

Effective Practices in Early Childhood Education

Building a Foundation

Sue Bredekamp



Third Edition

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Early Childhood Education Consultant



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Dedication

To Joe Bredekamp, for a lifetime of love, friendship, wonderful memories, and tolerance of craziness, and to Darby whose unconditional love enriches our lives every day.





About the author

Dr. Sue Bredekamp is an early childhood education specialist from the Washington, D.C., area who serves as a consultant on developmentally appropriate practice, curriculum, teaching, and teacher education for state and national organizations such as NAEYC, Head Start, the Council for Professional Recognition, and Sesame Street. From 1981 to 1998, she was Director of Accreditation and Professional Development for NAEYC where she developed and directed their national accreditation system for early childhood centers and schools. Dr. Bredekamp is the editor of NAEYC's best-selling, highly influential publication, *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*.

Dr. Bredekamp is Chair of the Board of the HighScope Educational Research Foundation. She was a member of the National Research Council's (NRC) Committee on Early Childhood Mathematics, which produced a landmark report, *Mathematics in Early Childhood: Paths toward Excellence and Equity*. Dr. Bredekamp serves on several advisory boards and is a frequent keynote speaker and author of numerous books and articles related to standards for professional practice and teacher education. She has been a visiting lecturer at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia; Monash University in Melbourne; University of Alaska; and University of Hawaii. She holds a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Maryland. The McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National Louis University recognized Dr. Bredekamp with its Visionary Leadership Award in 2014. For 45 years, Dr. Bredekamp has worked for and with young children toward the goal of improving the quality and effectiveness of early childhood education programs.



About the contributor

Dr. Kathleen (Kate) Cranley Gallagher is an educational psychologist and scientist at Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She is a Clinical Associate Professor in the School of Education at UNC, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate early childhood professionals. Dr. Gallagher has herself been an early childhood professional for over 30 years; she has taught in and administered diverse programs for children birth to 8 years of age, with and without disabilities. Dr. Gallagher's publications and applied work focus on developing, implementing and evaluating evidence-based interventions to support social-emotional well-being and development for young children, their families and early childhood professionals. Dr. Gallagher has served on state advisory panels, developing standards and assessments for early childhood education and health and is a founding member of the North Carolina Infant Mental Health Association. She developed *Be Well to Teach Well*, a program designed to support the well-being and of early childhood professionals. Dr. Gallagher is an accomplished teacher and frequently invited speaker nationally, and presented a keynote address at the *International Preschool Teachers' Conference* in Hangzhou, China as a guest of Zhejiang Normal University. She delivered a TEDx talk, entitled, *The Healthy Child: Assembly Required* in which Dr. Gallagher argued that the single most important feat of construction that our society undertakes is the assembly required to build physically, emotionally, cognitively, and socially healthy children. She lives in Carrboro, North Carolina, with her husband, John, and enjoys time with her two adult children, Jack and Bridget.

In the previous editions of this book, I described the challenge of my first day of teaching preschool in a child care center many years ago. It was the hardest job I have ever had, primarily because my bachelor's degree in English did not prepare me for it. I didn't know enough about child development, how and what to teach, how to communicate with families, how to positively guide children's behavior—the list goes on and on. Feeling completely incompetent, I seriously thought about not going back the next day. Then I realized that although I had a choice not to return, the children did not. They deserved a better teacher than I was at that time. As a result, I continued teaching, went back to school, and set out to learn as much as possible about child development and how best to teach young children. And I have been learning ever since. In short, my initial motivation in writing this book was a personal one—to help ensure that new teachers get off to a better start than I did and that the children do, too.

In the decades since I entered the early childhood profession, however, there has been an explosion of new knowledge and research, and a huge increase in public recognition and support for early education. A great many parents, policy makers, and researchers now consider early childhood programs essential for fostering school readiness and long-term success in life. Economists and business leaders consider high-quality child care and early education a necessary investment in the future of our country. Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman believes that investing in early education is a cost-effective strategy that will improve educational and health outcomes, strengthen the economy, help solve America's social problems, and produce a more capable, productive workforce.

But the power of early education depends on the quality of interactions teachers have with children, and the effectiveness of their instructional practices. To achieve their potential, children need and deserve highly competent, well-educated teachers. My goal in writing this book is to help all teachers, whether beginning or continuing their professional journeys, gain access to the exciting new knowledge about child development, engaging and challenging curriculum content, and effective ways of teaching. Today, our profession has a deep responsibility to meet the expectations of families, the general public, and policy makers and to fulfill the promise that has been made to children.

My hope is that every teacher embraces new knowledge as well as the enduring values of early childhood education, and encounters the sheer joy of teaching young children. Every child needs and deserves a highly qualified teacher from day one.



New to This Edition

This is the first edition of *Effective Practices in Early Childhood Education: Building a Foundation* offered in REVEL™.

REVEL™ is Pearson's newest way of delivering our respected content. Fully digital and highly engaging, REVEL offers an immersive learning experience designed for the way today's students read, think, and learn. Enlivening course content with media inter-actives and assessments, REVEL empowers educators to increase engagement with the course, and to better connect with students.

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- **Chapter Quiz** "Demonstrate Your Learning" end-of-chapter multiple-choice questions allow students to check their understanding on chapter concepts.

Additional Significant Changes to this Edition

- A new feature, "Promoting Play," in every chapter addressing a different issue related to supporting children's learning through play or protecting children's right to play. See the Special Features page at the end of the Table of Contents for a list of all of the feature topics by chapter.
- Revised Chapter 3 with examination of current issues such as the Common Core State Standards and accountability through the lens of developmentally appropriate practice.
- New sections on the implications of the Common Core State Standards for curriculum and teaching in preschool through grade 3 in Chapter 10 on planning curriculum, Chapter 11 on assessment, Chapter 12 on language and literacy, and Chapter 13 on mathematics.
- Updated Chapter 1 with discussion of new policy initiatives, changing demographics, new research on the effectiveness of early education, and trends in the field.
- Updated Language Lenses on research-based classroom practices for effectively teaching dual language learners.
- New examples of developmentally appropriate use of digital media with children, teachers, and families throughout the text.
- Reorganized content by moving sections on developmentally appropriate learning environments, materials, and schedule to Chapter 3, Developmentally Appropriate Practice.
- Reorganized Chapter 10, Planning Effective Curriculum, to include discussion of Reggio Emilia.

- Updated research and new examples of effective practices for children with diverse abilities, particularly children with autism spectrum disorder.
- Expanded discussion of current research on brain development and executive function and implications for teaching.
- New artifacts and examples of children’s work, especially from children in the primary grades.



Book Organization Reflects *Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice*

This book is designed to teach the concept of *developmentally appropriate practice* for students because an understanding of its principles is the foundation on which to build early childhood programs and schools for children from birth through age 8. Chapters are organized according to NAEYC’s guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice, which I have coauthored for 30 years.

Part 1, Foundations of Early Childhood Education, describes the current profession and the issues and trends effecting it today (Chapter 1), the rich history from which developmentally appropriate practices evolved (Chapter 2), and an overview of its principles and guidelines, which are described in depth in later chapters (Chapter 3).

Part 2, Dimensions of Developmentally Appropriate Practice, includes chapters describing the key factors teachers must consider as they make professional decisions. Chapter 4 presents an overview of current knowledge about how all children develop and learn. Chapter 5 addresses the unique, individual differences among children, including children with diverse abilities. Chapter 6 discusses the critical role of social, cultural, and linguistic contexts on all children’s development and learning and how teachers must embrace a diverse society to help every child succeed in school and life.

