

Onboarding Framework

Overview

What is it?

The onboarding framework is a comprehensive, adaptable tool designed to support new early childhood educators as they enter their roles. It goes beyond basic licensing requirements by providing a structured approach that familiarizes staff with the program's culture, policies, compliance standards, and growth opportunities. Emphasizing relationship-building and collaboration, this onboarding tool helps educators feel confident and aligned with the program's mission. Its flexible format allows programs to personalize the content to reflect their unique philosophy, curriculum, and operations, creating a solid foundation for educator success.



Why is it valuable?

This framework is valuable because it strengthens educator readiness, promotes consistency, and enhances the quality of care in early childhood settings. Setting clear expectations and offering ongoing support helps new staff integrate smoothly while aligning their practice with the program's values. It also ensures regulatory compliance, encourages reflective practice, and fosters a positive team culture, reducing turnover and improving outcomes for children. Its customizable design allows each program to maintain authenticity while upholding high standards.

How do I use it?

Click here for the **Onboarding Framework**.

Where can I learn more?

Click here for the **White Paper on Onboarding**

Click here for the **CCI at NCMC**.

Click here for the **MI's ECE Professional Standards and Competencies**

Who can I talk to?

A CCI team member is available to consult with you on your customization.

Contact us at **ECE@ncmich.edu**.

Onboarding Framework

A strong onboarding experience is the foundation for success in any early childhood education setting. This framework is designed to support new educators as they transition into their roles, ensuring they feel confident, knowledgeable, and connected to their program’s mission and values.

The North Central Michigan College Child Care Initiative has developed a comprehensive onboarding process that goes beyond meeting basic licensing requirements. This framework provides a structured yet flexible approach that centers can adapt to their unique needs while maintaining high standards for quality care and education. It is designed to familiarize new staff with essential policies and procedures, introduce them to the program’s philosophy, and create opportunities for professional growth and collaboration.

Why Use This Onboarding Framework?

<i>Smooth Transition</i>	Helps new staff integrate seamlessly into their roles by providing clear expectations and structured guidance.
<i>Regulatory Compliance</i>	Ensures all licensing requirements, background checks, and mandatory trainings are completed efficiently.
<i>Professional Development</i>	Offers additional learning opportunities focused on best practices in early childhood education, including the center’s curriculum approach and philosophy.
<i>Stronger Team Culture</i>	Encourages meaningful relationships among staff, fostering a supportive and collaborative work environment.
<i>Higher Quality of Care</i>	Equips educators with the tools and knowledge they need to provide enriching experiences for young learners.

Objectives of the Onboarding Process

<i>Understanding Licensing & Compliance</i>	Staff will complete all required background checks and training to ensure compliance with child care licensing regulations.
<i>Acquaintance with Policies & Expectations</i>	Staff and the Program Director will review the center’s policies, procedures, and expectations to establish a shared understanding of professional responsibilities.
<i>Introduction to Program Culture & Philosophy</i>	Staff will learn about the center’s curriculum approach and philosophy, along with the center’s vision, mission, and core values, to align their teaching approach with the program’s guiding principles.

Building Strong Relationships

Staff will complete learning and personality style assessments and engage in team reflections to foster collaboration and strengthen workplace relationships.

Commitment to Best Practices

Equips educators with the tools and knowledge they need to provide enriching experiences for young learners.

By implementing this onboarding framework, early learning centers can create an inclusive, well-structured, and engaging experience that sets new educators up for long-term success.

Customizing the Framework to Fit Your Program

While this onboarding framework is designed to provide a strong foundation, it is not a one-size-fits-all solution. This onboarding framework is provided in a Google Document format so that program administrators can edit, revise, and personalize it based on their policies, curriculum approach, and operational procedures. Each early childhood education center operates within its own unique context—with its own values, goals, curriculum, and community. As such, programs are encouraged to adapt and personalize the framework to reflect their specific approach and identity.

This resource was developed with a Reggio Emilia-inspired program in mind. As such, many of the examples, language, and recommended practices reflect that philosophy, including an emphasis on emergent curriculum, child-led inquiry, and the environment as the third teacher. If your program follows a different educational approach—such as Montessori, HighScope, Creative Curriculum, or a faith-based model—you will want to revise relevant sections to ensure alignment with your center's philosophy and daily practices.

The documents and prompts provided throughout this onboarding resource are meant to serve as templates and inspiration, not fixed directives.

