

Who Am I in the Lives of Children?

An Introduction to Early Childhood Education

Stephanie Feeney • Eva Moravcik • Sherry Nolte



ELEVENTH
EDITION

Suggested Correlation of Naeyc® Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs and Chapter Content

Standard	Key Elements of the Standard	Chapter and Topic
1: Promoting Child Development and Learning	1a. Knowing and understanding young children's characteristics and needs 1b. Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning 1c. Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments	4: Why Study Child Development? p. 94 4: Principles of Child Development, p. 96 4: Heredity and Environment, p. 100 4: Theories of Development, p. 110 4: Development of the Whole Child, p. 126 5: Other Methods of Authentic Assessment, p. 152 6: The Foundations of Child Guidance, p. 173 7: Safe Places for Children, p. 216 7: Healthy Places for Children, p. 228 7: Promote Well-Being, p. 240 8: The Indoor Learning Environment, p. 253 8: The Outdoor Learning Environment, p. 262 8: Different Children—Different Places, p. 266 8: Time, p. 285 9: Understanding Play, p. 293 9: The Role of Play in Development, p. 305 9: Facilitating Play, p. 310 9: Issues in Play, p. 316 10: What is Curriculum? p. 326 10: The Physical Development Curriculum, p. 333 10: The Communication Curriculum, p. 340 10: The Creative Arts Curriculum, p. 347 10: The Inquiry Curriculum, p. 357 11: Influences on Planning, p. 370 11: The Process of Planning, p. 376 12: Children with Disabilities, p. 416 12: Children with Other Special Needs, p. 437 Appendix B, p. 503
2: Building Family and Community Relationships	2a. Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics 2b. Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships 2c. Involving families and communities in their children's development and learning	1: The Work of the Early Childhood Educator, p. 2 1: The Teacher as a Person, p. 7 5: Other Methods of Authentic Assessment, p. 152 6: The Foundations of Child Guidance, p. 173 12: Working with Families of Children with Disabilities, p. 439 13: Understanding Families, p. 444 13: Building Relationships with Families, p. 450 13: Engaging Families in Your Program, p. 463 13: Supporting Families, p. 470
3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families	3a. Understanding the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment 3b. Knowing about and using observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches 3c. Understanding and practicing responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child 3d. Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues	1: The Work of the Early Childhood Educator, p. 2 2: Educational Standards, p. 49 5: The Purpose of Assessment, p. 137 5: Other Methods of Authentic Assessment, p. 152 5: Standardized Assessment, p. 166 11: Influences on Planning, p. 370 11: The Process of Planning, p. 376 11: Writing Plans to Guide Teaching, p. 384 12: Children with Disabilities, p. 416 12: Children with Other Special Needs, p. 437 13: Building Relationships with Families, p. 450
4: Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families	4a. Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with children 4b. Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education 4c. Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching/ learning approaches 4d. Reflecting on their own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child	1: The Work of the Early Childhood Educator, p. 2 1: The Teacher as a Person, p. 7 5: The Purposes of Assessment, p. 137 5: Other Methods of Authentic Assessment, p. 152 5: Standardized Assessment, p. 166 6: The Foundations of Child Guidance, p. 173 6: Goals for Guidance, p. 178 6: Communication: A Powerful Guidance Tool, p. 184 6: Guiding Groups, p. 191 6: Managing Inappropriate Behaviors, p. 205 6: Challenging Behaviors, p. 211 7: Safe Places for Children, p. 216 7: Promote Well-Being, p. 240 8: The Indoor Learning Environment, p. 253 8: The Outdoor Learning Environment, p. 262 8: Different Children—Different Places, p. 266 8: Time, p. 285 9: Understanding Play, p. 293 9: The Role of Play in Development, p. 305 9: Facilitating Play, p. 310 9: Issues in Play, p. 316

(Continued)

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An Introduction to Early Childhood
Education

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A Letter to Readers

Dear Reader:

Welcome to the eleventh edition of *Who Am I in the Lives of Children?* an introduction to the field of early childhood education. Our purpose in writing this book is to support you in becoming a professional who can enhance the development of young children in early childhood education programs.

We feel strongly that in order for you to become a skilled early childhood educator, you must develop your own style and a professional philosophy that reflects your values and guides your actions. Your journey will be an exciting one; a venture that will be shaped both by your unique experiences, values and beliefs and by the knowledge and skills you build along the way. We encourage you to take time to think carefully about what you know and value regarding young children and their families and your role as a teacher. There is much to learn about this field, and our knowledge about it grows and evolves continuously. It is impossible to include everything you might need to know in this book. Rather, we offer you basic information that we think will be helpful and will provide a lens through which to view information, ideas, and the many choices you will make in your work with young children and with their families. We are confident that as you reflect on your attitudes and beliefs, learn about young children, and build your skills for teaching them, you will find both satisfaction and joy in participating in the important work of the early childhood educator.

About the Authors

When we read a book, we like to know about the authors—who they are and why they wrote the book. We want to share some of that information with you.

This book grows out of our experiences as children, as adults, as learners, and as teachers. Our early schooling included experiences in child-oriented nursery schools much like those we describe in this book, as well as in large public schools, private schools, and a small multinational school. Although our childhood experiences were different, our values are similar, and we have many of the same ideas about education. We each have long held a strong commitment to ensuring that all children experience programs that are nurturing and challenging, that support all aspects of their development, and that welcome their families as partners.