Part 3, Intentional Teaching: How to Teach, describes the role of the teacher in implementing developmentally appropriate practices. Each of the interconnected aspects of the teacher’s role is addressed in separate chapters: building effective partnerships with families (Chapter 7), creating a caring community of learners and guiding young children (Chapter 8); teaching to enhance learning and development (Chapter 9); planning effective curriculum (Chapter 10); and assessing children’s learning and development (Chapter 11).

Part 4, Implementing an Effective Curriculum: What to Teach, describes both *how* and *what to teach* children from birth through age 8 in language, literacy, the arts, mathematics, science, technology, social-emotional development, social studies, physical development, and health. Each chapter demonstrates how the continuum of children’s development determines the appropriateness of curriculum content and intentional, effective teaching strategies for children of different ages.

Early childhood educators join this profession and stay in it because they believe their work can make a difference in the lives of children and their families. But to make a lasting difference, our practices must be effective—they must contribute to children’s learning and development. This book reflects this core goal by building on the basic framework of developmentally appropriate practice while going beyond to emphasize intentional teaching, challenging and interesting curriculum, and evidence-based, effective practices for a new generation of early childhood educators. Each of these key themes is discussed on the following pages.

Intentional Teaching of Young Children

This text builds on the framework of developmentally appropriate practice emphasizing that effective teachers are intentional, thoughtful, and purposeful in everything they do.

Intentional teachers know not only what to do with children but also why they are doing it and can explain the rationale for the decisions they make to other teachers, administrators, and families. To help students understand this concept, **Becoming an Intentional Teacher** features reveal what teachers are thinking in classroom situations, *how* and *why* they select the strategies they do, and challenge students to reflect further on these scenarios.

Becoming an Intentional Teacher Teaching in the “Zone”

Here's What Happened In my kindergarten, we are working on the basic mathematical number operations—adding and subtracting. In our classroom, children work in centers for part of the morning. Through assessments that I do during center time, I learned that Miguel can add two single-digit numbers on his own. I also learned that he is struggling with subtracting single-digit numbers, but is successful when I talk through the subtraction activities with him. I also observed that Miguel is able to subtract more successfully when the problem is applied, such as when he is playing cashier and giving “change” in our Home Improvement Store center. Miguel especially likes to play there because his Dad works in construction. I decided on a three-pronged approach to support his understanding and application of subtraction:

- 1) I set aside 5–10 minutes twice a week to work individually with Miguel. Using manipulatives, including an abacus and small counting trains, Miguel loves trains! During this time, I verbally support Miguel's grouping and counting, using short word problems and number cards.
- 2) I also intentionally join Miguel and other children in the Home Improvement Store at center time. I introduce the concept of “Supply Lists” to the center, using cards with pictures and labels of the different supplies. Children can add nuts, bolts, and tools to their baskets, according to the list, and return (subtract) things they no longer need for their building projects. As Miguel purchases and returns items for his building project, I support and make explicit his adding and subtracting, pointing out to Miguel how successfully he uses math for his project.
- 3) Finally, during the morning math challenge, I pair Miguel with a friend who understands subtraction concepts well, and is very verbal. I have them work together

to solve the problem, explaining each of their steps.

After about two weeks of this more intensive approach, Miguel demonstrates ability to subtract single-digit numbers on his own, and begins to experiment with double-digit numbers. He insists on being the employee at checkout in the Home Improvement Store to showcase his adding and subtracting.

Here's What I Was Thinking As a kindergarten teacher, I know that understanding and applying these foundational mathematical concepts is essential for building children's later competence in math. I also understand that children learn best in the context of supportive relationships, and I structure interactions in my classroom to intentionally support each learner. I do this by: (1) assessing each child's level of independent performance on a skill, (2) assessing each child's level of supported (with help) performance on a skill, and (3) developing lessons that allow a child to practice in their supported level, until the child can do the skill independently. I then set the next higher level of skill as the child's goal skill.

Vygotsky used the term zone of proximal development (ZPD) to describe the child's skill level when supported by an adult or more experienced peer. He believed that by assessing only what a child knows, a teacher does not have information on how to support the child's progress. But by assessing a child's ZPD, I am able to structure for progressive development and learning.

Reflection How did this teacher use assessment to guide her intentional teaching? What other strategies could she have used to teach Miguel in his Zone of Proximal Development?

So we see that in meeting the children, Frida seamlessly draws on her knowledge of child development and learning, as well as her knowledge of them as individuals and members of cultural groups. Precisely because children are so different and their abilities vary so greatly, Frida will need to draw from a wide repertoire of teaching strategies to help them achieve developmentally appropriate goals.

So far we have described the areas of knowledge that teachers consider in making decisions about developmentally appropriate practice—what teachers need to know and think about. Now we turn to the work of the teachers—what do early childhood teachers do? What are the dimensions of practice that describe the teacher's role?

✓ **Check Your Understanding 3.3:** Developmentally Appropriate Decision Making

The Complex Role of the Teacher

According to the NAEYC's (2009) guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice, the complex job of an early childhood teacher has five interrelated dimensions: (1) creating a caring community of learners, (2) teaching to enhance learning and development, (3) planning curriculum to achieve important goals, (4) assessing children's learning and development, and (5) establishing reciprocal relationships with families.

Effective teachers are informed decision makers who adapt for individual differences, including for children with disabilities and special needs. **Check Your Understanding** features engage students in assessing their own learning. Some questions involve critical thinking about a complex teaching situation or issue confronting the early childhood field. These quizzes appear only in REVEL™ and include feedback.

✓ Demonstrate Your Learning

Click here to assess how well you've learned the content in this chapter.

Readings and Websites

Carter, M., & Curtis, D. (2014). *Designs for living and learning: Transforming early childhood environments*. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press.

Copple, C., & Bredekamp, S. (Eds.). (2009). *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs serving children from birth through age 8* (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Epstein, A. S. (2014). *The intentional teacher: Choosing the best strategies for young children's learning* (Rev. ed.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

ASCD Whole Child Initiative

This website provides resources promoting elementary education that supports all areas of children's development and learning.

National Association for the Education of Young Children

NAEYC's website has a special section on resources for developmentally appropriate practice and play, plus copies of all their position statements.

ZERO to THREE—National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families

This website provides resources and practical tips for working with infants, toddlers, and their families.

Intentional teachers must reflect and apply their knowledge using a broad repertoire of effective teaching strategies. **Demonstrate Your Learning** features at the end of each chapter require students to practice these skills. This end-of-chapter quiz appears only in REVEL™ and includes feedback.

Current Research on Effective Practices

In an era of Common Core State Standards and Early Learning standards, accountability, and rapid change in the field, the text makes research understandable and meaningful for students and illustrates the connections between child development, curriculum content, assessment, and intentional teaching.

What Works

Teaching STEM to Dual Language Learners

Consistent attention is paid to research on how dual language learners acquire English and learn to read. At times, there is an assumption that because mathematics is about numbers and quantity, language is less of a barrier. However, mathematics itself is a language, and as we have seen, math talk to what makes its abstract concepts comprehensible for children. Other areas of STEM have their own vocabulary and involve academic language that children do not encounter in everyday interactions. In short, STEM learning presents unique challenges for dual language learners.

