

**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

---

**NAZIABANU NOORULLAH SHAIKH**

Early Childhood Educator

IIC University of Technology, Cambodia

---

**Abstract**

Early childhood education is a significant component of an individual's whole life experience and should not be overlooked. When the kid reaches the age of two, they are able to begin this schooling. It lays the groundwork for the child's future learning and serves as the basis for that learning. The primary objective of this research paper is to get an understanding of the relevance of early childhood education as well as its intended goal. The early childhood stage is a critical period, during which parents and teachers are expected to give sufficient attention to the children in their care, both at home and at school. When they are able to effectively teach them academic concepts, play activities, arts and crafts, health, physical exercises, sports, games, environment, communication, good manners and etiquettes, then they will be able to effectively contribute to the learning and acquisition of education. Play activities, arts and crafts, health, physical exercises, sports, games, and academic concepts will be taught. Early childhood educators, including instructors and other staff members at educational institutions, are required to have enough knowledge, a kind and caring disposition, and an approachable attitude in order to facilitate the development of early childhood education. They are responsible for meeting the requirements and needs of young pupils in a suitable manner.

**Keywords:** *Development, Early Childhood Education,*

**Introduction**

Up to the age of eight, a kid is considered to be in their early childhood years. Early childhood is considered to last until the child reaches the age of eight for a number of reasons, one of which is to ensure that the child is able to make a seamless transition from the play group level to the pre-primary level and then from the pre-primary level to the primary level of education. The education provided to children in their early years is, for the most part, presented in an orderly format. It is expected of the instructors and any other members of the pre-school who are actively participating in this instruction to be methodical and systematic in their actions and the way they go about their work. Efficiency is required in both the format and the connotation of it. Within the confines of this paradigm, the concept of "care" carries a great deal of weight. When passing on any sort of knowledge, comprehension, or information to the pupils, the instructors are tasked with keeping in mind the need of exercising care and forethought in their actions. The children who attend pre-school are still quite young, and as a result, they require special attention in many different areas, including education, play, health, feelings, eating habits, nutrition, and psychological evaluation. These are essential for the child's growth and development in other areas as well.

Early childhood education's primary objective is to facilitate the students' healthy maturation and progression into adulthood, and this goal serves as the program's guiding light. It lays the groundwork for

learning among the children, allowing them to develop their talents and capabilities in an effective manner beginning at a young age thanks to the foundation that is built. Early childhood education and care also includes the dissemination of information and knowledge to the students' families and communities, with the intention of making a positive contribution to the students' overall physical and mental growth and development. Learning begins with play in pre-schools; after kids begin to find pleasure in various play activities, they go on to the next level, where they are instructed in various drawing and colouring tactics, which helps them to develop an interest in art. The kids go to the next level where they are taught academic ideas such as the alphabet, numbers, and other similar things.

Early childhood care and education (ECEC) programmes are being analysed and improved in a great number of nations right now. The rising number of women participating in the labour field is one of the primary motivating factors for the reevaluation. This trend places high demands on the currently in place systems, which are then pushed to increase their capacity and broaden the scope of their services. A second important factor is the function that early childhood education and care is supposed to play in assisting children from low-income households in becoming ready for primary school and avoiding behavioural and emotional issues later in life. Even though traditional low-SES communities and indigenous minorities had never fully disappeared from national political agendas in the majority of countries, the challenge of providing for the children of cultural and linguistic minorities has emerged as a result of increased immigration to industrial countries in recent decades.

At the same time, more concerns have been brought to light. The early years of a child's life are characterised by a high degree of both adaptability and fragility in the growing kid in response to the stimulation and pressures of his or her environment, which is being more recognised by societies as a period of unique sensitivity. Because of these new discoveries, there is a growing degree of doubt regarding the effect that alterations in conventional approaches to child parenting have on the intellectual and social-emotional development of children and adolescents. According to the findings of a new study, could early, intense, long-day care contribute to an increase in the number of negative and violent behaviours exhibited by young children? One might question the validity of such far-reaching results if they are based on a single research that was carried out in a specific social and cultural setting. Less debatable, on the other hand, is the fact that, according to research conducted in a variety of nations, a lack of quality in early childhood care may raise the developmental risks associated with children or families. In addition, a large body of research suggests that the economic and cultural mechanisms at work within early childhood education and care (ECEC) systems predetermine families with low incomes as well as families from ethnic and socio-linguistic minority groups to choose disproportionately the options of lower quality.

