

Early Childhood Education

1

Exam Information	Description
Exam number 325 Items 32 National Career Cluster Human Services Certification available Yes	The Early Childhood Education 1 industry certification exam assesses learners on child-related careers and the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA). It includes developmentally appropriate practices (DAP), curriculum and facility design for young children, and knowledge of Early Childhood Education lab training. The exam evaluates learners' understanding of concepts and standards outlined in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education. It may also incorporate elements of student leadership and competitive events (FCCLA). Previous completion of the Child Development course is required.

Exam Blueprint and Performance Skills

Standard	Percentage of exam score
1. Training And Careers	5%
2. Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP)	30%
3. Social And Emotional Development	11%
4. Positive Guidance for Preschoolers	24%
5. Observation Techniques	8%
6. Child Abuse	8%
7. Lesson Planning	14%

*Includes performance skill evaluation

Standard 1 - Training And Careers

Identify the types of training and careers in the early childhood education industry.

Objective 1 Identify the advantages of obtaining the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential.

1. Requirements for obtaining the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)
 - a. 120 hours of professional education
 - b. 480 hours of work experience
 - c. CDA professional portfolio
 - d. CDA observation with a Professional Development Specialist (PD specialist)
 - e. CDA exam
2. Advantages for obtaining the CDA
 - a. Advance your career
 - b. Meet job requirements
 - c. Higher wage opportunities may be available

Objective 2 Identify the advantages of furthering your education.

Objective 3 Identify the career options in the early childhood field. Ex: Child life specialist, child care center worker, elementary teacher/specialist, Headstart teacher/director, education coach, entrepreneur, etc

Optional: Standard performance evaluations on the final page of this document

Standard 2 - Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Standard one sentence description

Objective 1 Review the domains of development (social, emotional, physical, and cognitive)

Objective 2 Identify developmentally appropriate (DAP) activities for young children.

1. Define developmentally appropriate practices (DAP)
 - a. Methods that promote each child's optimal development and learning through a strengths-based, play-based approach to joyful, engaged learning.
2. NAEYC- National Association for the Education of Young Children
 - a. Developmentally appropriate practice is designed to meet children "where they are, both as individuals and as part of a group"

3. 3 Core Considerations of DAP (see: naeyc.org)
 - a. Commonality in children's development and learning
 - b. Individuality reflecting each child's unique characteristics
 - c. Context in which development and learning occur
4. Nine Principles of Child Development and Learning (see: naeyc.org)
 - a. Development is affected by biological and environmental factors
 - i. Serve and return- the two-way warm, responsive interaction between the child and the caregiver.
 - b. All domains of development are important and support others
 - c. Play is essential and promotes learning
 - i. Concrete, sensory, & pretend experiences
 - d. Roles of the teacher in play
 - i. Play partner- participates in the play
 - ii. Play facilitator- makes suggestions, asks questions, & supports social interactions in the play
 - iii. Follow the child's lead
5. Mildred Parten's Six Stages of Play
 - a. Unoccupied- Children are relatively still and their play appears scattered. Allows children to practice manipulating materials, mastering their self-control, and learning about the world.
 - b. Solitary- Children entertain themselves without any other social involvement. They can explore freely, master new personal skills like motor or cognitive skills, and prepare themselves to play with others
 - c. Onlooker- Children who sit back and engagingly watch other children playing, but do not join in. Children learn about the social rules of play and relationships; they explore different ways of playing or using materials and they learn about the world.
 - d. Parallel- Children play next to each other but are not really interacting together. It's like a warm up exercise—children work side by side on the same activity, practicing skills and learning new methods to engage together
 - e. Associative- children begin to be more interested in the other players. They can start to use their newfound social skills to engage with other children or adults during an activity or exploration
 - f. Cooperative- Children play cooperatively, adopt group goals, and establish rules for play. Cooperation is an advanced skill that children need support to learn
6. Variations in culture, experience, and individuals must be considered
 - a. Individually/culturally appropriate
 - b. Support children's strengths and abilities(capability, potential or capacity)
 - c. Development in learning occur at varying rates from child to child and uneven rates across different areas for each child
7. Children are active learners from birth, creating meaning from their experiences
 - a. Children learn through active exploration and are complex thinkers
 - b. Active vs. passive learning
 - i. Active learning- being actively involved and engaged in the learning by doing, seeing, and thinking; it is hands-on and active
 - ii. Passive learning- sitting and listening without interaction with others, the instructor, or manipulative objects (ex. puppet show)
8. The environment can increase children's motivation to learn
 - a. A sense of belonging requires both psychological and physical safety
 - b. Connections with home and community help children feel psychologically safe
 - c. Encourage each child's sense of agency
9. Children learn in an integrated fashion that cuts across academic areas

- a. Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Howard Gardner
- 10. Children need to be challenged just beyond their level of mastery
 - a. Social Development Theory, Lev Vygotsky (Zone of Proximal Development)
- 11. Technology and media can be valuable when used responsibly.
 - a. Effective uses of technology and media by children are active, hands-on, engaging, and empowering
 - b. Expands children's access to knowledge and skills
 - c. Should not replace real hands-on experiences