Among us we have filled the roles of preschool teacher, social worker, kindergarten teacher, center director, education coordinator, parent and child center program



Stephanie Feeney, Eva Moravcik, and Sherry Nolte

director, consultant, parent educator, CDA trainer, Head Start regional training officer, college professor, and author. We have worked in parent cooperatives, child care centers, preschools, infant-toddler programs, Head Start programs, military child development programs, public schools, government agencies, and college settings. We have been board members of our local and national early childhood organizations; we have been and continue to be child advocates.

Stephanie, now retired, was professor of early childhood education at the University of Hawai'i for many years. Since her retirement, she has been coeditor of the third edition of *Continuing Issues in Early Childhood Education* and has written *Professionalism in Early Childhood Education: Doing Our Best for Young Children* (both published by Pearson). She now lives in Portland, Oregon, where she continues to write and teach about ethics and professionalism, and is involved in work on school readiness and programs for Native American children.

Eva is a professor at Honolulu Community College, where she teaches courses and coordinates a small child development lab school. Her daily work with children, family, staff, and college students continues to provide her with grounding in the reality of life in a program for young children. In addition to her professional activities, she has a long-time interest in folk music and dance and coordinates a small recreational folk dance group in Honolulu.

Sherry brings extensive experience working in programs for military families, low-income children, and infants and toddlers. She has recently retired from her position as professor at Honolulu Community College, where she taught early childhood courses and supervised practicum students. She continues to teach as adjunct faculty and

to work as an early childhood consultant and trainer. Eva and Sherry, with a little help from Stephanie, wrote *Meaningful Curriculum for Young Children*, now in its second edition; it can be used as a companion book to this text. Their in-depth reading, research, and writing on curriculum informs this edition of *Who Am I in the Lives of Children?*

About the Book: A Child-Centered Approach

We began writing *Who Am I in the Lives of Children?* because we wanted an introductory text consistent with our belief that the personal and professional development of early childhood teachers are inextricably linked. We wanted students to take time to reflect on values and educational choices—an approach that was not common at the time. In this edition, as in all of the previous ones, we emphasize the development of personal awareness and the ongoing process of reflection on values and choices. Then and now, we want to speak to our readers in as clear a way as possible; therefore, we write in an informal, direct, and personal voice. Like the previous ten editions, this one evolved as we thought about new information we gleaned from our reading and our experiences.

Since the first edition in 1979 and through ten subsequent revisions, *Who Am I in the Lives of Children?* has been used in a variety of teacher preparation programs across the United States and in countries as diverse as Canada, Australia, Japan, Singapore, and China. Each edition has reflected developments in our field; feedback from students, colleagues, and reviewers; and our own growth as educators and child and family advocates.

The cornerstone of this book and our work with children is what we refer to as a *whole child* or *child-centered* approach to early childhood education. This approach has its roots in a long tradition of humanistic and progressive education and in the unique history and philosophy of early childhood education. Our ideas have been profoundly shaped by educators, psychologists, and philosophers who have advocated child-centered educational practice, including (in chronological order) Friedrich Froebel, John Dewey, Maria Montessori, Lucy Sprague Mitchell, A. S. Neill, Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, Abraham Maslow, Barbara Biber, Sylvia Ashton-Warner, James L. Hymes, Loris Malaguzzi, Howard Gardner, and Uri Bronfenbrenner. We continue to be inspired by the insight, respectful attitude toward children, and the eloquent words of the late Fred (Mister) Rogers.

Programs that evolve from the *child-centered* tradition are dedicated to the development of the whole child—physical, social, emotional, and intellectual. Such programs are characterized by a deep respect for the individual and the recognition that individual differences need to be honored in educational settings. They reflect the understanding that children learn best from direct experience and spontaneous play. Educators in child-centered programs focus on getting to know each individual's strengths, interests,

challenges, and circumstances. They support each child in growing and learning in ways that are in harmony with who each child is rather than according to a predetermined plan. These educators see each child as a member of a family, a community, and a society, and their choices reflect these understandings.

We subscribe to a constructivist approach to providing learning experiences for young children and to the importance of intentional teaching. We continue in this edition to affirm our values and commitment to a respectful, culturally sensitive, child-centered, and family-friendly approach to working with young children. We strive to make the values and guiding principles of early education visible and affirm our commitment to them. Over the years, it has become clear to us that this approach is broader than just a way of viewing early childhood education—it is an approach to working with people of all ages, to learning at all stages, and to life.

What's New in This Edition

In this eleventh edition you will find:

- Updated content and references throughout
- Updated statistical information about children and families in Chapter 2
- Discussion of Gardner's most recent intelligences, Chapter 4
- Expanded discussions of dual language learners, technology in the classroom, and a new section on Universal Design for Learning in Chapter 12
- Discussion of strategies for working with immigrant families and their children in Chapters 7 and 13
- Updated section on family engagement in Chapter 13

Our Vision for You

Many approaches can be taken in teaching others to work with young children. *It is not our intention for everyone to come to the same conclusions or to work with children in the same way.* In this book, we want to help you discover who you are as an educator and what you value for children instead of focusing exclusively on content and skills. Like creating a clay figure in which each part is drawn out of a central core, we strive to help your work be an integral part of who you are. Without this foundation, it is difficult to know how to respond to a group of real children. A figurine constructed by sticking head, arms, and legs onto a ball of clay often falls apart when exposed to the heat of the fire. Similarly, a teacher whose education consists of bits and pieces may fall apart when faced with the reality of the classroom.