The relevance of early childhood development will be discussed, as will its breadth, in this module, which will serve to give foundational level basic knowledge on the topic. It lays the groundwork for engaging with this issue and putting into practise the recommendations of staff members who have either operational or expert levels of expertise in education. You will acquire the capacity to put your theoretical understanding of early childhood development into practise in order to make meaningful contributions to the area if you are successful in completing the course.

### **Defining early childhood**

The term "early childhood" refers to the stage of human development that spans from the beginning of a pregnancy (when conception occurs) all the way up until the beginning of elementary school (typically ends at age 8 or 9). This definition is represented in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the literature geared at early life, as well as policies implemented by the government. During the early years of childhood, there are phases of growth that are particularly delicate. The mother's state of health and nutrition is a crucial factor in determining the growth of the foetus during the prenatal period, which begins with conception and continues during pregnancy. Early childhood development is extremely important because it lays the foundation for a child's future success in primary school. Important aspects of early childhood development include cognitive stimulation, safe and nutritious foods for exploring toddlers, cognitive stimulation, safe and nutritious foods for exploring toddlers, and successful transitions from the home (for example, to a playgroup or pre-school). To put it another way, early childhood development is an essential time for the growth of skills that influence every aspect of a person's life later on.

### **Is it important to invest in early childhood development**

There is a wealth of evidence indicating that investing in early childhood is essential not only for the well-being of young children and their families, but also for the greater good of society as a whole. This is because early childhood development has a significant impact on a person's ability to learn and adapt throughout their lifetime. Early childhood development provides numerous returns on investment, the majority of which are tied to the public good in the form of social, economic, and educational advantages. It is very crucial for marginalised and disadvantaged demographic groups in any country's population to get attention throughout this time period of life. There is evidence that children who come from disadvantaged backgrounds or who have disabilities gain proportionally more than their peers who do not have a disability or who come from more privileged backgrounds. The developmental disparities that are caused by factors such as income, disability, or other types of social inequality can consequently be narrowed and sometimes even closed by early childhood programmes.

### **Brain development in early childhood**

According to the explanation provided by UNICEF, "The brain requires various inputs: it requires stimulation and care to spark neuronal connections across multiple parts of the brain in order to develop its capacity and function." Access to high-quality early childhood education programmes that teach children early cognitive and language abilities, promote social competency, and support emotional development is required for this. These programmes should also help children become more socially competent. In order to feed and nourish the architecture of the body, including the brain, during the critical stages of development, one needs to be in excellent health and consume the appropriate nutrients at the appropriate times. It is necessary for there to be a buffer against stress, as well as safety and protection, in order to facilitate the absorption of nutrients, growth, and development of the neurological system, which includes the brain. To develop a more capable brain, it is necessary for these various parts of the surrounding environment to collaborate.

### **How does DFAT define Early Childhood Development**

ECD, or Early Childhood Development, is the word that has been used by the Australian aid programme. ECD takes a multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary approach to its work. It tackles challenges that young children face including health, nutrition, education, gender relations and opportunities, social development,

economics, child safety, and social welfare. These are some of the themes that are addressed. Early childhood development (ECD) places an emphasis on young children's general well-being during their formative years. This lays the groundwork for the growth of women and men who are physically and psychologically healthy, socially and environmentally responsible, intellectually competent, and economically productive. Therefore, early childhood development (ECD) connects care for children (provided by families, communities, and society as a whole) and education for children (both formal and non-formal) to the child's intellectual, social, emotional, and physical growth.