Many of the same strategies for teaching dual language learners in general are effective in teaching STEM. For example, games such as a coding motion are useful in helping young children understand basic concepts such as the whole amount or putting together and taking apart. Children reads count or form shapes with their fingers. Teachers can set up an obstacle course for children to use their whole bodies to learn position words such as above, below, between, and through. A strategy for older children is to create a math, science, or technology dictionary of relevant terms. Such a resource engages children in using different ways of representing a concept—in this case, words that can be referred to later.

Another effective strategy is having children talk to one another in pairs or small groups. When children are learning a new language, it is important not to put them on the spot. They shouldn't be expected to respond in front of the whole class. In a small group, it is easier to practice concepts and "errors" are more likely to be viewed as part of the learning process. This is especially important with a topic like math that may have only one correct answer.

Introducing math or science concepts through class can be done effectively using an interactive whiteboard. Then children can be prompted to respond to questions shown on a whiteboard. Not every child will answer correctly, and no one child's response will be singled out.

Another proven strategy when introducing a math or science concept is to explicitly teach it by modeling, supplying the specific name, and having children repeat the word. Also helpful is repeating and using a connected sentence such as the one first

problem solving is playing a larger role in today's curriculum due to the Common Core standards, but word problems complicate the challenge of math instruction for dual language learners. Teachers should avoid tricky word problems that create confusion, such as: "Jonah has 2 cars and 3 trucks, how many vehicles does he have?" Such a question poses a language test rather than a math problem. A related challenge presented by word problems is the culturally implicit knowledge they often require. Solving a problem usually requires that a child understand the situation in which it occurs, whether it's purchasing groceries or driving a car at a certain speed.

Manipulatives are hailed as an excellent tool to teach STEM, and yet many children cannot relate to these toys. Few such toys reflect the racial, cultural, and gender diversity of our classrooms. For example, Legos has introduced some plastic figures portraying people of color as doctors, scientists, engineers, and other STEM occupations. However, most STEM toys still promote stereotypes of only white males in these roles.

What works most effectively are the practices that are developmentally appropriate for all children—hands-on, meaningful experiences coupled with teacher scaffolding, as opposed to worksheets that test what children should have already learned. Dual language learners need to actively "do" science, technology, and engineering tasks—teachers and other children supply the words. And most important of all, teachers need to have high expectations that all children can learn challenging STEM content.

Source: Researcher "10 Tips When Discussing Math with English Language Learners," by B. Austin, 2014, Chicago, *Urban Early Math Collaborative*, retrieved March 17, 2015, from <http://earlymathcollab.com/discussing-math-english-language-learners/>; "10 Tips for More Racial Diversity in STEM Toys" by M. Wessels, 2013, *Scientific American*, *Voices: Exploring and Celebrating Diversity in Science*, retrieved March 8, 2015, from <http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/voices/10-tips-for-more-racial-diversity-in-stem-toys/>; *msc_04_04_ahamilton*, http://www.flickr.com/photos/msc_04_04_ahamilton/.



What Works features present research-based practices in action, including descriptions of demonstrated effective practices such as teaching mathematics to dual language learners, father involvement, and using evidence-based curriculum to narrow the achievement gap.

Lens features present insights on culture, language, and including all children. These features discuss practice through diverse lenses, expanding the sources of information teachers use to make decisions and helping them look at questions or problems from broader perspectives. Widening the lens with which teachers view their practice is a strategy to move beyond the persistent educational tendency to dichotomize difficult or controversial issues into "either/or" choices, and move toward "both/and" thinking.



Including All Children

Developmentally Appropriate Practice and Children with Disabilities

People sometimes wonder if developmentally appropriate practices are effective for children with disabilities. The fact is that the basic elements of developmentally appropriate practice are necessary for inclusion to succeed. Consider the following example:

Isaac is 4 years old and has a diagnosis of autism. He is sitting on a brightly colored carpet square between two of his preschool peers at circle time. His teacher is reading a book the class made called *Friends, Friends, Who Do You See?* It is adapted from *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* (Martin, 1996), but features pictures of the children in the class paired with their names. Isaac loves the book, and reads along with the teacher. As the teacher reads each child's name in the story, he or she stands up and

up from school, his teacher describes how often he used his words and which friends he played with during center time.

By contrast, when children with disabilities are included in programs that are not developmentally appropriate, it becomes difficult for the child with special needs—indeed, for all of the children—to make meaningful progress. Compare this child's experience to Isaac's.

Tara, also a 4-year-old with autism, is sitting next to her teacher at circle time. The teacher is reading from a small-sized book, and many of the children cannot see the pictures very well, including Tara. Circle time has been in progress for over 20 minutes and many of the children are getting restless. Tara begins



Language Lens

Using Technology to Teach Dual Language Learners

With growing numbers of dual and multi-language learners in our classrooms, all teachers need to be prepared to support English language acquisition while also promoting continued home language development. Using technology exponentially increases teachers' options to achieve these goals, as these examples illustrate:

spellings) to help children learn routines and safety precautions. On the Internet she finds images, songs, and stories that accurately depict children's homelands, and uses these to spark conversations among small groups of children. She teaches all the children to use Translate on classroom tablets to aid communication and support burgeoning friendships. The class uses Skype to communicate with children's relatives in other parts of the country or world. Within a few weeks, all the children, including native English speakers, enjoy helping each other explore different languages and learn together.

"I talk at all in her children who own that without isn't develop. She help of a trans-app) to create a narration in both the story with the as an interesting the app to create

Children all over the world speak multiple languages. The opportunity to become bilingual or multilingual awaits every child in America if schools take advantage of young children's inborn ability to learn language and the afford- able, technological resources now available.

Source: *Digital Story Helps Dual Language Learner Connect with Classmates*, by D. Bates, no date, Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, retrieved August 27, 2014, from <http://www.naeyc.org/technology/digital-story-helps-dual-language-learners/>; "Using Technology as a Teaching Tool for Dual Language Learners in Preschool through Grade 2," by K. N. Neneh and F. S. Simon, 2013, *Young Children*, 68(1), 48-52.

Culture Lens

Understanding and Responding to Code Switching

Code switching is the ability to understand and use both the commonly accepted version of English and the home language or dialect. When children are learning a second language, they often code switch, usually beginning a sentence in one language and then switching to the other as in, "I drew a picture de mi madre" or "Mi mamá es dirty." Code switching is not limited to children. In fact, bilingual people of all ages alternate between languages depending on the setting and the topic of conversation. Many bilingual individuals find that they can best express their feelings and personal thoughts in their native language.

In the past, it was assumed that code switching meant that children were confused or incompetent. But now we know that the opposite is true: children are able to separate the languages in their brains and apply the different rules of grammar of each language. Code switching is actually a sign of children's growing communicative competence. They are using all they know to communicate as clearly as they can.

So what should teachers do about code switching? First, they should expect code switching as a normal aspect of dual language learning. The most important thing is not to correct children when they mix languages. Correcting children's language attempts sends a signal that they've done something wrong. They may stop trying to communicate in order to avoid making the "mistake" of code switching.

Instead of focusing on children's "errors," teachers should focus on understanding the child's message. They should view code switching as a strength. As always, teachers should be good language models themselves,

using the same strategies that promote language learning in all children: listening and responding in a meaningful way, using real objects and somewhat cues, intentionally teaching new words, and extending conversations with questions and ideas.

Sometimes bilingual teachers think that they can support dual language learning by alternating languages themselves. Again, the opposite is true: Children's brains will automatically listen and respond to the language they know best and tune out the other one. To promote dual language development, bilingual teachers can read books in each language but should do so at separate times.

