

Career Choices in Early Childhood Education

Make a difference in the life of a child and make a difference in the world. That's what the field of early education is all about. And whether it's called early care, early learning, child development or child care, it's always about quality teachers guiding children toward positive outcomes.

Early education describes programs for children from birth through age eight and includes teachers, caregivers, providers and practitioners.

Recent brain development research amplifies the importance of early education. Since about 90 percent of brain development occurs in the first three years of life, early childhood education is crucial.

There are national shortages in quality, early childhood programs and well-prepared professionals are needed. Decide if a career in early education is for you.

- Do you like children?
- Do you have a strong interest in how they learn?
- Are you nurturing and warm?
- Do you enjoy challenges in your day?
- Do you have a sense of adventure?
- Are you open to new ideas?
- Are you energetic?
- Do you like to learn?

If you answered yes, and you also possess integrity, patience, fairness, imagination and creativity, this field is for you.

Early education is wide open. There are many career paths and opportunities that include teaching infants or preschoolers, operating a family child care program, directing a child care center, and college / university-level instruction teaching adults how to teach young children. You could also teach art, music or dance classes, be a curriculum specialist, a home visitor, a child counselor or a researcher. Each job has specific educational requirements.

Entry Level Training

Child Care Center personnel:

If you decide to work at a child care center in Florida, you will have to complete the 40 Hour Introductory Child Care Training. All center child care personnel are required to enroll in the appropriate training within 90 days of employment and pass the competency examination within a year. You are allowed one opportunity, if you choose, to take the exams as an exemption from enrollment in child care training courses. If you do not pass you must enroll in the training and cannot retake the exam until after you complete the course. You may take the exam as many times as necessary, but you must pass within a year of when your training began. If you have completed certain educational programs you may be eligible for exemptions from portions of the required training. Local Training Coordinators will review your course work for this exemption.

The Introductory Child Care Training is offered in two parts:

Part 1: 24 Hour

The course includes: Child abuse and neglect; health, safety and nutrition; child growth and development; and behavioral observation and screening.

Part 2: 6 Hour

The course covers child care facility or child care home rules and regulations.

Part III: 10 Hour

You must take one of these specialized components after completing the 30-hour Child Care Worker Certification.

- Infant/toddler covers development of newborns to toddlers (36 months).
- Young children covers basic child care principles for children ages 3-5 in a preschool setting.
- School-age covers basic child care principles for children ages 5 to 12 in school-age care programs.
- Special needs covers ways to include children with special needs into the preschool setting.

Family Child Care Homes:

Before caring for children in their homes, operators of family day care homes must pass a competency exam based on 30 hours of child care training. You may take the exam one time before enrolling. Once enrolled, you may not retake the exam until after the course is completed. Following completion, there is no limit to the number of times you can take the exam, but you must pass within a year after the training began.

All child care personnel in facilities, large family child care homes and family day care homes are also required to complete 5 hours or 0.5 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) of approved training in early literacy and language development of children from birth to 5 years of aged. This is a one time requirement.

For more information on child care training requirements, visit www.myflorida.com/childcare/training.

Palm Beach Community College is the Child Care Training Coordinating Agency in Palm Beach County. For information about state-mandated training courses, call PBCC at (561) 862-4703 or visit www.pbcc.edu/cteworkforce/childcare.asp.

In-Service and Literacy Training Requirements

In-Service Training

Just as a child's mind is in perpetual development, so are the skills of the child educator and administrator. Child care workers are required to take one continuing education unit of approved in-service training, or 10 hours of equivalent training each year.

Annual in-service training must be completed during the state's fiscal year beginning July 1, and ending June 30, in any of the following areas:

1. Health and safety
2. CPR
3. First aid (this training may only be taken to meet the in-service requirement once every 3 years)
4. Nutrition
5. Child development – typical and atypical
6. Child transportation and safety
7. Behavior management
8. Working with families
9. Design and use of child-oriented space
10. Community, health and social service resources
11. Child abuse
12. Child care for multilingual children
13. Working with children with disabilities
14. Outdoor play safety
15. Guidance and discipline
16. Computer technology
17. Leadership development/program management and staff supervision
18. Age-appropriate lesson planning
19. Homework assistance
20. Developing special interest centers/spaces and environments
21. Literacy
22. Other course areas relating to child care or child care management

In-service credit may be earned at approved workshops, seminars, conferences and other applicable training.