### **Early Childhood Education**

Students will have an understanding of the educational and professional opportunities available in the field of early childhood education. Students will have an understanding of the processes that must be followed in order to keep both the classroom and the laboratory environments safe and healthy. Students will have an understanding of the benefits associated with membership in a student organisation that offers possibilities for career exploration, personal growth, leadership, community service, and scholarships. Students will have an understanding that technology is a vital component of today's academic and professional environments. Nanny, au pair, Child Development Associate (CDA), early childhood, prekindergarten, licencing specialist, entrepreneur, ethics, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Head Start, Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA), lab school, custodial care, parent cooperative, accreditation, custodial care, family child-care homes, child-care centres, Montessori method, etc. are some of the terms that are associated with the childcare industry.

### **Objective**

- To enable the students understand the nature, aims and objectives of Early Childhood Education.
- To acquaint with different recommendation.
- To understand the characteristics of Pre-school Education.

### **The Significance of Early Childhood Education (ECE)**

The ECE field is regarded as having the ultimate relevance. This is something that is understood by every single person of the community, regardless of where they came from or what they do for a living. People often say that the first three years of a person's life are the most important years of their existence. The youngster will begin to form the connections that will lead to progress at this point. It does not matter if the parents have completed formal education or not; what is essential is that they understand the relevance of schooling and are equipped with the information necessary to effectively implement the functions of growth and development. They will be able to make a valuable contribution after they have gained an understanding of the many approaches that pertain to the growth and development of children. Parents are the ones who are committed to and accountable for a significant portion of their children's actual growth and development. This responsibility lies mostly with the parents. Children are dependent on their mothers for the completion of all tasks and functions up to the age of three, during which time they remain physically close to their mothers (Warren, 2007).

When children reach the age of four, they start to understand that there is a world beyond their house that they need to get familiar with. This realisation prompts them to begin exploring the world around them. Students receive assistance in expanding their mental capacity and enhancing their skills and capabilities by

participation in ECE. As a person matures, the demands placed on him by his social environment begin to increase. The supply of knowledge and information through ECE that strives to contribute to an individual's entire development is one of the reasons why it is significant. Many theorists, researchers, educationists, and economists have contributed their work to this field, which has helped bring their ideas to fruition. People and groups that have acquired a deep interest and passion in this field have worked for advancements in this area. The issues of economic growth and productivity have been a source of concern, and ECE is a direct source of concern due to the considerable contribution it makes toward the maturation of future citizens (Calman& Whelan, 2005).

### **Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)**

From birth to two years of age, three to five years of age, and six to eight years of age are the three sub-stages that make up education. Different educational institutions accept students of varying ages because of the wide range of ages represented among them. To put it another way, a student's age is a significant consideration in the admissions process at educational institutions. If a child is participating in pre-school activities as part of his educational journey, then his maturation and expansion are occurring in a purposeful way. When a student reaches this point in their education, the abilities and information that they are able to acquire or understand will typically be with them throughout the rest of their lives. The primary goals of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) are the all-around development of the student to the point that they are able to fulfil their full potential, preparation for school, and the provision of support services for women and girls.

Mix of formal and informal interaction; blend of the textual concepts as well as cultural, the textual concepts should comprise of both basic literacy and numeracy; use of local mate The primary areas that have been emphasised upon are play as the basis of learning; art as the basis of education; recognition of the special features of thinking abilities among students; primacy of experience rather than expertise; experience of familiarity and challenge in everyday routines; (NCERT, 2006).

Measures and programmes are now being developed in India to meet the requirements of the six early childhood education and care goals that have been established. Primary education, gender equality, youth and adolescent education, adult education quality, and adult education are some of the aspects that have been taken into consideration. In the realm of early childhood education, the Dakar Framework of Action is attempting to define the objectives that are to be accomplished by the year 2015. The following topics will be discussed: primary education, aims for literacy, gender equality, and issues regarding quality. The following are the primary objectives that have been outlined: (Kaul&Sankar, 2009).

