decisions early childhood professionals have to make. These ethical dilemmas help you build a better understanding of what it means to think like a professional and to respond appropriately in complicated and potentially compromising situations.

- **ACTIVITIES TO APPLY WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED.** Here we revisit the chapter-opening learning outcomes and provide one activity per learning outcome to help you assess your content knowledge and/or apply your understanding of that content. For each set of questions, one has been labeled a "key assessment," meaning that it is designed around a critical concept in the chapter. For these assessments, a rubric is provided to help guide your work (and to help your instructor evaluate it).
- **GLOSSARY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS.** Keeping track of important key terms is a problem often associated with reading and studying. Key terms and concepts are defined in the text as they are presented and are also placed in page margins. In this way, you have immediate access to them for reflection and review, and they maximize your study time by helping you retain essential knowledge. A glossary of terms at the end of the book incorporates all of the definitions and terms found in the margin notes, providing a quick reference for study and reflection.

SUPPLEMENTS TO THE TEXT

The supplements for the thirteenth edition are revised, upgraded, and available for instructors to download on www.pearsonglobaleditions.com/Morrison. Instructors enter the author or title of this book, select this particular edition of the book, and then click on the "Resources" tab to log in and download textbook supplements.

INSTRUCTOR'S RESOURCE MANUAL This manual contains chapter overviews and activity ideas to enhance chapter concepts.

TEST BANK The Test Bank includes a variety of test items, including multiple choice, true/false, and short answer items.

TESTGEN COMPUTERIZED TEST BANK TestGen is a powerful assessment generation program available exclusively from Pearson that helps instructors easily create quizzes and exams. You install TestGen on your personal computer (Windows or Macintosh) and create your own exams for print or online use. It contains a set of test items organized by chapter, based on this textbook's contents. The items are the same as those in the Test Bank. The tests can be downloaded in a variety of learning management system formats.

POWERPOINT SLIDES PowerPoint slides highlight key concepts and strategies in each chapter and enhance lectures and discussions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the course of my teaching, service, consulting, and writing, I meet and talk with many early childhood professionals who are deeply dedicated to doing their best for young children and their families. I am always touched, heartened, and encouraged by the openness, honesty, and unselfish sharing of ideas that characterize my professional colleagues. I thank all the individuals who contributed to the Voice from the Field features and other program descriptions. They are all credited for sharing their personal accounts of their lives, their children's lives, and their programs.

I am blessed to work with my colleagues at Pearson. My editor, Julie Peters, is bright, savvy, and always relentless in her efforts to make *Early Childhood Education*

Today the best. Julie continues to be a constant source of creative and exciting ideas. Development Editor Christie Robb is a pleasure to work with. Christie is focused on providing a high-quality textbook for the early childhood profession. For every step in the writing, editing, and publishing process, Christie centered our attention on getting the job done. Project Managers Laura Messerly and Angela Williams Urquhart (Thistle Hill Publishing Services) are very attentive to detail and make sure every part of the production process is done right and that we meet all production deadlines.

I want to especially thank my outstanding student assistant Cassandra Cardwell. Cassie participated in the revision of *Early Childhood Education Today*, Thirteenth Edition, from the beginning and has been indispensable in assisting with the research and the many details necessary to publish a high-quality textbook. Cassie brought her outstanding organizational skills, intellect, and professionalism to the revision process. I am grateful and thankful to her for this. I would also like to thank student researchers Dylan Lee, Jerrica Anderson, and Amanda Bower for their help and support.

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**Voice from the Field:* Competency Builders *outline specific steps, strategies, or guidelines to guide early childhood professionals as they develop competencies or skills in these areas.*

