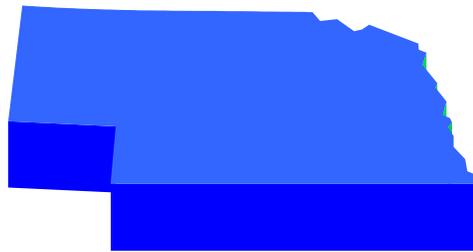


Nebraska Early Childhood Education Career Advising Guide



A guide to help you with your educational and career decisions



Table of Contents

	Page
About This Career Advising Guide	3
The Wonders of Working with Young Children	5
Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals	7
Educational Requirements for Working in Early Childhood Education Programs	8
Careers in Early Childhood	10
Early Childhood Salaries in Nebraska	19
Choosing Your Early Childhood Career Path	20
The Path to Being a High Quality Early Childhood Professional	22
Career Planning and Advising	23
Nebraska Options for Early Childhood Education-	
A. Training/Workshops	26
B. Child Development Associate	27
C. Certificate/Diploma Programs	28
D. Associate Degrees	29
E. Bachelor's Degrees	31
F. Post Bachelor's Degree Specializations and Endorsements	33
G. Master's Degrees and Graduate Level Teaching and Endorsements	33
H. Doctoral Degrees	35
RESOURCES	39

About This Career Advising Guide

What is the Career Advising Guide?

The Career Advising Guide is a collection of brief explanations of the options for professional development in the early childhood field in Nebraska. It also includes information for afterschool professionals, some of whom work in the early childhood field. The Career Advising Guide includes some of the newer options for professional development, and also the options that have been available for some time. It is important to read the web sites that describe the options that interest you.

Who is this Career Advising Guide for?

Professionals in all aspects of the field of early childhood education, as well as their advisors and mentors, will benefit from the information in the Career Advising Guide. The information supports the professional development and career advancement of those professionals who are relatively new to the field, as well as, those with years of experience. It is for individuals seeking to grow in their own professional skills, as well as for those who advise others.

Who are early childhood and afterschool professionals?

Early childhood professionals work with young children (birth through age eight) and their families. They work in a variety of settings. In different settings, early childhood professionals may be called teachers, child care providers, interventionists, or many other titles.

Afterschool professionals work with school age children and/or youth in any context. An afterschool professional may be just entering the field, or may have years of experience working with children and youth. They may work with children and youth one day per week or full-time.

We use the title professionals because we recognize that the work demands skilled, experienced, well-educated, dedicated workers: true professionals.

What is professional development?

Many people immediately associate professional development with training. It is this and more. Nebraska's Professional Development Framework defines professional development as "the continued learning growth of persons in the field of early childhood care and education." Professional development is also an approach to our work that values learning and that continually challenges us to become more skilled as professionals. This is a commitment that lasts as long as we work in the field of early childhood education.

The core beliefs about professional development defined in the Nebraska Professional Development System Framework are:

- Learning builds on past experiences, knowledge and individuals' strengths.
- Learning experiences should be culturally, linguistically and individually relevant.
- Learning is continuous and ongoing and is most effective when it is supported by networking, peer mentoring, consultation and opportunities to learn from one another.
- Professional development should be based on a sound philosophy and evidence-based practices.
- Effective professional development links theory and practice.
- Individuals should be involved in planning and designing their own professional development plan.
- There are several inter-related components of early childhood professional development systems which contribute to the improvement of quality care and education. This includes core knowledge, standards, accountability, access and compensation.

How can you use this Career Advising Guide?

Early childhood professionals can read it on their own to find out more about professional development and career advancement opportunities. They can locate themselves in the Nebraska Core Competency levels and learn about the options for going to the next level by taking advantage of existing opportunities.

Advisors, mentors, and supervisors may use it as a tool to help other early childhood professionals identify their pathways to career advancement.

Ultimately, there is always more to learn in the early care and education field and many ways you can advance your knowledge and skills to better serve young children in Nebraska.



The Wonders of Working with Young Children

There has never been a more exciting time to begin a career in early care and education. Early childhood educators have always been aware that the early years are a time of intense learning that can have tremendous impact on a child's future. Recent research in brain development has confirmed the critical need for stimulation in young children's lives. An early childhood professional's work is challenging, rewarding, and can have a lasting influence on children, families and society.

Research has shown that the educational background of teachers and caregivers is a critical aspect of the quality of all education and care programs for young children. The knowledge and skills necessary to positively support the development of young children cannot be acquired by teaching experience alone or the completion of a degree in another field. It is the specific education in early childhood education and/or child development coupled with practical teaching experience working with infants, toddlers, and preschool children that makes one most qualified to work with young children.

Early childhood professionals may work directly with children, work with children and their families, administer programs, and provide training for adults. This booklet focuses on the preparation of those who work directly with children, or who provide professional development programs for adults who work with young children.

What is early childhood?

Early childhood refers to the period in the life cycle from birth through age eight. Early childhood is also the period with the greatest rate of:

- brain development
- language development and acquisition
- small and large motor skills development

It is also the time when the foundations for social and emotional health are established.

What is special about the early childhood field?

People who work with young children:

- provide care and education
- nurture children emotionally and socially
- help them learn intellectually
- enhance their development by providing appropriate learning experiences and environments
- help build the foundations of learning which will impact the child for a lifetime.

What role do early childhood teachers play with families?

Families play the most crucial role in the lives of young children so the early childhood teacher's role involves working with young children and with their families. Early childhood programs are most effective when a major focus includes active engagement of family members with their children. The opportunity to build strong collaborative relationships with families is a special feature of the early childhood field.

Who are the children with whom early childhood professionals work?

Early childhood professionals work with children of different ages, including:

- Infants
- Toddlers
- Preschoolers, and
- School age children

Early childhood education programs might operate half-days or full-days. School-age programs generally operate for only part of the day.

Early childhood professionals work with children from varying backgrounds including differences in family structure, racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, income levels and the primary language used in the home. Children in early childhood programs will also present a wide range of abilities due to differences in life experiences as well as their own emotional, social, intellectual and physical challenges.

What jobs are available for early childhood teachers?

Jobs include family child care provider, infant-toddler caregiver/teacher, preschool teacher, elementary teacher, Head Start teacher or assistant teacher, home visitor, director, principal, nanny, play group facilitator or school-age group supervisor. Other roles early childhood educators have are those of trainers, coaches and consultants to early childhood providers.



Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals

Core Competencies are what all adults who work with children need to know, understand and be able to do to support children’s development and school readiness. *Nebraska’s Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals* address nine core knowledge areas for the early care and education field. To review the full document of core competencies go to: http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/core_comp_0510.pdf. The nine core knowledge areas are:

- A. Child, Growth and Development
- B. Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- C. Learning Environments
- D. Planning Learning Experiences, and Curriculum
- E. Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children
- F. Observation, Assessment and Documentation
- G. Partnerships with Families and Communities
- H. Professionalism and Leadership
- I. Administration, Program Planning and Development

Levels within the Core Competencies

There are many skilled early care and education professionals in Nebraska. Some of them have acquired skills through working with children over a number of years, through independent study and learning, or through formal education in degree or certificate programs at colleges and universities across the state. In Nebraska’s core competencies there are six levels of competencies defined. The six levels of competencies are:

Level	Description
Level 1	Skills and knowledge anyone entering the early childhood field should have.
Level 2	All skills in level one plus skills and knowledge anyone working the early childhood field should have after one to two years of employment.
Level 3	Skills and knowledge anyone working in the early childhood field might have, and specifically the skills you would expect to see in someone with a Child Development Associate (CDA) , a one year certificate/diploma in early childhood education, or three years experience in early childhood education. (Includes all of the skills in levels 1 and 2.)
Level 4	Skills and knowledge anyone working in the early childhood field might have, and specifically the skills you would expect to see in someone with an Associate’s Degree in early childhood education/child development or a related degree and at least three years experience in early childhood education (Includes all of the skills in levels 1, 2, and 3.)
Level 5	Skills and knowledge anyone working in the early childhood field might have, and specifically the skills you would expect to see in someone with a Bachelor’s degree in early childhood education, child development or early childhood special education or a related degree and at least three years experience in early childhood education (Includes all of the skills in levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.)
Level 6	Skills and knowledge anyone working the early childhood field might have, and specifically the skills and knowledge you would expect to see in someone with an advanced degree in early childhood education, child development, early childhood special education or a related degree and at least three years experience in early childhood education. (Includes all of the skills in levels 1,2,3,4, and 5.)

Educational Requirements for Working in Early Childhood Education Programs

Child Care Licensing Regulations are the set of minimal regulations that anyone offering licensed child care in Nebraska must meet. Nebraska law states that anyone caring for more than three children from different families at any one time must be licensed by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

The educational requirements for working in licensed Nebraska child care are minimal. Most teachers are not required to have any formal education in early childhood education, and most directors are required to have only minimal education in early childhood education.

Lowest level of education required by child care licensing	Directors	Teachers
Programs with 22 or more children	High school diploma or GED and 2 years experience in early childhood	Plan to complete 3 credit hour class or 15 clock hours of training
Programs with less than 22 children	Plan to complete at least six credit hours or 36 clock hours of training	Plan to complete 3 credit hour class or 15 clock hours of training
Family Child Care Home	12 clock hours of training per year	12 clock hours of training per year

Table 2-Educational requirements in Nebraska’s Child Care Licensing (Established in March 1998)

National Accreditation Requirements for Child Care Centers, School-age Care Programs and Family Child Care Homes: The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) offers national accreditation for child care centers and preschools. Directors of NAEYC accredited child care programs are required to have a bachelor’s degree with at least 9 credit hours in administration/management and 24 credit hours in child development or early childhood education. Teachers in NAEYC accredited programs are required to have a minimum of a CDA or be working on a higher degree. Educational requirements for accredited programs will increase between now and 2020. By 2020 at least 75 percent of teachers will need to have a minimum of a bachelor’s degree and all must have at least an associate degree.

The National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) accredits family child care homes. The National Association of Family Child Care requires at least 90 clock hours of training in early childhood education for people working in the family child care home.

The National After-School Association (NAA) transferred accreditation of before and after school programs to the Council on Accreditation in September 2008. The standards established by the National After-School Association will still inform the Council on Accreditation process. NAA requires both education and experience for positions. Site

Directors and senior group leaders are required to have at least an associate's degree with experience. Group leaders must have a high school diploma and experience to be group leader.

Head Start/Early Head Start Programs are federally funded comprehensive child development programs that serve pregnant women, children from birth to age 5 and their families. Head Start/Early Head Start programs must comply with federal performance standards defined by the Head Start Bureau. By September 30, 2013 fifty percent of Head Start teachers will need to have an associate's degree in early childhood education or a bachelor's degree in early childhood education. Education coordinators in Head Start programs will be required to have a bachelor's degree in early childhood education and assistant teachers will be required to have a Child Development Association (CDA) or be enrolled in an associate's degree program. Early Head Start teachers will be required to have a CDA or be trained in early childhood education with a focus on infants and toddlers.

Nebraska Department of Education Early Childhood Education Grantees and Rule 11 requirements: Regulations for Early Childhood Education programs applies to all center-based early childhood education and care programs operated by public schools and/or Educational Services Units (ESUs). Rule 11 reflects research-based elements of quality early childhood education programs which have been shown to produce strong outcomes for children. All teachers working in center-based early childhood programs (serving children below kindergarten entrance age) operated by a school district or an ESU are required to have a valid Nebraska teaching certificate with an early childhood education endorsement recognized by the Nebraska Department of Education. Acceptable endorsements are:

- 1) Early Childhood Education
- 2) Early Childhood Special Education
- 3) Preschool Disabilities
- 4) Unified Early Childhood Education Endorsement

Early childhood education programs operated by school districts may employ a teacher without such an endorsement if the teacher files a plan to complete the early childhood endorsement with the Nebraska Department of Education. The plan will require the teacher to receive 3 semester hours of credit annually toward completion of the endorsement. When fifty percent (50%) of the required courses have been completed, the teacher is eligible for a provisional endorsement which is valid for three years and can be renewed within upon completion of at least fifteen (15) credit hours.

Teacher aids (paraprofessionals) in these programs are required to have at least 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education, or the equivalent in prior training and experience. Home visitors are required to have a bachelor's degree in human development, social work, nursing or related field.

Careers in Early Childhood

There are a variety of positions available if you want to work in early childhood education. There are positions that allow you to work in your home, in child care centers or Head Start programs, and in public school settings. You can also choose to focus on a specific age of children you prefer. There are some early childhood caregivers who prefer to work with just infants and toddlers. They often will work in an infant/toddler classroom in a child care center or dedicate their family child care home to serving infants and toddlers. Other professionals work in home visitation programs or Early Head Start programs.

Table 3 on the following pages describes some of the roles in early childhood education, general descriptions of the work, educational requirements, and some of the benefits and challenges for early childhood professionals.



Roles, General Descriptions, Required Training, and Benefits and Challenges of Working with Children 0-8

Role	General Description	Training/Education	Benefits	Challenges
Family Child Care Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works independently in a home-based program serving no more than 8 children if working alone and 12 children with an assistant. • Provides children more individual attention due to more limited size. • Works with children and families over multiple years for deeper relationships. • May have siblings together in family setting rather than in separate rooms in centers. • School-age children might be there only in the morning, afternoon and summer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required training: CPR and First Aid Certification. • At least 12 clock hours of training in early childhood education. • Completed DHHS orientation for family child care providers. • Recommended training: Management Training, Early Learning Guidelines Training, and college courses in early childhood education from a two year or four year college 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work alone. • Establishes own fee structure/pay. • Can work from home. • Can have own children with you. • Develops close relationships with children and families. • Defines how many children, and the ages of children you are willing to care for within the state licensing regulations. • Contracts with families to include vacation, training and sick days. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hours maybe very long (12 or more hours per day). • You are only adult during the day. • There is not readily available assistance to help deal with issues as they happen. (Support groups are available across the state for discussion. There is also a toll-free telephone information service available.) • Stress on providers own children when caring for children outside of the family. • No paid retirement, benefits or vacations unless you build them into budget. • Responsible for managing the financial matters of the program. • Responsible for all food, equipment, health and safety needs of the program. • Your home is your workplace. • Your sick days impact several families, if you are sick often you lose business. • Need to secure substitutes or families prepared to have a backup plan if you need to be gone or are sick.

Table 3 Roles in Early Childhood Education

Role	General Description	Training/Education	Benefits	Challenges
Nanny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides care and education for young children in the child's home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended training: certification, specialized diploma or certificate for nannies through community college. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops close relationships with children and families. Limited number of children. Contracts can define hours. Pay can be good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families can ask you to do more than care for children, such as housework and errands. Family's rules and discipline are defined by parents—might not agree with your own way of doing things. You work for one family and if it doesn't work out you can be out of work quickly. May or may not include paid vacations or benefits. May or may not require live-in arrangement.
Assistant Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumes responsibility for the care and education of a group of children in an early childhood program. Supervised by another practitioner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required Training: At least 12 clock hours of training annually. A staff member onsite must have current first aid and CPR training. In public schools at least 6 college credits in early childhood education or equivalent training. Recommended training: Some early childhood education training or coursework. Working toward an Associate degree in ECED. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works with a group of children under the supervision of another teacher. Helps plan learning activities Observes and documents children's behavior and abilities. Works with a group of similar age children. Knows the children and their families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works with as many as 24 children with another teacher. (Depends on type of program.) Equipment available to the classroom varies based upon the budget of the program. Turnover of staff can be high depending on the program. Good working relationships with the lead teacher and other professionals are critical. Benefits vary based upon the program. Pay may be limited.

Table 3 Roles in Early Childhood Education

Role	General Description	Training/Education	Benefits	Challenges
<p>Teacher in Child Care Center or Head Start Program</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizes and manages the classroom and physical area where the learning experiences take place. • Observe and assess the educational needs and learning acquisition of children. • Plan, select, organize and direct the learning experiences of children. • Plan teaching strategies and materials and equipment to be used. • Evaluate and report children’s progress. • May supervise others. • Head Start programs must assess children based upon Head Start performance standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required Training: 12 clock hours of training annually. A staff member onsite must have current first aid and CPR training • Head Start requires a Child Development Associate. An Associate’s degree or a Bachelor’s degree. By September 2013 50% of teachers will be required to have a Bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education. • Recommended training: Child Development Associate or Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education. • Desirable education: Bachelors degree in child development or early childhood education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for group of children—usually same age. • Rewarding to watch children learn and grow. • May work independently. • Plans learning environments and activities. • Works with another teacher in the classroom. • Develops close working relationships with families. • Program may operate for nine months rather than all year. • Program may operate for part day. • Opportunities for professional development and skill building with team of staff may be available. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment available to you will depend on the program. • Staff turnover can be high. • Knowledge/skills of teaching assistants may vary. • Hours not usually more than 40 hours per week, but extra hours may be required if other staff is not available. • Benefits vary based upon the program. • Good working relationships with director and other professionals is critical. • Need to work well with families, other team members and representatives of social service agencies. • Pay may be limited. • Head Start programs must meet federal requirements so there may be many forms and reports that have to be generated to meet grant obligations. • Head Start programs have children from low-income families, children may have needs beyond those of other children due to poverty and other environmental factors.

Table 3-Roles in Early Childhood

Role	General Description	Training/Education	Benefits	Challenges
<p>Teacher in Public School Early Childhood Classroom or Early Childhood Special Education Classroom</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizes and manages the classroom and physical area where the learning experiences take place. • Observe and assess the educational needs and learning acquisition of children. • Plan, select, organize and direct the learning experiences of children within a curriculum framework. • Plan teaching strategies and materials and equipment to be used. • Evaluate and report children’s progress. • May supervise others. • Assumes responsibility for the care and education of a group of children who are both typically developing and some with developmental delays or disabilities. • Develop Individual Education Plans and Individual Family Service Plans. • Often works with other members of the teaching team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bachelors degree with a teaching certificate, and • Endorsement in early childhood education or unified early childhood education, or early childhood special education. <p>Or plan to complete early childhood education endorsement on file with the Department of Education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay and benefits are usually good. • Programs generally have equipment and supplies necessary. • Opportunities for professional growth. • School districts have specialized staff to assist when there are concerns about children’s learning and behavior. • Work with a team of professionals to determine best directions to help child develop and learn. • Personally rewarding to watch children learn and grow. • Quality interaction with children and the adults who care for and educate these children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School and district requirements must be met as program of the public schools. • Personal educational philosophy might not match school administrator’s resulting in conflicts around learning environments and activities. • Both federal and state reporting requirements must be met. • Need to work well with others. • Reports, policies and procedures must be completed and submitted. • Need to work well with families, principal and other district personnel. • School systems sometimes have response time delays.

Role	General Description	Training/Education	Benefits	Challenges
School-age care worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervise a group of children between the ages of 5-12. • Plan activities that can apply learning in a fun and interactive way. • Ensure children are safe and supervised at all times. • Encourage play and interaction with other children and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 12 clock hours of training annually for full time staff. • Some staff onsite must have current first aid and CPR training. <p>Recommended training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate degree in early childhood education with school-age course emphasis. • Youth and child development degree another option. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers opportunities for part-time work. • Quality interaction with children. • May or may not be supervising other staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time work often not available. • Pay may be limited. • Might be located in facility run by others and need to meet their policies and procedures. • Staff turnover can be high. • Equipment available can vary. • Not all employers offer benefits.
School-age care supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for hiring, supervising staff. • Plans all activities. • Ensures activities are safe and developmentally appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 12 clock hours of training annually for full time staff. <p>Recommended training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate degree in early childhood education with emphasis on school-age care. • Bachelors degree preferred in child development or youth development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More hours generally available for planning, hiring and supervising. • May work only during school year and during school breaks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay may be limited. • Not all employers offer benefits. • Ensures all policies and procedures of facility are met. • Staff turnover can be high. • Equipment available can vary.

Table 3-Roles in Early Childhood

Role	General description	Training/Education	Benefits	Challenges
Director Child Care Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsible for policies and procedures, • Ensures program meets child care licensing regulations • May be responsible for setting fee structure, collecting payments from parents, doing payroll, hiring and supervising staff. • Must operate program to ensure all children have safe learning environment. • Must screen all child care center job applicants and check against child abuse registry. • Criminal background checks on job applicants are recommended. • Must ensure program provides all necessary paperwork for families' tax reporting. • Ensure food and nutrition needs of children are met. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school diploma with experience and at least 12 clock hours of training annually. <p>Recommended education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some college coursework and management training course or child care administration course; • Bachelor's degree preferred with some early childhood education coursework and some business, management or administration coursework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can own your own business. • Can pay well. • Can work under corporate structure that can assume some of financial requirements. • Plays a key role in shaping the philosophy and quality of the program. • Works closely with families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring and training staff can sometimes be difficult. • Managing center budget while maintaining or improving program quality can be challenging. • Staff turnover can be high. • Addressing concerns with parents regarding payment, child development. • Maintaining staff :child ratio • Providing sufficient learning tools for classrooms. • Liability issues related to health, injury, and facility condition.

Table 3-Roles in Early Childhood

Role	General description	Training/Education	Benefits	Challenges
Community college instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop coursework to prepare potential early childhood education professionals. • Evaluate the effectiveness of the education. • Identify practicum sites to optimize student learning. • Ensure program develops core competencies in early childhood teachers • Meets any applicable national accreditation standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master’s Degree in Early Childhood Education preferred with some teaching experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rewards of helping educate the future generation of early childhood teachers. • Flexible schedule in college settings. • Understand a variety of early childhood settings through placement of students for practicum. • Continuous opportunity to learn new concepts in early childhood. • Pay and benefits can be good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching multiple classes at the same time, participating in college meetings, advising students, and getting all of the college paperwork done can be quite challenging at times. • College meetings and new procedures and requirements can consume a lot of your time.
Training coordinator or professional development coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in partnership with others to plan early childhood educator professional development efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master’s Degree in Early Childhood Education preferred with some teaching experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership in shaping the future of the field. • Pay and benefits can be good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and professional development coordinators can be very busy and have to be able to multi-task to coordinate a variety of efforts at the same time. • Need to be able to work well with many people to effectively design and plan training efforts. • Grant writing and generating of reports are a necessary part of the work. You also may have to manage the budget for the local training efforts.

Role	General description	Training/Education	Benefits	Challenges
Professor in four-year college of education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching, researching, and advancing the practices within the early childhood field. • Writing and publishing research findings. • Writing and submitting grants to conduct research in the early childhood education field. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ph.D. required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help develop and inform the early childhood field of best practices based upon research. • Help prepare early childhood professionals and researchers of the future. • Flexible schedule and sabbaticals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balancing teaching, leadership, research, and departmental work can be challenging. • Ability to multi-task is essential. • Research is required for professional advancement and tenure.

Table 3-Roles in Early Childhood

Early Childhood Salaries in Nebraska

Demand for early childhood education positions in Nebraska remains high. The Nebraska Department of Labor indicates in their *Nebraska Occupational and Industry Projections* publication dated September 30, 2008 that demand for child care workers is projected to increase by 24.14% between 2006 and 2016. Salaries in the early childhood field vary greatly depending upon the type of program and educational level of the employees. Some child care centers and family child care homes pay slightly above minimum wage based upon the fees they charge families for care. Other child care programs might offer better salaries if they have some government or corporate support for their programs. Most often the determinant of pay has to do with the educational requirements for the position. Public schools and Head Start programs generally pay better and offer better benefits to their employees. Below is information gathered from a variety of surveys, job postings, and other sources regarding annual early childhood wages across Nebraska from 2007 to December 2011.

Early Childhood Professions September 2011

Nebraska Department of Labor Career Compass Wage estimates*

Position	Statewide		Metro Omaha Area	
	Entry Wage	Average Wage	Entry Wage	Average Wage
Preschool Teachers	\$17,380	\$22,725	\$17,280	\$22,345
Kindergarten Teachers	\$34,235	\$44,115	\$34,730	\$43,905
Early Childhood Special Education	\$34,930	\$45,870	\$34,730	\$43,905
Teacher Assistants (Public schools)	\$16,905	\$20,655	\$16,785	\$20,520
Child Care	\$17,210	\$19,375	\$17,085	\$18,755
Child Care Director/Director Owner	\$35,795	\$60,600	\$48,045	\$80,660

Annual Graduate Placement Report Information from Community Colleges--

Community colleges in Nebraska report the placement of their graduates and their starting salaries upon graduation with an Associate’s degree in Early Childhood Education. Below are the average starting salary, the low hourly salary, and high hourly salary for various community college early childhood education graduates.

College	Average hourly salary	Low hourly salary	High hourly salary
Southeast-2009 Community College	\$10.35	\$8.00	\$18.00
Central Community College 2007-2008	\$9.80*	\$6.75*	\$18.50

* Central Community Colleges salaries were reported as monthly salaries, they were recalculated to reflect hourly salaries assuming full-time employment.

Nebraska Department of Education, Head Start Program Information Report Wages for 2009-2010 Program Year

Head Start programs have increased the level of education expected for classroom teachers based upon federal requirements. The salaries listed below are gathered from the Head Start grantees in Nebraska.

Head Start Teachers Annual Salaries	
Child Development Associate	\$20,901
Associates Degree	\$23,954
Baccalaureate Degree	\$27,612
Graduate Degree	\$34,742



Choosing Your Early Childhood Career Path

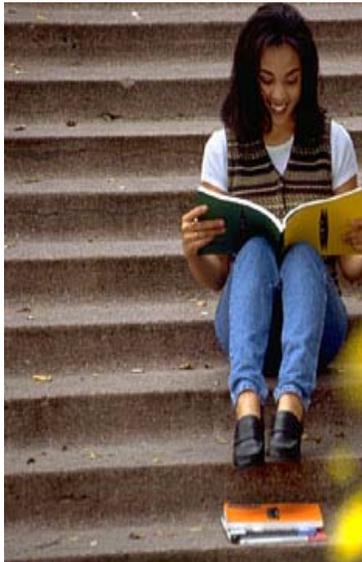
Training requirements, professional recognition (licensing and certification), and salaries vary with different roles and work settings in the early childhood education field. Understanding the options available will help you to make wise choices as you plan your career. All work in early childhood can be rewarding as you watch children learn, grow and develop. The choices you make in education and the types of settings you work will be a great determinant of the pay, and benefits you receive for doing this work. If you like helping children develop and learn and are willing to enter the field while earning a minimum salary, there are many jobs in the child care industry that you will find personally rewarding with some initial child development or early childhood education courses or training. If you like

helping children learn and develop and are seeking a position where you can earn better pay and receive better benefits, then getting a four year degree with a teaching certificate and early childhood education endorsement is the best option for you.

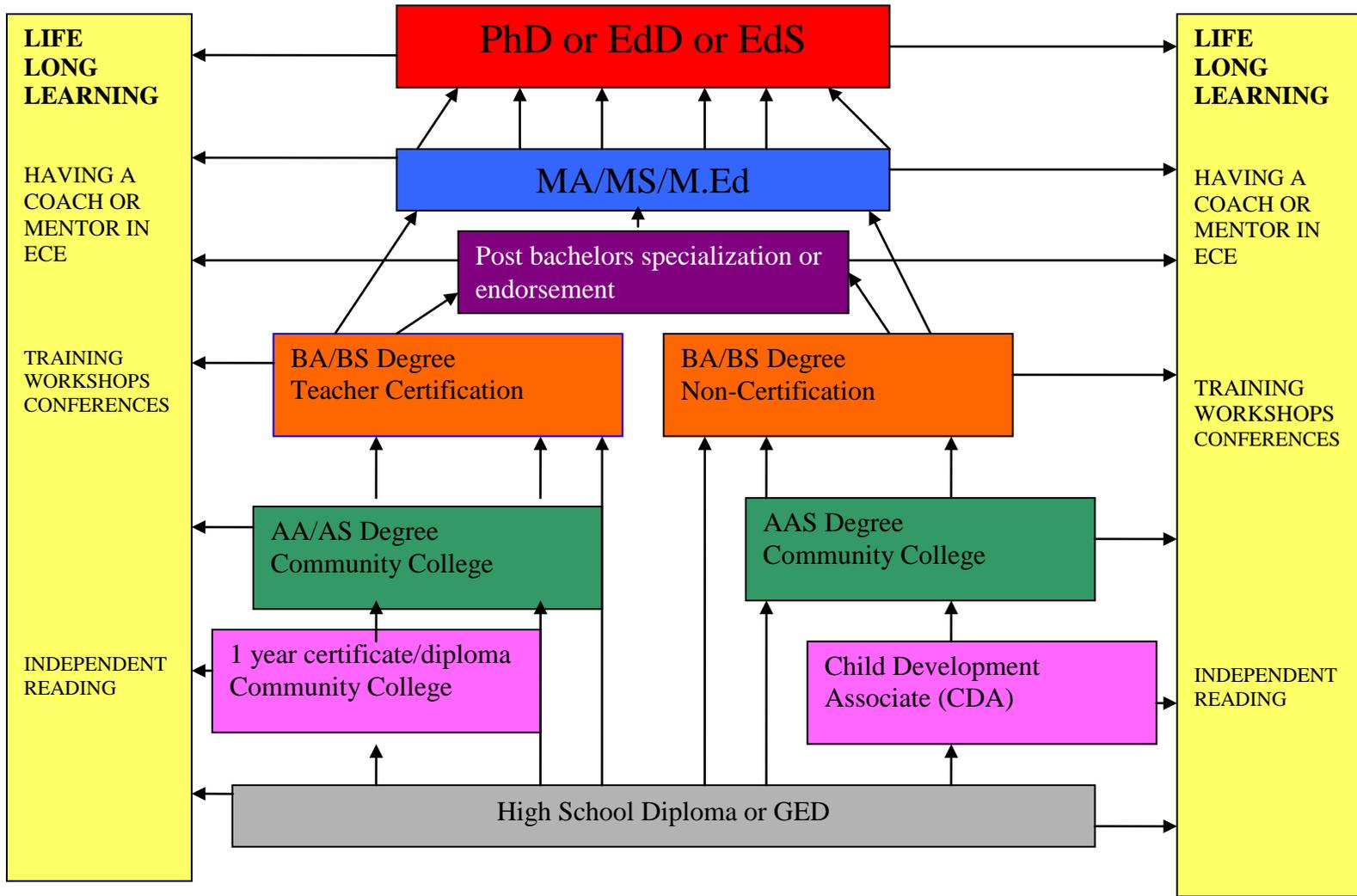
Although pursuing courses through community colleges and four year colleges seemed impossible in the past, there has never been a better time to consider it. Nebraska's two year and four year colleges have developed many new ways for delivering courses. There are now online courses, courses where you do a few days on campus and the rest of the work online, and distance education courses that are located in several classrooms across the institution's defined service area.

Financial aid is also available to help you complete your college education. T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) Early Childhood® NEBRASKA, administered through Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children, offers scholarships to anyone working 30 hours per week or more in early childhood education. T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood pays for community college courses and for courses at some four year colleges. Courses paid for must apply to any early childhood education degree. For more information on T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® NEBRASKA go to www.nebraskaeyc.org. In addition to T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood®, many people working in child care are eligible for Pell grants, scholarships or low interest student loans. Contact a college financial aid office to find out more about grants, scholarships and loans.

Information about early childhood education degree programs at Nebraska's community colleges can be found at <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/ecprograms.html>. Information about Nebraska's four year college's teacher education programs can be found at <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/tedprograms.html>.



The Path to Becoming a High Quality Early Childhood Professional:



How Do You Start on the Career Path?

The Career Path to become an early childhood professional can begin at several points. Some individuals enter directly into the workplace and begin acquiring an initial level of training through their programs. Others enter educational settings, seeking a one-year certificate or Associate degree, typically from area community colleges, while others enter directly into Bachelor's degree programs seeking a degree that will lead to teacher certification.

Basic educational requirements in early childhood:

Anyone working alone with children between infancy and five years of age must complete training in First Aid and CPR. All child care centers and school-age programs must have staff onsite at all times that have current First Aid and CPR certification.

Reasons a person may not be eligible for working in early childhood:

Anyone entered as a perpetrator on the child abuse and neglect registry or convicted of a criminal offense will be ineligible for working in the early childhood field.

Advancing your training/education in early childhood education:

- a. Consider completing first aid and CPR courses locally, it will make you more marketable in the early childhood field; then
- b. Take some community college courses or participate in local workshops in early childhood education. Explore opportunities for other professional development through your local Early Childhood Professional Development Partnership or Regional Training Coalition. A map of the regions can be found at http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/elc/elc_list.html.
- c. For information on Nebraska's community college early childhood education programs go to: <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/ecprograms.html>.
- d. Familiarize yourself with Nebraska's Early Learning Guidelines and the Early Learning Guidelines domains training
- e. Complete all forms required by the Nebraska Child Care Licensing Regulations
- f. Consider getting a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential while working in the early childhood field.

Career Planning and Advising

Seeking career advising is an important part of planning your professional development. Career advising provides the opportunity to discuss your professional goals with an advisor. An advisor is a person who is knowledgeable about resources that exist for supporting your professional development. For early childhood and afterschool professionals seeking career advising and assistance with career planning, there are a number of resources. Here are some places to find answers to your questions and other support for planning your professional development:

- Supervisors at your workplace
- Mentors who support your professional development plans through an on-going professional relationship with you
- Instructors of professional development opportunities
- Faculty and advisors at institutions of higher education

- Early childhood regional training coalition coordinators/professional development partnership coordinators
- The Early Childhood Training Center has staff to assist with career planning and advising for professionals at all career levels. Call 1-800-89CHILD for assistance with career planning.
- The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood ® NEBRASKA Coordinator at the Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children can also assist you with career advising and understanding their scholarship programs for attending college while working in the early childhood field.

Individualized Professional Development Planning

Every professional is encouraged to have an Individualized Professional Development Plan in writing. An individualized professional development plan is a thoughtfully developed plan designed by you to increase your knowledge, skills, and expertise for working with young children and their families; it is a plan for your professional growth.

In order to complete a professional development plan you need to:

- Identify and prioritize your specific areas for growth,
- Develop and clarify strategies to support your professional growth,
- And document and reflect upon your professional growth.

Self-assessments have been developed as part of *Nebraska's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals*. The self-assessments can be used by anyone to determine what knowledge and skills they currently have what skills they need to further refine and develop. Once a person has completed the self-assessments they can begin to plan for what further education, training, coaching or mentoring they need to improve their skills. The self-assessments can be found at http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/core_comp.html.

A sample professional development plan based upon Nebraska's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals can be accessed at the Early Childhood Training Center website at: http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/core_comp/profdev_plan.pdf.

Starting with Strong Foundations in Early Childhood Education:

Many acquire formal education in early childhood education to ensure that they are starting their career in early childhood education with a firm foundation. Options to consider include working toward a certificate, diploma, or Associate of Arts, Associate of Science or an Associate of Applied Science degree in Early Childhood Education. You also may be interested in working toward a bachelor's degree in early childhood education with a teaching certificate. Some of you might be interested in pursuing a Master's Degree.

If you think you would prefer to work with children between birth and age 8 in Head Start, Early Head Start, or a public school program, working toward a bachelor's degree is your best option; you could:

- a. Enroll in an Associate of Arts degree in a community college and then transfer to a four year college or university. Be sure the college you transfer to will accept the credits from your community college program; or
- b. Enter a college or university that offers an early childhood education unified degree or a degree in elementary education with a subject endorsement in early childhood education.
- c. Later you might want to work toward an advanced degree in curriculum instruction with an emphasis in early childhood education, educational administration or focus on research, special education, or another area of specialization.

Life Long Learning

Regardless of what path you decide to take to become a high quality early childhood professional you will want to actively pursue opportunities for continuous growth and learning. The early childhood field is evolving rapidly as new research information becomes available on how children's bodies and minds develop and what types of environments, experiences, and activities are most effective in helping children grow and develop.

Join professional organizations, subscribe to early childhood professional publications, discuss and reflect with others in the early childhood field about new research and best practice information and attend new trainings/workshops. A statewide registry of training is available at <http://ectccalendar.education.ne.gov/>.

In-service Clock Hours and Continuing Education Units

Most early childhood professionals need only in-service clock hours to document their continued education in the early childhood field. The continuing education can be accomplished through training or workshops. The child care regulations through the Department of Health and Human Services require people working in child care to document 12 clock hours of training annually. Training and workshop hours can be documented through the clock hours indicated on training certificates.

Continuing Education Units are a nationally defined measure for continuing education. Some states, as part of their credentialing or certification systems, will require professionals to obtain continuing education units (CEU's). The National Council on Professional Recognition requires all people with a Child Development Associate (CDA) to complete CEU's to renew their CDA.

A CEU is a single unit granted for 10 contact hours of participation in professional development activities, such as workshops, in-service programs, conferences, or other various training formats. CEU's are given to provide a permanent record of an individual's noncredit experiences. For CDA renewal, an early childhood professional must complete 4.5 CEUs or (45 contact hours---note that this is equivalent to one 3 credit hour semester long college course.)

Nebraska Options for Early Childhood Education- Training/Workshops

Workshops and Training

Training is an option for in-service credit toward state child care licensure requirements and also for ongoing education and continuous learning. Workshops and other professional development activities are designed to support increased competency and professional attitudes. Specialty training series and individual topic workshops are delivered by training consultants and staff of the Early Childhood Training Center, through the Early Childhood Regional Training Coalitions and Early Childhood Professional Development Partnerships. Early childhood professional organizations, food program sponsors, Educational Service Units, Cooperative Extension agencies and other community –based training entities offer additional opportunities for learning and professional development.

A few of the trainings brokered through the Early Childhood Training Center include:

Early Childhood Education Management Training Program-This is a 12-module series (each session is 3 and ½ hours long). The series is a total of 45 clock hours, and is designed to increase the knowledge of leading and managing an early childhood education program.

Early Learning Guidelines Training- The Early Childhood Training Center works with Regional Training Coalitions and Early Childhood Professional Development Partnerships to offer both 2-hour and 6-hour sessions on the seven Early Learning Guidelines domains. The 2-hour version provides an overview of each of the domains, while the 6-hour training provides more in-depth information on each of the domains. A person who completes the entire series will complete at least 42 hours of training.

Environment Rating Scales Training-This training helps early childhood providers better understand the commonly recognized measures of quality in specific types of early care and education settings. Environment Rating Scales are quality assessment instruments that assess the physical environment, the basic care environment, curriculum, interaction, schedule and program structure, and parent and staff education in early childhood settings. Trainings offered include a 3-hour overview, a three-day training including opportunity to visit other programs and practice scoring a program using one of the Environment Rating Scale Instruments, a two-day training where you can become reliable using one of the instruments.

Home Visitation Training-This intensive 40-hour training addresses a variety of training needs for new home visitors. Training content includes: ethics for home visitors, care of self, family systems theory, human growth and development, cultural competency, communication in home visitation, observation and documentation in home visitation, and family viewed in the context of community.

Read for Joy-This training program provides information for parents, caregivers, and early childhood professionals on ways to help children become successful readers. A 1.5 -2 hour session is offered for parents to help them understand early literacy and ways to support learning in school and at home. A 6 hour training includes information on how the children's brain develops, ways to engage children in learning, characteristics in homes and schools that produce effective readers, strategies for using literature effectively with children.

Special Care Training-Special Care training is a 7-hour training that trains early childhood professionals to better understand the importance of including children from birth through age five with disabilities in all early childhood care and education settings, the importance of building strong relationships with families, and suggested ways to include young children with disabilities in daily activities in early care settings.

Other training events can be brokered through the Early Childhood Training Center to address agency and program needs. There is a charge for some training delivered through the Early Childhood Training Center to cover the costs of presenter's honoraria, travel expenses, and materials. For more information on the Early Childhood Training Center go to:

<http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/train/list.html>.

Other sources of information on regional training events can be found by contacting the Early Childhood Regional Training Coalition Coordinator or the Early Childhood Professional Development Partnership Coordinator. For a listing of the local contacts go to:

http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/elc/elc_list.html.

Statewide Training Calendar

Nebraska offers a searchable statewide training calendar that can assist you in finding local, regional, state and national training events, workshops and conferences. Individuals can use the statewide training calendar to find training regarding a specific topic, during a range of dates, in a certain part of the state, and for addressing certain core competencies.

To search the statewide training calendar go to: <http://ectccalendar.education.ne.gov/>

Nebraska Options for Early Childhood Education Careers- *Child Development Associate (CDA)*

The Council for Professional Recognition is a national organization that awards the Child Development Associate (CDA) to early care and education professionals, who have demonstrated their skills and competencies in working with young children and their families. This is an **entry-level** professional credential that recognizes community-based training and/or college credit and experience in early education. There are three areas of specialization in the CDA:

- 1) Center-based setting: infant/toddler or preschool;

- 2) Family Child Care Settings, and;
- 3) Home visitor setting.

This credential is roughly equivalent to 1 year of college. One of the benefits of the CDA is that it is recognized in many states and can be used as an entry-level credential. It must be renewed every three years. The CDA requires that you keep accurate records of your training hours. A CDA credential may be acquired through an on-site portfolio development process or in combination with some college credit courses. For people interested in pursuing a college degree at some point in time, the college credit option for a CDA would be the preferred method of obtaining the credential.

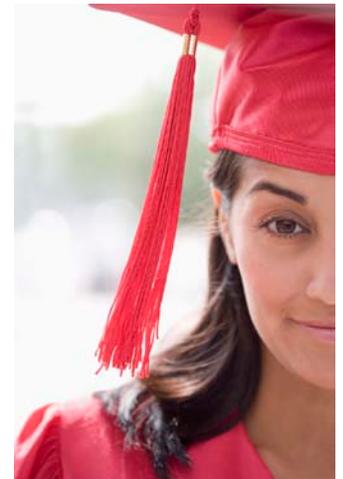
For more information go to the National Council on Professional Recognition at:
<http://www.cdacouncil.org/>

For information on the CDA in Nebraska go to:
http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/cda/cda_credentiaing.html.

Higher Education

Nebraska Community Colleges

Nebraska community colleges offer certificate programs, diplomas, and several types of Associate degrees in early childhood education. Costs for tuition and books at a community college are considerably less than the costs at a four-year college or university. Community colleges also offer a significant number of early childhood education courses online. Table 4 provides you with a matrix of the certificates, diplomas and degrees available from Nebraska's community colleges. For more information on each of Nebraska's community colleges go to:
<http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/tedprograms.html>



Certificate/Diploma Programs

Many community colleges in Nebraska offer 1 year programs that award diplomas or certificates with specialties in early childhood education. These programs generally emphasize courses in early childhood education with few general education classes, such as English and Math part of their requirements. Some of the certificate or diploma areas include: in-home care, professional nanny/child care home provider, and assistant teacher certificate. Check with your local community college to determine what one year diploma/certificate options are available.

Associate Degrees

There are several types of associate degrees offered through Nebraska's community colleges. The Associate of Applied Science Degree (A.A.S.) is a degree for those who know they want to work in child care settings or private homes and who will not want to complete a bachelors degree. Fewer credit hours from the AAS degree will transfer to a four year college for a bachelors degree. The Associate of Arts (A.A.) and Associate of Science (A.S.) degrees are the degrees that transfer most credits into the four year institutions of higher education. If you plan to work as an early childhood teacher in a public school setting you will want to take the Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree from the community college.

Early Childhood Education Associate of Applied Science Degree (A.A.S.)—Most community colleges in Nebraska provide an Associate of Applied Science Degree in early childhood education. This degree includes more credit hours in early childhood education and fewer general studies credit hours than the Associate of Arts degree. The degree prepares students to provide developmentally appropriate activities in an enriched environment for children, to build partnerships with families and communities, and to maintain a commitment to professionalism. Total credits for the Associate of Applied Science is 99 -119.5 quarter hours /60-64 semester credit hours depending on the college.

Associate of Arts (A.A.) /Associate of Sciences Degree (A.S.)—The associate of arts or associate of sciences degrees are for students who plan to complete their first two years of a bachelor's degree at a community college before transferring to a four-year college or university. Students should work closely with their advisor to determine what courses will transfer to the four-year institution. These degrees include an emphasis on general studies in combination with early childhood education foundational courses. A total of 90 quarter credit hours/60 semester credit hours are required for the degrees. Some colleges offer an associate's degree with an emphasis in early childhood education and an associate's degree for working as a paraprofessional in a school.

**Early Childhood Education Degrees/Certificates and Diplomas
Nebraska's Two Year Community Colleges**

Degrees/Certificates	Central Community College	Little Priest Tribal College	McCook Community College	Metro Community College	Nebraska Indian Community College	Northeast Community College	Southeast Community College	Western NE Community College
Associate of Applied Science-ECED	X		X	X			X	X
Associate of Arts/Associate of Science	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
AAS ECED Entrepreneurship							X	
Early Childhood Education Diploma (30.5-38.5 Sem Credit Hours)	X		X	X		X		
Early Childhood Education Assistant Certificate (49.5 Quarter Hours)				X				
Certificate in Early Childhood Education (20-24 Semester Hours)					X			X
Home Visitor/Family Advocate (42 quarter credit hours)							X	
In-Home Child Care Certificate (37.5 Quarter Credit Hours)				X			X	
Child Care Professional Diploma (83 Quarter credit hours)							X	
Early Childhood Para-Educator Certificate (13 Semester Credit Hours)	X							
Early Childhood Nanny Certificate (12 Semester Credit Hours)	X						X	
Paraprofessional Associate Degree						X		
Certificate in Early Childhood Education (12 semester hours)	X							

Table 4-Community College Certificates, Diplomas, and Degree Programs in Early Childhood Education

Bachelor's Degrees

Nebraska's Four Year Colleges and Universities

Nebraska's four year colleges and universities offer several bachelors degrees in child development and early childhood education, as well as, a variety of graduate level programs and degrees to advance the study of early childhood education. The following pages describe the degrees offered in Nebraska for early childhood education. Table 5 is a matrix that reflects the bachelors degrees offered at various four year colleges. Table 6 is a matrix that reflects the graduate level degrees available from Nebraska's colleges and universities. For more information on each of the four year colleges go to: <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/tedprograms.html>

Teacher certification is offered for degree programs that offer either field endorsements or subject endorsements. Many colleges encourage students seeking teacher certification to get both a field endorsement and subject endorsement for greater flexibility in finding a teaching position.

Field endorsements: Degree programs that include two or more subjects which, considered as a single areas of study, represent a wider and broader scope than that of a subject. For the early childhood education unified field endorsement a minimum of 45 semester hours must be in early childhood education and special education.

Subject endorsements: Degree programs that include specific courses or a narrow range of courses taught and offered in a school. For an early childhood education subject endorsement a minimum of 30 semester credit hours must be in early childhood education.

Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education Unified Field Endorsement—

People with this endorsement may teach infants, toddlers, and children from birth through grade 3 including those with and without disabilities in inclusive settings. Nebraska public schools recognize this endorsement for teachers seeking employment in special education programs for pre-kindergarten-age children with disabilities. The endorsement requires a minimum of 45 semester hours of courses that include knowledge of Early Childhood Education and Special Education including curriculum methodology appropriate for all curriculum areas of the primary grades. Most full-time students can complete this degree in four years. The total number of credit hours for the unified degree ranges from 125 credit hours-135 credit hours.

Bachelor's Degree with Birth through Kindergarten Endorsement

This degree program combines a background in family science, early childhood education, and special education. This endorsement includes an emphasis on family systems and working with infants, toddlers and families in community contexts. Students

will meet the requirements for the Nebraska Early Care and Education: Birth through Kindergarten teaching certificate.

Bachelor's Degree with Early Childhood Education Subject Endorsement with Elementary Education Field Endorsement

Persons with this endorsement are prepared to teach children from pre-kindergarten through grade 3 in all elementary subjects in kindergarten through grade 6 in all schools; and in grades 7 and 8 in self-contained classrooms. The elementary education field endorsement requires 40 semester hours of professional education course work. In addition, the early childhood education subject endorsement requires 30 semester hours in early childhood education. Most full-time students will need to complete this degree over five years. The total number of credit hours required ranges from 127 semester credit hours-143 credit hours.

Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education Subject Endorsement

Some four year colleges offer the option a completing a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education independent of a degree in Elementary Education. People with this endorsement may teach infants, toddler, and children from birth through grade 3.

Bachelor's Degree in Child Development (Not eligible for teaching certificate)

This degree prepares students for a career working with children and their families. Students learn to work effectively with diverse children, helping them learn and grow. The degree provides a comprehensive program in child development theory, research, practice and application. Emphasis is on children, birth to age 5. The total number of credit hours required ranges from 120-124 credit hours. **Note: This degree is not eligible for a teaching certificate in the state of Nebraska.**

Bachelor's Degree with Preschool Disabilities Subject Endorsement and Elementary Education Field Endorsement

Persons with this endorsement may provide services to and teach infants, toddlers, and preschool and kindergarten children who have a range of disabilities. Persons with this endorsement may also work with families and other personnel with responsibilities for the care and education of young children. The preschool disabilities endorsement requires a minimum of 30 semester hours plus the elementary education field endorsement. Only Peru State College offers this endorsement at this time. The total number of credit hours needed for this degree is 125 credit hours.

Post Bachelor's Degree Specializations and Endorsements

Four year colleges in Nebraska offer post bachelors degree initial teacher certification programs as part of their graduate programs. There are a variety of subject areas in which post bachelors degree certification can be earned. The post bachelors degree specializations and endorsements meet the State of Nebraska teacher certification requirements. Coursework will focus on theory and practice considering the nature of learners, and teachers and teaching. Requirements for the post bachelor's degree specializations are between 33-39 credit hours. Some of the specific post bachelor's degree specializations include:

Preschool Disabilities (Birth to Kindergarten)

Early Childhood Education

Early Childhood Special Education

Master's Degrees and Graduate Level Teaching Endorsements

M. Ed. (Master of Education). The M.Ed. is designed to prepare individuals for positions in leadership in professional education.

M. A. (Master of Arts). The M. A. degree is recommended for individuals who are preparing for careers in research and scholarly work in education.

Upon completion of a Master's degree program in Education a student should be able to:

- a. interpret, plan, conduct and apply educational research
- b. understand best classroom practice
- c. understand curriculum planning and development
- d. understand the relationship among teaching, the curriculum, and learners
- e. develop a philosophical, theoretical, and moral understanding of teaching, learning, and
- f. deepen their understanding of content area
- g. expand their understanding of strategies and uses of assessment
- h. expand their understanding of diversity and educational equity

Early Childhood Master's Degree (Grades P-3)

The program is designed for educators interested in early childhood education (preschool through grade 3). Candidates for the degree must hold a valid elementary education teaching endorsement or obtain permission to be in this program. The endorsement requires 30-36 credit hours depending on the program at each particular college.

Masters Degree-Reading Specialist

This degree satisfies the academic requirements for professional certification and an additional endorsement in reading. The current endorsement track includes K-12.

Master's Level Early Childhood Special Education

Persons with this endorsement may teach, coordinate or serve as a consultant to programs for infants, toddlers, preprimary and primary aged children who have a range of disabilities, and services to families and other personnel with responsibilities for their care and education. Persons must have an elementary education, special education (K-6), early childhood unified, or early childhood education teaching endorsement. The graduate subject endorsement requires 27 graduate semester hours related to Early Childhood Education and Special Education and 100 clock hours of related field experience.

Master's Level Preschool Disabilities (Birth-Kindergarten)

This degree provides a initial teaching certificate and does not require a prior education degree or endorsement in teaching before entering the program. There is a minimum of 36 credit hours required for this degree.

Master of Arts or Master of Science in Education—Curriculum and Instruction

The program provides educators with an opportunity to gain knowledge and skill in the design, development and evaluation of school curriculum. The degree is designed to give the practitioner greater knowledge in a chosen instructional specialization, which can include early childhood education. A Masters degree in curriculum and instruction requires 36 credit hours of course work.

Master's in Educational Administration

This degree is designed to assist aspiring administrators in educational settings. The degree helps candidates understand school cultures, how to construct and develop learning communities, skills for leading an organization, staff and faculty appraisal, school finance, school law, instructional leadership and how to work with the community. The degree requires between 36-39 Credit Hours.

Education Specialist (EdS) Degree

The Specialist Degree is an advanced degree usually requiring a minimum of one year of study beyond the Master's Degree. The Specialist Degree programs are for people preparing for a position which calls for a higher level of study than the Master's Degree and advanced study both in time and in depth.

Education Specialist-Superintendent of Schools. This special degree program is developed specifically for those interested in being Superintendent of Schools. The program requires 33 Credit Hours and is available through several colleges in Nebraska.

Education Specialist-Special Education. This post graduate program is designed for those who have completed their Masters degree and who are not interested in doctoral

work. This degree is only offered at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The degree is designed for those persons who want advanced study in the area of Special Education. The degree prepares educational professionals for specialized positions in schools or other settings. The program requires at least 66 credit hours beyond the bachelors degree. **These credits may not count toward a PhD.**

Doctoral Degrees

The EdD and PhD degrees represent alternate but comparable doctoral programs in education. Individuals receiving Doctoral Degrees generally seek to go into school administration, teach in higher education, and/or conduct research.

Doctor of Education (EdD) This emphasis is upon the application of theory to the improvement of educational practice. Emphasis is upon the development of decision oriented inquiry skills in which the educator applies theory and knowledge to the solution of educational problems.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) This emphasis is upon the generation of new knowledge or the reformulation of existing knowledge as a basis for the development of education theory through research efforts. The test of knowledge for this person is on the possible contribution to the development of educational theory.



**Bachelor's Level
Early Childhood Education Degrees Offered at Four Year Colleges in Nebraska**

Endorsements	Chadron State College	College of St. Mary	Concordia University	Doane College	Hastings College	Midland Lutheran College	Peru State College	University of Nebraska Kearney	University of Nebraska Lincoln	University of Nebraska Omaha	Wayne State College
Bachelors Degree in Early Childhood Education Unified	X	X					X	X	X		X
Bachelors Degree w/Elementary Education/ECE Endorsement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Early Care and Education Birth-Kindergarten									X		
Bachelors Degree in Child Development Non-Teaching	X								X		
Bachelors Degree w/Preschool Disabilities									X		
Post bachelors degree endorsement or specialization in preschool disabilities									X		
Post bachelors degree endorsement in early childhood special education									X		
Post bachelors degree endorsement in early childhood education		X							X	X	

Table 5-Bachelors degrees in early childhood education offered at Nebraska's four year colleges and universities

Graduate Level
Early Childhood Education Degrees and Endorsements Offered at Nebraska Four Year Colleges and Universities

	Chadron State College	College of St. Mary	Concordia University	Doane	Hastings	Midland Lutheran College	Peru State College	University of Nebraska Kearney	University of Nebraska Lincoln	University of Nebraska Omaha	Wayne State College
MA Preschool Disabilities (Birth-Kindergarten) (Initial Teaching Endorsement)									X		
MA in Teaching		X			X						
M. Ed in Curriculum and Instruction	X			X					X		
M.A. in Education-Curriculum and Instruction								X	X		
MS in Child Development and Early Childhood Education									X		
M.S. Degree in Elementary Education with Concentration in ECE										X	
M.S. in Education-Curriculum and Instruction							X				X
Master's Degree in Early Childhood Special Education									X		X
Pre-School Disabilities Endorsement									X		
Masters Degree with specialization in early childhood with deaf/hard of hearing									X	X	
MA/MS in Educational Administration	X		X	X				X	X	X	X
M.Ed in Educational Administration/Leadership	X		X	X					X		
M.A. or M.S Reading Specialist			X					X	X	X	

Table 6-Graduate level degrees w/early childhood education or administrative endorsements at Nebraska four year colleges and universities

**Graduate Level
Early Childhood Education Degrees at Four Year Colleges and Universities**

	Chadron State College	College of St. Mary	Concordia University	Doane	Hastings	Midland Lutheran College	Peru State College	University of Nebraska Kearney	University of Nebraska Lincoln	University of Nebraska Omaha	Wayne State College
Education Specialist (EdS)-Superintendent	X							X	X	X	X
Education Specialist (Special Ed Supervisor)									X		
Early Childhood Special Education Specialist									X		
Education Specialist (EdS)-Special Education									X		
Education Specialist (EdS)-Curriculum Supervisory										X	
Ed.D in Education									X	X	
Ph.D in Education									X	X	
Ed.D. in Special Education									X		
Ph.D. in Special Education									X		

Table 6-Graduate level degrees w/ Early Childhood Education or Administration Endorsements at Nebraska four year colleges and universities

RESOURCES

National Child Development Associate Credential

<http://www.cdacouncil.org>

Early Childhood Education Programs at Nebraska Community Colleges

<http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/ecprograms.html>

Nebraska Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals

http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/core_comp.html

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Regulations

http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/reg_t391.aspx

Nebraska Department of Education Rule 11 for Early Childhood Programs Operated by Public Schools

<http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/cleanrule112007.pdf>

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines

<http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/elg.html>

Nebraska Four Year Colleges with Early Childhood Education Degrees

<http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/tedprograms.html>

Nebraska Professional Development Plan

http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/core_comp/profdev_plan.pdf

Nebraska Professional Development Record

http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/core_comp/profdev_record.pdf

Nebraska Training Calendar

<http://ectccalendar.education.ne.gov>

TEACH Early Childhood® NEBRASKA

www.nebraskaaeyc.org