

## 7000

### Early Childhood Education Programs



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## Early Childhood Education Programs

### MISSION STATEMENT

7001

The Southern Union Conference Early Childhood Education Program has a mission to provide quality care and educational programs birth through four by well-qualified adults in safe, age appropriate environments while maintaining the principles of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### DEFINITION OF TERMS AND DESCRIPTIONS AS PERTAINING TO THIS SECTION

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Early Childhood Program (formerly referred to as Child Care Center, Child Development Center, Nursery School, Pre- Kindergarten Programs, Preschool, etc.): A purposefully organized entity providing an educational venue and approach for young children, before they enter formal elementary school, under the direction of trained personnel, who adhere to state regulations for licensing purposes. In an Early Childhood Program (ECP) provision is made for child care and education that stimulates the growth and development of intellect and positive social/emotional behaviors for children 0-4 years of age. An ECP should be licensed for any combination of ages from infants six weeks and older through age 5 and may include before and after school-care through age 12. It may offer a part-time and/or full-time schedule. The age of the children served and the service rendered should be determined by the facility in which the program is maintained, program type, personnel, and state regulations.

A facility which accepts children that are not four years old by August 15 of the year they are enrolled must be classified as an early childhood program and will need to acquire and maintain a valid state license to operate said program.

Kindergarten: A qualified readiness program which is under the direction of a certified teacher, Southern Union Conference Office of Education (SUCOE) and Local Conference Office of Education (LCOE) designed to prepare children for the first grade. Length of a child's stay in the program depends upon his maturation level. Kindergarten programs are not normally operated in centers. Under special circumstances a kindergarten program may be allowed to operate in a licensed early childhood education center but prior written approval for such an arrangement must be granted jointly from the LCOE and SUCOE.

Care-giver: A person responsible for the care and well-being of a young child in the absence of their parents. Extended-day Programs: Programs offered before, after or outside of regular school hours.

### PURPOSE AND GOAL

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The Southern Union Conference Administration, Office of Education, and Early Childhood Advisory, as a result of studies and research conducted during the late 1990's, conclude that the Church has a responsibility to embrace the ministry of early childhood education. Presently, there are early childhood education programs operating within the Southern Union territory serving some several thousand children, ages birth through four years. This translates to many families, both Adventist and non-Adventist, to whom the Church may minister. Thus, our objective is to operate educationally sound Christian early childhood education programs following developmentally appropriate practices as a ministry and service to families of the churches and communities, and not primarily as profit centers. The benefits can be many, including serving as feeders to our elementary schools and winning souls for Jesus.

*By extending early childhood education, programs can emerge as particularly strong, viable agencies in the community and become a major participant in the early education of...children who have been rightly educated [and who] will in their simplicity ...do a work in the proclamation of the truth which the older workers cannot do...*

*Testimonies, Volume 6, page 202*

*Then let the church carry a burden for the lambs of the flock. Let the children be educated and trained to do service for God, for they are the Lord's heritage. Testimonies, Volume 6, page 203*

1. The early childhood education programs should:
  - a. provide a natural extension of trustworthy care for children.
  - b. offer a sense of continuity and shared values.
  - c. enable children to grow spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.
  - d. support families, including siblings and significant others.
  
2. An early childhood education program should involve the following goals:
  - a. Maintain belief in God as Creator and Savior of mankind
  - b. Exhibit an understanding of the principles of child growth and development
  - c. Make provision for achieving intellectual growth as shown by a maturation of
  - d. thinking processes
  - e. Develop the child's ability to socially interact in a positive manner
  - f. Provide experience in dealing with feelings appropriately with a strong emphasis g. on enhancement of self-worth
  - h. Present opportunities for developing fine and gross motor skills coordination

#### **RATIONALE**

**7040**

Historically, Seventh-day Adventists have been opposed to formal early childhood education. Emphasis has been on surrounding the young child in a rich experiential environment, free from formal schooling and in the primary care of the mother. Statements by Ellen White have long influenced this position:

Small children should be left as free as lambs, to run out of doors, to be free and happy, and should be allowed the most favorable opportunities to lay the foundation for sound constitutions. *Testimonies, Volume 3, page 137*

...let the little ones play in the open air; ... and learn the love of God as expressed in His beautiful works. *Child Guidance, page 34*

Good child care is an urgent need in today's society. Traditionally, parents would be responsible for providing this care. However, because of the rapidly changing structure of the family in today's society, it becomes vitally necessary for parents to find assistance in giving their children the best care possible.