Encouraging children to code switch and responding positively honors the language system that they already possess and helps them adapt to different communication requirements in different situations. And it also respects and supports their cultural identity because language and culture are inextricably linked. Teachers should always create a warm, positive classroom climate in which children feel safe to express themselves. Capable code switchers acquire the ability to think about their own use of language, which serves them well in other learning situations and has long-lasting positive effects on language, cognition, and social development.

Source: *Code Switching: Why It Matters and How to Respond*, by National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness, no date, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Head Start, retrieved January 26, 2015, from <http://nclrc.org/what-the-perspectives-on-cultural-linguistic-rt-policies/code-switching.pdf>.

- Current research findings, such as effective strategies for teaching dual language learners or children with autism spectrum disorder, are brought to life and made meaningful by connections to classroom and community examples.
- The terms and definitions used in this text contribute to establishing a shared vocabulary for all of those in and entering the field.
- Approximately 40% of the references are from 2012 and beyond.

Connections between Curriculum and Child Development

Unlike many early childhood texts that focus on child development only, this text shows how child development and curriculum content knowledge are connected.

In the **Developmental Continuum** feature, the text provides an overview of the continuum of learning in the areas of language, literacy, mathematics, and cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development and describes how child development is linked to curriculum planning for children from birth through age 8.

Developmental Continuum Oral Language	
Age of Child	Developmental Expectations
Birth to about 8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Communicate through behaviors rather than words; signal distress by crying. Caregivers need to interpret babies' sounds and gestures.Smile or vocalize if they want someone to pay attention or play.Begin vocalizing vowel sounds called <i>cooing</i>. Soon after, they begin to <i>babble</i>, producing consonant/vowel sounds such as "ba."Continue to babble using all kinds of sounds and will play with sounds when alone.Begin to understand familiar names such as those of siblings or pets.Laugh and appear to listen to conversations.
Between 8 and 18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Become more purposeful in their communications.Use facial expressions, gestures, and sounds to get their needs met. (If a bottle falls from a high chair tray, instead of just crying, the 14-month-old may grunt and wave at the floor.)Understand many more words than they can say.Speak in long, babbling sentences that mirror the cadence of conventional speech.Soon start to shake their head "no" and begin to use the word <i>me</i>.Usually crack the language code and begin to use their first words between 12 and 18 months.
From 18 to 24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Experience a burst in vocabulary and begin to combine words into two-word utterances called <i>telegraphic speech</i>. Like old-fashioned telegrams, they waste no words in communicating their message: "No nap."
Ages 2 to 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Progress from using two-word combinations (my truck) to three- and four-word sentences with words in the correct order more often (Where's my truck?).Speaking vocabulary may reach 200 words.Use adjectives and adverbs. (Give me my blue truck now.)Most children's speech becomes more understandable. Constantly ask, "Wassat?" as they seem to want to name everything.
Ages 3 to 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Have a vocabulary of about 1,000 words.Although some may still have difficulty, most are better able to articulate some of the more difficult sounds, like <i>a, th, c, z</i>, and <i>f</i>.Can initiate and engage in more complex conversations.Use 1,500 to 2,000 words as vocabulary expands rapidly during kindergarten.Usually speak clearly and are lively conversation partners with adults and other children.
The primary grades	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Language development continues at a rapid pace.During these years, children need a large vocabulary to learn to read and to comprehend what they read. Explicit teaching of vocabulary needs to be an instructional goal.At the same time, the more children read, the more words they learn because the language of books is more elaborate than everyday conversation. Some researchers estimate that children need to learn 3,000 words a year throughout the elementary school years.

Sources: Based on *Assessing and Guiding Young Children's Development and Learning*, 6th edition, by O. McAfee, D. Leong, and E. Bodrow, 2013, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson; *Learning Language and Loving It: A Guide to Promoting Children's Social, Language, and Literacy Development in Early Childhood Settings*, 2nd edition, by E. Weitzman and J. Greenberg, 2002, Toronto: The Hanen Centre.

- Chapters 12 to 15 help early childhood teachers understand right from the start that there is content in the curriculum for young children. They describe the goals for young children's learning and development that predict success in school and life. Each of these chapters includes examples of effective strategies such as teaching children of diverse abilities in inclusive classrooms or ways to promote dual language learning.



Promoting Play

Addressing Threats to Children's Play

Pediatricians and psychologists agree that too many children today experience high levels of unrelenting stress. Factors such as poverty and violence are the primary sources, but stress affects the lives of all children to some extent. Teachers today report that more children are aggressive and disruptive as a result of stressful events. Increasing numbers of children, especially boys, are inaccurately diagnosed as hyperactive and needlessly medicated. Childhood obesity is also endemic.

Research demonstrates that exercise and child-initiated play are effective stress-relievers. Ironically, however, a survey of child care, preschool, and Head Start teachers found that they tend to limit children's opportunities for active play, especially outdoors, due to safety concerns and the need to prepare children academically for school. And children living in poverty are most likely to suffer because they have less access to safe outdoor play areas and programs feel extra pressure to focus on academic instruction to close the school readiness gap.

Part of the solution is that teachers, parents, and administrators need to understand that play and school readiness is not an either/or choice. The American Academy of Pediatrics emphasizes that play is essential for children's physical health, emotional and mental well-being, social relationships, and brain development and cognition. Vigorous play develops large motor skills, and can reduce obesity. In short, play contributes to all areas of development and learning.

In an attempt to get children ready for school and protect them from injury, early childhood programs may actually be contributing to children's stress by minimizing children's large muscle activity and child-initiated play time. Because children spend so much time in early childhood programs and school, it may be their only opportunity to have physical activity or outdoor play.

Early educators need to draw on the support of physicians and other experts to help educate parents and policy makers about the importance of play in children's lives and its essential role in helping children cope with stress and improve school success. They also need to advocate for funding to provide safe playgrounds and adequate spaces indoors and outdoors for active engagement. Play spaces and opportunities must be designed to protect children from injury, but protecting them from stress is equally important.

Sources: "Societal Values and Policies May Curtail Preschool Children's Physical Activity in Child Care Centers," by K. A. Copeland, S. N. Sheman, C. A. Kendigh, H. J. Kalkwarf, & B. E. Saelens, 2012, *Pediatrics*, 129(2), retrieved from <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/early/2012/01/02/peds.2011-2102.full.pdf.html>; "The Importance of Play in Promoting Healthy Child Development and Maintaining Strong Parent-Child Bonds: Focus on Children in Poverty," by R. M. Mitter, K. R. Ginsburg, & Council on Communications and Media Committee on Psychological Aspects of Child and Family Health, *Pediatrics*, 129(1), e204-e213, retrieved from <http://www.pediatrics.aappublications.org>.

A new feature, **Promoting Play**, presents new research on the important role of play in development and effective strategies to help children learn through play or protect their right to play. These features address play across the full age range, from birth through age 8. Discussions of play are also integrated in each chapter throughout this book as an effective means to support all domains of development and promote learning in all curriculum areas. Today many people are concerned about how the standards movement is negatively impacting play. We often hear statements such as "We can't let children play because we have to teach literacy," or "We don't have time for outdoor play in primary grades because we have to get children ready for standardized tests." Play should not be treated as a separate part of an early childhood program or day that can be cut if someone deems it unimportant. Therefore, you will find a discussion of play in every chapter of this book.

- The emphasis on implementing effective curriculum reflects current trends such as the goal of aligning prekindergarten and primary education, NAEYC accreditation and CAPE professional preparation standards, and enhanced expectations for teacher qualifications as described in the 2015 report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Age 9: A Unifying Foundation* by the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council.

