

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
TLSC: TEACHING, LEARNING, AND LEADING WITH SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

TLSC 250:
**Developmentally Appropriate Practice with Diverse Infants/Toddlers
and their Families**
SPRING SESSION 2013, WEEKS 4 through 8

Instructors: Anna Lees
Cell Phone: 231/818/6526
E-mail: amorrich@luc.edu

Time: MWF, 8:15AM – 12:45 PM
Classroom: DUM 119
Office hours: by appointment
Office: WTC, Lewis Towers 1118

Module Description

Candidates continue to investigate the professions of early childhood education, early intervention, and early childhood special education in this module, the second of three integrated modules in sequence 4 of the ECSE program. During the first part of TLSC 250, teacher candidates observe infants and toddlers and the environments in which they are served, practicing the process of interpreting and decision-making based upon observation, expanding their knowledge of developmental and learning theory, and continuing to explore physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development. They also learn, observe, evaluate, and support efforts to create safe, supportive, and developmentally appropriate infant toddler settings that adhere to all relevant standards. Next, candidates will develop their skills in working with the youngest children. After completing background readings on intentionality in developmentally appropriate adult-child interactions with infants and toddlers, they will observe other adults interacting and teaching across the daily routine, and begin the process of critically reflecting upon their own interactions with children and embedding developmentally appropriate infant/toddler programming in the routines of caregiving and typical infant/toddler behaviors (e.g., feeding, toileting, napping and waking, positioning/holding, as well as communicative crying).

Over the weeks of this module, candidates will lead planned activities and participate actively in child-directed play-based activities. They will assume responsibility for activities each day and be formally evaluated on their work on two group activities, after which they will identify strengths and areas for further development in a DAP self-assessment and professional development plan. They will also accumulate a variety of resources and share these with the rest of their community of teacher candidates via a Google site devoted to working with infants and toddlers.

IL DHS required areas of professional preparation for EI Developmental Therapist credential

This module (along with the remainder of sequence 4) is designed to address required areas of competency in early intervention (EI). It specifically addresses contexts and standards of practice for working with infants/toddlers and their families within their communities. Teacher candidates will develop skills in understanding the role of infant/toddler professionals and early interventionists, all through supervised experiences at partner sites serving infants and toddlers with special needs and their families. Candidates complete 36 hours of direct services to infants and toddlers and their families in TLSC 251. Course credit hours shaded in green in the table below are included in TLSC 250.

Infant-Toddler Competency Area	Credit hours in sequence 4					
	TLSC 250	TLSC 251	TLSC 252	TLSC 253	CIEP 315	TOTAL
Development	.5		.5		1	2.0 hrs
Assessment	.5	1	.5	.5		2.0 hrs
Intervention	.5	2		1		3.5 hrs
Families	1		1	.5	.5	3.0 hrs
TOTAL	2.5	3	2	2	1.5	10.5 hrs

Essential questions regarding early childhood education explored in TLSC 250

1. How do historical, philosophical, legal, and empirical factors influence the education of young children? (ECSE: 11A, 11B, 11C, 11K, 11R—ECE 17G, NAEYC: 6d)
2. What are some examples of early childhood service delivery models, and approaches to collaborative assessment and instruction? (ECSE: 5D, ECE 11C, 12A, NAEYC: 4b)
3. How might relevant professional organizations, publications, and resources for professional development positively influence the work of early childhood educators? (ECSE: ECE: 17E, NAEYC: 6a, 6b)
4. How do standards of practice guide the work of early educators across a wide variety of educational settings?
5. What are the outcomes of early education? How do professionals in birth to three, preschool, and early elementary school conceptualize their role as ‘effective’ educators?
6. What are the benefits and challenges of inclusive programming for young children with special needs? (ECSE: 5D, ECE: 11E, 12A, NAEYC: 4b, 4c)
7. How do early childhood educators demonstrate an attitude that affirms and respects family, cultural, and linguistic diversity? (ECSE: 3B, 11F, ECE 9B, 9C, NAEYC: 2a)
8. How do early educators affirm and respect family, cultural, and linguistic diversity? (ECSE: 3B, 11F, ECE 9B, 9C, NAEYC: 2a)