It is understood, without question, the ideal educational environment still remains in the home. While it is the responsibility of the parents and family to provide the earliest years of training and education within the home, we recognize the reality of societal needs and trends of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Many parents are working outside the home to support their families and therefore need reliable, safe, quality care for their young children. Thus, the need exists to provide alternative methods for an appropriate experiential background and basic foundational education.

In studying the patterns of today's Adventist families, we find that increasing numbers of mothers work away from home during their child's pre-school years. When Ellen White was challenged concerning earlier statements she had made regarding ideal school entrance age, she responded: "Circumstances alter conditions. Circumstances change the relation of things." Sanitarium Church School Board Minutes of January 14, 1904.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, nearly half of the labor force is female. Child care has been recognized as an essential thread in the social fabric of our society. Most families need and will continue to use some form of child care to help them raise their children. Societal changes have influenced family size and structure. Broken homes, single parents and surrogate parent settings are occurring in growing numbers. The classification of families has increased from four basic patterns/types in 1960 to 24 patterns/types in 2000.

Because of this sociological phenomenon, the majority of babies in the U.S. are placed in full child care by the time they are one year old. Today, the principles behind the statements by Ellen White are still recognized. Closer scrutiny, however, shows these additional perspectives:

1. When these statements were written concerning the ideal age of 8-10 years, there were no Adventist church schools. Adventist children attended public schools. Many classrooms were crowded and poorly ventilated, with hard wooden benches for seats. The curriculum was rigid, with an emphasis on rote learning, and was unsuitable for young children.
2. The church was counseled and strongly encouraged to provide for the training of younger children in situations where parents work out of the home and/or find themselves lacking in parental skills. Sanitarium Church School Board Minutes of January 14, 1904; "Counsel on Early School Attendance", *Review and Herald, April 24, 1975.*

Roger L. Dudley and V. Bailey Gillespie report in the VALUEGENESIS Faith in The Balance Study (1992) on page 214 that "One of the primary purposes of schools is to nourish a lifelong loyalty to Adventism. This aim is partially accomplished by surrounding the young with teachers and peers who value Adventism. Another key strategy to encourage loyalty to Adventism is teaching and modeling Adventist standards."

#### **PHILOSOPHY AND OBJECTIVES**

**7050**

Too much importance cannot be placed on the early training of children. The lessons that the child learns during the first seven years of life have more to do with forming his character than all he learns in the future years. *Child Guidance, page 193*

As a denomination, Seventh-day Adventists desire to see the early education of the child as a continual growth process. It is imperative that a balanced program be instituted to meet the needs of the child's physical, intellectual, spiritual, emotional and social development from birth through the years of formal schooling. This concept is predicated upon principles such as found in Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it."

From babyhood the character of the child is to be molded and fashioned in accordance with the divine plan. Virtues are to be instilled into his opening mind.  
*Child Guidance, page 193*

The parents' [caregivers'] work must begin with the child in its infancy, that it may receive the right impress of character ere the world shall place its stamp on mind and heart. *Ibid, page 193*

Too much importance cannot be placed upon the early training of children. The lessons learned, the habits formed, during the years of infancy and childhood, have more to do with the formation of the character and the direction of the life than have all the instruction and training of after years.

*Ministry of Healing, page 380*

Attention to young children at an early age helps to prevent later difficulties. Good nutrition, nurturing, mental stimulation and interactions at an early age are the best preventive measures for avoiding developmental delays and disturbances.

More important than sensory stimulation in the early years of development is the need for parents and caregivers to interact interpersonally with the child. The early years are important for relationships, not quantity of sensory bombardment.

What toddlers need for proper brain development is “close-up interaction with older people.” Children need adults in their lives with whom they can be attached. Attachment can involve a few selected individuals, including parents, grandparents, other relatives, nannies, childcare providers and teachers. These “selective attachments” offer children the chance to develop an internal model of security about the world, and allow their minds to develop a sense of emotional well-being and psychological resilience. It is very important that in the early years of development that patterns of INTERACTION between child and caregiver are developed and utilized. Relationships and the Developing Mind: An “Interpersonal Neurobiology” of Attachment, Daniel J. Siegel, M.D., pages 105, 107

Early childhood care and development recognizes that as children grow in size, they are also developing, maturing, and mastering ever more complex understandings of the people, objects, and challenges in their environment, and require specific nurturing and care in order to thrive. For a child to develop and learn in a healthy way, it is very important to meet the basic needs for protection, food, and health care. It is equally important to meet the basic needs for interaction and stimulation, affection, security, and learning through exploration and discovery.