1. Because children from disadvantaged, marginalised, and socioeconomically backward sections of the society are typically unable to acquire well-to-do educational opportunities, it is absolutely essential to make provision for opportunities for these children to improve their learning and secure their future. Since it is well acknowledged that monetary concerns provide the most significant challenge to these individuals in the process of acquiring an education, steps need to be taken to ensure that they have access to adequate financial aid.
2. It is of the utmost importance to make certain that children who come from disadvantaged, marginalised, and socially and economically backward elements of society have access to basic education, and that this education is of a high enough degree.

3. Due to the fact that the adults who belong to underprivileged and disadvantaged groups have not received an education, educational institutions and training centres have been established in rural regions to assist these people in enhancing their learning.
4. By the year 2015, there should have been at least a fifty percent improvement in the education of adults, with a particular emphasis placed on women. In addition to this, the steps needed to create provision for basic and ongoing reading programmes for adults would be established.
5. It is very necessary for educational institutions to provide equal opportunity for all students and to refrain from discriminating against any student on the basis of any characteristic, including but not limited to gender, religion, ethnicity, caste, creed, race, or occupation. It is imperative that women's rights and needs be addressed with the utmost priority, and that they be given the opportunity to get an education of the highest possible standard. Educating a lady is equivalent to educating a whole community or country.
6. It is essential for educational institutions to give students with instruction in all of the many disciplines that they study. These can be broken down into categories such as mathematics, physics, and social science, as well as languages, nutrition, arts and crafts, physical activity, creative activities, music, and dance. It is essential to help people improve their skills and capabilities in all relevant aspects of their lives in order to foster the individuals' overall growth and development.

### **Early Childhood Education Programs**

The shifting social, economic, political, and demographic circumstances have had a significant amount of impact on the early childhood education programmes that have been developed as a result. It was previously considered that the prenatal period through the first five years of a person's existence are the most formative years for the acquisition of information and abilities that would serve them throughout their lives. It is also thought that these abilities and knowledge are passed on from parent to kid by way of the customs and values of the family. In India, the role of the parent is often regarded as the most important factor in determining the trajectory of a child's growth and development. They make it possible for the youngster to comprehend all that is instructed or explained to them. For instance, when a child is enrolled in pre-school, the child's parents instruct him on how to show respect and courtesy to the other students and staff members at the school by actively listening to what they have to say, wishing them well, smiling, and using phrases like "please" and "thank you" in appropriate situations. They educate the kid that while they are playing in school, they should be patient and allow other children a chance, that they should be kind to their fellow students, and that they should respect the directions of the instructors and other members of the school community (Kaul&Sankar, 2009).

Preschool programmes typically last between two and three years for each of the children who attend them. During the course of this particular time frame. They are given the knowledge and information that they need to be able to improve their academic performance once they are enrolled in a conventional school setting. When a kid who is just two years old enrolls in a school, the institution provides him with toys and games to play with so that he will immediately feel at ease and content in the setting of the institution. After a certain amount of time has passed, pupils are first instructed in academic topics, and then they are given knowledge and information regarding activities involving arts and crafts. It is common practise for pre-schools to provide competitions, conferences, and summer camps that include a wide range of topics and activities. Students are given encouragement to take part in the activities, and as a result, they report feeling

more motivated to learn. When there is an event that is going to be arranged, whether it be a competition, a play, or a concert, the teachers are responsible for sufficiently training the students so that they can present their performance in an orderly manner.

When kids are being instructed in academic principles, it is essential to take into account all of the different topic areas and not only concentrate on teaching them their alphabets and numbers. Math, languages, social science, and the natural and social sciences round out the curriculum with mathematics. The instructors need to place a greater focus on efficient techniques of teaching and learning. Because the pupils are still very young, they could on occasion ask the teachers to go over previously covered material again with them. When beginning a new lesson plan, the instructors will first give an oral explanation to the students. In most cases, the teachers will also give the students text materials to read in order to ensure that the students fully comprehend the material. After the pupils have gained an understanding of the principles, they are next required to write them down. Writing things down can aid in recalling previously learned material. Hand-over-hand instruction is typically given by teachers to kids who are unable to write when it is required of them. Meals are often served to the pupils at the midday break at pre-schools. This is done to ensure that they receive sufficient nourishment and energy, as well as to assist the pupils in concentrating on their academic work. The pre-school curriculum places a significant emphasis on health and nutrition as vital topics that should be covered.

