

ED301363 1988-00-00 Child Care Directors' Training and Qualifications. ERIC Digest.

ERIC Development Team

www.eric.ed.gov

Table of Contents

If you're viewing this document online, you can click any of the topics below to link directly to that section.

Child Care Directors' Training and Qualifications. ERIC Digest.....	1
THE MULTIFACETED ROLE OF THE CHILD CARE DIRECTOR.....	2
STATE REGULATIONS GOVERNING MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS	3
CURRENT LEVELS OF TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE.....	4
CONCLUSION.....	4
FOR MORE INFORMATION.....	4



ERIC Identifier: ED301363

Publication Date: 1988-00-00

Author: Jorde-Bloom, Paula

Source: ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education Urbana IL.

Child Care Directors' Training and Qualifications. ERIC Digest.

THIS DIGEST WAS CREATED BY ERIC, THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER. FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ERIC, CONTACT ACCESS ERIC 1-800-LET-ERIC

The director's role in the early childhood center is central and complex. While there is agreement about the need for highly trained personnel to serve as directors, there is a

surprising lack of agreement about directors' training and minimum qualifications. This digest provides an overview of the competencies needed for effective center administration and summarizes state regulations governing minimum qualifications.

THE MULTIFACETED ROLE OF THE CHILD CARE DIRECTOR

The skills and competencies needed to effectively administer a child care center vary according to the age and background of the children enrolled, the services provided, the philosophical orientation of the program, the local sponsorship of the center, and program size. Directors of very small programs may have few administrative tasks and may serve as a classroom teacher part of the day, while directors of large programs may have to coordinate multiple sites and funding sources and a large staff. Researchers and teachers agree that four major task performance areas are encompassed in the director's role:

ORGANIZATION, LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT. Directors are expected to:

- * assess program needs,
- * articulate a clear vision,
- * implement goals,
- * evaluate program effectiveness,
- * recruit, train, and supervise staff,
- * translate program goals into well-written policies and procedures,
- * know about leadership styles and group behavior,
- * understand their professional identity and responsibility,
- * be alert to changing demographics, social and economic trends, and developments in the field.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMMING. Directors need to assess each child's needs and assist staff in planning developmentally appropriate experiences. Their organizational skills can be used to implement effective systems to keep track of enrollment, attendance, and anecdotal data. Directors need to understand:

- * developmental patterns in early childhood and their implications for child care,
- * environmental psychology and the arrangements of space and materials that support development,

- * health, safety, and nutrition in care programs.

FISCAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS. Directors are expected to know federal, state, and local regulations governing child care centers, and be able to develop a budget, set tuition rates, prepare financial reports, maintain insurance coverage, and use fundraising and grantsmanship to secure funding from various sources.

BOARD, PARENT, AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS. Directors need to be able to:

- * articulate a rationale for program practices to the advisory board, owner, or sponsor,
- * interpret child development for parents and others in the community,
- * regularly contact professional organizations, congressional representatives, public schools, the media, community service and other groups,
- * understand the dynamics of family life,
- * be aware of community resources that can support efforts in marketing and in serving parents.

STATE REGULATIONS GOVERNING MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

There are no federal regulations governing the qualifications of directors. Standards are mainly determined by state regulatory bodies. In most states, regulation of child care personnel is tied to center licensing and falls under the auspices of the Department of Public Welfare or the state's equivalent to the Department of Child and Family Social Services. Among states, regulations for almost every requirement differ with striking diversity (Morgan, 1987). The regulations are neither consistent nor specific.

Requirements for child care personnel are not uniformly regulated, as are requirements for entry into primary education positions (Berk, 1985). Some states do not differentiate personnel roles in child care settings, and place directors in the broad category of "child worker". Others define a second level of teacher more highly qualified in child development than other teachers, but do not necessarily designate this person to fill the role of director. States that set requirements for directors often use quite different terms to define the director's role.

BACKGROUND QUALIFICATIONS. The minimum age for directors is set at 18 or 21 in most states. Some states require demonstrated proficiency in basic literacy skills. In 9 states, directors are not required to have any relevant qualifying education. Several states require high school education, but only if the centers employ someone else to be responsible for programmatic aspects (Morgan, 1987). Directors are required to be well-qualified in child development in 26 states, and 10 require substantial coursework.