Early Literacy and Language Development

Child care workers must complete 5 hours or .5 continuing education units (CEU) of training in early literacy and language development of children from birth to 5 years old by June 30, 2005. All child care workers hired on or after January 1, 2005, must complete the training within 12 months of the date of their employment. A list of approved courses can be found at www.myflorida.com/childcare/training.

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) has developed a Web-based course, **Early Literacy for Children Age Birth to Three** which meets the legislative requirements and is available at www.myflorida.com/childcare/training.

Child Care Center Directors

Florida Director's Credential

If you decide to become a child care and education program director, you will need a Director's Credential as part of licensing standards. A Director's Credential includes educational and experiential requirements and is available at two levels -- Foundational and Advanced.

Foundational Level Requirements

- High school diploma or GED
- The Department of Children and Families Part I and II Introductory Training (24 and 6 hours).
- The Department of Children and Families "Special Needs Appropriate Practices" (10 hours) or 10 hours of in-service training, serving children with disabilities.
- One of the following staff credentials: Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential; Florida CDA Equivalency; Florida School-Age Certification; formal education exemption qualification (including a waiver); documented employment history exemption.
- An approved "Overview of Child Care Center Management" course.
- One year of on-site experience as a child care director.

Advanced Level Requirements

- High school diploma or GED
- The Department of Children and Families Part I and II Introductory Training (24 and 6 hours).
- The Department of Children and Families "Special Needs Appropriate Practices" (10 hours) or 8 hours of in-service training, serving children with disabilities.
- One of the following staff credentials: Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential; Florida CDA Equivalency; Florida School-Age Certification; formal education exemption qualification (including a waiver); or documented employment history exemption.
- Three approved courses in child care education administration or one of the exceptions listed below.
- Two years of on-site experience as a child care director.

Each Director Credential is valid for five (5) years from the date of issue. A Director Credential issued prior to January 1, 2004 will have an initial renewal date of January 1, 2009 and every 5 years thereafter.

Educational Exceptions

- **Foundational Level Credential** -- Directors who have another state's recognized Director Credential may receive credit toward the "Overview of Child Care Management" component.
- **Advanced Level Credential** -- Directors who have certain educational levels or extensive experience in the field may receive credit toward the three approved courses in child care education administration. Educational exceptions will be granted to candidates with the following:
 - A.S. degree in child care center management, *or*
 - A.S., B.A., B.S. or advanced degree in early childhood education/child development, family and consumer sciences (formerly home economics/child development), school-age child care or elementary education with at least three college credit hours in child care management/administration, business administration or educational administration, *or*

- B.A., B.S. or advanced degree other than those listed above, with three college credit hours in early childhood education/child development or school-age child care and three college credit hours in child care management/administration, business administration or educational administration, *or*
- Five or more years experience as an administrator or director in a licensed child care facility (or facility that is legally exempt) and three college credit hours in early childhood/child development or school-age child care and child care management/administration, business administration or educational administration. All coursework for this exception must have been completed within the past 10 years.

Exemption by Testing

For the Advanced Level credential only, candidates who meet the requirements for an educational exception but do not have coursework in early childhood education or administration may opt to take a competency-based exam to meet the three credit hour course requirement in early childhood/child development, or the three credit hour course requirement in administration, or both. This process will require the candidate to complete a written exam at an approved testing site and achieve a minimum score of 70.

For additional information, visit www.myflorida.com/childcare/training.

Director Credential training:

PBCC

Palm Beach Community College offers the foundational level and advanced level coursework for the Director Credential. The coursework includes (4) four 3-credit hour courses in the Early Childhood Education A.S. degree program - Child Care Center Management specialization.

NOVA Southeastern University

The approved coursework for the Florida Director Credential is available **online** through Nova Southeastern University's Mailman Segal Institute for Early Childhood Studies (MSI). The online Director Credential 3-credit training meets Florida's requirements for the foundational overview course and can be used as one of the three courses required for the advanced credential. The course covers organizational leadership and management, budgeting and legal issues, quality program standards, overview of curriculum and assessment practices and strategies for forming alliances with families. Courses start in January, March, June and September. For more information, visit www.nova.edu/msi/ and click on Director Credential, or call (813) 740-1530.

A list of approved training classes is at www.myflorida.com/childcare/training.

The Director Credential is issued by the Department of Children and Families, Child Care Program Office. For more information, visit www.myflorida.com/childcare/training or call 1-888-320-9710

Child Development Associate

Florida requires licensed child facilities to have one child care worker who holds one of the following credentials for every 20 children:

1. National Child Development Associate Credential; or
2. Formal educational qualifications including Associate or Bachelor Degrees in early childhood education or related fields; or
3. A certificate as a graduate of a state-approved CDA Equivalency Training Program; or
4. The Florida School-Age Certification Training Program.