Play is a child’s work and the child must therefore be given the opportunity and the freedom to explore its surroundings both indoors and outdoors. Through the many and varied activities of play, children begin to try to understand and relate to the world around them. Play is linked to many other abilities that are developing at the same time--social and language skills, cognitive and emotional growth. It is a task that consumes each child’s every waking hour.

Studies have shown that the first six (6) years of a child’s life form the foundation for all later development. Developmental psychologists have demonstrated that in the early years a child develops all the basic brain and physiological structures upon which later growth and learning are dependent, as is evident by the latest brain- research findings. Emotionally and socially, the child develops many of the abilities upon which later social functioning is based.

#### **START-UP AND GOVERNANCE OF CONFERENCE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS (ECP)**

**7100**

Prior to announcing the start-up or reopening of an early childhood program (ECP), a church or school must first receive a local board approval to explore possible needs and feasibility of opening an early childhood program as a ministry of service to the local community. If, after the needs and feasibility study are completed and reviewed by the local board and it is voted to proceed, an application must be submitted to the local Conference Board of Education for approval before any further steps are taken locally. (See <https://www.adventistedge.com/early-childhood/resources/> for the ECP/Pre-K Classroom Start-up Packet).

1.

#### Local Board

- a. All Early Childhood Programs must be governed by a board. The operating board should maintain a constitution with bylaws, conduct regularly scheduled board meetings, and keep written agendas, minutes, and financial statements for the overall administration of the ECP.
- b. Early Childhood Programs operated by a Seventh-day Adventist church should have a separate operating board. One of the following options should be selected in consultation with LCOE and SUCOE.

- 1) Separate operating boards

The church and the early childhood program each have their own boards. The pastor and the early childhood program director should be members of each entity's board. An agenda, minutes and financial statements must be maintained and available for each respective ECP board meeting. A monthly report should be made to the church board.

- 2) Sub-committee of the local church board that focuses on the ECP operations

An agenda with separate financial records and minutes must be maintained and available for each early childhood program sub-committee meeting. The ECP director, pastor or head elder should be a member of this sub-committee.

- 3) Independent boards with same members

Each board session operates with a separate agenda, minutes, and financial statements. These are maintained and available for effective business and operations of both entities.

Regardless of the governance structure chosen, annual reports regarding operations and finances should be made to the church and ECP constituencies.

- c. In situations where an early childhood program and elementary school share a campus, it is the goal to have open communication and collaboration between both entities to facilitate a smooth transition of children from the early childhood program to the elementary school. Therefore, a variety of governance options may be utilized based on local resources, personnel and needs of the constituency.

- 1) The school principal, if ECE qualified may request to also serve as the director of the Early Childhood Program with written approval granted jointly by the LCOE and SUCOE.

- 2) A pre-kindergarten through 12th grade classroom teacher may not concurrently serve as the director of an Early Childhood Program.

- 3) Early Childhood Programs operated on the same campus as a school should have a separate operating board. Any exceptions must be granted jointly by the LCOE and SUCOE. The selected option for operation should reflect the needs of the local early childhood and elementary school programs. One of the following options may be selected in consultation with LCOE and SUCOE.

- a) Separate operating boards

The elementary school and the early childhood program each have their own boards. The school principal and the early childhood program director should be members of each entity's board. An agenda, minutes and financial statements must be maintained and available for each respective meeting. A monthly report should be made to the church board.

- b) Sub-committee of the local school board that focuses on ECP operations

An agenda with separate financial records and minutes must be maintained and available for each early childhood program sub- committee meeting. The school principal should be a member of this sub-committee.

c) Independent boards with same members

Each board session operates with a separate agenda, minutes, and financial statements. These are maintained and available for effective business and operations of both entities. Regardless of the governance structure chosen, annual reports regarding operations and finances should be made to the church and school constituencies.

- d. The ECP board shall be composed of members of the Seventh-day Adventist church or churches who represent a cross-section of the constituency. This membership shall include the chair, treasurer, and secretary (the ECP director). In a consolidated center or where deemed appropriate, a vice-chair may be added. These officers shall be duly elected by the board at its first meeting or as specified by the constitution. (A recording secretary may be appointed to serve under the board secretary). In addition to the above members, the board should include the Home and Center Association leader/president and the pastor(s) of the constituent church(es). The ECP director, pastor, Home and Center Association leader/president, and Conference superintendent (or superintendent's designee) are ex-officio members, and have voting privileges.