Over more than four decades in early childhood education, I have had the privilege of working with and learning from countless friends, colleagues, teachers, and children. This book would not have been possible without the help and encouragement of the following people:

My deepest appreciation goes to Kathleen Cranley Gallagher, my collaborator on this edition, who revised Chapters 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 14, and 15. Kate's vast experience with children, with and without disabilities, as well as her research on children's social-emotional development and mental health greatly inform this edition. Kate contributed research and effective practices on early intervention, teaching children with autism spectrum disorder, and other cutting-edge topics. Without Kate's help, I can't imagine completing this work in a timely fashion.

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A sincere thank you and acknowledgment of support to Arlington Public Schools (APS) in Arlington, Virginia. Those assisting in the effort include: Arlington Public Schools administrative personnel Regina Van Horne, Lisa Stengle, and Linda Erdos; K. W. Barrett Elementary principal, Mr. Dan Redding; and K. W. Barrett instructional staff Joshua McLaughlin, Anastasia Erickson, Emily Sonenshine, Stephanie Shaefer, Judy Concha, Jennifer Flores, Elizabeth Jurkevics, and Richard Russey. Also, a big thanks to those students and their parents who allowed us to use the student artwork and artifacts found in this book.

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Instructor Supplements

The following instructor tools supplement, support, and reinforce the content presented throughout the text. All supplements are available for download for instructors who adopt this text. Go to <http://www.pearsonhighered.com>, click "Educators," register for access, and download files. For more information, contact your Pearson representative.

- **Online Instructor's Manual** (013402687X). The *Instructor's Resource Manual* provides chapter-by-chapter tools to use in class. Lecture or discussion outlines, teaching strategies, in-class activities, student projects, key term definitions, and helpful resources will reinforce key concepts and applications and keep students engaged.
- **Online Test Bank** (0134026756). These multiple-choice and essay questions tied to each chapter provide instructors the opportunity to assess student understanding of the chapter content. An answer key is provided.
- **Online PowerPoint™ Slides** (0134026829). Each slide reinforces key concepts and big ideas presented throughout the text.
- **TestGen** (013402673X). This powerful test generator contains the same items that are in the Online Test Bank, but you may add or revise items. Assessments may be created for print or testing online. You install TestGen on your personal computer (Windows or Macintosh) and create your own tests for classroom testing and for other specialized delivery options, such as over a local area network or on the web.

The tests can be downloaded in the following formats:

TestGen Testbank file - PC • TestGen Testbank file - MAC • TestGen Testbank -
Blackboard 9 TIF • TestGen Testbank - **Blackboard CE/Vista (WebCT)** TIF •
Angel Test Bank • **D2L** Test Bank • **Moodle** Test Bank • **Sakai** Test Bank

Like all Sue Bredekamp's work, *Effective Practices in Early Childhood Education: Building a Foundation* has become a landmark. Since its publication, it has been the major benchmark against which all volumes related to early childhood practice are measured, domestically and internationally. Indeed, it has been a driving force, not only guiding practice and scholarship, but also serving as a seminal vehicle to codify and chronicle the impact of history, the experiences of practitioners and leaders, and the impact of policy on the changing field of early education. In so doing, it has converted static assumptions and understandings about early childhood pedagogy into living, dynamic, and far more intentional practices.

Since its appearance, *Effective Practices* has been widely read and used to guide early childhood teacher preparation and practice. Its popularity has placed a special burden on the work; it, like the field, cannot remain stagnant or isolated from changes in the social context. Precisely because it is so well used and because the field is changing so rapidly, a new edition is necessary. Consider for example, the impact that the emergence of the K–12 Common Core has had on early education: whether one favors or disparages the Common Core ideologically, it is here to stay and is having profound impacts on American education generally, and American early education specifically. In addition, the revitalization of an emphasis on continuity and transition, emerging currently in the form of the “P–3 Movement,” is altering the way early educators conceptualize and actualize the linkages between pre-primary and primary education. Within the birth to 5-year-old component of early childhood, a renewed emphasis on supporting the infrastructure through the Early Learning Challenge Fund, with its focus on Quality Rating and Improvement Systems, standards, and assessments, is precipitating dramatic changes in the way early childhood education services are being designed and delivered. Finally, new research related to the way children learn and process information is calling forth compelling pedagogical alignments that address the importance of dual language learners, executive functioning, early mathematics, and learning progressions.

With the early childhood field changing so rapidly, time-honored questions are being catapulted to new prominence, often begging for urgent response: What should be the balance between cognitive development and other domains historically important to early childhood? What should be the balance between a focus on learning processes and content? What should be the balance between teacher-guided, intentional pedagogy and child-guided experiential learning? Note that none of these questions is new and that each recognizes the critical importance of balance.

Indeed, the majesty of this volume is that it, too, understands and addresses the importance of the contemporary context and the balance in perspective and practice it demands. In this volume, Bredekamp takes a long-haul view; she renders solid definitions of the field, situating the reader firmly in reality, and provides one of the most thorough historical overviews available. But Bredekamp does not stop there, nor does she skirt the tough issues, the new research, or the new demands being placed on early educators. Rather, with clarity and grace, she systematically addresses them all, setting before the field a rich compendium of research, firsthand and extremely well-cultivated practice, and ever-wise counsel. Readers will be impressed by the currency, practicality, and clear intentionality of the volume, evoking the same from those who regard it with the care with which it was written.

Of particular importance in this ever-changing and increasingly connected world is the role of culture and language. Bredekamp addresses these issues with honesty and integrity, treating readers to a richly nuanced understanding of the important roles of each in the development of young children. Cautiously, she reminds us that the words “developmentally appropriate”—although bywords of the profession—must be deeply contextualized in order to be understood and mastered. Indeed, in discussing how to balance developmentally, individually, and contextually appropriate practices, Bredekamp brilliantly notes that “a child with a disability acts like a magnifying glass on the

developmental appropriateness of an early childhood classroom.” In turn, early educators must regard this seminal edition as the best possible lens through which to see and enlarge what matters most in our field; with wisdom and prescience, it sheds all the light necessary to advance our evolving, joyous profession and our critically important work on behalf of children, their families, and their countries.

Sharon Lynn Kagan, Ed.D.
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Teachers College, Columbia University;
and Professor Adjunct, Yale University’s Child Study Center*

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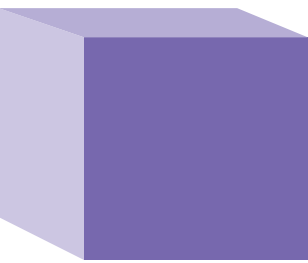


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1

Continuity and Change in Early Childhood Education

Learning Outcomes

After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1.1** Define early childhood education.
- 1.2** Describe the career options of early childhood educators and the dimensions of intentional, effective teaching.
- 1.3** Explain high-quality early childhood education and how it is measured.
- 1.4** Report research about the positive effects of early childhood education.
- 1.5** Analyze the current trends affecting early childhood education.

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At Cresthaven Primary School, teachers, children, and family members of all generations are viewing children’s work and sharing memories during the year-end celebration. This public school serves children from age 3 to grade 3, through a partnership with Reed Child Development Center nearby. The Reed Center provides state-funded preschool classrooms for 3- and 4-year-olds who will attend Cresthaven as well as before- and after-school care and child care for infants and toddlers.