Consider the following as you tailor the materials:

Curriculum philosophy:

Staff will complete all required background checks and training to ensure compliance with child care licensing regulations.

Policy & procedure details:

Update documents to align with your operational structure, staffing model, and state/local licensing requirements.

Program values & vision:

Revise vision, mission, and core value statements to accurately reflect your center's beliefs and goals.

Professional development topics:

Adjust training topics and reflective practice prompts to match the tools, frameworks, and assessment methods used in your program.

By customizing this framework, you can ensure that onboarding feels authentic and relevant to your staff—reinforcing the culture you've built and laying a meaningful foundation for new educators to thrive in your setting.

Options for Integration

While this document serves as a strong foundation, centers may also choose to integrate it into a Learning Management System (LMS) for better organization and tracking. Free LMS options to consider include:

- *Google Classroom*
- *Canvas Free-to-Teachers*
- *Moodle*

Organizing Documentation & Licensing Compliance

To streamline the onboarding process and ensure compliance with licensing requirements, it is crucial to establish a system for organizing and filing forms or use a learning management system. Consider the following best practices:

- Maintain a digital filing system for required documents, such as background checks, training certificates, and signed policy acknowledgments.
- Use cloud storage solutions (Google Drive, Dropbox) for easy access and organization.
- Develop a checklist to track completed licensing requirements for each staff member.

Encouraging Feedback & Dialogue

Creating an open and supportive onboarding experience involves ongoing communication with new staff members.

Consider incorporating:

- Regular check-ins with program administrators or mentors to address questions and concerns.
- Team discussions and reflection sessions to foster a sense of belonging and professional growth.

By ensuring that new educators have access to clear expectations, strong support systems, and opportunities for engagement, this onboarding framework will help create a positive and lasting impact within your center.

Week #1

Licensing & Trainings

Consent & Disclosure Form

Directions: *Completing the Consent and Disclosure Form*

To ensure compliance with licensing requirements for the (name of center), all employees—regardless of prior employment in a licensed program—must complete a new Consent and Disclosure Form to be added to the (name of center) license.

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Steps to Complete

- 1. Access the Form:** Click [HERE](#) to open the **Consent and Disclosure Form**.
- 2. Print and Fill Out the Form:** Complete all required fields on the form. Ensure the information is accurate and legible.
- 3. Submit the Form:** Upload the completed file to submit it.

R. 400.8112 Comprehensive background check; fingerprinting. Rule 112. (1) Pursuant to sections 5n and 5q of the act, MCL 722.115n and 722.115q, before an individual has unsupervised contact with children, the department shall determine the individual's eligibility to be any of the following: (a) A licensee. (b) A licensee designee. (c) A child care staff member. (d) A child care aide. (e) An unsupervised volunteer.

LARA Fingerprints and CCBC Clearance Letter

Objective: *Confirm whether you have current LARA fingerprints and provide the required documentation or take steps to complete the process.*

Directions:

1. Check Your Fingerprints Status:

- Do you have current LARA fingerprints?

2. If Yes:

- Upload your current CCBC Clearance Letter as a file.

3. If No:

- Contact the Program Director to schedule your fingerprinting appointment.

CPR Certification Verification

Objective: *Confirm your CPR certification status and provide the required documentation or schedule training if needed.*

Directions:

1. Check Your CPR Certification Status:

- Do you have a current CPR certification?

2. If Yes:

- Upload a copy of your CPR certificate or card.

3. If No:

- Schedule CPR training as soon as possible.
- Upload proof of your certification once completed.

Michigan Virtual Account Verification

Objective: *Confirm that you have a Michigan Virtual account to access required health and safety courses.*

Directions:

1. Check Your Account Status:

- Do you already have a Michigan Virtual account?

2. If Yes:

- Take a screenshot verifying your account.
- Submit the screenshot as proof.

3. If No:

- Click [HERE](#) to access Michigan Virtual and create an account.
- Once your account is created, take a screenshot verifying your account and submit it.

MiRegistry Account Verification

Objective: *Ensure you have a MiRegistry account for tracking professional development and credentials.*

Directions:

1. Check Account Status:

- Do you already have a MiRegistry account?

2. If Yes:

- Take a screenshot verifying your account.
- Submit the screenshot as proof.

3. If No:

- Click [HERE](#) to access MiRegistry and create an account using your personal email. Once your account is created, take a screenshot verifying your account and submit it.