You will play an important part in the lives of the children and families with whom you will work. We hope this eleventh edition of *Who Am I in the Lives of Children?* will help you become a competent, nurturing, and reflective early childhood educator and an active and committed advocate for young children.

Acknowledgments

We have been writing and revising *Who Am I in the Lives of Children?* since 1977, and during that period of time we have been influenced and supported by many colleagues, friends, and students. Our list of individuals to acknowledge continues to grow, as does our gratitude.

We are very grateful to early intervention specialist Aoife Rose Magee for helping us to review research and revise Chapter 12, Including All Children. Special thanks to Maud Naroll for her assistance in updating the statistical information in Chapters 2 and 12.

We continue to acknowledge Doris Christensen's contributions to the conceptualization of this book and to her writing in its first seven editions. We offer thanks to the many educators who have contributed to our thinking and practice since we began writing this book: Barbara

Bowman, Sue Bredekamp, Harriet Cuffaro, Elizabeth Jones, Lilian Katz, Gwen Morgan, and Karen VanderVen. We remember with fondness Docia Zavitkovsky, Jim Greenman, Elizabeth Gilkeson, and Elizabeth Brady, and we honor the memory of Jean Fargo for helping us to realize that values must lie at the heart of the work of the early childhood educator.

We wish to thank the following colleagues for their assistance with this and previous editions: Georgia Acevedo, Steve Bobilin, Linda Buck, Svatava Cigankova, Robyn Chun, Jane Dickson-Iijima, Christyn Dundorf, Richard Feldman, Marjorie Fields, Ginger Fink, Nancy Freeman, Jonathan Gillentine, Mary Goya, Kenneth Kipnis, Leslie J. Munson, Miles Nakanishi, Robert Peters, Julie Powers, Larry Prochner, Jackie Rabang, Alan Reese, Beth Rous, Kate Tarrant, and Lisa Yogi.

Our students in the early childhood/elementary education program at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa and the early childhood program at Honolulu Community College have asked thought-provoking questions and given us insight into the viewpoints of the future educator.

Like you, we learn by doing. Our attitudes, values, knowledge, and skills have developed as we have worked with the children, families, and staff at programs in Hawai'i: the Leeward Community College Children's Center, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Children's Center, and the Early School.

We would also like to thank the reviewers of this edition for their insights and comments: Susan P. Maude, Iowa State University (retired); Amy Smith, Johnston Community College; Robert J. Walker, Southwest Tennessee Community College; and Charlene McCaghren Woodham, Ed.S., Athens Technical College.

This book is brought to life through the photographs, children's art, and videos that illustrate each chapter. The images of young children are the work of Jeffrey Reese, a talented photographer who took photographs for this and the previous seven editions. The pictures were taken in Hawai'i at the Leeward Community College Children's Center, the Keiki Hauoli Children's Center at Honolulu Community College, and at Keiki Steps on the Wai'anae Coast of O'ahu; in Oregon at South Coast Head Start in Coos Bay and at Helen Gordon Child Development Center in Portland; and in Olympia, Washington, with the family of Kona and Ed Matautia. Much of the video was taken by Steve Bobilin, education specialist at Honolulu Community College. The artwork that adds such vibrancy to this edition is the work of the children of Leeward Community College Children's Center; it would not exist were it not for their talented teachers, Jackie Rabang and Steve Bobilin. We appreciate the cooperation of the children, staff, and families of these schools.

We are grateful to the New Lanark Trust in South Lanarkshire, Scotland, and the Kunsthistorisches Museum,

Vienna, for graciously allowing us to use images from their collections in Chapter 3.

Special thanks to our editor, Julie Peters, for all of her guidance and patience during this revision as we learned to adapt to a new digital platform. We'd also like to acknowledge Jason Hammond and Krista McMurray for all of their help in preparing this edition.

No book is written without affecting the lives of the families of the authors. We especially want to thank Don Mickey, Jeffrey Reese, and Miles Nolte, who have

encouraged us and supported our efforts with patience and good humor. This book, and our lives, would be much poorer without the participation, love and support of our families.

Stephanie Feeney

Eva Moravcik

Sherry Nolte

Portland, Oregon, and Honolulu, Hawai'i

Features of this Book

New Comprehension Checks and Application Opportunities

Learning Outcomes

We had a purpose and specific learning outcomes in mind as we wrote each chapter of this book. Review this list to make sure that you are able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills that the items cover. Each outcome aligns with a major section of the chapter, and serves as a useful review of chapter content.



Chapter Learning Outcomes:

- 1.1** Explain the context in which early childhood education occurs and the most important tasks that characterize the work of the early childhood educator.
- 1.2** Discuss the importance of teachers' personal attributes, both those that are inborn and those that are learned from culture, family, and community.
- 1.3** Demonstrate understanding of what it means to be a professional with emphasis on the role of morality and ethics.
- 1.4** Describe educational pathways that are appropriate to a variety of career goals and identify some that you think might be appropriate for you.

Reflection Box Notes

There are two types of reflection notes in the chapters of this book. These box notes pose questions for you to think, write, and talk about.

“Reflect On . . .” Notes

These questions are intended to help you engage with what you are learning. Thinking and reflecting is a cornerstone of the learning process. Discussing and writing about these topics is a good way to focus your learning and clarify your thinking.