More information can be found at www.myflorida.com/childcare/training.

CDA National Credentialing Program

The *Child Development Associate credential* (CDA) is a nationally recognized entry-level credential available to people already working with young children. It is granted by the National Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition. It includes 120 clock hours of training, observation by a national representative and compiling a portfolio during a two-year period. Clock hours can be counted through college course work in addition to non-credit workshops and seminars. Courses for CDA training often count toward an Associate's Degree.

A *Child Development Associate* has completed a CDA assessment and has been awarded the CDA Credential. S/he is able to meet specific needs of children and works with parents and other adults to nurture children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. A CDA would also demonstrate competence in meeting CDA Competency Goals through her/his work in a center-based, home visitor or family child care program. The Credential is awarded for three child care settings: 1) Center-based, for which Candidates receive endorsements to work with infants and toddlers or preschool children; 2) Family Child Care; and 3) Home Visitor.

To apply for the National CDA Credential, contact the Council for Professional Recognition at (800) 424-4310 or visit www.CDAcouncil.org.

Florida State Approved Equivalency Programs

A complete list of CDA equivalency programs approved by the Department of Children and Families can be found at www.myflorida.com/childcare/training.

Palm Beach Community College CDA programs

At PBCC, there are *three* options for the CDA equivalency.

Child Development Associate (CDA) – Center Based

The Child Development Associate (CDA) program is a comprehensive 124-hour program that includes CDA Modules I, II, and III. Upon completion, a Florida CDA Equivalency Certificate is awarded and the student is prepared to apply for National Assessment.

The 40-Hour Introductory Child Care Training Certification (Part I, II and III) is a prerequisite to the CDA program. Child care providers receiving their certification after January 2004, must prove they passed the Department of Children and Families mandated competency test.

Child Development Associate (CDA) – Family Child Care

The Family Child Care program is a comprehensive 124-hour program that includes CDA Modules I, II, and III. Upon completion, you will receive a Family Child Care CDA Florida Equivalency Certificate.

Child Development Associate (CDA) – Bilingual Specialization

The Child Development Associate program with a bilingual specialization is a 124-hour program for child care providers working in a bilingual child care environment. A bilingual environment requires the worker to speak both languages daily and consistently. This program consists of CDA Modules I, II, and III. Upon completion, a CDA Florida Equivalency Certificate will be awarded by PBCC. For more information, contact Luisa Hernandez at (561) 862-4719 or visit www.pbcc.edu/cteworkforce/childcare.asp.

Students completing their CDA at PBCC may be eligible to receive credits toward an Associate in Science degree in Early Childhood Education once 15 academic credits are completed. For more information contact Sheila Scott-Lubin at (561) 862-4700 or Luisa Hernandez at (561) 862-4719.

CDA courses on-line: Nova Southeastern University

Child Development Associate training is available **online** through Nova Southeastern University's Mailman Segal Institute for Early Childhood Studies (**MSI**).

The 9-credit CDA series helps caregivers work effectively with infants, toddlers, and preschool children and their families within an early childhood program environment. NSU's online CDA training program is based on the national format and prepares students for the national credentialing assessment administered by the CDA Council for Professional Recognition. Learning is at the time and place chosen by the student. Students connect with MSI's CDA online website, which features course assignments, bulletin board activities and chat sessions providing opportunities for classmate interaction and links to Internet sites useful for assignments. The program consists of 3 courses that can be completed in 8 months. Courses start in January, March, June, and September. For information, visit www.nova.edu/msi/ and click on online CDA; or call (800) 836-8326, ext. 6931.

Other options to obtain a CDA equivalency certificate are available. Additional information about programs approved by the Department of Children and Families can be found at www.myflorida.com/childcare/training. If training is not offered through an accredited college or university, no college credits may be issued.

School Age Child Care

Florida School-Age Certification Training Program

The Florida School-Age certification-training program has been developed to:

- Promote quality services to children and families by providing specific standards, training, and evaluation of school-age staff members and practitioners.
- Provide School-age Child Care Professionals in Florida a training option that would allow them to meet the **staff credential requirement** for the Director Credential while completing training that focuses specifically on the age of the children in their care.

The *Florida School Age Certification Training Program* at Palm Beach Community College is a competency-based program for individuals who work with school age children. The certification can be earned by completing Level I or Levels I and II of the Florida School Age Certification Training Program.