Health and Safety Training Verification

Objective: *Complete and verify required Health and Safety training through MiRegistry.*

Directions:

1. Check Your Training Status:

- If you are new to MiRegistry:
 - Complete Health and Safety Modules A, B, and C (5 hours total).
- If you have completed these modules previously:
 - You will need to complete an annual refresher. The program director will coordinate the timing with you.

2. Access Training Information:

- Click [HERE](#) to view current GSQ training opportunities and register as needed.

3. Submit Your Certificate:

- Upload your certificate verifying completion of Modules A, B, and C or your annual refresher.

Infant Safe Sleep Training Verification

Objective: *Confirm completion of the Infant Safe Sleep for Michigan Child Care Providers training.*

Directions:

1. Check Your Training Status:

- Do you have a current Infant Safe Sleep for Michigan Child Care Providers certificate?

2. If Yes:

- Upload a copy of your certificate as proof of completion.

3. If No:

- Click [HERE](#) to access information about current GSQ training opportunities and register for the Infant Safe Sleep training.
- Submit your certificate once completed.

NAEYC Membership Verification

Objective: *Confirm your membership with NAEYC and join the Michigan affiliate (MIAEYC) if necessary.*

Directions:

1. Check Your Membership Status:

- Are you a current member of NAEYC?

2. If Yes:

- Submit a screenshot or PDF of your membership ID page from the NAEYC website.

3. If No:

- Click [HERE](#) to visit the NAEYC website and create a membership.
- This membership will also allow you to join the Michigan affiliate (MIAEYC).
- You will need the director's credit card to complete the process.

4. Submit:

- Once your membership is active, submit your membership ID page from the NAEYC website.

Mandated Reporters of Abuse and Neglect

Overview: As part of your onboarding and professional development, you will review the Mandated Reporters of Abuse and Neglect training presentation. This training is essential for understanding your responsibilities as an early childhood educator in protecting the safety and well-being of children.

Access the Presentation Here:

- ***Mandated Reporters of Abuse and Neglect Training Presentation***

Watch this video:

- ***Disproportionality Video***

After Completing the Training, You Will:

- Understand what it means to be a mandated reporter.
- Learn about implicit bias and disproportionality and their impact on reporting.
- Gain knowledge of the Child Protection Law (CPL) and its requirements.
- Be able to recognize the signs of child abuse and neglect.
- Understand the MDHHS reporting process and how to make a report.

Instructions

1. Watch the Presentation

- Access and review the presentation at the link above.
- Take notes on any key points that stand out to you, including anything new you learned or found surprising.

2. Reflection Question

- After watching the presentation, answer this brief reflection question:
 - What is one key takeaway or new understanding you gained from the training that will impact how you approach your role as a mandated reporter?

3. Submit Your Response

- Provide your answer to the reflection question in 2–3 sentences.

Exploring the Reggio Emilia Philosophy [CURRICULUM OPTION]

Overview: The Reggio Emilia Philosophy inspires our teaching practices at the (name of child care center). To deepen your understanding of this approach, you will spend time reviewing the Reggio-Inspired Teacher Playbook. This resource explores core principles of Reggio Emilia, including the importance of observation, documentation, family involvement, and creating a learning environment that reflects the image of the child as capable, curious, and full of potential.

Access the Playbook Here:

Reggio-Inspired Teacher Playbook

(Note: please “zoom out” to fit it on your screen.)

Assignment Instructions

1. Review the Playbook

- Read the Reggio-Inspired Teacher Playbook thoroughly. Take notes on the key principles and practices described in each chapter.

2. Select Reflection Questions

- For each chapter (1–5), you will select two reflection questions from the provided list (see below). These questions are designed to help you apply the principles of Reggio Emilia to your work with children and families.

3. Write Your Responses

- Respond to your selected questions thoughtfully. Your answers should demonstrate reflection, insight, and personal application of the Reggio philosophy. Aim for 3–5 sentences per response. Please type your reflection in a word document and submit as an attachment.

Reflection Questions by Chapter

Chapter 1: The ‘Image of the Child’

- Have you ever had the experience of someone seeing your worth and/or potential?
 - Think about both your personal and professional life. How did it make you feel? Did it change the way you interact with others? Or yourself?
- Have you had someone overlook your potential? How did that feel?
- When someone is different from you, have you ever overlooked their potential? How did you realize it?

Chapter 2: Focusing on the Child’s Interests

- How can I focus on what the children are wanting to learn and not my own direct teaching?
- What do I know about this group of children from the observations that I have made?
- How do I integrate my own curiosity into the learning in our classroom?
- How would I let parents know what is important in this observation and/or documentation?

- What is it about this observation that makes me curious?
- How do I build relationships with the children and their families?

Chapter 3: Building Relationships with Families

- In what ways can you engage the parents in your program?
- What are the core strengths of each family?
- How can we educate ourselves and learn about different families' cultures and integrate it into the classroom and school?
- How can we show families that we value them, we stand for their success, and the best possible outcome for their children?
- How can we be a support system for the families in our program?
- How can we include families in curriculum development and the documentation process?

Chapter 4: Observation and Documentation

- How do I create the time in my daily routine to observe and take anecdotal notes, take pictures and videos of the children, record conversations, and add to, reflect on, and analyze existing documentation?
- How do I engage the children and their families in the documentation process?
- What am I curious about and want to learn about children and/or child development?
- How can I engage with other educators about our investigations and documentation?
- What materials can I provide to encourage the children to represent their learning?

Chapter 5: Learning Environments

- How do you think the children/child feels in this environment?
- Can I see what educators and children value in this environment?
- Can children explore and be independent in this environment?
- Where in this environment are children engaged, joyful, connected?
- Where in this environment are children not engaged?

Mission, Vision & Values

Objective: *Understand the mission, vision, and values of the (name of child care center) and reflect on its Reggio-inspired philosophy.*

Directions:

1. Read the (name of center) philosophy:

- Carefully review the description of our Reggio-inspired approach and our commitment to inquiry-based, play-centered learning.

2. As you read, think about:

- What aspects of the Reggio-inspired philosophy resonate most with you? Why?
- How does the program's holistic approach to meeting children's needs align with your views on early childhood education?

Staff Handbook Review

All new team members are required to read and review the center's Staff Handbook during Week #1 of onboarding. This handbook outlines important policies, procedures, expectations, and operational details that are essential for your success at this child care center.

Instructions:

1. Read through the entire document carefully.

2. Note any questions or areas that need clarification.

3. Complete the Handbook Acknowledgment Form and return it to your Program Director by the end of Week #1.

4. Bring your questions or comments to your next check-in meeting for discussion.

Reviewing the Staff Handbook is a key step in ensuring all team members are aligned in expectations and responsibilities from the start.

Understand the (name of child care center) Evaluation Process and Michigan Professional Standards & Competencies (MiPSC)

Overview: The (name of child care center) evaluation tool uses the Michigan Professional Standards & Competencies for Early Childhood Educators (MiPSC) as a guiding document. The tool is designed to break down each area and provide administration the opportunity to evaluate staff, and staff the opportunity to reflect in each area.

The MiPSC is a critical component in Michigan's commitment to early childhood educators, an enhanced system of professional development, and improved program standards so that all of Michigan's children can receive a Great Start.

The ELC uses the following tools to create a comprehensive system for staff evaluation and growth:

1. Regular Evaluation

- Staff evaluations are conducted annually to ensure continuous professional development and improvement.
- Staff will be evaluated by the Program Director no later than six months after beginning a position.
- Administration may collaborate with Lead Teachers to provide feedback to Associate and Assistant teaching staff.

2. Self-Evaluations

- In addition to annual evaluations, staff will be asked to complete a self-evaluation to reflect on their performance, strengths, and areas for improvement.
- The self-evaluation will be shared with staff one month prior to their annual evaluation.

3. Observation and Feedback

- Evaluations include classroom observations and feedback from the Program Director or Lead Teacher (if applicable).
- This helps assess teaching practices, interactions with children, and classroom management.

4. Goal Setting

- Center staff and the Program Director collaboratively set goals for professional growth and development.
- These goals are revisited in quarterly professional development check-ins and in subsequent evaluations to track progress.

5. Professional Development

- Evaluations may identify training needs and opportunities for professional development.
- This ensures staff members stay updated with best practices in early childhood education, meet licensing and accreditation requirements for training hours, and connect staff with local, state, and national early childhood initiatives.

6. Documentation

- Detailed documentation of the evaluation process is maintained to track progress and provide a clear record of performance.

The following **attached document** is an overview of each area of the **Michigan Professional Standards & Competencies for Early Childhood Educators (MiPSC)**. After acclimating in the program, staff will be provided with a more in-depth overview of each competency and additional resources to strengthen their understanding of the competency area and how it relates to the Reggio Emilia Philosophy.

Assignment Instructions

1. Review the Document

- Familiarize yourself with the evaluation process outlined in the document.
- Pay close attention to how the MiPSC framework guides the evaluation process and the tools used to support staff growth.

2. Understand the Tools and Processes

- Take note of the six components of the evaluation process described above.

3. Familiarize Yourself with MiPSC

- Review the attached overview of the Michigan Professional Standards & Competencies for Early Childhood Educators (MiPSC). These competencies are a cornerstone of professional development and align with Michigan's commitment to early childhood education.

4. Reflect

- Take time to consider how the evaluation process and MiPSC framework can support your growth as an early childhood educator.
- Think about how these tools can enhance your understanding of the Reggio Emilia Philosophy and your practice in the classroom.

Next Steps

- No written response is required at this time. Simply review the document to become familiar with the evaluation process and MiPSC framework.
- You will receive a more in-depth overview of each competency area as you acclimate to the program.

Feel free to reach out with any questions during your next check-in with the Program Director!

Optional Document Upload: Diplomas & Unofficial Transcripts

As part of your onboarding process, you have the **option** to upload digital copies of your diplomas and unofficial transcripts for our records. While not required, these documents help us keep an accurate and complete staff file, and can be useful for licensing, accreditation, and professional development purposes.

What to Upload:

- A copy of your highest earned diploma (e.g., Associate's, Bachelor's, Master's)
- Unofficial transcripts from any relevant educational institutions

Week #2-4

Reflection

Reflection Assignment Instructions

Reflecting on your experiences is an important way to grow as an early childhood educator. **Each week**, please take time to complete a brief journal entry using the prompts provided. Your reflections will guide our weekly meetings and help you feel confident and supported in your role.

Steps for Reflection

- 1. Set Aside Quiet Time** Find a quiet moment at the end of your day or week to reflect on your experiences in the classroom.
 - 2. Choose Prompts** Each week select **four prompts** from the provided list that feel most meaningful or relevant to your week.
 - 3. Write Thoughtfully** Use the prompts to guide your reflection. Be honest and specific about your experiences, challenges, and successes. There are no “right” answers—this is a space to explore your thoughts and feelings.
Each response should be approximately 300 words.
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Steps for Reflection

Settling Into Roles

- What has been the most rewarding part of your role so far?
- How does this role align with your personal values or passion for working with children?
- What are your goals for your first few months in this role? How can you begin working toward them?
- Describe one interaction or moment that has made you feel connected to the children, staff, or center.
- What resources or support do you think would help you feel more confident in your position?

Daily Classroom Reflections

- What went well in your classroom today, and why do you think it was successful?
- Reflect on a challenging moment you experienced with a child. How did you respond, and what would you do differently next time?
- Did you notice any new strengths or interests in a child today? How might you build on that moving forward?
- What strategies or techniques have you used to support a child’s learning or behavior today? Were they effective?
- What surprised you about your interactions with the children or your teaching approach today?

Wonderings and Questions

- What questions do you have about early childhood development or teaching strategies?
- Are there specific areas where you feel unsure or curious about how to proceed?
- What would you like to learn more about in your role to better support the children or families?
- Are there any children whose development or needs you'd like to better understand?
- How can the team or Program Director help address your wonderings?

Challenges

- What is one challenge you're facing in the classroom? How does it affect your day-to-day experience?
- Are there specific situations or transitions in the classroom that feel difficult to manage?
- Reflect on a moment of conflict or tension. How did you handle it, and what could be improved?
- What tools or strategies could help you navigate the challenges you're experiencing?
- Is there something about the physical environment, schedule, or routines that feels like a barrier.

Overall Reflections

- How do you feel you're growing as a teacher or caregiver through this experience?
- Reflect on a moment when you felt a strong connection with a child or colleague. What made it meaningful?
- How are you balancing your personal well-being and the demands of your role?

Week #5

Michigan Professional Standards & Competencies for Early Childhood Educators (MiPSC)

Michigan Professional Standards & Competencies (MiPSC) Reflection

Overview: As part of your professional growth, it is essential to understand the Michigan Professional Standards & Competencies for Early Childhood Educators (MiPSC) framework. This document outlines the knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of all early childhood educators and serves as a foundation for evaluating and supporting your professional development.

Specifically, review pages 1–6 of the document. Reflect on how these shared expectations align with your own understanding of quality early childhood education.

Why We Evaluate Early Childhood Teachers

Evaluating early childhood teachers ensures consistent, high-quality care and education for young children. It provides opportunities for professional growth and ensures that educators are meeting the developmental, educational, and social-emotional needs of the children they serve.

Being familiar with the MiPSC framework is important because it:

- Defines the shared expectations for early childhood educators.
- Aligns with credentialing processes to guide professional development.
- Helps educators understand their roles within a larger, cohesive framework of quality care and education.

Assignment Instructions

1. Review the MiPSC Document

- Carefully read pages 1–6 of the MiPSC framework, paying attention to the progression of competencies and credentials outlined.
- Click [HERE](#) for MiPSC framework.

2. Write a Brief Response

- In 2–3 sentences, explain why evaluating early childhood teachers is valuable and important
- In 2–3 sentences, describe why familiarity with the MiPSC framework benefits early childhood educators.

3. Reflect on Your Feelings About Evaluation

- Respond to the following reflection questions:
 - How do you feel about being evaluated as an early childhood educator?
 - What style of feedback works best for you (e.g., face-to-face conversations, written feedback, email communication)?
 - What additional support or resources would help you feel more confident in meeting the competencies outlined in the MiPSC framework?

4. Submit Your Reflection

- Your written response should be approximately 300–400 words.

Week #6

Child Development

Complete the CDC Watch Me Grow Course and Review Child Development Resources

Objective: Complete the Watch Me! Celebrating Milestones and Sharing Concerns training and review additional resources on child development to better support children and communicate with families.

Directions:

1. Complete the Training:

- Access the course Watch Me! Celebrating Milestones and Sharing Concerns through the CDC Watch MeGrow website.
- This online course will help you learn best practices for monitoring child development and how to discuss developmental concerns with parents.

2. Review Additional Resources:

- Visit the Harvard Center on the Developing Child's Brain Building Through Play Resources.
- Review the resources on this site to gain insights into strategies and handouts that support brain development in young children through play.

3. Reflection Questions:

- After completing the course and reviewing the resources, answer the following questions:
 - Identify at least 3 developmental milestones for infants and toddlers.
 - Describe two communication strategies to use when talking with families about their child's development.

4. Submit Your Reflection:

- Write a short reflection (200-250 words) answering both questions.
-

Reflection on the Reggio Emilia Philosophy [CURRICULUM OPTION]

Objective: Read and reflect on the article about the Reggio Emilia approach to child development.

Directions:

1. Read the Article:

- Click here to read the article.

2. Reflect on the Article:

- After reading the article, consider the following questions and reflect on them:
 - What personal experiences have shaped your view of child development?
 - What do you consider a strength of the Reggio Emilia philosophy?

3. Submit Reflection:

- Share your thoughts with a reflection of approximately 200 words.

Week #7

Interactions & Guidance

Review the ZERO TO THREE Mindfulness for Early Childhood Education Resource Guide.

Objective: Learn how mindfulness practices can support early childhood educators in fostering mental, social, and emotional skills in children.

Directions:

1. Review the Training Guide:

- Review Mindfulness for Early Childhood Education from ZERO TO THREE linked [HERE](#).

2. Reflection Question:

- After reviewing, reflect on the following question:
 - How can mindfulness practices support both educators and children in an early childhood setting? Describe one way you can incorporate mindfulness into your daily routine with children.

3. Submit Your Reflection:

- Write a short reflection (150-200 words) answering the question above.
-

Reflection on Emergent Curriculum and Family Involvement in Reggio Emilia-Inspired Learning [CURRICULUM OPTION]

Objective: To understand the principles of emergent curriculum in Reggio Emilia-inspired education and reflect on how to actively involve families in contributing to their child's learning journey through documentation and social stories.

Instructions:

1. Read the Article:

- Inspired by Reggio Emilia: w Curriculum in Relationship-Driven Learning Environments

2. Write a Reflection:

- After reading the article, write a reflection (approximately 300 words) addressing the following guiding questions:
 - What key ideas from the article about emergent curriculum and relationship-driven learning environments stood out to you?

- Provide an example of how you might invite a parent to be an active part of contributing to their child's learning documentation or social story. What approach would you take to make this ask to the family?
- Reflect on how involving families in this way can enhance the educational experience for both children and families.

Week #8

Teaching & Learning

Read, Watch, and Review: Infant & Toddler Development [CURRICULUM OPTION]

Objective: Engage with resources related to infant and toddler development.

Directions:

1. Watch the Following Virtual Courses and Videos:

- Review this NAEYC article:
 - 12 Ways to Support Language Development for Infants and Toddlers
- Watch video:
 - Circle Time Magazine Fostering Social-Emotional Skills Episode One:
- Watch video:
 - Brain Building in Progress: Professional Development Birth through 33 Months video trainings:

2. Reflect and Answer the Following Questions:

- After engaging with the resources, write a reflection (200 words each) responding to the following questions:
 - Describe a provocation you might present in the classroom that would support social-emotional skills in the toddler group.
 - How does the Reggio Emilia approach support individualized learning, and what is the teacher's role in this approach?

Week #9

Observation, Documentation, & Assessment

Read, Watch, and Review

Objective: Explore how documentation and observation guide teaching practices and how to effectively engage children, families, and educators in the process.

Directions:

1. Read the Following Articles:

- Pedagogical Documentation Article:
- NAEYC Using Observation to Guide Your Teaching Article

2. Reflection Question:

- After reading both articles, answer the following reflection question (200-250 words each): You have observed two year-old Camille paying close attention to the weather lately. She watched a raindrop on the window for several minutes and then sang a song to herself about the rain.
 1. Share one way that you might design a learning experience around this observation.
 2. What documentation process could you use to share this learning and how could you involve both families and co-educators?

Video Review: Explore Infant and Toddler Resource Guide

Objective: Watch the videos and explore ways to deepen your understanding of child care practices for infants and toddlers.

Directions:

1. Watch the Videos and Explore the Resources:

- Visit the following link and explore the Infant-Toddler Resource Guide, which includes videos and helpful resources:
 - Infant-Toddler Resource Guide - Child Care ACF

2. Reflection Questions:

- After viewing four videos of your choice, respond to the following (approximately 200 words per question):
 - What are your overall reflections? What new insights did you gain that you hadn't considered before?
 - Share any specific questions you have after reviewing the videos. How do you plan to incorporate these ideas/take-aways into your daily practice?

Week #10

Health, Safety, & Nutrition

Assignment: Reflection on Child Safety

Objective: To understand the importance of maintaining child safety in early childhood education settings and reflect on strategies to ensure children are not lost or separated from the group.

Instructions:

1. Read the Article:

- Keeping Track At All Times

2. Write a Short Reflection:

- After reading, write a reflection (approximately 250 words) addressing the following questions:
 - What key points did you learn about the responsibility of caring for children in group settings?
 - Describe at least one specific strategy or idea you would use to ensure child safety in your classroom
-

Reflection on Promoting Health in Child Care Settings

Objective: To explore the importance of maintaining a safe and healthy environment in child care settings and reflect on strategies to reduce illness among children and staff.

Instructions:

1. Read the Article:

- Access and read the document linked below, focusing on the section about preventing illness in child care environments.
 - Health and Safety in Child Care Settings

2. Write a Short Reflection:

- After reading, write a reflection (approximately 250 words) addressing the following questions:
 - What did you learn about the steps child care providers can take to prevent illness?
 - Describe one specific strategy you would implement to help reduce illness in your care environment.
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Reflection on Reggio-Inspired Cuisine and Family Style Meals [CURRICULUM OPTION]

Objective: To understand how food can serve as a meaningful provocation in early childhood education and explore strategies for incorporating family-style mealtime lessons into a learning environment.

Instructions:

1. Read the Articles:

- Reggio Meets Cuisine and Culture
- Family-Style Dining in Child Care Settings
 - Note: click “download” to view the article

2. Write a Short Reflection:

- After reading both articles, write a reflection (approximately 300 words) addressing the following questions:
 - Provide an example of a food provocation where children actively participate in preparing a snack. How does this activity support learning and development?
 - Reflect on the “4 Family Style Lessons” described in the articles. What key insights stood out to you?
 - Share an idea for implementing one of the family-style lessons in your classroom. How will it benefit children’s social-emotional development and independence?

Week #11

Family & Community Engagement

Assignment: Reflection on Family Engagement and Cultural Connections

Objective: To explore strategies for building strong, positive relationships with families, and understand the importance of cultural connections in supporting children's development and learning.

Instructions:

1. Watch the Videos:

- Family Engagement: Strengthening Family Involvement to Improve Outcomes for Children
- Building Positive Relationships with Families
- Learning About a Child's Family Culture

2. Write a Short Reflection:

- After watching the videos, write a reflection (approximately 300 words) addressing the following guiding questions:
 - What strategies did you learn for strengthening family involvement and building positive relationships with families?
 - How can educators effectively learn about and honor a child's family culture?
 - Share one specific idea for engaging families in a way that fosters collaboration and supports their child's success.
 - Reflect on how building strong family relationships can contribute to better outcomes for children.

Reflection on the Role of Parents in Reggio Emilia Education [CURRICULUM OPTION]

Objective: To understand the importance of parent involvement in the Reggio Emilia approach and reflect on strategies to foster meaningful partnerships with families in early childhood education.

Instructions:

1. Read the Article:

- The Role of Parents in Reggio Emilia Education

2. Write a Reflection:

- After reading the article, write a reflection (approximately 200 words) addressing the following guiding questions:
 - What stood out to you about the ways parents are involved in the Reggio Emilia approach?
 - Why is parent involvement essential in creating a successful learning environment?
 - Share one idea or strategy you would use to build strong partnerships with families in your classroom.

Week #12

Professionalism & Management

Discovering Your Learning Style

Objective: Gain insights into your preferred learning style by taking the VARK Learning Style Quiz and reflecting on what you learned.

Steps:

1. Take the VARK Learning Style Quiz:

- Visit the **VARK website** and complete the quiz.
- Be honest with your responses to get the most accurate results.

2. Review Your Results:

- After completing the quiz, review your identified learning style(s): Visual, Aural, Read/Write, Kinesthetic, or a combination (Multimodal).

3. Write a Short Reflection:

- Reflect on your results in 1-2 paragraphs (approximately 100-150 words).
 - Address the following questions:
 - Were you surprised by your learning style? Why or why not?
- How do you think understanding your learning style will help you in this class or in other areas of your life?

Review the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct

Objective: Explore the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct to understand the principles and responsibilities that guide ethical behavior in early childhood education.

Assignment Details:

1. Read the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct:

- **NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct:**
 - Take your time to carefully review its core principles and ideals.

2. Focus on Key Sections:

- While reading, pay special attention to these areas:
 - **Core Values:**

What foundational beliefs does this code emphasize about children, families, and the profession?

- **Ethical Responsibilities to Children:**
What does the code highlight about our obligations to ensure the well-being, development, and rights of every child?
- **Resolving Ethical Dilemmas:**
How does the code suggest educators approach situations where ethical decisions are challenging or unclear?

3. Guiding Questions:

- Which principles or ideals resonate most with your personal beliefs or experiences?
- Were there any ethical responsibilities that surprised you or made you think differently about your role in early childhood education?
- How do you think this code can guide you in handling ethical challenges in real-world teaching scenarios?

4. Prepare a short summary and reflection:

- Summarize the main ideas from the code (approximately 200 words).
- Include your responses to the guiding questions and any personal insights gained from the reading.

Review the CDA Competency Standards

Objective: Familiarize yourself with the Child Development Associate (CDA) Competency Standards to better understand the skills and behaviors expected of early childhood professionals.

Assignment Details:

1. Review the CDA Competency Standards:

- CDA Competency Standards

2. Guiding Questions While Reading:

- Which competency goal do you feel most confident in at this point? Why?
- Is there a goal or functional area that you find challenging or new? How might you strengthen your skills in that area?

3. Write a Short Reflection:

- In 150–200 words, address the guiding questions, sharing your insights and thoughts about the competency standards.
- Include any **questions you have** about the standards or how they apply to your current or future practice.

Understanding Implicit Bias

Objective: Watch the video “Implicit Bias | Preface: Biases and Heuristics” from UCLA’s Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: **Watch Here**. This video explores how unconscious biases and heuristics shape our decision-making and behavior in ways we may not even realize.

After watching, write a short reflection (approximately 250 words) responding to the following questions:

- 1. What is one key insight you gained from the video about implicit bias, and how might it apply to your work in early childhood education?
- 2. The video explains how heuristics help us make quick decisions but can also lead to biased thinking. Can you think of a situation where you or someone else may have relied on heuristics in a way that led to an unintended bias? How could awareness of this concept help in the future?