Expected child development outcomes from TLSC 250 (with associated IL ECE and ECSE standards):

Developmental sequence:

1. Describe the phases of infant and toddler development, including the influences of teratogens, maternal factors, health care, and childbirth. (NAEYC 1)
2. Cite major milestones of physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development from birth to age 3. (ECSE 2A, 2B, 2E; ECE 8A, 8D; NAEYC 1)
3. Explain the strengths, limitations, historical contexts, and interrelationships of notable theories of child development, including those of Erikson, Freud, Piaget, Bandura, Vygotsky, key behaviorists, and others in explaining the development and learning of infants and toddlers. (ECSE 2E, 2F; ECE 8A, 8D, 8F, 8G, 9C; NAEYC 1)

Contextual factors:

1. Recognize the impact of heredity, nutrition, disease, injury, and emotional well-being on each domain of early development. (ECE 6A, 8F, 8G, 8H)

2. Identify personal and family characteristics, social relationships, and community factors that may protect young children from the effects of stress and environmental risks by increasing resiliency. (ECSE 2C; ECE 6A, 8F, 8G)
3. Utilize the lens of culture to examine issues affecting families of young children, including reproductive choices, child rearing practices, and reactions to disability. (ECSE 3B, 3C; ECE 9C)
4. Apply developmental theory in the interest of social justice by attempting to better understand the needs of children in oppressed minority groups (including young children from immigrant families, children living in poverty, etc.). (ECSE 3B, 3C; ECE8D, 8F, 9C; NAEYC 1)

Exceptionality:

1. Identify early indicators of possible learning, emotional, and behavior problems, as well as their impact on educational planning (ECSE 2H)
2. Describe the ways in which child characteristics and environmental factors interact to alter developmental trajectories. (ECSE 2A, 9A)

Observing development and conducting research:

Recognize appropriate methods for collecting data on children's development (naturalistic and systematic observation, interviews, case studies, formal assessment, ethnography, etc.), recognizing the importance of distinguishing between observational data collection and interpretive analysis. (ECSE 1B; ECE 11A; NAEYC 3)

This course has also been developed to specifically address the following NAEYC standards for personnel preparation in early childhood education:

1. Promoting Child Development and Learning

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs are grounded in a child development knowledge base. They use their understanding of a) young children's characteristics and needs, and b) multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning, to c) create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child.

3. Observing, Documenting, and Assessing To Support Young Children and Families

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment are central to the practice of all early childhood professionals. They a) know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They b) know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies c) in a responsible way, d) in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence the development of every child.

4. Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families

Students prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Students know,

understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child's development and learning

6. Becoming a professional

Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.

The role of TLSC 250 in exploring diversity

Teacher candidates will have the opportunity to explore cultural, linguistic, ability and many other forms of diversity. They will work directly with diverse infants and toddlers and their families to better understand the role of EC educators. They will begin to develop effective collaboration and communication skills for working with children birth to age three. They will also apply prior learning related to families' culture and needs, and their implications for early childhood educators who are competent in addressing cultural and linguistic diversity. Finally, candidates will be exposed to the field of EI and learn about infants and toddlers with special needs and ways to work collaboratively and sensitively with their families.

Module Texts

Berk, L. E. (2008). *Infants and children: Prenatal through middle childhood (7th edition)* Boston: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.

It is recommended that you purchase a used copy from Amazon. You will need this text for sequences 4 and 5.

Post, J., & Hohmann (2011). *Tender care and early learning: Supporting infants and toddlers in child care settings (2nd edition)*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope.

(\$50.00 used on Amazon. Can also be purchased directly from High/Scope)

Gordon & Browne (2013/14). *Beginnings and beyond: (9th edition)*. Belmont, CA Wadsworth.