Reflect On

Your Ethical Responsibilities and Confidentiality

A mother of a child in your class asks you to share how a relative's child (also in your class) is doing in school. She shares that she is concerned about this child's development. You've been worried about the child, too. Using the “Guidelines for Ethical Reflection” box in Chapter 1, reflect on your ethical responsibilities in this situation and think about an ethical response that you might make.



Reflect On

Your Interest in Child Development

How did your interest in young children begin? What did you first notice about them? What interested you then? What intrigues you now about young children?



“Ethical Reflection” Notes

Early childhood educators often encounter ethical issues in their work. An overview of professional ethics and discussion of ethical dilemmas that teachers of young children might experience can be found in Chapter 1, “The Teacher.” These notes describe ethical dilemmas and ask you to think about the conflicting responsibilities in each situation and to reflect on what the “good early childhood educator” might do to resolve it using guidance from the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

Related NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards

We show which professional standards apply to the chapter in this brief section.

The NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards

The NAEYC Professional Preparation Standard that applies to this chapter:

Standard 6: Becoming a Professional (NAEYC, 2009).

Key element:

6a: Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood field

Golden Rules

for Interviewing a Child for Assessment

1. Don't interrupt a child who is actively involved with friends or play activities; instead, invite the child to join you during an interlude after play.
2. Choose a quiet corner for the interview where you can sit at the child's level.
3. Plan a few questions in advance and relate them to your objectives for children—remember, you want to know what children understand and can do, not whether they liked an activity or the way you teach.
4. Use open-ended questions that have many possible answers to avoid the child feeling there is a “right” answer. Start with phrases like “Tell me about . . .” and “What do you think . . . ?”
5. Use language that is easy for the child to understand.
6. If the child doesn't answer a question, try rephrasing the question and asking it again.
7. Use the child's answers and interests to guide the interview.
8. Record children's behavior as well as their words.



Golden Rules

“Golden Rules” boxes contain important principles and practices for teaching, summarized and presented in a clear and useful format.

Connecting with Families

Another feature is guidelines or strategies contained in boxes that we call “Connecting with Families.” These give you practical ideas for ways to include families in your program.

Connecting with Families

On Assessment

Families have an important role in assessment. They are not merely “the audience” to whom you present a portfolio. They have valuable contributions to make. Invite families to participate in tangible ways. Have incoming families tell the child's story, describe what the child was like last year, and share who the child is in the family today. You might want to design a questionnaire for incoming families to complete to include in a portfolio.



Document Your Skill & Knowledge About the Learning Environment in Your Professional Portfolio

Include some or all of the following:

- An evaluation of an existing early childhood environment using the Learning Environment Checklist in Appendix B. Include a short written analysis of the strengths of the environment as well as how you might change or modify it to better support children's development.
- A photograph of a classroom, playscape, or learning center you have created with a brief description of why you designed it in this way.

Starting Your Professional Portfolio

Today, professionals in many fields create portfolios in which they document for employers and themselves their qualifications, skills, experiences, and unique qualities. Portfolios are “living documents” that will change as you grow, learn, and have new experiences.

End-of-Chapter Features

- **Demonstrate Your Understanding:** This section suggests activities and projects to help you learn more about the chapter's content—all organized by learning outcomes.

- **Document Your Knowledge and Competence:** This section suggests items that you might wish to put in your professional portfolio. Today, professionals in many fields create portfolios in which they document for employers and themselves their qualifications, skills, experiences, and unique qualities.

Portfolios are “living documents” that will change as you grow, learn, and have new experiences. Guidelines for starting a portfolio can be found in Chapter 1.

- **To Learn More:** This section lists books and websites that might be of interest if you want to follow up on what you have learned.

At the back of the book you will find a Bibliography, which lists the books and articles that we consulted as we wrote each chapter. We hope you will have the opportunity to read some of these references as you develop into a committed early childhood educator.



To Learn More

Read

Absorbent Mind, M. Montessori (1967)

Experimenting with the World: John Dewey and the Early Childhood Classroom, H. K. Cuffaro (1995)

Giants in the Nursery: A Biographical History of Developmentally Appropriate Practice, D. Elkind (2015)

Hidden History of Early Childhood Education, B. Hinitz (2013)

Hundred Languages of Children, C. Edwards, L. Gandini, & G. Forman (1998)

Visit a Website

The following agencies and organizations have websites related to the history of early childhood:

Froebel Foundation USA

Rachel McMillan Nursery School

The Association for Experiential Education: Progressive Education in the United States

High/Scope Educational Research Foundation

Bank Street College of Education

Why Waldorf Works (website of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America)

American Montessori Society

Association Montessori Internationale

North American Reggio Emilia Alliance



Document Your Skill & Knowledge About the History of ECE in Your Professional Portfolio

Include some or all of the following:

Explore an Educational Approach

- Read about one of the educational approaches discussed in this chapter (High/Scope, DIA, Waldorf, Montessori, Reggio Emilia). Describe what you see as the major features of the program. Analyze how what you read reflects the history of early childhood education described in the chapter. Include your thoughts and reactions to what you learned and the implications for you as an early childhood educator.

Read and Review a Book

- Read a book about one of the historical figures or European educational approaches discussed in this chapter. Write a review of the book that includes your thoughts about what you learned, how it helped you understand themes in the history of early childhood education, and implications for you as an early childhood educator.

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Supplements to this Text

The supplements package for the eleventh edition is revised and upgraded. All online ancillaries are available for download by adopting professors via pearsonhighered.com in the Instructor's Resource Center. Contact your Pearson sales representative for additional information.