Level I is a 90-Hour program, consisting of two 3 credit courses: EEC 1003-Introduction to School Age Child Care and EEC 1603-Positive Guidance and Behavior Management in School Age Child Care; a two-hour formal observation; interview and documentation of her/his competence through development of a Portfolio and a Resource File.

Level II requires that the student has successfully completed the requirements for Level I, further demonstrate and document her/his competence through parental feedback, formal observation and interview by a School-Age Certification Representative and through participation in a Local Assessment Team Meeting.

PRIME TIME Palm Beach County, Inc., offers scholarship opportunities for management and frontline professionals working with children (**K-12**), employed in after school programs, to attend such trainings to enhance their professional development.

As a non-profit organization, PRIME TIME is dedicated to providing technical assistance and support to the after-school providers of school-age care throughout Palm Beach County, Florida. The vision for PRIME TIME is for all children and youth, ages 5 to 18, to have access to affordable, high quality after school programs during non-school hours.

For more information about scholarships and training available for individuals working in after school programs, contact Nicole Ramsay at PRIME TIME at 561-659-4993, or by email at nicole@primetimepbcc.org, or visit the website at www.primetimepbcc.org.

For more information on the Florida School-Age Certification Training Program, contact Sheila Scott-Lubin at (561) 862-4710, or visit the website at www.pbcc.edu/cteworkforce/childcare.asp.

College Credit Certificates and Associate Degrees

Palm Beach Community College - College Credit Certificates:

PBCC offers **college credit certificates** in five specialized areas. Four courses must be taken in each area for 12 college credits. The courses can also be applied to the Associate of Science in Early Childhood Education degree. The certificates are offered in the following areas:

- Child Care Center Management
- Infant/Toddler
- Preschool
- School Age
- Montessori
- High Scope* (*12 credit specialty track)

Associate Degrees

Associate degrees are offered by community colleges and some four year colleges and they take two years for full-time students to complete. Programs include college credits in general education and specialized courses. Two colleges in Palm Beach County offer associate degrees in Early Childhood Education.

Palm Beach Community College

Associate of Science (A.S.) Degree Program – Early childhood Education

This program prepares individuals to enter the field of early childhood as educators and caregivers. The program provides students with a thorough background in all aspects of child development and expands classroom knowledge with practical hands-on teaching experiences. It has six areas: Infant/Toddler; Preschool; School-Age; Montessori, High/Scope Approach; and Child Care Center Management. Articulation agreements for an A.S. to B.S. degree are being considered.

Associate of Arts (A.A.)

The associate of arts degree is the basic transfer degree of community colleges in Florida for students who intend to earn a bachelor's degree from a four-year college or university. The A.A. program is comparable to the first two years of a university program, and it meets the general education requirement. It may also include common prerequisites for the student's intended major.

For more information, call (561) 862-4710, or visit www.PBCC.edu.

Nova Southeastern University

Associate of Arts Degree Program With Emphasis in Early Childhood Education

The Associate of Arts Degree Program with emphasis in early childhood education is aimed at preparing competent early childhood teachers. The online degree program designed by Nova Southeastern University (NSU) provides students with learning experiences through which they develop knowledge and skills required for working with children, families and communities. It allows students to complete

class assignments and communicate with colleagues and instructors from home, libraries, work, or anywhere they can get Internet access.

Course content is accessed through the Internet. The online platform offers electronic bulletin boards, chat rooms, email, Web-based resources, NSU's cutting edge electronic library and scheduled discussions. Thirty-six credit hours of general education coursework are required, drawing from natural science, English composition, social science/history, behavioral science, mathematics, speech communications and humanities/fine arts. The balance of coursework focuses on education, child development, curriculum, and other skills development.

The Child Development Associate 9-credit series and the 3-credit training for the Florida Director Credential may be taken online as part of the program.

For more information, visit www.fgse.nova.edu/ecaa/

College Degrees – Bachelor Degrees

Bachelor's Degrees

A Bachelor's Degree is a four-year degree offered by state and private colleges and universities. It requires four years of full time study to complete. Some baccalaureate degrees in early childhood education require student teaching and will prepare you for early childhood teacher certification.

College degrees usually lead to more career choices and higher earnings as a professional. The following are institutions in Palm Beach County that offer Bachelors (Baccalaureate) degrees.

Florida Atlantic University (FAU)

FAU is developing an undergraduate degree in early childhood education/early childhood special education, or "Blended" which may be available in 2005/2006. The main campus is in Boca Raton. For more information, visit www.FAU.edu.