THIRTEENTH EDITION
GLOBAL EDITION

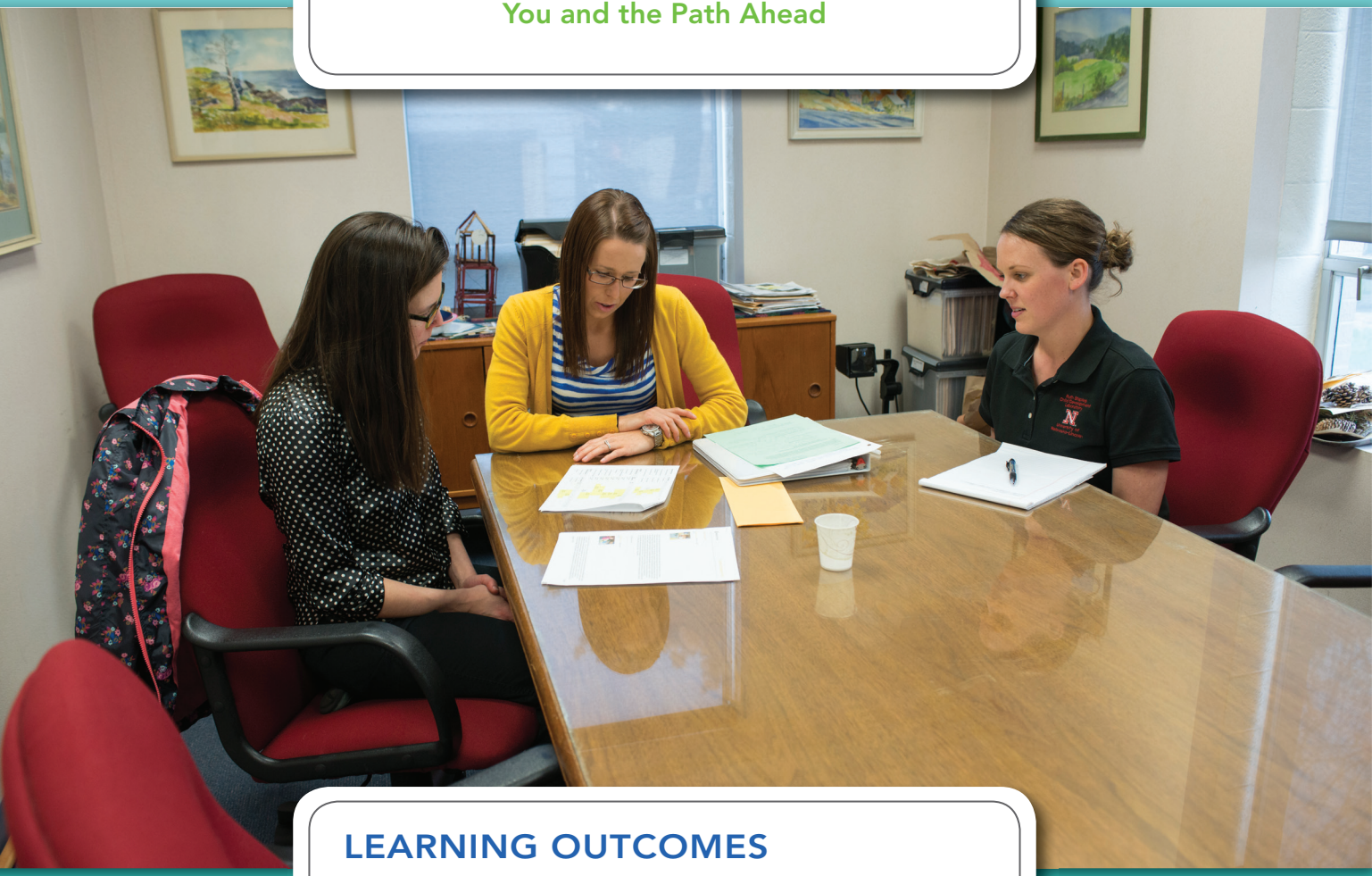
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION TODAY

CHAPTER

1

BEING an EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR

You and the Path Ahead



LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Discuss how the early childhood profession is changing.
2. Explain who an early childhood professional is.
3. List the six standards for being an early childhood education (ECE) professional.
4. Explain how to apply developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) to your professional practice.
5. Describe how you can prepare for a career in early childhood education.
6. Explain what a philosophy of education is and how you can develop your philosophy and apply it in your professional practice.
7. Explain your understanding of what roles are expected of you as an inclusive early childhood professional.

EVER since she was in high school, Renee Comacho wanted to teach young children. Not just any children, but children with disabilities. During her junior year, Renee joined a summer volunteer intern program at her local child care center that had five children with disabilities. She really enjoyed working with them! That experience got her hooked on early childhood special education! Today, Renee teaches K–3 in a public early childhood center of two hundred children that includes children with many kinds of disabilities. Renee is working on her master's degree and wants to earn National Board Certification as an exceptional needs specialist. Renee works with teams of teachers and they are always learning how to accommodate lessons and activities to assure that they are meeting the needs of all children—especially those with disabilities. At the beginning of this school year, they all participated in training about how to accommodate the curriculum and classroom environments to support learning. They also learned how to involve families of children with disabilities. Renee and her colleagues have high expectations for all the children, so they want to make sure they do the best they can for them. As you can tell, Renee is excited about teaching and wants the best for her children. I hope you feel the same way!

NAEYC STANDARDS

CHANGES IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSION

This is a wonderful time to be a member of the early childhood education profession. The field of **early childhood education**, which includes knowledge of how children from birth to age eight grow, develop, and learn, has changed more in the last ten years than in the previous fifty years, and more changes are on the way! Why is early childhood education undergoing dramatic transformation and reform?