Due to confidentiality and conflict of interest issues, it is not recommended that regular teachers and/or employees of the ECP, other than the director and treasurer, serve on the board. The ECP board members (other than ex-officio members) are to be elected by the constituent church(es) in accordance with the early childhood program's constitution or working policies.

Officers and members of the board usually serve on a fiscal year term. It is desirable for the sake of continuity that not more than one-half of the membership is elected each year. One of the following two plans is recommended in election of board members and their term of office:

- 1) Members may be elected at the close of the school year and shall function for the following year, or for a term equal to that of their elected church officers.
- 2) Members of the initial Board may be chosen for terms of one, two, and three years respectively, the new members being chosen each succeeding year for a period of three years.

Vacancies are filled as outlined in the governing constitution. The person filling the vacancy serves only for the remainder of the expired term.

Members of the same family (parents, spouses, etc.) of full-time ECP staff members shall not be elected to serve concurrently on the ECP board. (Any exception to this policy must be approved by the local Conference Office of Education.)

2. State licensing

All early childhood programs operated by Southern Union churches and schools are required by Southern Union policy to hold a current license issued from the appropriate state regulatory agency. A copy of the license must be filed annually with:

- a. the local Conference Adventist Risk Management Director.
- b. the local Conference Education Department.
- c. the Southern Union Conference Early Childhood Education Department.

d. any other office which may be assigned supervision of the centers. (00:29)

3. Risk Management

- a. Current policies and procedures as outlined by Adventist Risk Management must be followed.
- b. Quarterly safety inspections are to be made by the appointed safety officer for the ECP facility administration office. Copies of the completed safety inspection checklist form are to be sent to the local Conference by the 10th of January, April, July and October of each year for review and filing by:
- c. a) Adventist Risk Management director and b) Education Department E.C.E. liaison. One copy is to be kept on file at the center.

All programs must carry the following insurance coverages:

- 1) General liability of at least \$1,000,000 limit and no aggregate
  - 2) Property insurance on the building(s) and contents for replacement value
  - 3) Student accident insurance (through Adventist Risk Management)
  - 4) Employment Practice Liability coverage for wrongful termination, sexual misconduct and harassment
  - 5) Worker's Compensation per state statute
- d. Early Childhood programs are required to follow legislative guidelines for approved vehicles for transporting children. (See SU Board of Education policy #02:140)

**OPTION FOR INCORPORATING EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS**

**7105**

If providing Conference support is not an option and the Conference feels that the ECEC program is financially viable, can operate on its own accord and is mission-directed, the final option to be considered may be separately incorporating under NAD Working Policy BA 25 and C 47.

**ACCREDITATION**

**7110**

Early Childhood Programs of the Southern Union, including incorporated and new ECPs, may receive accreditation through the North American Division Commission on Accreditation (NADCOA) in affiliation with the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA). NADCOA is the denominational accrediting authority for early childhood programs operated under the auspices of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Failure to maintain denominational accreditation will result in sanctions, up to and including closure of the ECP. Current ECPs, including incorporated ECPs, seeking either accreditation for the first time or accreditation renewal, must acquire Seventh-day Adventist accreditation before renewing or initiating accreditation with another accrediting agency. Incorporated and newly established ECPs will be granted candidacy status for three-years, although a full evaluation may be arranged earlier than three years. An ECP seeking additional accreditation must consult with both the local conference and Southern Union Offices of Education prior to application.

**EVALUATION FOR ACCREDITATION**

**7111**

Early childhood programs, including incorporated ECPs are evaluated according to a plan outlined by the North American Division Commission on Accreditation (NADCOA) and National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA). The evaluation process requires the use of the NAD Early Childhood Standards of Accreditation and qualified individuals to serve on the coordinating, self-study, and visiting committee teams to review the early childhood educational and care program. "Qualified" is defined as an individual



with an early childhood education degree, a child development degree (or equivalency), or an elementary education degree with kindergarten, [pre-kindergarten](#), or [early childhood](#) endorsement and experience. This may include but not be limited to work experience as an early childhood classroom teacher or a director in an early childhood program, in a specific field of growth and development of young children, and/or in administration of a child care facility. Early childhood qualified individuals must participate on the self-study and visiting committee teams [for all early childhood accreditations](#).