NOVA Southeastern University

NSU offers an undergraduate degree in Prekindergarten/Primary Education. The campus is in Fort Lauderdale. The program includes state certification in prekindergarten/primary, age 3 to grade 3.

For more information, visit www.undergrad.nova.edu/admissions/majors.cfm and click on Prekindergarten-Primary Education.

Bachelor of Science in Education with a concentration in Child Development is available on-line for students interested in professions related to services for young children and their families. Please contact Merav Yeshayahu at (954) 262- 8364 or 800- 968- 3223, ext. 8364.

Lynn University

Lynn University offers an undergraduate degree (B.S.E.) in elementary education for grade level Pre K through 6 with a concentration in age 3 to grade 3. Their campus is in Boca Raton. For more information, contact Ellen Kirbert, Associate Professor, at (561) 237-7091 or visit www.Lynn.edu.

Palm Beach Atlantic University

Palm Beach Atlantic University offers an undergraduate major in elementary education (K-6) with a specialization in PreK to Primary (Age 3 to Grade 3) approved by the Florida Department of Education. The campus is on the Intracoastal Waterway near downtown West Palm Beach. For more information, visit www.pba.edu.

Beginning Fall 2005, the evening and graduate program at Palm Beach Atlantic University will add an Early Childhood Education and Care Concentration made up of seven courses and is designed to be completed within three semesters. Courses are offered in the evenings in an accelerated format and meet one night per week. For more information, contact Myra Santiago (561) 803-2122. (8/03/05)

Distance learning options on the Internet are available. When considering distance learning for college credit, be sure to explore the accreditation status of the institution offering the courses and/or degrees. For more information about available programs, visit the following sites:

<http://www.worldwidelearn.com/degrees/early-childhood-education-degree.htm>

College Degrees – Graduate Degrees

Master's and doctorate degrees are referred to as graduate degrees. They require one to five additional years of specialized college courses after the bachelor's degree. Often, a research project called a thesis or dissertation is required for the degree to be awarded. Both degrees are highly specialized and content varies greatly from institution to institution.

Master's Degrees

Florida Atlantic University (FAU) is revising its M.Ed programs in early childhood education/early childhood special education, or “Blended.” For more information, visit www.FAU.edu.

NOVA Southeastern University offers the Master of Science (M.S.) in Education with specialization in Early Childhood Education (EC) in the following areas:

- Preschool Education
- Prekindergarten/Primary Education
- Multicultural Early Intervention
- Prekindergarten Handicapped Education (endorsement)

NOVA also offers the M.S. in education in Early Literacy Education; High Scope Educational Curriculum, and Prekindergarten and Primary education. In addition, it offers an M.S. in Human Services with specialization in Early Childhood Education Administration.

For more information, visit www.Nova.edu.

Doctoral Degrees

NOVA Southeastern University

Nova Southeastern University offers an Ed.D. in Child, Youth, and Human Services with specialization in early childhood.

Florida Atlantic University

FAU offers an Ed.D in Curriculum and Instruction, Early Childhood Education emphasis.

For High School Students

Teacher Education Career Academy

High school students in Palm Beach County who are pursuing careers as teachers, child psychologists and social workers can participate in the Teacher Education Career Academy. It includes coursework (Early Childhood Education 1, 2, 3, 4, with honors credit for levels 3 and 4, and School-Aged Certification). Directed study (internships, mentorship), and on-the-job training is also utilized. Students gain hands-on experience as teacher-assistants in preschools on high school campuses, early learning centers, elementary schools, and School Age Child Care (SACC) programs. Students completing the course are prepared to take the competency exam and are awarded a Child Development Associate Equivalency (CDAE) Certificate after graduation and reaching age 18. The CDA program completed at the School District of Palm Beach County will articulate into college credit at Palm Beach Community College.

For more information, call Sylvia Tricarico at (561) 434-8631 or email her at tricaricos@palmbeach.k12.fl.us.

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About the GED

If you do not have a high school diploma, it is important to obtain a GED credential. Passing the GED Tests provides an opportunity for adults to continue their education. A high school diploma or GED is required for admission into any college or university. A GED credential documents that you have high school-level academic skills. About 96 percent of U.S. employers accept the GED credential as equal to a traditional high school diploma, according to recent studies.

- The General Educational Development (GED) Testing Service develops and distributes the GED Tests.
- More than 600,000 adults worldwide take the GED Tests each year.
- Those who obtain scores high enough to earn a GED credential outperform at least 40 percent of today's high school seniors.
- One out of every seven high school diplomas issued each year in the United States is based on passing the GED Tests.
- More than 95 percent of U.S. employers consider GED graduates the same as traditional high school graduates in regard to hiring, salary, and opportunity for advancement.