CHANGES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. First, there is a tremendous increase in scientific knowledge about how young children grow, develop, and learn. This new knowledge helps parents and teachers view young children as being extremely capable and naturally eager to learn at very young ages. Second, all across the United States, educators have developed research-based programs and curricula that enable children to learn literally from the beginning of life. Third, influential research, such as the HighScope Perry Preschool Project, validates the fact that high-quality education in the early years has positive and lasting benefits for children throughout their lives.[1] Additional research from the Abecedarian Project and the Chicago Parent-Child Centers (CPCs) demonstrate the long- and short-term benefits of quality early education and child care, particularly for children who come from low-income families.[2] The way children are reared and educated in the early formative years makes a significant difference in the way they develop and learn. When families, teachers, and other caring adults get it right from the start of children's lives, all of society reaps big dividends. Fourth, more than 75 percent of all four-year-olds attend some kind of preschool program, and more than 1.3 million children attend state-funded preschool education.[3] The demand for teachers for these children, as well as ongoing public and professional interest, will continue to focus attention on the early years and the importance they play in lifelong education. Finally, politicians are rediscovering young children. During the Great Recession of 2007–2010 and the years following, politicians either eliminated or reduced funding for preschool programs. Now, thanks in part to President Obama's call for universal preschool in his 2013 State

early childhood education The growth, development, and education of children birth through age eight.

of the Union Address, all seems to be changing, with more states joining the federal government in allocating more funding for preschools.

As a result of all these changes, the field of early childhood education is entering a new era, which requires well-educated early childhood professionals who are up-to-date on current methods, who are willing to develop new and improved programs for children and families, and who will advocate for best practices for all young children. Ongoing change and how you can respond to it is one of the themes of the early childhood profession and this book.

WHO IS AN EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONAL?

Like Renee, you are preparing to be a highly qualified and effective early childhood professional, who teaches children from birth to age eight. You are going to work with families and the community to bring high-quality education and services to all children. How would you explain the term *early childhood professional* to others? What does *professional* mean?

Early childhood professionals promote child development and learning; build family and community relationships; observe, document, and assess to support young children and families; promote positive teaching and learning for young children; and identify with and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession.

early childhood professional An educator who successfully teaches all children, promotes high personal standards, and continually expands his or her skills and knowledge.

You are preparing to be an **early childhood professional**—that is, a person who successfully teaches all children (birth to age eight), promotes high personal and professional standards, and continually expands your skills and knowledge. You will teach all children and develop supportive relationships with them to help ensure that each child can achieve and be successful. For example, National Teacher of the Year Rebecca Mieliwoki promotes high-quality teaching based on her belief that students learn best when they have the most enthusiastic, engaged teachers possible.[4]

Professionals promote high standards for themselves, their colleagues, and their students. They are multidimensional people who use their many talents to enrich the lives of children and families.

Early childhood professionals constantly change in response to new jobs created by the expanding field of early childhood education. They continually improve their skills and knowledge. You can expect that you will participate in many professional development activities, will be constantly involved in new programs and practices, and will have opportunities to engage in new and different roles as a professional.

THE SIX STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Being a professional goes beyond academic degrees and experiences. High-quality professionalism in early childhood education has six integrated standards, all of which are important and necessary dimensions of your professional experience. These are located at the beginning of each chapter. Figure 1.1, "The Six NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Practice," shows how each of these standards plays a powerful role in determining who and what a professional is and how professionals implement practice in early childhood classrooms. Let's review each of these standards and see how you can apply them to your professional practice. In the **video**, George S. Morrison, EdD, Professor of Early Childhood Education at the University of North Texas, discusses the NAEYC Professional Development Standards. Professor Morrison clearly identifies how and why these standards are important for your professional development. As you observe, make sure that you clearly understand each standard and how you can begin to apply them to your ongoing professional development.