Objective 3 Explore the types of learning strategies for children

- 1. Child-directed or Child-initiated- a child decides what to do, the idea, and the materials to use, and the adult supports learning by following their lead
- 2. Teacher-directed- a teacher decides what to do and how to do it (i.e. circle time, teaching a new game, teacher-directed steps, routines, etc.)
- 3. Open-ended questions- asking questions that require more than a yes or no answer, this is the ideal. Use the 5 W's (who, what, where, when, why, and how) to begin a question so children can answer with more description
- 4. Close-ended questions- questions that require only a "yes" or "no" response. These limit or end conversations, discussions, and learning. Not an effective method unless it is followed by an open-ended question

Standard 3 - Social And Emotional Development

Students will support social and emotional development and implement positive guidance.

Objective 1 Students will develop a warm, positive, supportive, and responsive relationship with each child.

- 1. Appreciate each child
 - a. Use observations to understand each child
 - b. Create experiences that support their sense of belonging
 - c. Value the child's temperament
 - i. Temperament: how children approach, react to, and relate to the world around them
 - d. Support children in taking pride in their own individual and cultural identity
 - e. Promote a child's sense of self and help them flourish
 - i. Identity: Roles, behaviors, and attributes that we assign ourselves
 - ii. Self-esteem: Perception of your own self-worth and value
 - iii. Personal power: Growth mindset vs. fixed mindset
 - iv. Optimism: the belief that good things will happen to you and negative events are temporary setbacks to overcome
 - v. Resiliency: Ability to withstand, recover from, and adjust to setbacks or change
- 2. Guide children in expressing their feelings
 - a. Teach children "feeling" words (happy, sad, excited, disappointed, etc.) and associate the name with a way they feel so they can articulate the feeling instead of acting out
 - b. Give permission to have all feelings, even negative and allow children to not feel ashamed

- c. Give time, space, and the means to work through their feelings; model calmness when discussing and dealing with feelings
 - d. Active listening: Adult listens thoughtfully and carefully to a child does not offer solutions, and does not criticize
 - i. Reflectively recognizes and accepts the child's thoughts and feelings. Repeat back to the child what they are feeling and saying
3. Establish partnerships with families
- a. Family is a group of people, not necessarily biologically related that share emotional bonds, common values, goals, and responsibilities and contribute significantly to each other's well-being
 - b. Develop a cooperative and collaborative relationship with families where you both make the interest of the child your focus
 - c. A partnership with families contributes to school success and provides a stable presence for the child
 - d. Ways to create partnerships:
 - i. Include pictures of families in the center
 - ii. Encourage family participation in the center
 - iii. Communicate with families by providing regular information concerning center business or happenings
 - iv. Hold parent-teacher conferences to discuss the child and center
 - v. Maintain confidentiality of any information families share

Objective 2 Students will guide children to function effectively in the group and to acquire social skills.

- 1. Encourage successful social interactions
 - a. Develop a positive relationship with each child
 - b. Caregiver sets the example and expectations for how children relate to others by:
 - i. Talking and listening to the child respectfully
 - ii. Being sensitive to children's feelings
 - iii. Validating children's efforts, accomplishments, and progress, not intellect
 - iv. Let them know you care about, appreciate, and value them unconditionally
 - v. Help children understand social rules, play cooperatively, and contribute to a learning community
 - vi. When communicating with children, staff and families state positive information before negative information
- 2. Build prosocial skills
 - a. Teach, support, and facilitate prosocial skills (compassion, empathy, sympathy, positive interactions, respect, and support)
 - b. Help children put feelings into words
 - c. Read books that allow you to discuss characters, feelings, and actions
 - d. Help children interpret facial expressions in media and in others
- 3. Help children resolve conflict
 - a. Teach and model effective ways to resolve conflicts independently
 - b. Help children see that a conflict is a shared problem that can be solved by seeing, listening to, and understanding both points of view and finding a solution that everyone can agree upon
 - c. The end goal is for children to learn how to resolve conflicts on their own.

Standard 4 - Positive Guidance For Preschoolers

Explore the positive guidance techniques for preschoolers.

Objective 1 Define positive guidance, discipline, and punishment

1. Positive Guidance: consistent ways of supporting children to identify express and regulate emotions, communicate needs with others, and develop deep and trusting relationships
2. Discipline: to teach a behavior by instruction and exercise in accordance with rules of conduct.
 - a. Discipline should be firm, fair, and friendly
3. Punishment: A penalty inflicted for wrongdoing, a crime, or an offense. Physical or verbal attacks. Might teach obedience to authority (out of fear), but not self-control, which enhances self-respect. May restrain a child temporarily, but it does not teach self-discipline. Demeans the child and negatively affects the relationship
4. Distinguish between punishment and discipline/guidance techniques
5. Self-discipline is the overall goal of guidance and discipline. The ability for the child or person to direct their own behavior and not to be directed upon

Objective 2 All children's behavior is a form of communication. Review common reasons for children's behaviors. (Child Development)

1. To be heard, understood, or validated
2. Common behavior for the child's development
3. Natural curiosity
4. They do not know any better
5. To get attention
6. To get power
7. For revenge
8. Feeling inadequate or incapable
9. The need to feel that they belong

Objective 3 Discuss reasons and guidelines for setting expectations. Review natural consequences in Child Development.

