

# EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, CERTIFICATE OF PROFICIENCY

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## Early Childhood Certificate for K-6 Teachers (Preschool Focus)

*21-Hour Program*

This specialized Early Childhood Certificate is designed for K-6 teachers who wish to expand their skills and knowledge to teach preschool-aged children (ages 3 and 4). The program consists of 21 hours of comprehensive training, equipping educators with the necessary tools to create engaging, developmentally appropriate learning environments for young learners.

### Program Overview:

The certificate program provides K-6 teachers with an in-depth understanding of early childhood education principles, emphasizing cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development in preschool-aged children. It covers essential teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, and hands-on learning approaches tailored to the developmental stages of young children.

### Key Areas of Focus:

- Child Development:** Explore the milestones and needs of preschoolers, with a focus on language acquisition, social-emotional growth, and motor skills.
- Curriculum Planning:** Learn to design play-based, child-centered curricula that engage preschool learners and support foundational academic skills.
- Classroom Management:** Gain strategies for creating a nurturing, safe, and stimulating classroom environment that promotes positive behaviors and learning.
- Family Engagement:** Understand the importance of building strong relationships with families to support children's learning and development.
- Assessment Techniques:** Discover age-appropriate assessment strategies to track and support individual child progress.

**Professional Development:** Some of the hours from this certificate program can be applied toward professional development requirements, offering flexibility for teachers looking to earn continuing education credits while expanding their expertise.

### Certification Benefits:

- Equip yourself with the skills to transition smoothly into preschool teaching roles.
- Enhance your ability to foster social, emotional, and cognitive development in young children.
- Develop a strong foundation in early childhood pedagogy that aligns with current best practices.
- Make a meaningful impact on young learners' early education experiences, setting them up for future success.

Upon completion, participants will have gained valuable insights into early childhood education and earned a certificate to enhance their teaching credentials, preparing them to teach preschool effectively while enriching their professional development journey.

## Curriculum

Code	Title	Hours
ECE 2113	Basic Child Growth and Development	3
ECE 2313	Foundations and Theories in Early Childhood Education	3
ECE 2513	Curriculum for Early Childhood Education	3
ECE 2613	Methods and Materials Using Developmentally Appropriate Practices and Activities for Young Children	3
ECE 2996	Practicum in Early Childhood Education	6
SPED 2023	Development and Characteristics of Diverse Learners	3
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>21</b>

## Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcomes for Early Childhood Education Certificate Program

This Early Childhood Education Certificate program aligns with the **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)** and the **Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)** Standards to ensure that students are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and practical experience necessary to become effective early childhood educators. The following learning outcomes are designed for students across the program's six courses.

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## 1. Basic Child Growth and Development

- **Understanding Child Development:** Demonstrate an understanding of the key developmental milestones and processes for children from birth to age eight, aligned with NAEYC Standard 1 (Promoting Child Development and Learning).
- **Application of Developmental Knowledge:** Apply developmental knowledge to recognize individual learning needs and differences in children (CEC Standard 1: Learner Development and Individual Learning Differences).
- **Observation Skills:** Utilize observational techniques to assess developmental progress and identify potential delays or areas for support (NAEYC Standard 3: Observing and Recording Children's Development).

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## 2. Foundations and Theories in Early Childhood Education

- **Foundational Theories:** Analyze key educational theories and models that inform early childhood education practices, including cognitive, social-emotional, and behavioral theories (NAEYC Standard 2: Building Family and Community Relationships).
- **Critical Thinking:** Synthesize various theoretical approaches and apply them to real-world early childhood education scenarios (CEC Standard 5: Application of Research to Practice).
- **Ethical Practices:** Demonstrate a commitment to ethical practice by understanding the foundational principles of early childhood education and their application in creating positive learning environments (NAEYC Standard 4: Using Developmentally Effective Approaches).

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## 3. Curriculum for Early Childhood Education

- **Curriculum Design:** Develop developmentally appropriate curricula for young children based on current research and best practices, focusing on play-based learning (NAEYC Standard 5: Understanding Content Knowledge and Curriculum).
- **Inclusive Learning Environments:** Create inclusive curriculum plans that address the diverse needs of all children, including children with disabilities (CEC Standard 3: Curricular Content Knowledge).
- **Learning Outcomes and Assessment:** Establish measurable learning objectives and develop effective strategies to assess young children's progress (NAEYC Standard 6: Becoming a Professional).

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## 4. Methods and Materials Using Developmentally Appropriate Practices and Activities for Children

- **Instructional Strategies:** Apply developmentally appropriate teaching methods and materials that foster the cognitive, physical, and emotional growth of young children (NAEYC Standard 3: Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families).
- **Hands-on Learning:** Design engaging, play-based activities and experiences that promote creativity, problem-solving, and social skills development (CEC Standard 4: Assessment).
- **Adaptation and Differentiation:** Adapt teaching methods and materials to meet the individual needs and abilities of all children, including those with exceptionalities (CEC Standard 5: Instructional Planning and Strategies).

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## 5. Practicum in Early Childhood Education

- **Practical Application of Theory:** Demonstrate the ability to integrate theoretical knowledge and teaching strategies into a real-world early childhood classroom setting (NAEYC Standard 7: Reflective Practice).
- **Professionalism:** Exhibit professional conduct, including maintaining ethical standards, engaging with families, collaborating with colleagues, and reflecting on personal teaching practices (CEC Standard 7: Collaboration).
- **Child-Centered Instruction:** Implement child-centered teaching practices that nurture the development of the whole child, ensuring equity and access for all learners (NAEYC Standard 1: Promoting Child Development and Learning).

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## 6. Development and Characteristics of Diverse Learners

- **Diversity and Inclusion:** Recognize the diverse characteristics, backgrounds, and needs of learners, and incorporate inclusive teaching strategies that respect and celebrate diversity (NAEYC Standard 4: Using Developmentally Effective Approaches).

- **Individualized Support:** Identify and apply strategies to support children with diverse learning needs, including those with disabilities, from various cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds (CEC Standard 6: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice).
- **Family and Community Engagement:** Build positive relationships with families and communities, recognizing the role they play in supporting the diverse needs and development of children (NAEYC Standard 2: Building Family and Community Relationships).

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**Conclusion:**

By the end of this Early Childhood Education Certificate program, students will have demonstrated mastery in developmental theory, curriculum design, and instructional strategies. They will be prepared to create inclusive, developmentally appropriate educational environments for young children, grounded in the principles of NAEYC and CEC standards. Furthermore, they will have developed the ability to reflect on their practice, engage in ethical professional behaviors, and create positive learning outcomes for all children, including those with exceptionalities or from diverse backgrounds.

For program assessment visit: [https://www.atu.edu/assessment/program\\_assessment.php](https://www.atu.edu/assessment/program_assessment.php)