



2015 EARLY EDUCATOR CENTRAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Early Educator Central: The Pathway to Credentials and Degrees for Infant-Toddler Educators?

Early Educator Central is a new project jointly administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Offices of Child Care and Head Start. 2014-15 is the start-up year for the Early Educator Central website with resources available to the early childhood field by fall 2015. The project is being led by ICF International in collaboration with ZERO TO THREE and the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

The initial focus is on linking to coursework to support infant-toddler educators, who include center and home-based/family child care teachers. However, the initiative is also providing compelling resources for others with key career roles in early learning. Resources are being developed and organized to meet the needs of other key early childhood professionals including: administrators of early childhood programs; trainers and coaches; higher education professionals and coursework developers; and professional development (PD) systems leaders.

What coursework will be available through Early Educator Central?

Early Educator Central leverages coursework that has been financed through the federal government. In the start-up year, coursework will be available as follows:

Coursework	Course Developer	Intended Audience
Department of Defense Virtual Lab School Infant Toddler Track	The Ohio State University	Infant Toddler Educators Administrators
Better Kid Care	Penn State Cooperative Extension	All Early Learning Educators Administrators
Online Infant Toddler Associate of Arts (A.A.) curriculum	University of Cincinnati	Infant Toddler Educators Course Developers and Higher Education Professionals PD System Planners
Infant Toddler Consultant Online Curricula	ZERO TO THREE	Coaches and Trainers PD System Planners

Coursework	Course Developer	Intended Audience
Family Connections: A Preventive and System-Wide Training Guide and Mental Health Consultation Model	Children's Hospital Boston	Administrators Coaches and Trainers PD System Planners
Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation's Best Practice Tutorial Series	Georgetown University	Administrators Coaches and Trainers PD System Planners
Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFL) Infant Toddler Training Modules	Vanderbilt University	Infant Toddler Educators

With the new Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships coming on board, does Early Educator Central respond to widespread needs for attaining the national infant-toddler child development associate credential or equivalent?

Yes, it does. Two options for meeting the training requirements for the national child development associate will be available: the Department of Defense (DoD) Virtual Lab School provides one option for those seeking an infant-toddler credential and the Better Kid Care modules have been aligned to the requirements of the national child development associate. There is also an on-line associate degree curriculum developed by the University of Cincinnati that local higher education institutes can access and use to offer infant-toddler coursework or degree programs.

The reauthorization of the federal Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) puts into place some requirements for basic training. Can Early Educator Central help? Will these apply to infant-toddler teachers only or to other teachers as well?

The courses on Early Educator Central may be helpful in meeting the new requirements under the Child Care and Development Block Grant, particularly through the Better Kid Care coursework, which addresses many of the topics included in the new CCDBG training requirements for all teachers.

What standards have been used to identify and select the coursework that is available?

All courses included on Early Educator Central meet the following standards:

1. Courses were developed with federal partners and resources (ACF, DoD, Dept. of ED, etc.).
Rationale: Ensures that content is of high quality and has gone through a federal approval process.
2. Course content is designed for one of the four portal audiences: Teacher/Provider, Director, Trainer/Coach, State Leaders (including PD System Directors), and Higher Education Faculty and Curriculum Developers.
Rationale: There are many important roles to support the Infant-Toddler workforce.
3. Course content is in line with state or national standards.
<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/resource/stateterritory-infanttoddler-and-preschool-credentials>
Rationale: A standards based approach helps ensure quality.
4. Courses are available on a no or low cost basis.
Rationale: Workforce costs can be a barrier.
5. Courses include a competency based approach to assessment of learning.
Rationale: This provides a practice-based approach meant to focus on educator skills that can benefit outcomes for children.

Is the competency based approach used to assess each course available?

Yes, it is. Early Educator Central has developed a tool, which includes a self-assessment that course developers may use.

How will Early Educator Central support educators to improve and demonstrate their competencies?

An open-source observation tool will be available as part of Early Educator Central. This tool will allow teachers to video their own practices, and then share the videos with their administrators, coaches, trainers, and faculty as appropriate. The observation tool is designed to help early educators collect information about their own practices so that they can continue to build effective, developmentally appropriate practice.

Many early childhood teachers find themselves taking classes at many different colleges and universities where their courses do not articulate for credit. Is any assistance available through Early Educator Central?

Model articulation agreements are being prepared for use by higher education and state agencies to demonstrate practical, workable approaches to aid in the articulation of credit.

States face challenges in planning to support the early childhood workforce gain credentials and degrees. How can Early Educator Central help?

A systems-based professional development cost analysis tool will aid professional development system planners understand costs associated with helping infant-toddler teachers as well as other early childhood professionals gain degrees and credentials. The tool will help planners budget yearly system costs at three levels: for an individual teacher, for an early childhood employer, and for state level infrastructure such as early childhood teacher scholarships, certification or licensure, training registries and other system supports.

Besides the coursework, what can I expect to find at Early Educator Central when it goes live in 2015?

In the start-up year, here's what you can expect:

Early Educator Tools	Overview	Intended Audience
Observation Tool	An open-source, on-line digital observation tool that teachers can use to record themselves and share with others to help improve their practice	Infant Toddler Educators All Early Learning Teachers Administrators Coaches & Trainers Course Developers & Higher Education Professionals Professional Development System Leaders
Coursework Framework	A self-assessment tool that course developers can use to ensure their courses deliver on a "Know-See-Do-Improve" competency framework	Coaches & Trainers Course Developers & Higher Education Professionals Professional Development System Leaders
Articulation Agreement Models	A set of model Articulation Agreements that can inform the development of career pathways with portable degrees and credentials	Course Developers & Higher Education Professionals Professional Development System Leaders
Professional Development System Cost Calculator	An on-line cost calculator to inform planning and development of state/grantee professional development systems with a focus on credit-bearing credentials and degrees	Professional Development System Leaders

I have more questions about Early Educator Central. Where can I get more information?

Please contact Harriet Dichter, Project Director, at harriet.dichter@icfi.com



Early Educator Central

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*Jointly administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS),
Administration for Children and Families (ACF), Offices of Child Care and Head Start*