The GED Tests (2002 series) measure knowledge in five different areas: social studies; science; language arts; reading; and mathematics. An important feature of the GED Tests is an essay that documents your ability to write and communicate effectively. The GED Tests usually require some preparation on your part; many tools are available to help you earn a GED credential.

You may take the GED Tests if:

- You are not enrolled in high school, and
- You have not graduated from high school, and
- You are at least age 16, and
- You meet Florida's requirements regarding age, residency, and the length of time since leaving school.

For more information about the GED, visit the web at: www.acenet.edu/cill/ged/index.cfm

In Palm Beach County, you may find help with the GED the following locations:

Palm Beach County School System

Adult General/Workforce Development Education Program:

Program offerings include Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Education Development (GED), and High School Credits. The goal for the majority of the students attending the General/Workforce

Development Education Program is to achieve a high school diploma. For more information, visit the website at www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/AdultEdCenter/

Palm Beach County Library System

Learning Express is a compilation of some of the most frequently taken tests including Basic Skills Success, College Prep, GED, Skills Improvement Courses, TOEFL Exam Preparation, and U.S. Citizenship. Within these categories are real tests such as the SAT, GED, TOEFL, PPST and FCAT. This collection is accessible with a library card through our Electronic Databases:

<http://www.pbclibrary.org/edb/patronlinks.asp>

Not only will you be able to take practice tests, but this interactive learning platform has timed practice tests and analyzes the results immediately so that you will know your strengths and weaknesses on the spot.

Options for Non-English Speakers

Classes in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) are available in Palm Beach County.

Palm Beach Community College: ESOL for the Child Care Worker:

Introductory and intermediate ESOL courses have specific curriculums for child care. There are two courses in each level and 36 contact hours are awarded for each course. Participants learn English and conversation for child care. A certificate of completion is awarded on the last day of class.

For more information, call Shelly Hedstrom at (561) 868-3162 or visit

www.pbcc.edu/cteworkforce/programs.asp

ESOL for the Work Place:

These ESOL classes help improve oral communication and overall fluency of English in the workplace for non-native speakers. The courses are for people who are not seeking an academic degree. First-time students take the Phone Pass test for the Workplace in one of three Testing Centers in Palm Beach Gardens, Lake Worth or Boca Raton.

For more information, contact Sylvia De Jesus at (561) 868-3270 or visit

www.pbcc.edu/cteworkforce/programs.asp

English for Academic Purposes Foundation:

These courses are for non-native English speaking students who have not taken college readiness courses. The program includes three courses in reading and writing, grammar, listening and speaking. Students must complete all three classes before registering for any other classes at the college.

For more information, contact Shelly Hedstrom at (561) 868-3162

Palm Beach County School District:

English For Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) is offered through the **Adult Education Center** on Military Trail, north of Okeechobee Boulevard in West Palm Beach. ESOL classes are open year round. Classes are divided from beginning literacy to advanced English. There are also Citizenship and VESOL Classes.

For more information, visit www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/AdultEdCenter or

www.palmbeach.k12.fl.us/AdultEdCenter/ESOL/esol2.htm

Scholarships and Financial Aid

You may not have to go it alone when it comes to paying for your training in early childhood education. Following is a list of organizations that offer financial assistance to those in early education and training.

The **T.E.A.C.H.** (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) scholarship program provides scholarships for early childhood caregivers and center directors who are working toward earning an A.S. degree in Child Development and Education, a Child Development Associate credential, a CDA equivalency or an Administrator Credential. The program arranges for costs to be shared by the scholarship recipient, the sponsoring childcare center or family child care home, and the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Scholarship Fund.

For additional information, contact the Children's Forum at (850) 681-7002 or visit www.fcforum.org.

The **SEEK** Scholarship is for family child care providers and workers in centers and schools that provide subsidized child care and have a rate agreement with Family Central Inc. The program seeks to improve early care and education by supporting staff development through continuing education and training. The SEEK Scholarship provides financial assistance for formal and informal education and training that includes coursework at select accredited institutions and training agencies. SEEK funds also assist with the cost of related workshops and conferences.

For more information, contact a SEEK Scholarship Coordinator / Career Advisors or visit: www.pbcc.edu/ieece.