You will need this text for both sequences 4 and 5.

Additional readings will be assigned and must be completed according to the sequence calendar. Many of these are already available online, with the remaining articles to be posted during the first weeks of the semester.

Expected dispositional outcomes

The following dispositions will be assessed during this module:

D3: Valuing diversity and advocating for all students, particularly those from populations that are historically disenfranchised, underserved and/or overrepresented (including, but not limited to race, ethnicity, culture, language, SES, immigration status, exceptionality, ability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity). (a1A, i1F, i2J) (IB)

D6: Collecting and analyzing community, school, family, and student data to guide educational decision making. (a2E) (IB)

D7: Valuing and utilizing the unique identities and backgrounds of all students, families and communities as essential assets in learning environments. (i2D, i2F) (IB)

D11: Implementing proactive and preventive practices that represents an understanding that student behavior is shaped by complex environmental factors. (d1D)

D13: Demonstrating high levels of personal engagement and investment in all students' learning while remaining persistent in seeking strategies for reaching students who are not initially successful.

D15: Valuing and promoting curiosity, creativity, and life-long learning in students. (IB)

IDEA Objectives for the evaluation of this course

Essential objectives for this course include:

1. Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)
2. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories
3. Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course
4. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view

The School of Education's Conceptual Framework

“Professionalism in Service of Social Justice” is the conceptual framework infused into all programs within the School of Education. The underlying beliefs or principles that form the foundation of this framework include sensitivity and concern for others as essential societal values, and also the belief that caring for others will enhance the moral core of our communities and via a ripple effect, our society and the world as well. Teacher preparation activities in the ECSE program have been designed to assist teacher candidates in taking the first steps toward embodying the principles of social justice by collaborating cross-culturally to make a lasting impact beyond the level of the individual. Meeting the needs of diverse children is a central focus of readings, class discussion, and of the ECSE program itself.

The following Conceptual Framework Standards are specifically addressed in this module:

Conceptual Framework Standards	Activities and Assignments
Candidates demonstrate...	
CF1: ...an understanding of a current body of literature and are able to critically evaluate new practices and research in their field	- Written assignments and applications to work at partner site
CF2: ...knowledge and skills in a variety of school and professional settings.	- Extensive work with children and families in the field
CF3: ...an understanding of issues of social justice and inequity.	- Presentations and other activities highlighting features of underserved populations
CF4: ...skills that will enable them to work effectively with diverse clients.	- Field-based classroom work and family event
CF5: ...technological knowledge and skills which enhance education.	
CF6: ...professional decision-making skills and behaviors in advancing social justice and service.	
CF7: ...how moral and ethical decisions shape actions directed toward service to others.	Reflections
CF8: ...an ability to apply principles in professional decision-making.	

Field-based components

Please note that this module includes work in an infant/toddler setting. Please refer to the sequence grading table to see exactly what portion of assignment, module, and final grade points are dependent upon your attendance, participation, professionalism, and work in these field sites.

Fieldwork is critical to your work across all sequence modules. Failure to show up at any time for work in these sites is unacceptable and may be grounds for failure of a module, and therefore the sequence. Hours, start and end dates, days of attendance, and associated work are all indicated in the sequence calendar and grading table.

Technology

Technology is an essential tool for developing your professional skills and for completing any degree program. This sequence assumes a basic and practical knowledge of technology. It assumes that candidates are proficient at word processing (including creating tables and diagrams), communicating via Loyola Outlook e-mail, downloading Microsoft Word and Acrobat Reader files), and recording/presenting video clips. Anytime presentations are done, you must ensure that your files and software are compatible with Loyola's. Bring flash drives, various types of CDs/DVDs, videocassettes (and adapters), and other materials to class in advance of presentations so that you may test them for proper functioning and compatibility. Presentations are graded, so technology foul-ups should be avoided through careful planning and proactive work on assignments. If you are not familiar with the any of the preceding skills/equipment, it is your responsibility to become so.