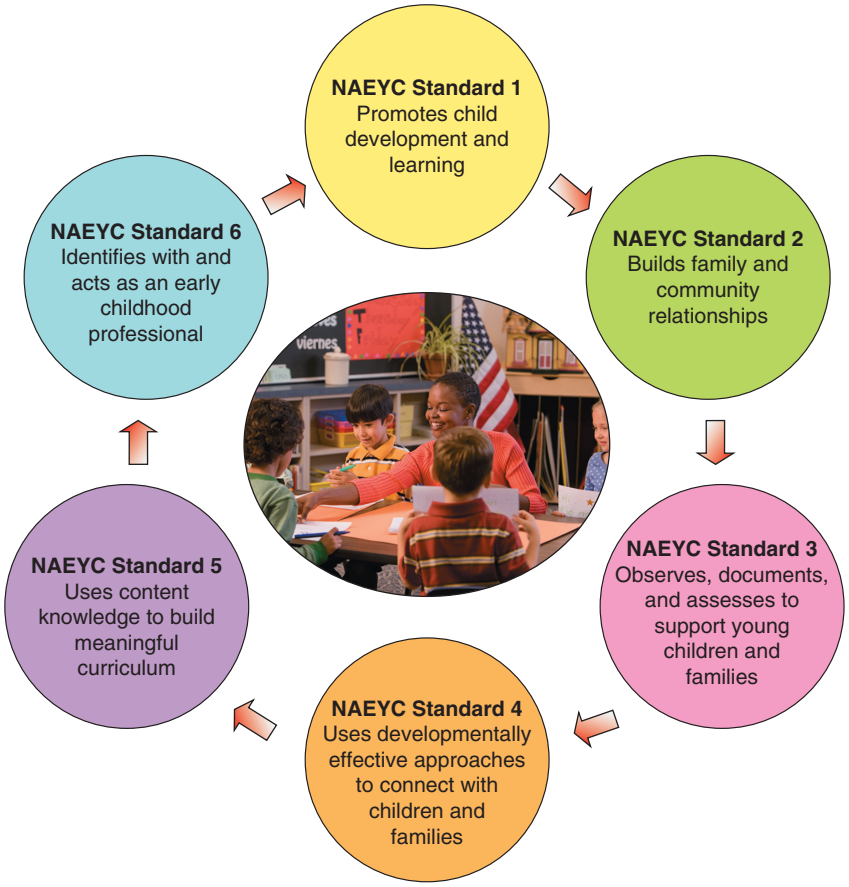


FIGURE 1.1 | Six NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs

These standards of professional preparation provide guidelines for what you should know and be able to do in your lifelong career as an early childhood professional.

Source: National Association for the Education of Young Children, NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs, July 2009.

STANDARD 1: PROMOTING CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

CHILD DEVELOPMENT. As an early childhood professional you will need to understand child development and learning and how to promote them. **Child development** is the stages of physical, social, mental, and linguistic growth that occur from birth through age eight. Learning how to do this includes knowledge and understanding of young children's characteristics and needs and the multiple influences on children's development and learning.

child development
The stages of physical, social, mental, and linguistic growth that occur from birth through age eight years.

Knowledge of child development is fundamental for all early childhood educators regardless of their roles or the ages of the children they teach. It enables an educator to confidently implement developmentally appropriate practices with all children. All early childhood professionals "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 to use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning."[5]

Teacher of the Year Tina Repetti-Renzullo believes that teaching should take on many forms to meet the unique needs and learning styles of each individual. She believes that this is not an easy task, but it is the core of her responsibility as a teacher. Her classroom is a lively space where students are encouraged to access the content by employing their bodies and brains. In teaching students the letters and sounds of the alphabet, Tina uses tactile manipulatives, poetry, visual cues, song, dance, puppetry, and home language as much as possible in order to engage their cognitive processes.[6]

MULTIPLE INFLUENCES AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT. Young children are shaped by multiple influences that determine their life outcomes:

culture A group's way of life, including basic values, beliefs, religion, language, clothing, food, and various practices.

- ***Children's culture.*** **Culture** is a group's way of life, including basic values, beliefs, religion, language, clothing, food, and various practices. Culture determines the foods children eat, the kind of care they receive or do not receive from their parents, and helps determine how they view and react to the world.
- ***Language.*** Quite often in immigrant families, the burden of helping the non-English-speaking family members communicate falls on the child. Children often act as interpreters for their families and have to learn to communicate as a survival skill.
- ***Social relationships.*** Getting along with one's peers and significant adults, such as teachers, is as important a skill as learning to read and write. Unfortunately, many young children don't have the parental guidance and support they need to learn the social skills necessary for peaceful and harmonious living.
- ***Children's and families' socioeconomic conditions.*** Children in poverty represent 24 percent of the total population.[7] Research clearly shows that children in poverty do not do well in school and life. This means that you will teach children in poverty, and as a professional you will be responsible for their learning, growth, and development.
- ***Children with disabilities.*** It is estimated that 13 percent of all children in public schools have a disability of some kind.[8] There is every reason to believe that this number will increase as methods for diagnoses increase. Children come to child care, preschool, and grades K–3 with many physical, behavioral, and learning disabilities. As an early childhood professional, you will care for and educate children with physical, behavioral, and learning disabilities.

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND SPECIAL EDUCATION AND YOU

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES. As more children with disabilities are included in the regular classroom, early childhood and special education are blending and integrating. For example, kindergarten teacher Julie Sanders has in her classroom a child with autism and a child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). As a result, she applies knowledge of typical and atypical child development. As a teacher of young children, you will more than likely have at least one child with a disability in your classroom. Consequently, it is important that you, like Julie, know the developmental characteristics of children with disabilities as well as typically developing children.

Throughout this text, you will find specific ideas and skills for accommodating children with disabilities.