Instructor's Resource Manual: This manual contains chapter overviews and activity ideas for both in and out of class.

Online Test Bank: The Test Bank includes a variety of test items, including multiple choice, and short essay, and is available in Word.

TestGen Computerized Test Bank: TestGen is a powerful assessment generation program available exclusively from Pearson that helps instructors easily create quizzes and exams. You install TestGen on your personal computer (Windows or Macintosh) and create your own exams for print or online use. The items are the same as those in the Test Bank. The tests can be downloaded in a variety of learning management system formats.

Online PowerPoint Slides: PowerPoint slides highlight key concepts and strategies in each chapter and enhance lectures and discussions.

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Chapter 1

The Teacher



SOURCE: Jeff Reese

We teach who we are.

JOHN GARDNER



Chapter Learning Outcomes:

- 1.1 Explain the context in which early childhood education occurs and the most important tasks that characterize the work of the early childhood educator.
- 1.2 Discuss the importance of teachers' personal attributes, both those that are inborn and those that are learned from culture, family, and community.
- 1.3 Demonstrate understanding of what it means to be a professional with emphasis on the role of morality and ethics.
- 1.4 Describe educational pathways that are appropriate to a variety of career goals and identify some that you think might be appropriate for you.

NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Professional Preparation Standard that applies to this chapter:

Standard 6: Becoming a Professional (NAEYC, 2011).

Key elements:

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



The Work of the Early Childhood Educator

Welcome to the field of early childhood education! You are embarking on the important career of educating and caring for young children. The kind of person you are and the kind of professional you become will have a lasting impact on children, families, and society. The purpose of this book is to help you become an educator who can nurture the growth of children, support families, work amicably with colleagues, advocate for children and families, and, in the future, make your own distinctive contributions to early childhood education.

This first chapter will introduce you to the field of early childhood education and the work of a teacher of young children. Before you learn what and how to teach, it is helpful to have some understanding of the teacher's role and responsibilities and the different kinds of teaching positions that are available to you.

In the process of learning more about yourself and about the field of early childhood education, you will acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will help you to grow into a dedicated early childhood educator who can provide nurturing experiences that support the learning and development of young children.

The Context

Because words create an image of who we are and what we do, what we call things is important. So we begin this first chapter with some basic definitions regarding who we serve and what we call the field and the people who work in it. **Early childhood** is generally defined as the period in the life span that includes birth through age 8. The field is generally referred to as "early childhood education," "early childhood education and care," or "early care and education" to emphasize the dual focus on learning and care that distinguishes early childhood programs and educators from other educators and schools.

In this book, we use the term **early childhood education (ECE)** to refer to education and care provided in all settings for children between birth and age 8. We use this term because education is a core function of the early childhood educator's work and because it brings our field into alignment with other arenas of education (elementary, secondary, and postsecondary) while suggesting the uniqueness of our field's focus on young children. Additionally, the role of education is the one most valued in our society. When programs are viewed as providing education, they are seen as worthy of respect, and the children who participate in them are viewed as learners. This term suggests that those who implement early childhood education support development and help children learn in the context of caring relationships.

Early childhood educators provide education and care for young children in a number of different kinds of settings with the goal of promoting positive development and learning. These programs are found in diverse facilities, in centers, schools, and homes. Programs for children under age 5 may be called **child care centers**, **preschools**, **child development centers**, or **prekindergartens** (a term often used for programs for children under age 5 housed in public schools). Programs for young children and their families may be called **family-child interaction** or **home-visitor programs**.

Programs for children 5 through 8 years of age (often housed in public schools) include kindergartens, primary grades, and **before- and after-school programs**. **Kindergarten** serves 5- and 6-year-olds and is the first year of formal schooling. **Primary grades** refers to grades 1 through 3 (and sometime includes kindergarten). Children with disabilities (birth to age 8) may be served in preschool, kindergarten, or primary grade classrooms, or may be taught in separate classrooms.

As you learn about and have experience in these different kinds of programs you are likely to notice differences in philosophy and practices between infant-toddler and preschool programs that serve children from birth through age 4 and kindergarten through third grade classrooms that serve children 5–8 years-of-age. Teachers in preschools are more likely to have training in child development and provide children with opportunities to explore and play in a planned learning environment. Preschool programs tend to emphasize child-choice and hands-on activity and base assessment on observations of children as they engage with learning experiences in the classroom.

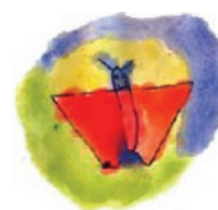
In elementary programs, as you probably remember from your childhood, teachers tend to focus more on the acquisition of knowledge and skills in subjects like reading and math, science and social studies. Elementary classrooms are often furnished with desks and learning is likely to involve reading and verbal instruction. Children do more assigned paper-and-pencil work and are most often assessed with paper and pencil tests. There are, of course, exceptions to these generalizations in every community.

Reflect On

Your Ideas about Early Childhood Teachers*

What do you see in your mind when you think of a teacher of young children? What is the teacher like? What is the teacher doing? (Keep a copy of your response so you can refer to it later in this course or program.)

* This is the first of many reflections that you will find in this book. Thinking about the questions asked and writing down your ideas will help you to become a reflective teacher of young children.