1. Setting expectations with children means setting a guideline for behavior
2. State your expectations clearly and firmly, discuss limits in advance, use consequences as a form of discipline when expectations are not met, give the child explanations for your expectations, and then listen to what they have to say about it

Objective 4 Discuss guidelines for using positive guidance techniques.

1. Respond to aggressive behavior in nonaggressive ways. i.e.: When responding to a 2-year-old having a temper tantrum, if the caregiver remains calm and nonaggressive, then the situation

- becomes deescalated and can be resolved quicker. If the child is going to harm themselves or someone else remove them from the situation
2. Adjust the environment so that items that might be a potential problem are placed out of sight
 3. Positive statements
 - a. Clearly stating what the child IS expected to do instead of telling them what not to do. i.e.: "Walk in the house" vs. "Don't run in the house."
 - b. When giving directions, get down at the child's eye level to talk with them
 - c. To encourage a child to complete a task, tell them what needs to be done in short and simple steps (2 or 3 max) and then go and help them get started
 4. Redirection
 - a. Substituting unacceptable or dangerous behavior for acceptable behavior by helping the child to pay attention to or focus on something else that is equally or more appealing
 - b. Children up to two years old can easily be distracted to change their behavior like playing with a toy instead of the electrical outlet
 - c. Some behaviors just need to be redirected to an appropriate place such as having a child jump on a trampoline instead of on the bed
 5. Reverse attention
 - a. Attention is a powerful reinforcement to guide children in a positive or negative direction
 - b. Ignore the negative behavior when possible and reinforce the positive behavior
 6. Positive reinforcement
 - a. Great motivator and modifies behavior
 - b. Acknowledge positive behaviors and effort
 - c. Ex: sticker chart, reward system, praise, etc.
 7. Limited choices
 - a. Give children opportunities to make choices within the caregiver's limits
 - b. Limit the number of options provided and be careful of the choices you give by making sure that you can really stand by it
 - c. When children can make their own choices, even if it is within an instructor's limits, they not only get practice in making decisions, but they feel in control of the situation and are more willing to do what was asked
 8. Time Away/Cool down area
 - a. An area or time away where a child can calm down

Standard 5 - Observation Techniques

Incorporate observation techniques and guidelines while studying children and developing strategies to meet their needs.

Objective 1 Examine the purposes of observing children.

1. Observation - Watching children with the clear goal of studying or understanding
2. Understand the child and their experience in the classroom
3. Learn how to respond and interact with children
4. Identify how best to challenge and support the children

5. Develop realistic curriculum and goals

Standard 6 - Child Abuse

Identify child abuse.

Objective 1 Identify signs of child abuse.

1. Provider shall ensure that no child is subjected to physical, emotional, or sexual abuse while in care
2. Any person who witnesses or suspects that a child has been subjected to abuse, neglect, or exploitation shall immediately notify Child Protective Services or law enforcement
3. Inform parents, children, and those who interact with the children of the center's behavioral expectations and how any misbehavior will be handled
4. Individuals who interact with the children shall guide children's behavior by using positive reinforcement and redirection, and by setting clear limits that promote children's ability to become self-disciplined
5. Caregivers shall use gentle, passive restraint with children only when it is needed to stop children from injuring themselves or others, or from destroying property
6. Interactions with the children shall not include: restraining a child's movement by binding, tying, or any other form of restraint that exceeds gentle, passive restraint

Optional: Standard pPerformance evaluations on the final page of this document

Standard 7 - Lesson Planning

Understand important components to successful lesson planning.

Objective 1 Identify the components of a lesson plan.

1. Lesson Plan- A description of the activity that includes goals and procedure
 - a. Objective- The overall goals that children may learn, know and/or do
 - b. Standard- concise written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education
 - c. Procedure- Step-by-step instructions for implementing the activity

- d. Supplies- materials needed to complete the activity
- e. Rationale- explains how the activity benefits the child
- f. Reflection/evaluation- a review of the activity including any changes, children's learning, and teacher's learning.

Performance Skills Evaluation

Exam name: Early Childhood Education 1

Candidate Name: _____

Performance assessments may be completed and evaluated any time before the certification is issued. The following performance skills can be used in connection with the associated standards and exam. The evaluator will function as the subject matter expert to determine if the candidate meets the skills requirements with a Yes/No for passing.

Standard 5 – Observation Techniques

- Practice observing, interpreting and reflecting on observations of children. (Video or in person)

Pass:

Evaluator Name:

Date:
