

Child Development

The Profession

Early Childhood professionals work in a variety of settings and roles which provide quality services to young children and their families. Trained professionals in this field may be employed as teaching assistants, lead teachers, administrators, or family service personnel. They work in early care and education programs, including preschools, Pre-K classes, Head Start, infant and toddler programs, and family-based care. Early Childhood professionals may also be employed as family or social service providers, working directly with families to meet their ever-changing needs. Qualified individuals also serve as administrators of early care and education programs, or may choose to become child care entrepreneurs

The Program

Students may work to earn the following degree and/or certificate(s). Courses taken for certificates may also be applied toward an Associate's degree.

Associate of Applied Science Degree in Child Development (A.A.S.) – 60 credit hours of coursework, designed to provide students with a theoretical knowledge base and practical experience which will enable them to work within the field of child development. Four practicum courses provide opportunities for students to work “hands-on” in early childhood programs (112 clock hours per course). Other child development courses also include field experience requirements (16 clock hours).

Early Childhood Certificate – 33 credit hours of coursework, designed primarily for those who wish to work as assistant caregivers. Basic skills such as positive communication, positive guidance and development of the child from birth through eight years of age are emphasized.

Early Childhood Administrator's Certificate – 32 credit hours of coursework, designed to prepare individuals to become program administrators and to assist those currently holding such positions to improve their skills. The curriculum emphasizes both program and business management skills needed for the implementation of quality programs for children.

Family Advocate Certificate – 46 credit hours of coursework, designed to prepare individuals to work with families and children in a Human Service capacity, and to assist those currently holding such positions. The curriculum emphasizes knowledge of child development birth through adolescence, early childhood education, and social work knowledge and skills through the Applied Rehabilitation Psychology Program.

Child Development Associate (CDA) Training – 9 credit hours of coursework, designed to prepare individuals for assessment by the National Council for Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. The 3 preparation courses are offered online, and may be taken in any order.

Application Requirements

Prospective students are strongly encouraged to meet with a CDEC program advisor to discuss degree plan options before enrolling in Child Development courses. In general, application requirements include:

High school diploma or equivalent

Compliance with Texas Success Initiative (TSI) testing requirements

Criminal background check (Students are responsible for fees associated with fingerprint checks as needed for the criminal history check.)

The purpose of the background check is to determine that a person has no criminal or abuse and neglect history; that their presence would not be a risk to the health or safety of children in care. Students who have questions about this requirement should see a program advisor.

Course Availability

Child Development courses are offered in the evenings at the SPC Career and Technical Center. Each class meets 6:00-9:00 p.m. one night per week. Practicum students set individual schedules to work in early childhood programs and to meet with a practicum supervisor. Courses are offered as either fall or spring semester classes, with additional offerings as internet and summer options. In all cases, it is strongly recommended that students meet with a Child Development advisor to formulate a viable degree plan to meet their needs.

Contact

Stephanie Deering

Program Coordinator CDEC Programs

806.716.4645 | sdeering@southplainscollege.edu