All ECP visiting team individuals are selected jointly by the Southern Union and local [conference](#) offices of education, and may include non-educators. The non-educators serve the team only in their area of expertise in the evaluation process, e.g. safety inspection, financial management, food service, etc.

Normal and usual expenses for members of [all](#) visiting teams (excluding union and conference personnel) that evaluate denominational ECPs, [including incorporated ECPS](#), shall be paid by the host [conference office of education](#). Normal and usual expenses include travel, per diem, lodging, and substitute teacher/director when necessary.

The site visit report of the evaluation visiting committee is reviewed and processed by the Southern Union Accreditation Review Committee.

#### **ADMISSION AND ATTENDANCE**

**7120**

Quality child care is an urgent need in today's society. Traditionally, parents are responsible for providing this care. However, in a significant percentage of today's family, it became necessary for parents to find assistance in giving their child the best care possible. Being counseled to provide for the training of younger children in situations where parents work out of the home and/or find themselves lacking in parental skills (see Sanitarium Church School Board Minutes of January 14, 1904; "Counsel on Early School Attendance", *Review and Herald*, April 24, 1975; *Selected Messages*, Vol 3, Section VI, pages 206-226) the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists early childhood program should strive to follow that counsel in offering healthy, safe, Christian environments to parents of the church and its community for their young children.

Early Childhood Programs should make available the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to all young children equally, making no discrimination on the basis of race, color, ethnic background, country of origin, or gender in the administration of education and care. Enrollment is voluntary and every parent should have an understanding of Seventh-day Adventist values, objectives, and goals of Adventist education and care and commit to a partnership with teachers and staff upon entrance.

#### **ENTRANCE GUIDELINES**

**7130**

Regulations for the care of children in an early childhood program will differ from state to state. For this reason, every caregiver should obtain a copy of regulations from appropriate state offices (i.e. Department of Human Resources/Services, Department of Health, etc.) and should carefully adhere to them.

Immunizations appropriate to the child's age must be completed before admittance to any program. If parents [chose not to have](#) their child immunized, they must complete the refusal of immunization form and this form must be kept on file ([Consult the state department of education or childcare licensing office to obtain the appropriate form.](#)) These guidelines are in effect regardless of the age span a program chooses to serve, the title of the program, or whether a part-time and/or full-time schedule is run.

#### **STAFFING GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS**

**7200**

The following guidelines reflect only minimal standards set forth by the Southern Union Conference Office of

Education. Appointment of personnel can best be determined by the goals, objectives and design of the program.

The number of children and their ages will dictate the required staff ratio and educational qualifications. It is recommended that the employing agency compare the state’s requirements and guidelines for staff to the Southern Union’s and comply with the stricter of the two.

1. Ratios

Teacher-child ratios that must be maintained for the specific age groups are as follows; however, if codes/regulations by civil authorities, the licensing agency, or accreditation standards are stricter than those listed here, the strictest regulation must be met:

Ages	Ratio	Maximum Group Size
Birth to 12 months	1 adult per 4 infants	7
13 months to 24 months	1 adult per 5 toddlers	10
25 months to 36 months	1 adult per 8 children	14
37 months and up	1 adult per 12 children	18

Approved ratios must be maintained at all times.

2. Conditions of Employment

All staff members and volunteers must be screened by a credible, independent agency and pass the background check. Workers shall not engage in or have a history of behaviors injurious to or which may endanger the health or morals of the children in care. All employees should be members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Additional competencies that are essential include:

- a. Displaying a commitment to the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education
- b. Manifesting a genuine love and concern for children
- c. Illustrating a working knowledge of child growth and development
- d. Applying principles of learning through developmentally appropriate practices
- e. Demonstrating a willingness to grow professionally
- f. Exhibiting leadership and appropriate management skills
- g. Developing positive interpersonal relationships with staff, parents, children, pastor, board members and supervisors

3. Recommended guidelines for employees are as follows:

- a. Director must meet one of the following criteria:
  - 1) Have a bachelor's degree in either early childhood education or child development
  - 2) Have a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a current teaching certificate with Kindergarten endorsement