Of all the terms that are used to describe people who provide care and education for young children, we choose to use **teacher** “because it is the broadest term, it captures most of the job responsibilities, commands society’s respect, and is, after all, what children usually call the adults who care for and educate them no matter what the setting” (Bredekamp, 2011, p. 21). The term *teacher* emphasizes the things that unite us as a group of people who work with young children. It also is a term that the general public—people like your family and friends—will understand and about which they are likely to have positive associations. We call this chapter “The Teacher” because we believe this term best reflects you, a student using this text, and



SOURCE: Jeff Reese

your career aspirations, whether you are considering working with infants or 8-year-olds. We will also use the terms *caregiver*, *provider*, *practitioner*, and *early childhood educator* to refer to those who are employed to educate and care for children between birth and age 8 in infant–toddler programs, family–child interaction programs, home visiting programs, family child care homes, preschools, kindergartens, and primary grades.

Because programs for children under age 5 are most often found in preschools and child care centers while kindergarten through grade 3 programs are usually housed in elementary schools, it can be challenging to get a sense of the field of early childhood education as a whole. As you construct your understanding of the field, it may be helpful to keep in mind that programs for young children have the overarching purpose of supporting children's growth

and development. No matter what they are called or where they are housed, all programs for young children provide both care and education. People who work in early childhood programs, regardless of their job title or the age of the children, strive to support all aspects of children's development, promote learning, and provide nurture and care.

Working with young children is varied and challenging; it demands knowledge, skill, sensitivity, creativity, and hard work. If these challenges inspire you, you have probably chosen the right field. Early childhood education is especially rewarding for those who enjoy the spontaneous teaching and learning opportunities that abound in daily life with young children. It may not be as gratifying for people who prefer dispensing subject matter or for those who like work that is tidy and predictable. Sometimes, college students who begin their careers with visions of shaping young minds become discouraged when they discover how much of their time is spent mixing paint, changing pants, arbitrating disputes, mopping floors, and wiping noses. But while working with young children can be demanding and tiring, it can also be invigorating, for, in addition to more mundane tasks, you will get to have conversations with children, tell and read stories, sing, observe nature, explore neighborhoods, plant gardens, and provide inspiration for creative art, music, and movement. You will have the opportunity every day to plan and implement interesting and meaningful learning experiences. We have found that this wide range of tasks makes work with young children endlessly interesting and challenging.

While your most important task as an early childhood educator is working with children, you will also interact with families, colleagues, and community agencies. If you embarked on a career in early childhood education because you enjoy being with young children, you might be surprised at the extent to which teachers work with adults as well. You will interact with families and work with other staff members daily. You might also communicate with people in agencies concerned with children and families (such as child welfare workers and early intervention specialists) and engage with other professionals in order to further your own professional development.

We hope that you, as one of tomorrow's early childhood educators, will make a commitment to providing high-quality programs for young children (the chapters of this book will help you learn to do that). Eventually, you may also want to develop knowledge of broader societal issues and become involved in policy decisions and advocating for the rights and needs of young children.

Working with Children

The first and most important of your tasks as an early childhood teacher is working with children. Each day you will communicate with them, teach them, play with them, care for their physical needs, and provide them with a sense of physical and psychological security. The younger the children you work with, the more you will be called on to provide physical care and nurture.

Your work with young children will begin before the first child arrives and will continue each day after the last child has gone home. Because the learning environment is the primary teaching tool in programs for children under age 5, you will set the stage for learning by creating a classroom that is safe, healthy, and stimulating. You will also plan the daily schedule, design learning experiences, create materials, and use resources. After children arrive, you will observe and support them as they learn and play, mediate relationships, model the way you want people to treat one another, and help them develop skills and learn about the world. In a single day, you might be doing the work of a teacher, friend, secretary, parent, reference librarian, interior designer, nurse, janitor, counselor, entertainer, and diplomat.

PRACTICE BASED ON KNOWLEDGE OF CHILDREN Because young children are vulnerable and dependent on adults, early childhood educators regard all areas of development—social, emotional, intellectual, and physical—as important and interconnected. As a teacher of young children, you will be called on to nurture and support all these aspects of development. Concern for development of the **whole child** is an idea you will encounter over and over in this book. Care and education that is responsive to and based on research on children’s development is known as **developmentally appropriate practice (DAP)** (Bredekamp & Copple, 2009). On the pages of this book we explain how you can provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences for young children.

INTENTIONAL TEACHING Early childhood educators need to have a repertoire of teaching strategies that will effectively reach every child they encounter (Epstein, 2007; National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009). According to Ann Epstein (2007), an **intentional teacher** has a purpose behind every decision and skill in articulating the reasons for actions. The intentional teacher decides on goals for children’s development, thinks through alternatives, and then decides on strategies that will achieve these goals. This teacher also has a solid base of knowledge of development, research, **pedagogy**, and relevant standards. He or she knows how to use this knowledge to meet goals and adapt to individual differences in children. An important part of your preparation to be a teacher will be learning to select appropriate teaching strategies and to articulate why you chose them in ways that can be understood by children’s family members, and colleagues.

ADDRESSING STANDARDS More and more, early childhood educators are being asked to pay attention to **early learning standards**. These standards are developed by states to specify developmental expectations for children from birth through entrance to first grade. As part of the current emphasis on standards, you will probably be expected to do the following:

- Know what standards are used in your program and in your state
- Design a curriculum that addresses early learning standards
- Assess what children have learned in terms of standards
- Identify how you are meeting standards

These tasks are very similar to what teachers have done in the past, but today you can expect your work to be more visible, more public, and more likely to be evaluated.

