
CHAPTER 2 TYPES OF PROGRAMS

Overview

This chapter introduces the student to the many and varied types of early childhood programs that are available today and gives students a framework of reference for ways to serve young children and their families. “Indicators of Quality” help students begin to define what “quality” and “excellence” mean in all early childhood programs. These standards include the most recent NAEYC criteria for developmentally appropriate practices on which students learn to build their experiences and work with young children. A multicultural aspect is reinforced by looking at developmentally *and* culturally appropriate practices to ensure a consistency between the child’s home and school experiences.

Moving from the most familiar or traditional types of programs to those that are newer and emerging, this chapter cites specific examples that define each type of program so that students begin to see how the issue of quality cuts across the field. Program philosophies are related to one another and to developmental theories.

As needed, there is cross-referencing with other chapters where the program may be referred to under another topic. This approach prevents repetition and gives an opportunity to enlarge the student’s perspective.

A realistic and up-to-date picture is drawn through the use of current statistics and studies that illuminate important child care issues. The inclusion of home schooling adds immediacy to any discussion of early childhood programs. Topics such as the influence of Vygotsky on early programs, the pros and cons of mixed-age groupings, and the issues of class size challenge the students to wrestle with the balance between theory and practice.

This chapter includes the material on evaluating programs. We think it important that as students learn about quality programs they be given the tools for assessing a program’s worth. We stress a process of regularly scheduled evaluations that include a rationale and guidelines, as well as strategies for inclusive evaluations. This discussion introduces students to the idea of evaluation as an ongoing aspect of the early childhood field and prepares them for discussions of teacher evaluations in Chapter 5 and evaluating and assessing children in Chapter 6.

A description of Head Start’s multiculturalism standards exemplifies ways in which a commitment to cultural diversity can be implemented in an early childhood program. The inclusion of Kagan and Kauerz’s four reflections of what future kindergartens must is helpful to educate students on the current social and political factors facing early childhood education today.

A strength of this chapter is the way it sets the stage for the necessity of considering *quality* and *appropriateness* in activities for young children. The concept is introduced here as an underlying tenet of any good early childhood program.

OUTLINE

- I. Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs
 - A. Three Core Considerations of DAP
 - B. Guidelines for DAP
 - C. DAP in Action
 - 1. What DAP looks like
- II. Early Childhood Core Programs
 - A. Factors That Determine Types of Programs
 - B. Special Program Features
 - 1. Mixed-Age Groupings
 - 2. Looping: Continuity of Care
 - C. The Core of Programs of Early Childhood Education
 - 1. Traditional Nursery School/Preschool
 - a. The Role of the Teacher
 - b. Universal Preschools
 - 2. Child Care Centers
 - a. Scheduling
 - b. Licensing
 - c. Staffing
 - 3. Family Child Care
 - a. Advantages
 - b. Challenges
- III. Variations of Core Programs
 - A. Head Start: An Early Intervention Model
 - 1. Early Head Start
 - 2. Evaluating Early Intervention Effectiveness
 - a. High/Scope Perry Preschool Study
 - 3. Head Start Today
 - B. Variations on Early Childhood Program Options
 - C. Infant/Toddler Programs
 - 1. Philosophy of Infant/Toddler Care
 - 2. Unique Characteristics
 - D. Kindergarten
 - 1. Length of Day
 - 2. School Entry Age
 - 3. Curriculum: Developmental or Academic
 - E. Early Elementary/Primary Grades
 - 1. Unique Characteristics
 - 2. The Challenge of Academic Standards
 - 3. School-Age Child Care
 - F. Homeschooling
- IV. Assessing Program Quality
 - A. Indicators of Quality
 - B. Research Studies on Quality
 - 1. Issues That Affect Quality
 - C. The Process of Assessing Programs
 - 1. Why Program Assessment is Important
 - a. To establish accountability
 - b. To make improvements
 - c. To acquire accreditation
 - D. Essential Steps Before You Begin
 - E. Implement the Findings
- Summary
- Key Terms
- Review Questions
- Observe and Apply
- Helpful Websites
- References