Alissa Nicholson: (561) 868-3997
Lillian Cortina: (561) 868-3659
Zachary Scuderi: (561) 868- 3826
Sandra Jackson: (561) 868- 3667

Paula "Penny" Markovitz: (561) 868-3997
Patricia Ortiz-Gutierrez: (561)868-3674
Christina Valdes: (561) 868- 3828
Evelyn Gomez: (561) 868- 3954

PRIME TIME offers scholarships to management and frontline professionals working with children (K-12), employed by after school programs. For more information, contact Nicole Ramsay at (561) 659-4993 or at nicole@primetimepbc.org

Paraprofessional Retention Outreach (PRO) Program

This U.S. Department of Education-funded program helps school district paraprofessionals obtain associate degrees and meet No Child Left Behind requirements. It provides financial assistance, academic advising and professional development. Program ends fall 2007.

Contact: Diane Hess (Advisor) Phone: 868-3807

Financial Aid Offices

All colleges and universities have financial aid offices, which are excellent resources for information and applications for financial aid programs to help with the cost of professional development. Assistance is offered in scholarships, grants, loans and work-study programs.

Qualifications to Work in Early Childhood Settings

Some of the positions available in Palm Beach County for those interested in working with children and the requirements for them are listed in the matrix below:

Position	Child Care Center	School District PreK	Head Start Early Head Start	Family Child Care
Assistant/ Associate teacher	Must enroll in 40 hour course within 90 days and complete within one year, and 5 hour literacy	Must have a state-approved CDA Equivalency	Must enroll in 40 hour course within 90 days and complete within one year.	
Lead teacher	One CDA or state approved CDA equivalency for every 20 children	Must have a National CDA	50 % of all Head Start teachers must have an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in Early Childhood Education	
Director/ Owner	Director's Credential (includes CDA or other educational credential)			30 hour course prior to accepting children

A sample of other positions related to the early childhood field available in Palm Beach County and the requirements for them are listed in the matrix below:

Position	School District PreK	Community Agency (Family Central)	PBCC/ FAU
Resource Teacher	Bachelor's degree and teaching certificate with certification in early childhood and at least three years teaching experience in an early childhood setting.		
School readiness specialist/ Program Assessor		Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education or related field	
College instructor			PBCC: Master's degree with 18 credit hours in early childhood or related field FAU: Doctorate Degree in early childhood or related field

Career Preparation Options For The Early Childhood Professional

LEVELS	DESCRIPTION
Ph.D.	The Early Childhood Professional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has completed a doctoral degree in early childhood or a related field, and may hold a Florida Educator's Professional Certificate
MA or MS Degree	The Early Childhood Professional <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has completed a master's degree in early childhood or a related field, and may hold a Florida Educator's Professional Certificate
BA or BS Degree	The Early Childhood Professional – BA or BS Degree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has completed a baccalaureate degree in early childhood or a related field, and may hold a Florida Educator's Professional Certificate
AA or AS Degree	The Early Childhood Professional – AA or AS Degree <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has completed an associate in arts or an associate in science degree (or an equivalent) in early childhood or in a related field in the associate degree program
FL Director Advanced Credential	The Early Childhood Professional - Advanced Director Credential <ol style="list-style-type: none"> – 4. Same as for Foundational Level below has completed three approved courses in child care education program administration. The coursework requirement must be taken for college credit and must be from the following curriculum areas: Overview of Child Care Center Management, Child Care and Education Organizational Leadership and Management, Child Care and Education Financial and Legal Issues, Child Care and Education Programming; and has completed two years of experience on-site as a child care director.
FL Director Foundational Credential	The Early Childhood Professional - Foundational Director Credential Every child care facility is required to have a credentialed director who <ol style="list-style-type: none"> has earned high school diploma or GED; and has completed the department's 30-clock-hour Introductory Child Care Training (Part I); and the department's Special Needs Appropriate Practices module or a minimum of 10-hours of in-service training in serving children with disabilities; and holds one of the following staff credentials: a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential; state-approved Florida CDA Equivalency; the Florida School-Age Certification; a formal education exemption qualification; or a documented employment history recognition exemption; and has met the requirement for one course in the content area "Overview of Child Care Center Management," which may be met by either taking one approved three-hour college level course, offered for credit or 4.5 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) through continuing education or one approved Post Secondary Adult Vocational course offered through a vocational-technical institution in Florida; and has completed one year experience on-site as a child care director.
12 Credit Certificates	12 Credit Certificate Specialization Areas Requires completion of four (4) specific 3 credit courses in one specialization area: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Child Care Management School Age Infant/Toddler Pre-School High/Scope
National CDA or CDA Equivalency Credential	The Early Childhood Professional – CDA National or CDA Equivalency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> has earned high school diploma or GED; and has successfully completed a culminating CDA credential or equivalent (120 classroom hours + 480 hours on-the-job training).
40-hr. Certificate Center Based	The Early Childhood Professional –40-Hour Certificate Minimum training requirements .require an approved 40-clock-hour introductory course in child care covering: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> State and local rules and regulations which govern child care. Health, safety, and nutrition. Identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect. Child development, including typical and atypical language, cognitive, motor, social, and self-help skills development. Observation of developmental behaviors, including using a checklist or other similar observation tools and techniques to determine the child's developmental age level. Specialized areas, including computer technology for professional and classroom use and early literacy and language development of children from birth to 5 years of age Center based personnel must successfully complete this training within 1 year after the date on which the training began, as evidenced by passage of competency examinations with a score of 70 or better. Successful completion of the 40-hour course may articulate into community college credit in early childhood education. Exemption from all or a portion of the required training shall be granted to child care personnel based upon educational credentials or passage of competency examinations.
30-hr. Certificate Family CC Homes	30-Hour Certificate - Family Child Care Home Operators of family day care homes must successfully complete an approved 30-clock-hour introductory course in child care, as evidenced by passage of a competency examination, before caring for children.
Entry Level Trainee	Must enroll in state mandated 40 hr. course within first 90 days and/or pass competency exam within 12 months of registering for 40 hr. course; complete 5 hours or 0.5 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) of approved training in early literacy and language development of children from birth to 5 years of aged