Assignments

1. Environmental Observation Assignment (20pts): Due 2/14

This assignment will be completed in week 5 and a portion of the assignment will be done in pairs. Candidates will assess the classroom environment from multiple points of view, develop a map of their classroom, and write a paper that integrates these observations and materials. See Sakai for complete assignment description.

2. Developmental Assessment Assignment (40pts): Due 3/16

This assignment involves working with the teacher(s) in your classroom to select a child and collecting observational notes on that child throughout the sequence, culminating in a developmental assessment report. See Sakai for complete assignment description.

3. Adult-Child Interaction Assignment (20pts): Due 2/21

Candidates will observe and listen in their classrooms, noting adult-child interactions that relate to aspects of developmentally appropriate practice, as well as any ineffective practices. These observations and interpretations will be integrated into a reflective paper. See Sakai for complete assignment description.

4. Evaluation of Developmentally Appropriate Practices (60pts): Due 3/14

Throughout TLSC 250 you will be engaged in work with infants and toddlers in classrooms. You will be observed and evaluated formatively on these interactions throughout the modules. Each week, you will plan and deliver one planned activity and one classroom routine per day. The planned activity requires a written activity plan, which will be reviewed with the classroom teachers and instructors. You will record these activities and post a video of each on Box. We will view some of these activities in class, and you will receive feedback from your peer review group. Your points for this assignment come from posting your videos, the progress you make in embodying the principles of DAP, and your reflections and self-critique. Keep in mind that these points also include a portion for your formative comments on others' videos.

After your activity has been completed, you will upload the activity plans (along with modifications and reflections) to the Sequence 4 Google site at <https://sites.google.com/site/bestpracticesforinfanttoddlers/home>. We will review all of these steps on site. See Sakai for complete assignment description.

5. Harold Washington Library Center Assignment (20pts): Due 3/9

During TLSC 250, candidates will visit the Thomas Hughes Children's Library at the HWLC and complete an assignment at the library, which consists of collecting and evaluating various types of resources for sequence 4 and your future work as EC educators. Note: You may want to get a Chicago Public Library card before this field trip, since it is likely there will not be time to do this during the field trip and you might want to check out some of the resources you discover at the largest children's library in Chicago. You must apply for a card in person at a library branch location, and two of these locations are very close to the LSC: 6001 N Broadway in Edgewater, and 6907 N. Clark in Rogers Park. Instructions and requirements for getting a CPL card may be found [here](#). See Sakai for complete assignment description.

6. Professionalism in field settings (20 pts)

Once candidates enter field settings, expectations for professionalism are extremely high. They include following basic expectations for punctuality, dress/shoes, hair/nails/jewelry. Much more importantly, however, they address your interactions with staff, children and families and your emerging skills as an effective early childhood educator. Expectations for professionalism will be covered during the sequence, and each candidate will be rated individually on professionalism. These ratings will be discussed in individual meetings at the end of sequence 4.

7. Family and Community Engagement (20pts)

Candidates will participate in planning and hosting three monthly play groups (in February, March, and April) for young children with special needs and their families at Misericordia (6300 N Ridge Ave., within walking distance of the LSC – see dates in Sequence calendar). Attendance and participation in planning for all three of these dates is required. Points for this portion of the TLSC250 grade will come from the ongoing planning for these groups, as well as for applying the knowledge and skills they acquire in Sequence 4. Candidates will have access to resources at Misericordia, as well as those of the ECSE program, to plan these groups, so activity plans will be developed as part of the planning process.

8. Attendance (20 pts)

Attendance is critical to your success in this sequence. It is your responsibility to attend campus-based and field-based sessions, arriving and departing at the appropriate times. While it is helpful to your instructors to know if you must miss a class, missed classes or tardiness will still result in point deductions for both attendance and participation. Missing more than two classes will result in a failing grade for the term.