## Conclusion

The field of CE is recognised as an essential one not just in India, but everywhere else in the world as well. In order to advance efficacy, expertise, and prowess in this domain, India's government has enacted a number of laws, initiatives, and programmes in recent years with the specific intention of doing so. There are currently pre-schools operating in metropolitan areas that are equipped with contemporary and forward-thinking teaching and learning techniques, instructional strategies, infrastructure, and facilities. These pre-schools have also been established. On the other hand, there is a need to make enhancements to pre-schools as well as the educational institutions that are found in rural regions. In order for there to be progress made in this area, the government has been pushing for various policies, processes, and strategies to be implemented. The development of ideas, topics, standards, concepts, tactics, and techniques, together with other factors, have contributed to the field's upward movement. It is essential to get an awareness of the aims and objectives, purpose, and relevance of ECE in order to make improvements, since this knowledge is necessary to bring about change. As they put in a lot of effort and devote themselves to their children's growth and development, parents are the ones who need to have enough awareness because they are the ones doing the work. Parents put their money toward their children's education as well as the fulfilment of their other responsibilities and obligations. To conclude, it can be said that children are the future citizens of the country; consequently, the children's healthy growth and development would render an effective contribution not only to the progression of their own families, but also to the progression of the societies and the nation as a whole.

## References

1. Calman, L.J., & Whelan, L.T. (2005). *Early Childhood Education for All*. New York: Legal Momentum
2. Cherry, K. (2012). Child Development Theories. *Major Theories of Child Development*.

3. Child Development Principles and Theories. (n.d.). Retrieved March 21, 2018 from [https://www.g-w.com/pdf/sampchap/9781590708132\\_ch04.pdf](https://www.g-w.com/pdf/sampchap/9781590708132_ch04.pdf)
4. Currie, J. (2001). Early Childhood Education Programs. *Journal of Economic Perspective*, 15(1), 213-238. Retrieved March 19, 2018, from [www.princeton.edu](http://www.princeton.edu)
5. *Division of Early Childhood Education*. (1996). Retrieved March 19, 2018, from <http://www.nj.gov/education/ece/curriculum/curriculum.htm>
6. Early Childhood Care and Education. (2012). UNESCO. Retrieved March 22, 2018 from [https://www.unicef.org/eapro/End\\_Decade\\_Note\\_-\\_Education\\_for\\_All\\_new.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/eapro/End_Decade_Note_-_Education_for_All_new.pdf)
7. Handerson, K. (2004). Illinois Early Learning Standards. Illinois State Board of Education. *Division of Early Childhood Education*. Retrieved March 21, 2018, from [www.iske.net](http://www.iske.net).
8. Neugebauer, R. (2007). Early Childhood Trends around the World. Global Trends in ECE. Retrieved March 22, 2018, from <https://www.childcareexchange.com/library/5017558.pdf>
9. Starting Strong Curricula and Pedagogies in Early Childhood Education and Care. (2004). Five Curriculum Outlines. Directorate of Education. OECD. Retrieved March 22, 2018, from <http://www.oecd.org/education/school/31672150.pdf>
10. *The Preschool Professor*. (2010). Retrieved March 20, 2018, from <http://www.the-preschool-professor.com>
11. *UMHS – Your Child Development and Behaviour Resources*. (2012). Retrieved March 22, 2018, from [www.med.umich.edu/yourchild/topics/devmile.htm](http://www.med.umich.edu/yourchild/topics/devmile.htm)
11. Warren, L.H. (2007). *The Importance of Early Childhood Education*. Retrieved March 20, 2018, from [www.Helium.com](http://www.Helium.com)