Training Organizations

Local organizations with training resources

Children's Services Council
cscpbc.org/training.htm
561-655-1010

PBCC Institute of Excellence
www.PBCC.edu/ieece
561-868-3660

Family Central, Inc.
familycentral.org/home.html
Training Coordinator
561-561-514-3366

University of Florida – Palm Beach County Extension
www.pbcgov.com/coopext/FACS/calendar/child_care.htm

PBCC Course Outlines
www.pbcc.edu/acsv/CourseOutlines.asp

Palm Beach Community College
Lucia Adrian, Program Manager /
Training Coordinating Agency
561-862-4707

Resources Depot
resource depot.net/events/index.php
Deb Romanelli, Executive Director
Connie Christman, Training Coordinator
561-882-0090

**PBCC Early Childhood Education
and Child Care** Certification programs
pbcc.edu/cteworkforce/childcare.asp

**PBCC Registration, Records, Personal
Information**
pbcc.edu/pantherweb/

National and State professional organizations with training resources

**National Association for the Education of Young
Children** www.naeyc.org

National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC)
www.NCCIC.org.

National Association for Family Child Care
www.nafcc.org.

National Black Child Development Institute
www.nbcdi.org/Welcome/

Child Development Education Alliance
www.cdealliance.org/calendar.htm

**Early Childhood Association of
Florida** www.ecaoffl.org

**Florida Association for Child Care
Management (FACCCM)**
www.faccm.com

**Department of Children & Families
Child Care Information**
www.myflorida.com/childcare/training

Children's Forum www.flchild.com

Professional Organizations

Local and State Organizations

AEYC of the Palm Beaches

1732 S. Congress Ave. #281
Palm Springs, FL 33461
Contact: Kellie Mejia 561-715-8573
Or Gail Ledezma-Smith 561-655-1010 x.2227
www.ecaoffl.org/palmbeach.htm

Early Childhood Association of Florida

3026 West Main Street
Tampa, FL 33607
Toll free: 866-ECAofFL or
1-866-322-6335
Phone: 813-878-9973
Fax 813-878-9978
ECAofFL@earthlink.net
For more information, e-mail your address and
phone number.
Website: www.ecaoffl.org

Southern Early Childhood Association

PO Box 55930
Little Rock, AR 72215-5390
Phone: 800-305-7322
FAX: 501-227-5297
Website: www.southernearlychildhood.org

National Association for the Education of Young Children

1509 16th St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 800-424-2460
Website: www.naeyc.org

National Association of Family Child Care Providers

206 6th Ave. Ste. 900
Des Moines, IA 50309
Website: www.nafcc.org.

National Head Start Association

1651 Prince Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703-739-0875
Website: www.nhsa.org

National Black Child Development Institute

1101 15th ST NW, Suite 900
Washington DC 20005
Phone: (202) 333-2220
Fax: (202)333-3222
Website: www.nbcdi.org/Welcome/

Please visit the NAEYC website for an extensive listing of national organizations with early childhood related resources

www.naeyc.org/ece/links.asp