Working with Families

Young children cannot be separated from the context of their families, so building good relations with family members is an important part of the role of the early childhood educator. Because early childhood programs often provide the child's first experience in the larger world away from home, you will play an important role in the transition between home and school—helping families and children learn to be apart from one another for a period of time each day. In fact, you may be the second professional (the first is usually the pediatrician) who has a relationship with the family and the child. A close, respectful partnership between home and the early childhood program is absolutely essential in programs for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. It is also important in programs for children over the age of five.

Just as your work with children brings with it diverse roles and demands, your work with families involves a range of attitudes and skills that are both similar to and different from those you need in your work with children. In your work with families, you may find yourself being a consultant, a social worker, an advocate, a teacher, a reporter, a librarian, a mediator, a translator, and a social director. These diverse roles provide another way that your job will be varied, engaging, and challenging.

Working as Part of a Team

An important feature of the role of most teachers is working collaboratively with other adults. Working as part of a team involves collaborating with coworkers, supervising volunteers, interacting with program administrators, and working with a host of other adults, ranging from custodians to counselors.

The ability to work productively on a team is an essential skill for an early childhood educator. In effective teams, people work together on behalf of a shared goal. They support and respect one another. They acknowledge and make the best use of one another's strengths and contributions. They understand their roles and fulfill their responsibilities. Perhaps most important, they communicate effectively and strive to resolve the conflicts that inevitably occur when people work together every day. For these reasons, many teachers find that participating in a team gives them support, stimulation, and a sense of belonging.

Being a part of a team is more than just turning up for work each day. It involves an understanding of team roles and responsibilities. It means being a good colleague by treating others with respect, honoring diverse values and communication styles, being sure that you do your share of the work, and appreciating your colleagues' contributions.



The Teacher as a Person

Because who you are as a person is the foundation for the professional you will become, we begin our exploration of the role of the teacher of young children by looking at personal characteristics. We will consider a personal quality that is inborn (temperament) and others that are shaped from infancy by a child's interaction with family, culture, and community. We will look at the kinds of personal characteristics that are desirable in teachers of young children and ask you to take a thoughtful look at who you are in relationship to the teacher you wish to become. As you enter the field the sum of your previous experiences will blend over time with your professional training and experiences working with children and families to forge your emerging professional identity as an early childhood educator.

There is no one "right" personality type, no single set of experiences or training, no single mold that produces a good teacher of young children. Although people from many different backgrounds can do a good job working with young children not everyone is right for this field. What makes a good early childhood teacher? What combination of attitudes, knowledge, skills, and personal qualities—including **dispositions** (tendencies to respond to experiences in certain ways)—contribute to the ability to work effectively with young children? Successful early childhood educators have been described as having a positive outlook, curiosity, openness to new ideas, enthusiasm, commitment, high energy, physical strength, a sense of humor, flexibility, self-awareness, the capacity for empathy, emotional stability, warmth, sensitivity, passion, perseverance, willingness to take risks, patience, integrity (honesty and moral uprightness), creativity, and love of learning (Cartwright, 1999; Colker, 2008; Feeney & Chun, 1985; Katz, 1993).

In addition all teachers of young children should love their work, communicate effectively, be good role models, and have deep appreciation and respect for children. Respect—the belief that every human being has value and deserves to be appreciated—is fundamental. It is not necessary (or possible) to love every child, but it is imperative that teachers respect the worth and value of every child and family member. It is also important for them to have the capacity to nurture and to be able to focus consistently on the best interests of others.

In 1948 child development scholar Barbara Biber wrote the following statement which we have included in the previous 10 editions of this book because it so eloquently describes aspects of psychological health that are important for teachers (Biber & Snyder, 1948).

A teacher needs to be a person so secure within herself that she can function with principles rather than prescriptions, that she can exert authority without requiring submission, that she can work experimentally but not at random and that she can admit mistakes without feeling humiliated (p. 282).

We know that genuine liking and respect for children, paired with a caring nature and an inquiring mind and spirit, lead to a sense of commitment that can turn teaching young children from a job into a deeply held sense of mission (sometimes referred to as a **calling**).



SOURCE: Jeff Reese

People with a wide range of personal **attributes** can be effective as teachers of young children. What is important is for you to be willing to look at yourself as objectively as possible, understand your personal qualities and how they might impact your work, and be willing to try to overcome anything that could hinder your ability to work effectively with children and their families. Who you are as a person has a strong and lasting impact and is the first thing that should be considered as you embark on your career as a teacher.

Some personal attributes, like temperament, are inborn. Others are shaped by early experiences and the culture of a person's family and community. **Culture** refers to the way a group of people lives as well as their shared, learned system of values, beliefs, and attitudes (dictionary.cambridge.org. NAEYC, 2009). People are immersed in their culture the way a fish is immersed in water. Its impact is so pervasive that a person may not be aware of its influences. The culture that a person experiences as a child has a powerful impact on their thinking and behavior and influences decisions throughout life. Your culture has had a profound influence on you and culture has a similarly powerful influence on the children you will teach and their families.

Temperament

We have found the research of pediatricians Alexander Thomas and Stella Chess on the temperament of infants, adapted to adults by therapists Jayne Burks and Melvin Rubenstein (1979), a good place for our college students to begin to look at their personal attributes. Thomas and Chess refer to **temperament** as an individual's behavioral style and typical ways of responding. They found that newborns show definite differences in traits of temperament that tend to persist over time. Although they can be modified

through life experiences, the nine dimensions of temperament are helpful in explaining personality differences in adults as well as children.

Figure 1.1 gives a brief description of the nine traits as they apply to adults and a continuum accompanying each trait. We have used these dimensions in our teaching as a tool for personal reflection. Traits of temperament are neither good nor bad; they are simply part of who you are. However, some characteristics, such as positive mood, a high activity level, and ease in adapting to new situations are helpful in working with young children.

Ruby and Michelle teach together in a classroom of 3- and 4-year-olds. Ruby arrives at school an hour before the children and families arrive; she likes to be alone in the classroom to gather her thoughts and get materials ready. Michelle rushes in at the last minute with

Figure 1.1 Thomas and Chess's Nine Dimensions of Temperament



a bag of intriguing items she has gathered related to their curriculum on plants. A half-hour after the school has opened, Ruby is quietly reading to a few of the younger children, including Joshua, who has been having a hard time separating from his mom. Michelle is leading the rest of the children on a hunt through the yard for flowers.

Ruby and Michelle display some different temperamental qualities, particularly rhythmicity and intensity of reaction. Recognizing that a child, parent, or colleague has a temperament that is different from your own (as in the case of Ruby and Michelle) may keep you from finding his or her behavior negative or difficult. To heighten your awareness of your own temperament, you may wish to plot yourself on the continua in Figure 1.1 and think about the implications of what you find for working in an early childhood education program.

Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner's model of multiple intelligences is another tool that can be helpful in understanding children and understanding yourself (Gardner, 1983). Gardner describes **intelligence**, the ability to think and learn, as culturally defined, based on what is needed and valued within a society. When you realize your unique talents and strengths (your intelligences), you are better able to maximize them. Figure 1.2 presents the eight categories identified by Gardner.

Understanding that people can be intelligent in different ways can also be helpful in your work with colleagues. Ruby and Michelle, in the earlier example, would do well to build on one another's strengths and learn from one another. Ruby, with her inclination to reflect and her strong interpersonal intelligence, is likely to become the expert on addressing children's social-emotional needs, and Michelle, with her strong naturalist intelligence, will become the expert in inspiring children and creating science curricula. If they are wise, they will come to appreciate each other for these differences.

Figure 1.2 Gardner's Multiple Intelligences

- **Musical intelligence:** The ability to produce and respond to music. This might be you, if you are especially sensitive to the aural environment of the classroom and play instruments and sing easily as you work with children.
- **Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence:** The ability to use the body to solve problems. This might be you, if you demonstrate good coordination and play actively with children.
- **Logical-mathematical intelligence:** The ability to understand the basic properties of numbers and principles of cause and effect. This might be you, if you love to invent challenges for yourself and children.
- **Linguistic intelligence:** The ability to use language to express ideas and learn new words or other languages. This might be you, if you are very articulate and enjoy word play, books, storytelling, and poetry.
- **Spatial intelligence:** The ability to form a mental image of spatial layouts. This might be you, if you are sensitive to the physical arrangement of a room, are able to easily see how to rearrange the classroom, or especially enjoy working with children in blocks.
- **Interpersonal intelligence:** The ability to understand other people and work with them. This might be you, if you are attentive to relationships and demonstrate sociability and leadership.
- **Intrapersonal intelligence:** The ability to understand things about oneself. This might be you, if you have strong interests and goals, know yourself well, are focused inward, and demonstrate confidence.
- **Naturalist intelligence:** The ability to recognize plants and animals in the environment. This might be you, if you know all about the flora and fauna in your community and have an especially well developed science curriculum and science area in your classroom.

Learning more about yourself can help you be more sensitive to and accepting of differences among people, more aware of the impact of your personality on others, and better able to consider the kinds of work settings in which you might work most effectively.

Reflect On

Your Temperament and Intelligences

Use Thomas and Chess's temperament dimensions and Gardner's model of multiple intelligences to reflect on your temperament and intelligences. What do they tell you about yourself? What are your preferences for activity and setting? What are you good at? What is challenging for you? What might be the implications of what you learned about your personality for relating to children, families, and colleagues?



Personal Values and Morality

The decisions you make each day, the foods you eat, the place you live, the magazines and books you read, the television programs and videos you watch, and the work and play you choose are all influenced by your values. **Values** are principles or standards that a person believes to be important, desirable, or worthwhile and that are prized for themselves (e.g., truth, integrity, beauty, love, honesty, wisdom, loyalty, justice, and respect). You develop your values during a complex process of interaction between your family's culture, religion, and values, community views, and life experiences. Your professional values will evolve from these personal values in combination with professional experiences. If you spend some time reflecting, you will be able to identify your personal values and see the impact they have on your life.

You are very likely to have chosen early childhood education because you care deeply about children. You might be motivated by a concern for social justice, religious values, or a passion for learning. You might have a desire to help children enjoy fulfilling lives, to be successful students, or to become productive members of society. As part of your preparation for becoming a teacher of young children, it is worthwhile to consider what values brought you to the decision to enter this field and how these values might influence the ways you will work with young children.

Reflect On

Your Values and the Moral Messages You Received as a Child

Make a list of your values. How do you think you developed these values? Which values were directly taught in your home, place of worship, or community? Were some taught in indirect ways? What messages did you receive about behaviors that are right and wrong? How do these reflect your childhood and upbringing? Can you think of ways that your values have changed over time?



It is often surprising to discover that other people do not share the values that you hold dear—it is one of the reasons that the first year in a new community or a new relationship (e.g., with a new spouse) or the first year of working in a program can be