KEY TERMS

mixed-age grouping
developmentally
appropriate practice (DAP)

traditional nursery school
child care center
parent cooperative schools

school readiness
self-care
assessment
employer-sponsored child
care
educaring
looping

sociocultural
laboratory schools
alignment
family child care
attachment
accountability

Objectives

- Examine the underlying theoretical principles of developmentally appropriate practices applied to a variety of early childhood programs
- Describe the core programs of early childhood education, program types, and their differing philosophies
- Identify the variation of program options and range of delivery systems that impact the lives of children and their families
- Assess early childhood programs utilizing indicators of quality early childhood practices that support all children including those with diverse characteristics

Teaching Tips and Lecture Ideas

This chapter lends itself well to students' interest, especially if students are currently teaching in group settings. Questions that draw out the various characteristics of student teaching sites help students to identify the type of setting they are currently involved in and how it varies from the models. A guest panel of teachers from local programs, each describing their schools, would also enhance student learning.

Also, a discussion of the first two chapters together would help students understand how theory is practiced in an actual classroom. Components of clients (both children and parents), program organization, and teacher/ assistant roles can be compared across philosophical orientation and history. One way to approach this would be to base a discussion of students' teaching sites on the list, "Features of Early Childhood." Another might be to ask students to identify their own philosophies and then try to match them with corresponding programs.

A discussion of early academics as it relates to the program philosophy would be pertinent. Students might want to discuss which programs would lend themselves to pressure by parents and/or boards to teach inappropriate curriculum content. Which types of schools would be most resistant to the current early academic pressures?

Following are topics that provide good research subjects and can stimulate class discussion:

- Whether or not parent/child programs are offered by the local public school system, what services they provide, who qualifies for their use, and a description of the programs available. See Parents as Teachers national Web site for research directions.
- Using the NAEYC guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice, ask students to select the one practice that they now use that would be the most difficult for them to change to a more developmentally appropriate approach.
- Again, using NAEYC developmentally appropriate guidelines, ask students to investigate and reflect on the link between these guidelines and the accreditation process, to cultural sensitivity, and academic readiness.
- In small groups, have the students define the term "culture" and explore the implications of these definitions for those who teach young children.
- Discuss NAEYC's position statement on licensing and regulation of early child care and education programs by the states. What suggestions do students have to resolve the issues of cost, enforcement, exemptions, church/state controversy, creation of a common set of standards, and so on?

- Discuss the “trilemma” of child care: quality, affordability, and compensation as it relates to high staff turnover, high child/staff ratios, teacher/caregiver training, and the ability to pay.
- Head Start Performance Standards define an “environment of respect.” Ask students to develop a rationale for each of the five components listed and cite an example of what activities and behaviors would reinforce those principles.
- Early childhood extends from birth through age eight. Discuss strategies for forging links between preschools and kindergartens and between kindergartens and first, second, and third grades. What examples can be found locally for a comprehensive coordinated early childhood system? Ask students to find and interview a primary grade teacher who employs developmentally compatible teaching methods.
- To reinforce and familiarize students with the concept of evaluations, have students discuss the Perry Preschool Project.
- Ask for students who are working in an NAEYC-accredited program to share the process and outcomes with the class.
- Showing students some of the self-study materials for accreditation and using some of the NAEYC’s videos about the process will help students understand both the intent and the complexity of assessing “quality.”
- Assign Edith Dowley’s Insights article, “Early Childhood Education in the Shipyards” to Assign “Brain Research Says” and engage the students in a debate about redshirting. Then have students visit their local elementary schools and inquire as to how the school decides if children are ready for kindergarten or not. What are their reactions to what is going on locally?
- Have students who are currently working share what evaluations are completed on the teaching staff. How often are they evaluated and what is done with the results?