The preschoolers are in awe of the “big school” where they will attend kindergarten and are excited to see their work displayed in the hallway. “Look, Mommy! Here’s my painting of the yellow fish,” cries 4-year-old Amber as she tugs on her mother’s hand. “See where I wrote my name. And here’s Brenda’s picture. She’s my new best friend.” Amber’s mother smiles and tries to read what her daughter wrote: “I lk fsh.” The teacher, Ms. Engels, comes up and says, “Amber knows a lot about writing and letters. She can write her name, and she is starting to write the consonants she hears in words.”

For several years, Cresthaven School has been involved with its neighbors in a community garden project. In each class, the teachers connect the larger curriculum—especially science and social studies goals—to aspects of the garden project. Six-year-old Sergio and his grandmother walk down the hall to find the list of all the meals the kindergartners prepared with the vegetables they harvested. He exclaims, “And tonight, we get to eat strawberries!” Meanwhile, first-grader Mathias quietly explains to some parents, “Me and my friends made this graph. It shows the vegetables the kids liked most.” Third-grader Carola describes her class project to her father. “You’ll like this, Dad. For social studies, we’re figuring out where food comes from and why it costs so much.”

The second-grade teacher, Ms. George, gets everyone’s attention. “Our class is going to present their video of the garden project in 15 minutes.” Seven-year-old Kelsey takes 75-year-old Mrs. Carrero by the hand and invites her to see the show. The children share most of the food raised in the garden with elderly neighbors such as Mrs. Carrero. “I’ll show you the chapter book I can read, too,” says Kelsey.

Four-year-old Cooper, who has autism, has been in Ms. Watson’s class for 2 years. His mother comes up and quietly whispers to Ms. Watson, “I wanted you to know that Cooper got invited to Martie’s birthday party. I never thought that would happen, but he’s made more progress here than I ever imagined.”

As she’s leaving, Nicky’s mom stops to thank Isela and Evan, who are finishing their first year of teaching 2-year-olds. They remember their struggles with Nicky’s tantrums as he hugs his mom’s leg and playfully peeks around at Evan. She says, “I know he is growing up and has to move to preschool, but we are really going to miss you two.” ■



Listening to these children, parents, and teachers, some new to the field and others with many years of experience, reveals the most exciting—as well as challenging—dimensions of early childhood education. Teaching young children is hard work. It takes energy, physical stamina, patience, a sense of humor, and a wide range of knowledge and skill. But early childhood professionals soon discover the rewards of their efforts. Nothing is quite as exciting as making a baby smile and giggle, seeing a toddler’s grin as he climbs the stairs on his own, or observing a preschooler’s serious look as she comes to the rescue as a pretend firefighter. And what can compete with a first grader’s feeling of utter accomplishment that accompanies learning to read?



Early childhood education is a rewarding profession for many reasons. We describe the diverse field of early childhood education and discuss its rewards in this chapter. We also discuss why early childhood education is a field on the rise and what the current trends are that present both challenges and opportunities. We also describe how, in a period of rapid change, the early childhood profession continues to be shaped by its enduring values. Above all, early childhood educators enter and stay in the field primarily for one reason—they know that their work makes a difference in the lives of children and families.

What Is Early Childhood Education?

early childhood education

Education and child care services provided for children from birth through age 8.

professionals Members of an occupational group that make decisions based on a specialized body of knowledge, continue to learn throughout their careers, and are committed to meeting the needs of others.

Early childhood education is a highly diverse field that serves children from birth through age 8. During these years, children participate in many different kinds of care and education settings. Regardless of where they work or what their specific job titles are, however, early childhood teachers are **professionals**. This means that they make decisions based on a specialized body of knowledge, continue to learn throughout their careers, and are committed to providing the best care and education possible for every child. The opportunity to make a difference in this exciting field has never been greater.

Why Early Childhood Education Is a Field on the Rise

Early childhood education benefits greatly from increasing public recognition, respect, and funding. In fact, a bipartisan poll reported that 86% of American voters believe that “ensuring children get a strong start in life” should be a national priority, second only to increasing job opportunity and growing the economy (First Five Years Fund, 2014). A Gallup poll found that 70% of voters supported federal funding to make high-quality preschool programs available for all children (Jones, 2014). Although higher percentages of Democrats and Independents supported such funding, a majority of Republicans were also in favor.

Forty states—as diverse as Oklahoma, Georgia, New Mexico, New York, Illinois, Massachusetts, Tennessee, and Florida—provide funding for prekindergarten programs (Barnett, Carolan, Squires, & Brown, 2013). Continued funding even in challenging economic times reflects growing public recognition of the benefits of early education, especially for children at risk of later school failure, but also for middle-class children. A great many policy makers, parents, and researchers now consider early childhood programs essential for fostering school readiness and long-term success in life (Barnett, 2013a). Groups such as the prestigious Committee for Economic Development (2012) consider quality child care and early education a necessary investment in the future of our country. A powerful advocate for early education, Nobel Prize–winning economist James Heckman (2013) believes that investing in early education is a cost-effective strategy that will improve educational and health outcomes, strengthen the economy, help solve America’s social problems, and produce a more capable, productive workforce.

Early education is also considered an effective crime-prevention strategy. A prestigious group of America’s police officers and prosecutors call themselves, “the guy you pay later” because America’s failure to pay for quality services for young children increases the costs of the criminal justice system (Fight Crime: Invest in Kids, 2014).

Several factors have contributed to the rise in status of early childhood education. These include an impressive body of research on the positive effects of early childhood programs and concerns about the persistent achievement gap in our schools. Next, we examine the overall landscape of the field, including the types of settings where children are served.

The Landscape of Early Childhood Education

Although early childhood terminology is not uniform across diverse settings, throughout this text we will use vocabulary that is consistent with that used by the **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)** and that we feel best represents the present

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) The world’s largest organization of early childhood educators, whose mission is to act on behalf of the needs and interests of children from birth through age 8. NAEYC establishes standards for teacher preparation and accreditation of early childhood programs.

and future of the field. NAEYC, headquartered in Washington, D.C., is the world's largest professional organization of early childhood educators. Founded in 1926, NAEYC's mission is to act on behalf of the needs, rights, and well-being of all young children from birth through age 8.

One way the association achieves its mission is by establishing standards for teacher preparation at the associate, baccalaureate, and graduate-degree levels (NAEYC, 2011b). NAEYC's standards have considerable influence in the field; it is likely that the course you are now taking is designed to meet the association's teacher education standards. NAEYC (2008b) also administers an accreditation system for high-quality children's programs and provides resources such as publications and conferences to support teachers' continuing professional development.

Given NAEYC's definition of the field—birth through age 8—early childhood teachers work with various groups:

1. *Infants and toddlers*: birth to 36 months
2. *Preschoolers*: 3- and 4-year-olds
3. *Kindergartners*: 5- and 6-year-olds
4. *Primary grades 1, 2, and 3*: 6-, 7-, and 8-year-olds.

Because early childhood is defined so broadly, the field encompasses child care centers and homes, preschools, kindergartens, and primary grade schools. Figure 1.1 provides an illustration of the various settings where young children are educated and cared for. Young children are always learning, and they always need loving care. Therefore, it is important *not* to distinguish child care from early education, but rather to ensure that all children have access to programs that are both caring and educational, regardless of the length of day or who provides the service.

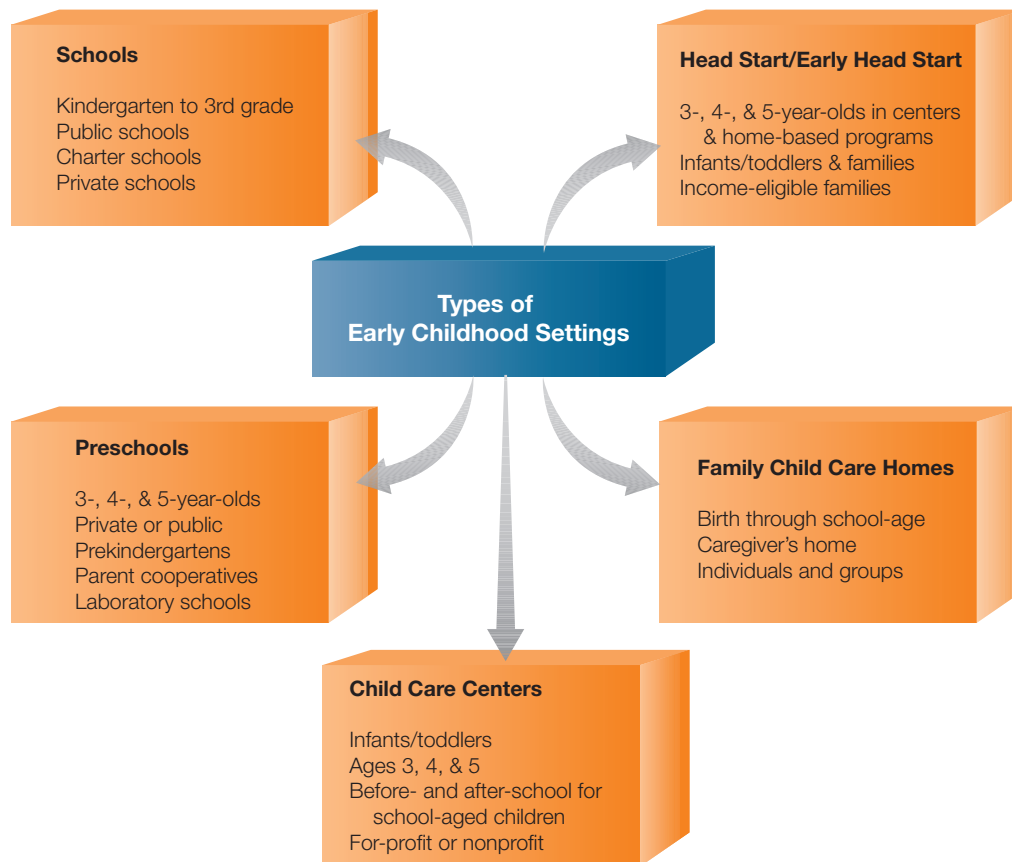


FIGURE 1.1 Types of Early Childhood Settings Early childhood education is a diverse field because young children's care and education occurs in a variety of settings as depicted here.



child care center Group program that provides care and education for young children during the hours that their parents are employed.

family child care home Child care in which caregivers provide care in their own homes for a small group of children, often multi-age groups.

preschool Educational programs serving 3- and 4-year-olds delivered under various sponsorships.

parent cooperative Preschool program owned, operated, and partially staffed by parents.

laboratory school School operated by colleges and universities that usually serves children of students and faculty and also acts as a model of excellent education for student teachers.

prekindergarten (pre-K) Educational program serving 3- and 4-year-olds, usually in public schools.

school readiness Children's competencies related to success in kindergarten, including physical development, health, and well-being; social-emotional development and learning; cognitive development and general knowledge such as mathematics and science; positive approaches to learning such as curiosity and motivation; and language development and early literacy skills.

universal voluntary prekindergarten Publicly funded preschool, usually for 4-year-olds but sometimes 3-year-olds; available to any family that chooses to use it.

Child Care The term *child care* typically refers to care and education provided for young children during the hours that their parents are employed. To accommodate work schedules, child care is usually available for extended hours, such as from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. In some settings, such as hospital-affiliated child care centers, care is offered for longer hours to accommodate evening, weekend, or even night-shift employment.

Child care is typically provided in two types of group programs: **child care centers** and **family child care homes**. In either setting, children's care may be privately funded by parent tuition or publicly subsidized for low-income families. Child care centers usually enroll children from infancy through preschool-age children, and many also offer before- and after-school care for primary grade children. In family child care homes, caregivers provide care in their own homes for a small group of children, often of varying ages. Family child care is the setting of choice for many parents of infants and toddlers because of its home-like atmosphere.

Preschool **Preschool** programs, as the name implies, serve 3- and 4-year-olds prior to their entrance into kindergarten. Preschool programs may be operated by community organizations or by churches, temples, or other faith-based organizations and also by **parent cooperatives**, which are run and partially staffed by groups of parents. Preschools often operate half-day, although extended hours—the school day—are becoming more common. Some colleges and universities operate **laboratory schools**, which usually serve children of students and faculty and also act as models for student teachers.

Preschools are called by various names, including *nursery schools* and *prekindergartens*. (To further complicate matters, child care centers are also called preschools.) Preschool programs are both privately and publicly funded. Those that are primarily funded by parent tuition tend to serve middle- or upper-income families. Two particular types of preschool are designed primarily for children from low-income families: public prekindergarten and Head Start.

Public Prekindergarten The term **prekindergarten (pre-K)** usually refers to preschools that are funded by state and local departments of education. Currently, public prekindergarten is in the news media regularly and is the fastest-growing sector of the field, with enrollment increasing enormously in recent years. In 1980, 96,000 preschoolers were served in public elementary schools; in 2012, enrollment had increased to more than 1.3 million children across 40 states (Barnett, Carolan, et al., 2013).

The primary purpose of prekindergarten is to improve **school readiness**; that is, to prepare children for kindergarten. Although some state officials narrowly define readiness as literacy and math skills, the early childhood profession uses a broad definition of school readiness that describes the whole child (Head Start, 2015):

- Language development and early literacy skills
- Cognitive development and general knowledge, including mathematics and science
- Social-emotional development
- Physical development and health
- Positive approaches to learning such as curiosity and motivation

The majority of public prekindergarten programs are designed for children from low-income families or those who are considered at risk for school failure due to conditions such as low levels of maternal education or speaking a language other than English in the home. However, a growing number of people, including the president and members of the U.S. Congress, are calling for funding of **universal voluntary prekindergarten**, the goal of which is to make these programs available to families of all income levels who choose to use them. Publicly funded prekindergarten has contributed to the field's growth; today the number of 4-year-olds in state pre-K programs exceeds the number enrolled in Head Start (Barnett, Carolan, et al., 2013).



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Early childhood education includes child care centers, preschools, prekindergartens, family child care homes, and schools. But every high-quality program provides both loving care and education for young children and support for their families.

Head Start **Head Start** is a federally funded, national program that promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children ages 3, 4, and 5. Head Start provides educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services to the nation's poorest children and families whose incomes fall below the official poverty level (Head Start, 2013). Head Start's goal is to improve school readiness by supporting all areas of children's development and promoting the early reading and math skills needed for later success. In addition to these comprehensive services, parent involvement is a special focus of the program. Parents volunteer in the classroom and also serve in governance roles, with the goal of empowering families to move out of poverty. In fact, 23% of Head Start staff members are parents of current or former Head Start children (Head Start, 2013). Children with disabilities make up about 12% of Head Start's enrollment (Head Start, 2014b).

