Child Development

CSU Transitional Kindergarten Pre-Service Preparation Project
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Module Outcomes

- Understand the connection between child development and learning for the TK student
- Recognize the impact of early environments and experiences on learning
- Know that appropriate practice in the TK classroom is based on the knowledge of how children learn and develop
- Identify developmentally appropriate practice in the classroom
- Realize the role of being an intentional teacher, engaging TK students in the learning process
Module Activities

You are invited to explore current research and resources to reinforce and enhance your understanding of child development and implications for the TK classroom. You will participate in the following activities:

- Read research based articles about child development principles and domains of development focusing on the “whole child.”

- Watch videos and read correlating research-grounded articles about the impact of environments and experience on learning; the relationship between social-emotional and cognitive development; and developmentally appropriate practice and best instruction.

- Interact using online sources and/or face-to-face engagements: journal entries and reflections, response charts or posters, website exploration, various dialogue exchanges, and scenario investigation.
Key Point: Early Development Makes a Lasting Impact

Early childhood, birth to eight years, is a time of remarkable development: physical and motor, language, cognitive and social-emotional development.

Neuroscientists have found early experiences – particularly from birth to age five – shape brains in developing a strong foundation for thinking and learning, regulating emotions and behavior.
Key Point: Principles of Child Development Inform Practice

- Research and theory about child development have provided well supported generalizations to guide practice and instruction:

  12 Principles of Child Development and Learning that Inform Practice.

- Best practice is based on these principles.
Key Point: Teach to the Dimensions of Learning

Recognizing the wide range of abilities and experiences upon which early learning and development rests, the “whole child” must be embraced and focus given to the five dimensions of learning.

Cognition and General Knowledge

Language

Approaches toward Learning

Social and Emotional

Physical Well –Being and Motor

National Education Goals Panel, 1998
Key Point: Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Supports Optimal Learning for All Children

- Developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) requires both meeting children where they are—which means that teachers must get to know them well—and enabling them to reach goals that are both challenging and achievable.

- All teaching practices should be appropriate to children’s age and developmental status, attuned to them as unique individuals, and responsive to the social and cultural contexts in which they live.

- Developmentally appropriate practice ensures that goals and experiences are suited to children’s learning and development and challenging enough to promote their progress and interest.

- Best practice is based on knowledge—not on assumptions—of how children learn and develop.
Key Point: DAP Environments Engage Children in Learning

“Children who attend high-quality early learning programs benefit from rich opportunities to learn through play.

Their play focuses on the world around them as they seek to make sense of the thoughts and behaviors of other people and experiment with living and nonliving things and make discoveries.

Children thrive when offered a curriculum that integrates all the domains in a way that is developmentally, culturally, and linguistically meaningful and appropriate.”


- participate at their own learning level.
- engage in active learning.
- explore and discover.
- socialize and interact with others.
- enjoy “hands-on” experiences that are also “minds-on.”
- make choices, taking responsibility for their learning.
- respect individual differences and cultural diversity.
Children with Special Needs

Developmentally appropriate adaptations, accommodations, and modifications need to be individualized for students, based upon their needs, personal learning styles, and interests.

Teachers’ attention to individual variation is essential.

Intentional teaching is necessary for the child to function and learn well in an inclusive setting.

Key Point: DAP Provides Inclusive Environments

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
Because culture and language are critical components of children's development, practices cannot be developmentally appropriate unless they are responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity.

*Developmentally Appropriate Practice*, Copple C. and Bredekamp S

Instructional content and methods will vary depending on what the teacher knows about each child, including a child's developmental level as well as the social and cultural context of the family.
Key Point: DAP Promotes Intentional Teaching

Meeting children where they are in their learning is essential, but no good teacher simply leaves them there.

The developmentally appropriate teacher purposefully plans experiences to promote children’s learning and development, while providing supports and scaffolding so children can “stretch” to acquire new learning.

Effective teaching does not happen by chance.

A hallmark of developmentally appropriate teaching is intentionality.

Adapted from NAEYC
Resources


Resources


For additional information please visit [http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/tk/](http://teachingcommons.cdl.edu/tk/) or contact Dr. Kim Norman, CSU TK Project Director, at knorman@fullerton.edu.