Answers to Review Questions in Text

1. The three core considerations of developmentally appropriate practices are 1) What is known about child development and learning; 2) What is known about each child as an individual; and 3) What is known about the social and cultural contexts in which children live. They contribute to children’s learning through a) responding to children’s interests; b) actively involving children in their own learning; c) making play the primary context for children’s learning; d) teachers being responsive to individual children; e) teachers setting challenging yet achievable goals; f) teachers realizing different children will learn different concepts from the same lesson; and g) all aspects of development being integrated.
2. The core programs of early childhood education are traditional nursery school, child care centers, family child care, Head Start. They are similar in that they all serve the same age groups about 2 ½ to 5 year -olds. They are different in their philosophy of care, their settings, and their fees.

3. The variations of the core programs and who they serve are:
 - Laboratory Schools: Children of faculty and students, serve as observation area for specific programs
 - Parent Cooperatives: Organized and run by parents for young children
 - Employer-sponsored Child Care: Serve employees of a business who are in need of child care
 - For-profit Child Care: Children ages 6 weeks -12
 - Religious Facilities: Parents who want faith based curriculum
 - Non-profit centers: Subsidized by sponsoring organization
4. The three most important factors that determine the quality of an early childhood program are teacher/child ratio, the size of the group, and the education and experience of the staff. They all have the ability to influence program assessment positively or negatively. Low teacher/child ratio, small group size, and higher education levels and experience of staff lead to higher assessment scores on evaluation instruments such as ECERS. Conversely, high teacher/child ratios, large group size, and lower education levels and less experienced staff lead to lower scores on evaluation instruments such as ECERS.

Recommended Resources

Films/Videos

Building Quality Child Care: An Overview. NAEYC video.

Caring for Infants and Toddlers. NAEYC video with Bettye Caldwell discussing unique needs of this age group.

Culture and Education of Young Children. NAEYC video with Carol Brunson Phillips.

Curriculum for Preschool and Kindergarten. NAEYC video with Lilian Katz.

Environments for Young Children. NAEYC video with Elizabeth Prescott and Elizabeth Jones.

The Nurturing Community. Video #1 in Raising America's Children series.

Seeing Infants with New Eyes. NAEYC video with Magda Gerber. *Teaching the Whole Child in Kindergarten.* NAEYC video *Toddler Curriculum: Making Connections.* NAEYC video. *Tools for Teaching Developmentally Appropriate Practice: The Leading Edge in Early Childhood Education.* NAEYC video.

What Is Quality Child Care? NAEYC video of a Bettye Caldwell address on professional child care.

Other Resources

Goffin & Stegeline (Eds.). *Changing kindergartens: Four success stories.* Washington, DC:

NAEYC. *Congregations and child care: A self-study for churches and synagogues and their early childhood programs.* NAEYC.

WebSources

Parents as Teachers National Organization	http://www.parentsasteachers.org
Reggio Emilia Programs	http://zerosei.comune.re.it
Bureau of Labor Statistics	http://www.bls.gov
Department of Health and Human Services	http://www.dhhs.gov
Families and Work Institute	http://www.familiesandwork.org
National Institute on Out-of-School Time	http://www.niost.org
National Network for Child Care	http://www.nncc.org
National Association for Family Child Care	http://www.nafcc.org
Child Care Exchange	http://www.ccie.com
National Center for Education Statistics	http://nces.ed.gov/
Culturally Linguistically Appropriate Services	http://www.clas.uiuc.edu
Center for Child Care Workforce	http://www.ccw.org
International Nanny Association	http://www.nanny.org
Head Start	http://www.nhsa.org/
Early Head Start National Resource Center	http://www.ehsnrc.org
ChildStats.gov	http://www.childstats.gov
Census Bureau	http://www.census.gov
Children's Defense Fund	http://www.childrensdefense.org
About Homeschooling	http://homeschooling.about.com