9. Participation points for on-site and campus-based activities (30 pts)

These points will be assigned based upon candidates' active involvement and full engagement in the learning process. This includes contributing comments and examples in class, referencing course readings, asking questions, participating in other candidates' discussion sessions, and giving class, module, and field-based activities your full attention. Your instructors reserve the right to deduct points for any issues of participation. You will earn participation points for demonstrating the behaviors listed above, adhering to the module policy regarding the appropriate use of technology, and your meaningful participation in the module Discussion Sessions, as well as completing Sakai forum reflections.

Participation rubric for Sequence 4

Professional Attitude and Demeanor Part I

- 3-Always prompt and regularly attend sessions.
- 2-Rarely late and regularly attend sessions (No more than 1 absence).
- 1-Often late and/or poor attendance at sessions (More than 2 absences).

Professional Attitude and Demeanor Part II

- 8-Always prepared for sessions with assignments and required materials.
- 4-Rarely unprepared for sessions with assignments and required materials.
- 1- Often unprepared for sessions with assignments and required materials.

Level of Engagement in Class

- 8-Always a willing participant. Contributes by offering ideas and asking questions in sessions, small groups and the whole class.
- 4-Often a willing participant. Contributes by offering ideas and asking questions in sessions, small groups or the whole class.
- 1-Rarely a willing participant. Rarely contributes to sessions by offering ideas or asking questions.

Integration of Readings into Classroom Participation

- 6-Often cite from readings; use readings to support points.
- 3-Occasionally cite from readings; sometimes use readings to support points.
- 1-Rarely cite from readings; rarely use readings to support points.

Listening Skills

- 5-Listen when others talk, both in groups and in sessions. Incorporate or build off of the ideas of others.
- 3-Listen when others talk, both in groups and in sessions
- 1-Rarely listen when others talk, both in groups and in sessions.

10. Sequence Summative Assessment (25 pts): Due 4/25

Each sequence in the TLLSC ECSE program includes a summative assessment for which points are shared across all of the sequence's modules. You will be working in teams independently throughout the semester to complete this project, and you will be given time to collaborate during this spring's PLC sessions. Details for this presentation will be discussed later in the sequence.

Assignments

All assignments are expected on the dates noted. It is imperative that work be completed on time. For this reason, you must plan ahead and stay organized. This does not mean that you are not allowed to request additional time to work on individual assignments – however, if an assignment must be submitted late, your instructors must be notified in advance (NOT on its due date) so that a plan for completion can be developed. Otherwise, point deductions will be made according to the following schedule:

- a. 1 to 4 days late: 10% of points will be deducted
- b. 5 to 7 days late: 30% of points will be deducted
- c. more than 7 days late: 50% of points will be deducted

All written assignments (with the obvious exception of test protocols and notes) must be typewritten and conform to the reference formats specified in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th edition except where indicated. Please submit a paper copy of each assignment in class unless instructed otherwise. Early assignments are always welcome.

Assignments for Sequence 4 are listed in the table below:

Dimension	Description	When graded	Points
Environmental Observation	At Easter Seals	Due 2/14	20
Developmental Assessment	At Easter Seals	Due 3/16	40
Adult Child Interaction	At Easter Seals	Due 2/21	20
Evaluation of DAP	At Easter Seals	Du 3/14	60
HWL Field-Trip	In class and field	Due 3/9	20
Professionalism in field	At Easter Seals	Throughout 250	20
Family and Community Engagement	Misericordia	End of 251	20
Attendance	In class and field	Throughout 250	20
Participation	In class and field	Throughout 250	30
Summative Assessment	Throughout semester	PLC	25
TOTAL			/275

Assignments and Grading

Final course grades will be assigned as follows:

Percentage	93-100	90-92	87-89	83-86	80-82	77-79	73-76	70-72	67-69	60-66	<60
Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	F

The following four are standard sections included in every LUC syllabus:

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is an expression of interpersonal justice, responsibility and care, applicable to Loyola University faculty, students, and staff, which demands that the pursuit of knowledge in the university community be carried out with sincerity and integrity. The School of Education's Policy on Academic Integrity can be found at: http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_integrity.shtml. For additional academic policies and procedures refer to: http://www.luc.edu/education/academics_policies_main.shtml

