

Nebraska's

Career Advising Guide

for the Early Childhood Education Field



Table of Contents

About This Career Advising Guide.....	1
The Wonders of Working with Young Children.....	3
Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals.....	5
Careers in Early Childhood.....	9
Early Childhood Salaries in Nebraska.....	17
Choosing Your Early Childhood Career Path.....	19
Paths to Becoming an Early Childhood Professional.....	20
The Path to Becoming an Early Childhood Professional.....	21
Career Planning and Advising.....	22
Nebraska Options for Early Childhood Education.....	24
Workshops and Training.....	24
Child Development Associate (CDA).....	26
Certificate/Diploma Programs.....	27
Associate Degrees.....	27
Bachelor’s Degrees.....	29
Master’s Degrees.....	32
Doctoral Degrees.....	35
Early Childhood Education Doctoral Degrees.....	35
Resources.....	36

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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 the options that have been available for some time. It is important to explore the links to websites that describe options that are of interest.

Who is the Career Advising Guide for?

Professionals in all aspects of the field of early childhood education, including 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 and for those who advise others.

Who are early childhood professionals?

Early childhood professionals work with young children (birth through age eight) and their families. They work in a variety of settings, and may also be referred to as teachers, child care providers, interventionists, or another title not listed here.

The title “professionals” is used because it recognizes that the work demands skilled, experienced, educated, and dedicated workers.



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 interrelated 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.

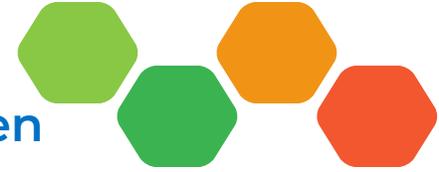
How can the Career Advising Guide be used?

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 professionals can advance their 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 a 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 children from birth to preschool and kindergarten through 3rd grade 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 impacts 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
- Kindergarten through 3rd grade

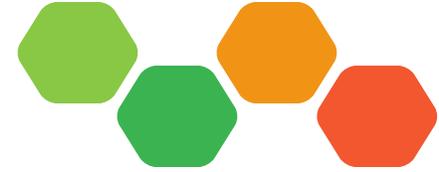
Early childhood education programs might operate half-days or full days. School-age programs generally operate for only part of the day and can include out of school time.

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, para-professional, home visitor, director, principal, nanny, play group facilitator or school-age group supervisor. Other roles early childhood educators have been 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 skill areas for the early care and education field. To review the full document of core competencies, go to:

<https://www.education.ne.gov/obec/core-competencies>

The nine core knowledge areas are:

- Child, Growth, and Development
- Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- Learning Environments
- Planning Learning Experiences, and Curriculum
- Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children
- Observation, Assessment, and Documentation
- Partnerships with Families and Communities
- Professionalism and Leadership
- Administration, Program Planning, and Development

Levels within the Core Competencies

Bloom's Taxonomy has been adapted to guide the revision of the Nebraska Core Competencies from six levels to four levels. The adapted continuum builds upon the knowledge and skills that early childhood educators should use while working with young children, families, communities and other professionals. The four cumulative levels advance in difficulty with levels that build upon each other. There is an expectation that a person working at any level should have the skills of the previous levels in that specific area.

Early childhood educators across the state of Nebraska must have a variety of skills and knowledge (competencies) to provide quality care and education. The four revised levels based on Bloom's Taxonomy range from basic to more complex.

Keep in mind the following points:

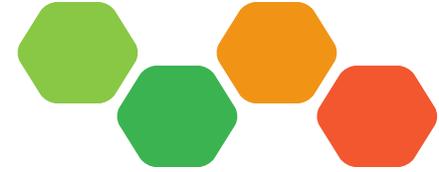
- These levels are not to be associated with the progression along the career pathway.
- This information can be used for building professional learning experiences that assist individuals in progressing in their ability to make decisions about their practice.
- This framework provides a roadmap for professional learning design. It does not equate to any specific credential, license, or certification.

The four levels of competencies are:

Level	Definition
Level 1: Knowledge & Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can name recognize, and recall relevant information from long-term memory • Can understand its content and construct meaning
Level 2: Applying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can apply content knowledge and information while working with children in various settings • Can carry out or use a procedure through executing or implementing
Level 3: Analyzing & Emergent Evaluating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can break material into component parts to understand and determine how they relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose • Begins to compare, contrast, and experiment by differentiating, organizing, and identifying attributes
Level 4: Evaluating & Creating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can critically reflect on knowledge and application, and can bring together knowledge in new combinations • Thinks creatively about the knowledge to solve new problems. Works to ensure policies and practices are aligned with research-based best practices • Can make judgments about the merit of ideas, materials and methods by applying accepted standards and criteria. If necessary, can expand upon them • Can think creatively. Can combine concepts and/or components to develop original ideas and new ways of looking at and understanding elements

Table 1. The four levels of competencies in Nebraska based on [Bloom's Taxonomy](#).

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.

	Directors	Teachers
Child Care Centers, Preschools, School Age Programs	Have a high school diploma or GED and 3000 clock hours of verifiable experience and successfully complete 36 clock hours or 6 credit hours of approved training	Plan to complete 3 credit hour course from an accredited college or university, or 45 clock hours of approved 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. Seventy five percent of the teachers must meet ONE of the following: Have a minimum of CDA credential awarded by the Council for Professional Recognition or equivalent. Be working on an associate or degree higher in early childhood education, child development family studies, early childhood special education, or elementary education with a concentration in early childhood education or the equivalent Have a degree (associate or higher) outside of the early childhood field and three or more years of work experience in an NAEYC-accredited program. Have a degree (associate or higher) outside of the early childhood field with three or more years of work experience in a non-accredited program and at least 30 contact hours of relevant training during that past three years.

The National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) accredits family child care homes. The National Association of Family Child Care requires at least 120 clock hours of training in early childhood education for people working in the family child care home. Higher Education course work may be used for a percentage of the training hours required.

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 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. No less than fifty percent of all Head Start teachers, nationwide, must have a baccalaureate degree in child development, early childhood education, or equivalent coursework. Education managers or coordinators must have a baccalaureate or advanced degree in early childhood education or a baccalaureate or advanced degree and equivalent coursework in early childhood education with early education teaching experience. Early Head Start teachers must have a minimum of a Child Development Associate (CDA) and training with an infant/toddler focus or comparable credential from their state.

Nebraska Department of Education Early Childhood Education Grantees and Rule 11 requirements: Regulations for Early Childhood Education programs apply to all center-based early childhood education and care programs and home visitor 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:

- Early Childhood Education
- Early Childhood Special Education
- Preschool Disabilities
- Early Childhood Education Inclusive 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 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 visiting specialists 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 to work in early childhood education. There are positions that allow work from home, in child care centers or Head Start programs, and in public school settings. One can also choose to focus on a specific age of children they 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.



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 a 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 institution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works alone Establishes own fee structure/pay Can work from home Can have one's own children with them 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 may be very long (12 or more hours per day) May be the only adult during the day There is not readily available assistance to help deal with issues as they happen Stress on providers own children when caring for children outside of the family No paid retirement, benefits, or vacations unless built into budget Responsible for managing the financial matters of the program Responsible for all food, equipment, health and safety needs of the program The home is the workplace Sick days impact several families, if sick often may lose business Must secure substitutes or help families prepare a backup plan if teachers are gone or are sick
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 them 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 their own way of doing things Work for one family and if it doesn't work out can be out of work quickly May or may not include paid vacations or benefits May or may not require live-in arrangement

Role	General Description	Training/ Education	Benefits	Challenges
Assistant Teacher or Paraprofessional	<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: Training in Nebraska's Core Competencies or train in areas of weakness. 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 (this depends on the 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
Teacher in Child Care Center or Head Start Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes and manages the classroom and physical area where the learning experiences take place Observes and assesses the educational needs and learning acquisition of children Plans, selects, organizes, and directs the learning experiences of children Plans teaching strategies and materials and equipment to be used Evaluates and reports 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 CDA, an associate degree, or a bachelor's degree Recommended training: CDA or an associate degree in Early Childhood Education Desirable education: bachelor's degree in early childhood education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for group of children, usually the 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 a 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 must 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

Role	General Description	Training/ Education	Benefits	Challenges
Teacher in Public School: Early Childhood Classroom or Early Childhood Special Education Classroom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizes & manages the classroom and physical area where the learning experiences take place • Observes and assesses the educational needs and learning acquisition of children • Plans, selects, organizes, and directs the learning experiences of children within a curriculum framework • Plans teaching strategies and materials & equipment to be used • Evaluate & report children's progress • May supervise others • Assumes responsibility for the care & 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"> • 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: Training in Nebraska's Core Competencies or train in areas of weakness. 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 (this depends on the 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

Role	General Description	Training/ Education	Benefits	Challenges
Teacher in Public School: Kindergarten through Grade 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizes & manages the classroom and physical area where the learning experiences take place Observes and assesses the educational needs and learning acquisition of children Plans, selects, organizes, and directs the learning experiences of children within a curriculum framework Plans teaching strategies, materials, and equipment to be used Evaluates and reports 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 Communicates with parents regarding their child's progress Often works with other members of the teaching team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bachelor's Degree & an Initial Teaching Certificate. A bachelor's degree is the minimum education requirement for Nebraska teachers pursuing an Initial Teaching Certificate. If the degree is not in education, the prospective teacher must complete a teacher education program through a state-approved college or university. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay & 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 & behavior Works with a team of professionals to determine best directions to help child develop and learn Rewarding to watch children learn and grow Quality interactions with children and the adults who care for and educate these children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School & district requirements must be met as a program of the public schools Personal educational philosophy might not match those of the school administrator resulting in conflicts around learning environments and activities Both federal & state reporting requirements must be met Reports, policies, & procedures must be completed & submitted Must work well with families, principal, and other district personnel School systems sometimes have response time delays
School-age care worker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervises a group of children between the ages of 5-12 Plans activities that can apply learning in a fun and interactive way Ensures children are safe and always supervised Encourages 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 Recommended training: Associate degree in early childhood education with school-age emphasis Youth and child development degree may be another option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers opportunities for part-time work Quality interactions with children May or may not be supervising other staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full time work is often not available Pay may be limited Might be in a 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

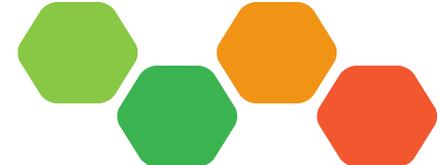
Role	General Description	Training/ Education	Benefits	Challenges
School-age care supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for hiring, supervising staff Plans all activities Ensures activities are safe and developmentally appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 12 clock hours of training annually for full time staff Recommended training: Associate degree in early childhood education with emphasis on school-age care Bachelor's 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
Child Care Center Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure program meets child care licensing regulations Addresses concerns with parents regarding payment or child development concerns Must operate a program to ensure all children have a 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 the program provides all necessary paperwork for families' tax reporting Ensures food & 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 Recommended education: 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 be a business owner Can pay well Can work under a corporate structure that can assume some of the 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 to child ratio Providing sufficient learning tools for classrooms Liability issues related to health, injury, and facility condition
Community College Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops coursework to prepare potential early childhood education professionals Evaluates the effectiveness of the education Ensures 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 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 the paperwork done can be quite challenging College meetings and new procedures and requirements can consume a lot of your time

Role	General Description	Training/ Education	Benefits	Challenges
Training Coordinator or Professional Development Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works 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 Some teaching experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides 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 must be able to multitask to coordinate a variety of efforts at the same time Must 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
Professor of a Four-Year Institution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching, researching, & 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. often required Teaching certificate or teacher experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps develop and inform the early childhood field of best practices based upon research Helps 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
Early Childhood Professional Development Trainer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides relevant training to early childhood professionals Collaborates with array of support systems around early childhood Offers positive support to early child professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High school diploma or GED May require associate or bachelor's degree, and may require degree in a specific area of study May require work experience and/or training experience Experience in online technology Training in specific area of instruction or professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supportive role in early childhood field Helps prepare and support early childhood professionals Flexible schedule Travel to work with early childhood professionals in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must meet requirements of hiring agency or Early Learning Connection Coordinator Must be able to offer positive support May require training in variety of programs or topics, both in-person and virtually

Role	General Description	Training/ Education	Benefits	Challenges
Support Roles: Technical Assistant, Mentor, Consultant, Coach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical Assistant: Provide general support & guidance with logistics of agency or initiative expectations • Consultant: Provide information, technical assistance, logistical information, content, knowledge base, model, provide resources, offer suggestion • Mentor: Share ideas, problem solve, reciprocal support of growth & importance of practice, brainstorm, co-plan, co-teach, exchange ideas • Coach: Help improve decision-making, increase reflectivity in practice, provide nonjudgmental support, learning-focused conversations, supporting inquiry, reflection, insights regarding practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High school diploma • May require associate or bachelor's degree • Specific coach training • Training in specific area of professional development or coaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting role in the early childhood field • Help prepare and support early childhood professionals • Flexible schedule • Travel to work with early childhood professionals in the field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must meet requirements of hiring agency • Must have ability to offer positive support • May need to be trained in a variety of coaching initiatives/ models to offer support in each area • Consultant may not have consistent income • As a contractor the individual may be responsible for marketing, administrative tasks, and may not have health or financial benefits

Table 3. Roles in early childhood education

Early Childhood Salaries in Nebraska



Demand for early childhood education positions in Nebraska remains high. The Nebraska Department of Labor indicates in their High Wage, High Skill and High Demand (H3) Occupations Projections dated July 2020 that demand for child care workers is projected to increase by 3.69% between 2018 and 2028. Salaries in the early childhood field vary greatly depending upon the type of program and educational level of the employees. Some family child care homes and child care centers 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 and require more education.

Early Childhood Professions Wage Estimates

Position	Statewide		Omaha Metro Area	
	Entry Wage	Average Wage	Entry Wage	Average Wage
Preschool Teachers	\$26,568	\$43,158	\$29,700	\$44,256
Kindergarten Teachers	\$42,181	\$56,394	\$45,291	\$60,242
Early Childhood Special Education	\$42,904	\$54,853	\$41,361	\$56,722
Teacher Assistants	\$21,908	\$25,735	\$22,159	\$26,095
Child Care Worker	\$20,240	\$23,221	\$20,491	\$23,975
Child Care Director/Owner	\$39,916	\$66,441	\$40,008	\$62,174

Table 4. Nebraska Department of Labor H3 Wage Estimates of Early Childhood Professions from Occupational Employment Statistics, 4th Quarter 2017.

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 degree in Early Childhood Education. Table 5 on the next page describes 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
Northeast Community College 2020	\$12.52	\$9.18	\$16.00
Southeast Community College 2020	\$12.50		
Central Community College 2019-2020	\$11.73	\$11.06	\$12.74

Table 5. Central community college salaries in Nebraska.

Head Start Teachers Annual Salaries for 2014-2015 Program Year

Nebraska Head Start Teachers with:	Salaries
Child Development Associate	\$19,049
Associate Degree	\$25,540
Bachelor's Degree	\$35,560

Table 6. Head Start salaries gathered from the Head Start grantees in Nebraska.

Choosing Your Early Childhood Career Path

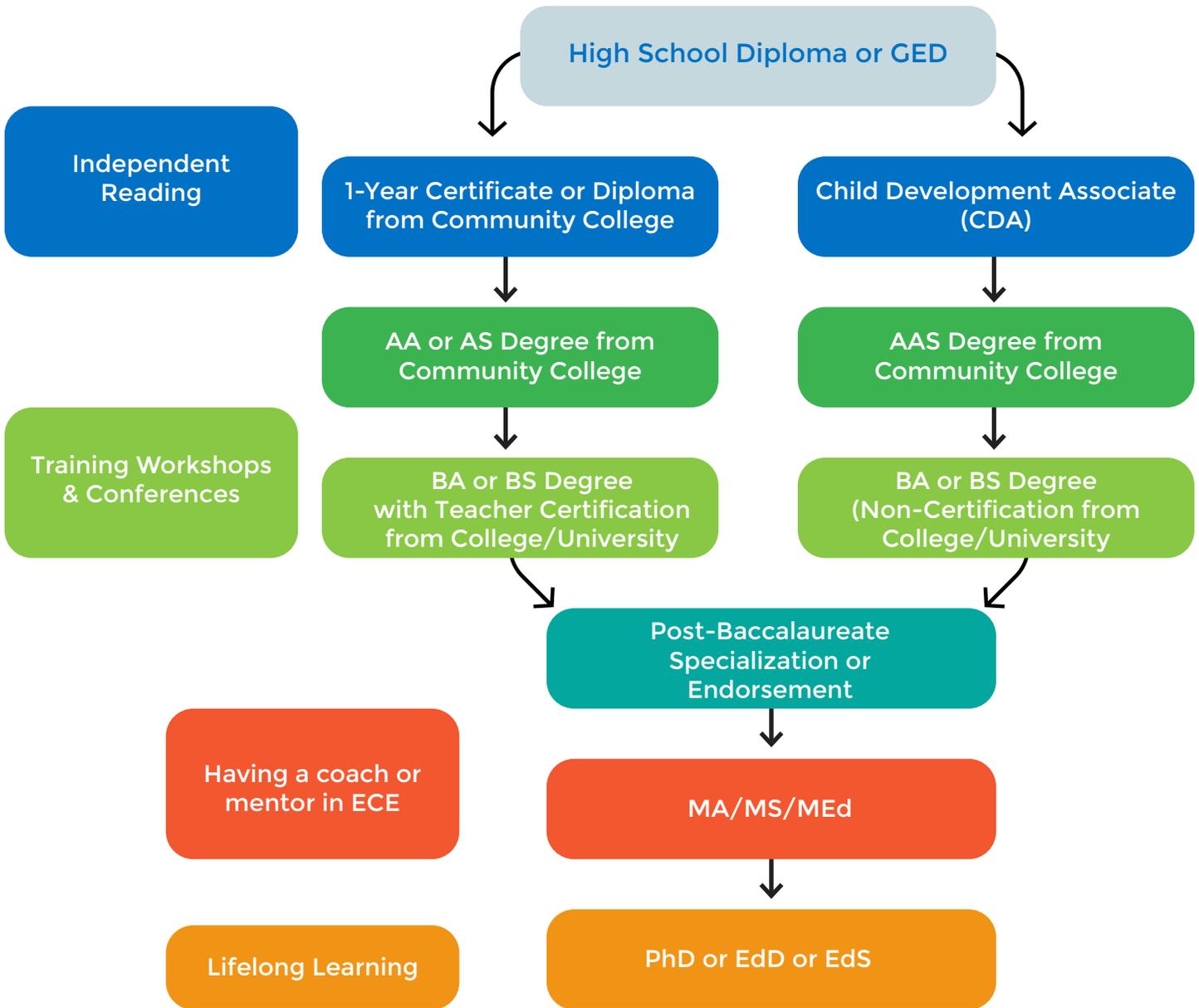
Training requirements, professional recognition (licensing and certification), and salaries vary with different roles and work settings in the early childhood education field. Understanding the options available will help you to make wise choices as you plan your career. All work in early childhood can 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 may have 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 in several classrooms across the institution's defined service area.

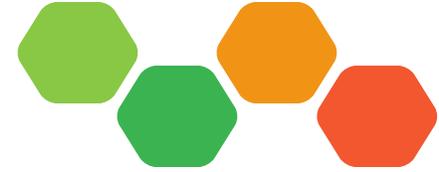
Financial aid may be available to help you complete your college education. T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) Early Childhood[®] NEBRASKA, administered through Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children offers scholarships to anyone working 30 hours per week or more 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.nebraskaaeyc.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 and four-year college's teacher education programs can be found at: <https://www.education.ne.gov/oec/career-development>

Paths to Becoming an Early Childhood Professional



The Path to Becoming an 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. Some Early Childhood Training can begin in high school, including dual credit courses where available.

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 and complete a criminal background check, to include fingerprinting. All child care centers and school-age programs must always have staff onsite 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
- b. Find relevant training at the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System (NECPRS). necprs.ne.gov
- c. 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 Early Learning Connection. A map of the regions can be found at: <https://www.education.ne.gov/oec/early-learning-connection>
- d. For information on Nebraska's community college early childhood education programs, go to: www.education.ne.gov/oec/pd-training-education-community-collegesoffering-early-childhood-programs
- e. Familiarize yourself with Nebraska's Early Learning Guidelines and the Early Learning Guidelines domains training: <https://www.education.ne.gov/oec/early-learning-guidelines>
- f. Complete all forms required by the Nebraska Child Care Licensing Regulations
- g. Consider getting a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential while working in the early childhood field. For more information, visit: www.education.ne.gov/oec/nebraskas-cda-pathways

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 several 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. For more information, visit: <http://www.nebraskaaeyc.org/teach-early-childhoodreg.html>

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 and what skills they need to further refine and develop. Once a person has completed the self-assessment, 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:

<https://www.education.ne.gov/oc/core-competencies>

A professional development template plan based upon Nebraska's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals can be accessed at the Early Childhood Training Center website at:

https://cdn.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Self-Assessment_Fillable.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 (A.A.), Associate of Science (A.S.), or an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) 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 eight in Head Start, Early Head Start, or a public school program, working toward a bachelor's degree is your best option. You can:

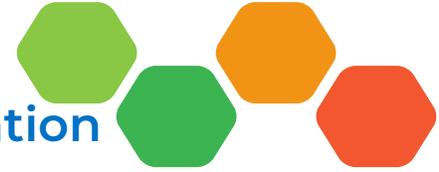
- Enroll in an Associate of Arts degree in a community college and then transfer to a four-year college or university. Be sure the college you transfer to will accept the credits from your community college program; or
- Enter a college or university that offers an early childhood education inclusive degree or a degree in elementary education with a subject endorsement in early childhood education.
- 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 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: <https://hecprs.ne.gov/training-public>

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.



Workshops and Training

Training is an option for in-service credit toward state child care licensure requirements and 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 an 8-module series. 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 6-hour sessions on the seven Early Learning Guidelines domains. The 6-hour training provides 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 set of trainings helps early childhood providers better understand the highly recognized measures of quality used in Nebraska. The Environment Rating Scale is an observation tool that assesses the quality of interactions between adults and children, including classroom schedules, materials, and spaces available and accessible to children. The use of ERS is a widely accepted method of evaluating and improving the quality of home- and center-based programs. Training offered includes a 4-hour introduction, a half day training looking closer at each scale, a two-day training including opportunity to visit other programs and practice scoring a program using one of the Environment Rating Scale tools, and a full day training where you can learn observer specific information to prepare for reliability of one of the tools.

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) Training

This training helps early childhood providers better understand the importance of interactions between teachers and students and what teachers do with the materials to support students' learning. The CLASS is an observation tool that measures the effectiveness of classroom interactions among teachers and children, including emotional support, classroom organization and instructional support. These daily interactions promote children's social and cognitive development. Training offered includes a 4-hour introduction focusing on a basic understanding of the CLASS, its various uses, the domains, and the teacher-child interactions that support learning; and a 2-day training providing a deep understanding of the CLASS, domains, and the teacher-child interactions that support children's learning and how to code using video observations thus preparing participants to conduct CLASS observations in classrooms.

Home Visitation Training

This intensive 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 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 3-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: <https://www.education.ne.gov/oec/early-childhood-training-center>

Other sources of information on regional training events can be found by contacting the Early Learning Connection Coordinator for your region. For a listing of the local contacts go to: <https://www.education.ne.gov/oec/early-learning-connection>

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 the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System. With a NECPRS account, one can find relevant training as well as build their own professional record and organize credentials and certificates. necprs.ne.gov/training-public

Child Development Associate (CDA)

The Council for Professional Recognition is the 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 four areas of specialization in the CDA:

1. Center-based setting infant/toddler,
2. Center-based setting preschool,
3. Family Child Care Settings, and
4. Home visitor setting

This credential is roughly equivalent to one semester 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: <https://www.education.ne.gov/oec/nebrasgas-cda-pathways/>

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: <https://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pd-training-education-community-colleges-offering-early-childhood-programs/>

Certificate/Diploma Programs

Many community colleges in Nebraska offer one-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 as 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 bachelor's degree. Fewer credit hours from the AAS degree will transfer to a four-year college for a bachelor's 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 are 93 quarter credit hours (QCH)/57-81 semester credit hours (SCH) 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 60-69 SCH are required for the degrees depending on the college. Some colleges offer an associate degree with an emphasis in early childhood education and an associate degree for working as a paraprofessional in a school.

Table 7 on the following page describes the associate level certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees in early childhood education offered by Nebraska's community colleges and institutions.

Early Childhood Education Certificates, Diplomas, and Associate Degrees

Degrees/ Certificates	Central Community College	College of Saint Mary	Creighton University	Little Priest Tribal College	Metropolitan Community College	Mid-Plains Community College	Nebraska Indian Community College	Northeast Community College	Southeast Community College	Western Nebraska Community College
Associate of Applied Science in ECE	X 62 SCH					X 61 SCH		X 60 SCH	X 74 SCH	X 60-61 SCH
Associate of Arts/Associate of Science in ECE		X		X 69 SCH	X 93 QCH		X 63 SCH	X 60 SCH	X 60 SCH	X 60-61 SCH
Early Childhood Education Diploma	X 31 SCH					X 30 SCH			X 31-32 SCH	
Early Childhood Home Visitor Diploma	X 31-32 SCH									
Early Childhood Education Assistant Certificate										
Early Childhood Education Certificate	X 16 SCH		X 18 SCH			X 12 SCH			X 17 SCH	
Early Childhood Education Director Certificate										
Infant/Toddler Certificate	X 18 SCH									

Table 7. Associate Level Certificates, Diplomas, and Associate Degrees in Early Childhood Education Offered by Nebraska's Community Colleges and Institutions. (Quarter credit hours: QCH, Semester credit hours: SCH)

Bachelor's Degrees

Nebraska's four-year colleges and universities offer several bachelor's 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 bachelor's 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:

<https://www.education.ne.gov/obec/nebraska-teacher-education-programs>

Educator Endorsements

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 include two or more subjects which, considered as a single area of study, represent a wider scope than that of a subject. In other words, field endorsements are broader in coverage and cover several areas within the field.

Subject endorsements include specific courses, or a narrow range of courses, taught and offered in a school.

Some institutions also offer supplemental endorsements.

Supplemental endorsements include content areas that can be added to a Nebraska teaching certificate in the presence of other earned endorsements. A supplemental endorsement, such as Early Childhood Education, cannot stand alone on an initial teaching certificate.

Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and Early Childhood Education Supplemental Endorsement (Prekindergarten-Grade 3)

This endorsement requires persons to hold, or earn concurrently, the Elementary Education endorsement. Persons with this supplemental endorsement may teach children from prekindergarten through grade three. This endorsement requires a minimum of 18 semester credit hours of coursework specific to early childhood education that addresses preschool and kindergarten levels and includes the identification of deficiencies and effective instructional and intervention strategies related to mathematics and reading.

Bachelor's Degree with Early Childhood Education Inclusive Field Endorsement (Birth-Grade 3)

Persons with this endorsement may teach and provide services to infants, toddlers, and children from birth through grade three including those with special developmental and/or learning needs, and to support families and other personnel with responsibilities for their care and education. This endorsement requires a minimum of fifty-one semester hours, including thirty-nine semester credit hours of coursework in Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Special Education for children birth through grade three, and twelve additional semester hours of coursework in one area of concentration, either birth through kindergarten or age three through grade three. Course work must include the identification of deficiencies and effective instructional and intervention strategies related to mathematics and reading.

Table 8 on the following page describes the bachelor's level degrees and endorsements in early childhood education offered by Nebraska's four-year colleges and universities.

Early Childhood Education Bachelor’s Degrees and Endorsements

Degrees/ Endorsements	Chadron State College	College of Saint Mary	Concordia University	Creighton University	Doane University	Hastings College	Midland University	Peru State College	UNK	UNL	UNO	Wayne State College
B.S. in Education with Early Childhood Education Minor		X							X			
B.A./B.S. in Education with Early Childhood Inclusive Endorsement	X	X	X					X	X	X	X	X
B.A./B.S. in Elementary Education with ECE Supplemental Endorsement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
B.S. in Early Childhood with Special Education Minor		X										
B.S. in Early Childhood Education in a Mobile Society										X		

Table 8. Early Childhood Education Bachelor Level Degrees and Endorsements Offered at Nebraska’s Four-Year Colleges and Universities.

Master's Degrees

M.A. (Master of Arts)

The M. A. is an academic degree recommended for individuals who are preparing for careers in research and scholarly work in education

M.S. (Master of Science)

The M. S. degree is an academic degree recommended for individuals who are preparing for more specialized and technical careers.

M. Ed. (Master of Education)

The M.Ed. is a professional degree designed to prepare individuals for positions in leadership, curriculum and instruction, and special education.

Upon completion of a master's degree program in education a student should be able to:

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

Graduate Level Teaching Endorsements

Master's Degree with Early Childhood Special Education Subject Endorsement (Birth-Kindergarten)

Persons with this endorsement may teach, coordinate, or serve as a consultant to programs for children, ages birth through kindergarten, with special developmental and/or learning needs, and to support families and other personnel with responsibilities for their care and education. Persons must have an elementary education, special education (K-6), early childhood inclusive, or early childhood education supplemental endorsement. This endorsement requires a minimum of thirty graduate semester credit hours including a minimum of twelve graduate semester credit hours of coursework in Early Childhood Education and a minimum of eighteen graduate semester hours of coursework in Early Childhood Special Education, and one-hundred clock hours of related field experiences.

Master's Degree with Special Education Early Intervention Specialist Supplemental Endorsement (Birth-Prekindergarten)

Persons with this endorsement may teach, consult, or provide services for infants, toddlers, and preschool children, ages birth through prekindergarten, including those with verified disabilities, and support families and other personnel with responsibilities for their care and education. This endorsement requires a minimum of twenty-one semester hours, which must include a minimum of fifteen semester hours in early childhood special education and a minimum of six semester hours in typical early childhood development, and a minimum of one hundred and sixty clock hours of field experiences.

Table 9 on the following pages describes the master's degrees and endorsements in early childhood education offered by Nebraska's four-year colleges and universities.

Early Childhood Education Master's Degrees and Endorsements

Degrees/ Endorsements	Chadron State College	College of Saint Mary	Concordia University	Creighton University	Doane University	Hastings College	Midland University	Peru State College	UNK	UNL	UNO	Wayne State College
Graduate Level Early Childhood Teaching Endorsement					X							
M.A. in Teaching		X				X					X	
M.A. in Education- Curriculum & Instruction with ECE concentration									X			
M.A. in Educational Administration/ Leadership	X			X						X	X	
M.S. in Child Development/ Early Childhood Education										X		
M.S. in Educational Specialist in ECE				X								
M.S. in Elementary Education with ECE Endorsement											X	
M.S. in Elementary Education with Certificate in ECE				X								

Degrees/ Endorsements	Chadron State College	College of Saint Mary	Concordia University	Creighton University	Doane University	Hastings College	Midland University	Peru State College	UNK	UNL	UNO	Wayne State College
M.Ed. in Curriculum & Instruction/ Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education with ECE Endorsement	X		X		X			X		X		X
M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education			X									
M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education Birth-3rd Inclusive			X									
M.Ed. in Early Childhood Special Education	X		X							X		
M.Ed. in Educational Administration/ Leadership	X		X		X				X	X		X

Table 9. Early Childhood Education Master Level Degree and Endorsements Offered at Nebraska's Four-Year Colleges and Universities.

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.

Degrees/ Endorsements	Chadron State College	College of Saint Mary	Concordia University	Creighton University	Doane University	Hastings College	Midland University	Peru State College	UNK	UNL	UNO	Wayne State College
Education Specialist (Ed.S.)					X				X			X
Ed.D. in Education		X			X					X		
Ph.D. in Education										X		
Ph.D. in Human Sciences with Specialization in Child Development/ Early Childhood Education										X		

Table 10. Early childhood Education Doctoral Programs in Early Childhood Education at Nebraska's Four-Year Colleges and Universities.

Resources



Early Childhood Education Programs at Nebraska Community Colleges

<https://www.education.ne.gov/oc/pd-training-education-community-colleges-offering-early-childhood-programs/>

National Child Development Associate Credential

www.cdacouncil.org

Nebraska Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals

<https://www.education.ne.gov/oc/core-competencies>

Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Child Care Regulations

<https://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/Child-Care-Licensing.aspx>

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

<https://www.education.ne.gov/oc/rule-11>

Nebraska Department of Labor (H3) Occupations Projections

<http://h3.ne.gov>

Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Record System and Training Calendar

<https://necprs.ne.gov/home>

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines

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

Nebraska Four Year Colleges with Early Childhood Education Degrees

<https://www.education.ne.gov/oc/career-development>

Nebraska Professional Development Plan

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

TEACH Early Childhood® NEBRASKA

<http://www.nebraskaaeyc.org>

It is the policy of the Nebraska Department of Education not to discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin, or genetic information in its educational programs, admission policies, employment, or other agency programs.

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Nebraska Department of Education
Office of Early Childhood
education.ne.gov/oec

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