



Professional Learning = Professional Success

4Cs of Alameda County | www.4calameda.org

The care and education of young children is an important job with a huge impact on the future – not only of the children, but of society as a whole. As recent research on early brain development shows, children are active learners from the time they are born, and their early experiences shape their ability to respond to future challenges. Providing positive experiences that promote healthy growth requires strategies for supporting physical, mental, emotional, and social development.

Because of the great responsibility they have and the knowledge and skills they need to provide high quality care and education, early childhood professionals must have more than just a love for children. Fortunately Alameda County provides opportunities and support systems to help caregivers of young children develop professional knowledge and skills.



NURTURE YOUR CAREER ALONG WITH THE CHILDREN

Taking college courses, participating in conferences, and attending workshops helps you move up in your profession. California's Child Development Permit Matrix lists the amount of education and experience required for each of the levels of the Child Development Permit (Assistant, Associate Teacher, Teacher, Master Teacher, Site Supervisor, and Program Director). Completing educational requirements allows you to qualify for a higher level permit – and a higher-level, higher-paid job.

INCREASE YOUR PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENCE AND SUCCESS

Nurturing young children is complicated and difficult; people who do this work care about children and want to give them the best experiences possible. Professional learning can help you:

- Understand the reasons for children's behavior and the ideas behind early childhood education practice
- Learn successful approaches to major challenges, such as positive guidance for children's behavior and promoting pre-academic learning naturally through child-initiated play
- Learn techniques for self-reflection: experimenting with methods, observing results, then modifying your approach.

TAKING ECE CLASSES . . .

“made me feel more like a professional”

Family Child Care Provider

KEEP ON LEARNING

Even if you have taken many courses and worked in the field for years, you can benefit from professional education:

- Keep up with new developments, such as recent discoveries in brain research, new approaches to practice, and new materials available.
- Develop special areas of expertise, such as working with children with special needs, infants and toddlers, or dual language learners.
- Benefit from the experience of other practitioners in the field who may have developed approaches and methods that are new to you.
- Keep your permit up to date by meeting Continuing Education requirements.

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION . . .

“changed my whole perspective on working with infants and toddlers”

Family Child Care Provider

“helps me to promote the outdoors and science to children”

Child Care Center Teacher

LOTS OF WAYS TO LEARN

College classes provide a systematic overview of one area of knowledge; college degrees give you a whole program of professional training. More informal forms of education, such as workshops, conferences, and one-on-one coaching, provide a different dimension of learning. Professional education includes:

- College courses—Local community colleges offer classes on child development and early childhood education.
- Degree programs—Contact Professional Development Coordinators at colleges with Early Childhood Development departments
- Conferences at community colleges, with workshops on a range of topics.
- Free workshops at 4Cs of Alameda County—See our training calendar at www.4c-alameda.org.
- Professional organizations, which provide publications, conferences, and other supports for professional development.

SUPPORTS AVAILABLE

Financial support:

- Child Development Training Consortium (www.childdevelopment.org) provides funds for tuition and permit fees for people pursuing a career in ECE.
- Scholarships are available at the colleges. Contact Professional Development Coordinators.
- Stipends are connected with cohort and individual coaching projects through First5/Every Child Counts. Find out more by calling 510-875-2400.

Professional development:

- Professional development coordinators at community colleges with Early Childhood Development Departments
- Technical assistance and training offered by 4Cs
- Networking and support through East Bay Association for the Education of Young Children. Get contact information at www.caeyc.org.

Quotes from early childhood practitioners are taken from the Children’s Advocate, www.4children.org