Accessibility

Students who have disabilities which they believe entitle them to accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act should register with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) office. To request accommodations, students must schedule an appointment with an SSWD coordinator. Students should contact SSWD at least four weeks before their first semester or term at Loyola. Returning students should schedule an appointment within the first two weeks of the semester or term. The University policy on accommodations and participation in courses is available at: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>

EthicsLine Reporting Hotline

Loyola University Chicago has implemented EthicsLine Reporting Hotline, through a third party internet & telephone hotline provider, to provide you with an automated and anonymous way to report activities that may involve misconduct or violations of Loyola University policy. **You may file an anonymous report here on-line or by dialing 855-603-6988. (within the United States, Guam, and Puerto Rico)** The University is committed to the highest ethical and professional standards of conduct as an integral part

of its mission of expanding knowledge in the service of humanity through learning, justice and faith. To achieve this goal, the University relies on each community member's ethical behavior, honesty, integrity and good judgment. Each community member should demonstrate respect for the rights of others.

<http://www.luc.edu/ethicsline>

Electronic Communication Policies and Guidelines

The School of Education faculty, students and staff respect each other's rights, privacy and access to electronic resources, services, and communications while in the pursuit of academic and professional growth, networking and research. All members of the university community are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of integrity, communication, and responsibility while accessing and utilizing technology, information resources, and computing facilities. A link to the Loyola University Chicago and School of Education official policies and guidelines can be found at:

http://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/education/pdfs/SOE_Cyberbullying_Policy.pdf

http://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/education/pdfs/SOE_Netiquette_Guidelines.pdf

Supplemental resources

- <http://www.aap.org/> The American Academy of Pediatrics is dedicated to the health of all children and committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults.
- <http://www.betterbabycare.org> Better Baby Care site supports safe and healthy, family centered, and developmental care.
- <http://csefel.uiuc.edu> This project is designed to strengthen the capacity of Head Start and child care programs to improve the social and emotional outcomes of young children.
- www.illinoisearlylearning.org The Illinois Early Learning Web site is an effective means of providing evidence-based, reliable information for parents, caregivers, and teachers of young children in the State of Illinois.
- www.isbe.net The Illinois State Board of Education website provides access to Early Learning, Early Childhood, and Special Education (provides access to Early Childhood Special Education).
- <http://education.umn.edu/icd/icdOLD//harriscenter> The Irving B. Harris Training Center for Infant and Toddler Development serves as a model for blending research with practice and policy.
- www.naeyc.org National Association for the Education of Young Children has for its purpose, "leading and consolidating the efforts of individuals and groups working to achieve healthy development and constructive education for all young children."
- <http://nccic.org/> The National Child Care Information Center is a national resource that links information and people to complement, enhance, and promote the child care delivery system, working to insure that all children and families have access to high-quality comprehensive services.
- <http://www.nectac.org/default.asp> The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center supports the implementation of the early childhood provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Their mission is to strengthen service systems to ensure that children with disabilities (birth through five) and their families receive and benefit from high quality, culturally appropriate, and family-centered supports and services.

- www.nhsa.org National Head Start Association is a private not-for-profit membership organization that provides a national forum for the continued enhancement of Head Start services for poor children ages 0 to 5 and their families.
- www.nieer.org The National Institute for Early Education Research supports early childhood education initiatives by providing objective, nonpartisan information based on research.
- www.ounceofprevention.org The Ounce of Prevention was established to promote the well-being of children and adolescents by working with families, communities, and policy-makers.
- <http://www.pitc.org/> The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers is committed toward promoting responsive, caring relationships for infants and toddlers.
- <http://www.zerotothree.org> Zero to Three is a leading resource on the first three years of life. Its goal is to strengthen and support families, practitioners and communities to promote the healthy development of babies and toddlers.