Head Start programs are quite diverse. Most Head Start children are served in classroom-based preschool programs, although in rural or remote areas, a home-based option is available. One of the smallest serves 30 children on the Havasupai reservation in the Grand Canyon, accessible only by helicopter or donkey, while the largest programs serve over 22,000 children in 400 centers across Los Angeles (Head Start, 2011a).

The families represent all the racial and cultural groups in the United States (Head Start, 2014b). About 43% of the children are White, 38% are Latino, and 29% are African American. A sizable number of families—almost 10%—report that their children are biracial or multiracial. In addition, the program has a special focus on serving American Indians, Alaska Natives, and migrant and seasonal workers. About 30% of the children speak a language other than English at home. Of these, 85% speak Spanish, but 140 other languages are spoken.

In response to brain research and concerns that age 4 or even age 3 is too late for services to be effective, the government launched **Early Head Start** in 1995. Early Head Start serves low-income pregnant mothers, infants, and toddlers and promotes healthy family functioning. As of 2012, there were more than 1,000 Early Head Start programs in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico (Head Start, 2014a). Research on Early Head Start (Vogel, Yange, Moiduddin, Kisker, & Carlson, 2010) demonstrates that it achieves its promise of lasting positive effects on children and families.

Head Start Federally funded, national program that promotes school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children ages 3, 4, and 5 through providing educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services to the nation's poorest children and families.

Early Head Start Federally funded program serving low-income pregnant mothers, infants, and toddlers that promotes healthy family functioning.



early childhood special education Services for children with disabilities or special needs who meet eligibility guidelines that are determined on a state-by-state basis according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Federal law governing provision of services for children with disabilities and special needs.

early intervention Services for infants and toddlers who are at risk of developmental delay and their families.

inclusion Participation and services for children with disabilities and special needs in programs and settings where their typically developing peers are served.

Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education **Early childhood special education** serves children with disabilities or special needs who meet eligibility guidelines that are determined on a state-by-state basis, according to the **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**. In addition to serving children with identified disabilities, some states provide **early intervention** services for infants and toddlers who are at risk of developmental delay and their families.

Federal legislation enacted during the past three decades has fundamentally changed the way in which early childhood services are organized and delivered to children with disabilities and special needs (Division for Early Childhood & NAEYC, 2009). These children, including children who are at risk for disabilities or who exhibit challenging behaviors, are far more likely to participate in a typical early childhood program than in the past. This trend, called **inclusion**, is defined and described in the *Including All Children: What Does Inclusion Mean?* feature.

All early childhood educators are likely to work with children with disabilities at some point in their careers. This inevitability broadens what teachers need to know right from the start, and requires that general early childhood teachers develop skills to collaborate with special educators.

Kindergarten and Primary Grades Most 5- through 8-year-old children attend public schools, although many attend secular or faith-based private schools funded



Including All Children What Does Inclusion Mean?

Mark and Monique Berger operate a family child care program in their home. Their state permits group homes such as theirs to serve up to 12 children. The licensing agent informs them that they are required by law to serve children with disabilities and special needs. One mother, whose son Barry has cerebral palsy, has inquired about enrolling him in their program. Mark wants to be sure that they abide by the law, but Monique is a little unsure about what it means to include a child with a disability in her child care home.

Although full inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood programs has been the law of the land for several years, Mark and Monique are not alone in being unsure about what it means. To help them and other professionals like them, the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children and NAEYC (2009) jointly developed a statement defining early childhood inclusion:

Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his or her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential.

The statement describes the key features of high-quality inclusive programs, which are (1) access, (2) participation, and (3) supports.

A defining feature of high-quality early childhood inclusion is *access*, which means providing children with a wide range of learning opportunities, activities, and environments. In inclusive settings, adults also promote belonging, *participation*, and engagement of children with disabilities and their typically developing peers in a variety of intentional or purposeful ways.

Finally, an infrastructure of inclusion *supports* must be in place to ensure a foundation for the efforts of individuals and organizations that provide inclusive services to children and families. For example, Mark and Monique will need access to ongoing professional development and support to acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required to effectively meet Barry's needs and contribute to his development. In addition, specialized services and therapies for Barry will need to be coordinated and integrated with the other activities they offer the children.

Source: Early childhood inclusion: A joint position statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), by Division for Early Childhood and National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009, Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, retrieved from <http://community.fpg.unc.edu/resources/articles/files/EarlyChildhoodInclusion-04-2009.pdf>.

by parent tuition. Typically considered the first year of formal schooling, **kindergarten** has traditionally been designed for 5-year-olds. States establish varying dates for the legal entrance age to kindergarten, but 40 states require that children who are entering kindergarten must have their fifth birthday before the end of September or earlier (Education Commission of the States, 2013). This means that today's kindergartens enroll many 6-year-olds. By contrast, in 1975, only nine states required that children be 5 by September (Colasanti, 2007)

First, second, and third grades are the **primary grade** years of school (6 through 8 years of age). These grades are especially important because during these grades, children are expected to acquire the fundamental abilities of reading and mathematics, along with the foundations of other academic disciplines including social studies, science, the creative arts, technology, and physical education. In first to third grade, children are learning to read; after that, they are expected to read to learn (Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010). Therefore, if a good foundation is not laid during the primary years, children are likely to struggle in later years (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2014).

Forty states and the District of Columbia permit funding of public **charter schools**. A charter school is a publicly funded school that is independently operated under a contract with the state or district. Typically, charter schools have greater flexibility than do regular public schools for meeting regulations, but they must also meet accountability standards. In school districts where charter schools are an option, parents have a choice of where to send their children. More than 2 million children attend charter schools and the percentage is increasing (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014a).

How Early Childhood Education Is Expanding

Participation in early childhood programs has increased steadily for many decades as more children participate in group programs at younger ages. In 1965, only 60% of 5-year-olds went to kindergarten, whereas today about 95% do (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014b). A similar but steeper growth trend is apparent for younger children. In 1960, only 10% of 3- and 4-year-olds were enrolled in any type of early childhood program. By 2012, 64% of 3- to 5-year-olds were enrolled in preprimary programs (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014b). Although the economic downturn has affected enrollment, all types of early childhood programs have seen growth over the years, including private preschools and child care centers, state-funded prekindergartens, preschool special education, and Head Start (Barnett, Carolan, Fitzgerald, & Squires, 2011; National Center for Education Statistics, 2014b).

Growth in Preschool Attendance Changes in preschool participation are apparent in the findings of the *Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort* (Jacobson Chernoff, Flanagan, McPhee, & Park, 2007). The study revealed that preschool, rather than kindergarten, is now seen as the first year of school for children. The percentage of children who attend center-based preschools is approximately the same whether or not their mothers are employed. This finding indicates that the growth in preschool enrollment is related to increased demand for early education as much as increased need for child care (Barnett & Yarosz, 2007).

Child Care for Employed Families Expansion of the early childhood field is directly related to the demand for child care for employed families. Currently, 64% of women with children under age 6 are in the labor force (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2014). Infant and toddler care is a particular need because 58% of mothers of children under age 1 are in the workforce. Almost 80% of school-agers need care for some hours of the day (Children's Defense Fund [CDF], 2011).

Classroom Connection

This video defines inclusion as “belonging.” How does inclusion benefit all children?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_qgW9FWEgQ

kindergarten Typically considered the first year of formal schooling; serves 5- and 6-year-olds.

primary grades First, second, and third grade; sometimes includes kindergarten.

charter schools Independently operated, publicly funded schools that have greater flexibility than regular schools in meeting regulations and achieving goals.