Only 6 states require directors to have had courses in administration. Ongoing training for directors is required by 12 states (Morgan, 1987).

EXPERIENCE AND FORMAL EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS. In the past, states often equated a year of experience with a year of college. But research has shown that education in early childhood or child development has a far stronger positive impact than years of experience on teacher behavior and student achievement. States are increasingly linking levels of experience to formal educational requirements.

CURRENT LEVELS OF TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE

Child care directors are overwhelmingly (88-92%) female. They are experienced, averaging over 9 years in the field of early childhood. The baccalaureate is held by 78%, and 38% have a master's or doctorate. The level of formal training appears to have increased in the last 15 years.

Child care directors are typically promoted to their positions from the ranks of teachers. Of the directors Norton and Abramowitz (1981) surveyed, 78% were head teachers or assistant directors before they assumed their positions. Interest and experience, rather than formal training, seem to be the primary criteria for promotion. Directors with concentrated course work in child care management are rare. Most have put together a patchwork of coursework, in-service professional development, and on-the-job training. Only recently have intensive graduate programs in child care administration appeared (Jorde-Bloom, 1987; Manburg, 1984).

CONCLUSION

Current trends reflect awareness of the importance of the child care director. Several states are making a concerted effort to increase minimum qualifications. A tendency toward professionalization is emerging. Directors are receiving more education, increasing participation in professional organizations, and using training opportunities to increase their expertise in administration.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Almy, Millie. "Interdisciplinary Preparation for Leaders in Early Education and Child Development." In Sally Kilmer (Ed.), *ADVANCES IN EARLY EDUCATION AND DAY CARE*. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1981.

Berk, Laura. "Relationship of Caregiver Education to Child-oriented Attitudes, Job Satisfaction, and Behaviors toward Children." *CHILD CARE QUARTERLY* 14 (1985):103-109.

Greenman, James and Robert Fuqua (Eds). *MAKING DAY CARE BETTER: TRAINING,*

EVALUATION, AND THE PROCESS OF CHANGE. New York: Teachers College Press, 1984.

Jorde-Bloom, Paula. "Training for Early Childhood Leadership and Advocacy: A Field-based Model." ILLINOIS SCHOOL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT 24(1) (1987): 29-33.

Manburg, Abbey. "An Innovative Response to the Challenge of Field-based Program Design." INNOVATIVE HIGHER EDUCATION 8(2) (1984): 108-114.

Morgan, Gwen. THE NATIONAL STATE OF CHILD CARE REGULATION 1986. Watertown, MA: Work/Family Directions, Inc., 1987.

Norton, Marcia and Sheila Abramowitz. ASSESSING THE NEEDS AND PROBLEMS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD ADMINISTRATORS/DIRECTORS. 1981. ED 208 963.

Peters, Donald and M. Kostelnik. "Current Research in Day Care Personnel Preparation." In Sally Kilmer (Ed.), ADVANCES IN EARLY EDUCATION AND DAY CARE. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, 1981.

Sciarra, Dorothy and Anne Dorsey. DEVELOPING AND ADMINISTERING A CHILD CARE CENTER. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979.

Spodek, Bernard and O. Saracho. "The Preparation and Certification of Early Childhood Personnel." In Bernard Spodek (Ed.), HANDBOOK OF RESEARCH IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. New York: The Free Press, 1982.

This publication was prepared with funding from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education, under OERI contract. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of OERI or the Department of Education.

—
Title: Child Care Directors' Training and Qualifications. ERIC Digest.

Document Type: Viewpoints (120); Information Analyses---ERIC Information Analysis Products (IAPs) (071); Information Analyses---ERIC Digests (Selected) in Full Text (073);

Descriptors: Administrator Qualifications, Administrator Role, Administrators, Day Care, Early Childhood Education, Standards, Training

Identifiers: ERIC Digests, State Regulation

###

—



[\[Return to ERIC Digest Search Page\]](#)