- 3) Have an associate degree in early childhood education
  - 4) Hold and maintain current a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential or Equivalency (CDAE) and one year of verifiable, successful experience in a child care program that included appropriate early childhood educational practices and administrative experience
  - 5) Hold and maintain current a Director's Credential as required by respective state's licensing authority
- b. Associate Director/Assistant Director/Head Teacher must meet one of the following criteria:
- 1) Have a bachelor's degree in either early childhood education or child development
  - 2) Have a bachelor's degree in elementary education and a current teaching certificate with Kindergarten endorsement
  - 3) Have an associate degree in early childhood education
  - 4) Hold and maintain current a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential or Equivalency (CDAE)
  - 5) Have a high school diploma with one year verifiable, productive experience in a child care program that included appropriate early childhood educational practices, and successfully complete an appropriate child development course during the first 6 months of employment
- c. Teachers must meet one of the following criteria:
- 1) Have an associate degree in early childhood education
  - 2) Hold and maintain current a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential or Equivalency (CDAE)
  - 3) Have a high school diploma (or equivalency) and six months of successful work experience in a structured program with children, and complete an appropriate child development course during the first 6 months of employment
- d. Support Staff:  
Must be at least 16 years of age and demonstrate proficiency in working with children

#### **STAFF IN-SERVICE**

**7240**

All staff are expected to earn a minimum number of hours from in-service training each year. The authorizing agencies, i.e., state and conference, are responsible for providing opportunities for professional growth. The hours of required in-service and/or professional growth is based upon the level of employment and responsibility. In

addition, each staff person should hold a current First Aid Certificate and CPR certification.

All staff are expected to accumulate a minimum number of clock hours of in-service training each year as suggested:

1. Director - 18 clock hours
2. Assistant Director/Teacher - 12 clock hours
3. Food Service Personnel for centers - 4 clock hours
4. Volunteers or other staff working at the center for 15 or more hours a week - 6 clock hours

#### **DISCIPLINE**

**7260**

Appropriate discipline is meted out in love with the goal of leading the child to assume responsibility for his own behavior. Discipline should be administered in a manner that maintains the self-worth and dignity of the child created in the image of God. Positive behavior management strategies should be used.

Punitive measures that do not teach self-control and problem solving are discouraged.

Each early childhood education program should be so designed that the internal and external controls of the young children become an integral part of the daily program. The disciplinary measures to be used in each program should be so stipulated by the person in charge. The following, but not limited to the following, is a list of inappropriate measures of discipline that must be avoided:

1. Denial of food, outside play
2. Forced napping
3. Punishment for toilet accidents
4. Subjection to derogatory remarks about themselves or their families, abusive or profane language, yelling or screaming, or threats
5. Physical or corporal punishment, or inappropriate restraints
6. Demeaning punishment
7. Allowing children to discipline or humiliate their peers
8. Isolation in unsupervised area (closet, dark room, etc.)

## **DEVELOPMENTAL STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM**

**7300**

### **1. Standards**

It is essential for teachers and caregivers to recognize key areas of learning and development necessary for the healthy growth of young children. The Southern Union has adopted goals & developmental performance standards for early childhood education. Guided by these, teachers and caregivers shall intentionally integrate knowledge and experiences in spiritual, physical/health, language and communication, social- emotional, and cognitive domains to equip children with the attitudes, skills, and concepts they need to grow and make progress in all areas of life.

*The Southern Union ECEC Teacher Goals & Developmental Performance Standards for the Growth of the Young Child* shall be primary in guiding teachers and caregivers in Southern Union early childhood programs. Other developmental learning standards may be supplementary as needed per local licensing/regulatory requirements.

### **2. Curriculum**

The curriculum of a Seventh-day Adventist early childhood program is designed to meet the goals and developmental performance standards of and reflect the philosophy and objectives of Seventh-day Adventist Christian education and care.

The early childhood programs are required by Southern Union Conference Board of Education policy to use developmentally appropriate practices and curriculum as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. At the present time, the approved curriculum is:

*Pebbles: A Faith-based Early Childhood Curriculum* issued by the Southern Union Office of Early Childhood Education.

*Pebbles: A Faith-based Early Childhood Curriculum* should be supplemented with additional activities related to the child's spiritual, physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development.

### **3. Daily programing**

Daily programming needs to show experiences in the following areas:

- a. Self-development:
  - 1) Spiritual growth
  - 2) Positive self-concept and attitude
  - 3) Natural curiosity
  - 4) Creative potential
  - 5) Psycho-motor coordination
  - 6) Sensory awareness
  - 7) Social graces
  - 8) Values
- b. Skill development:
  - 1) Problem solving
  - 2) Thinking
  - 3) Reasoning
  - 4) Creativity
  - 5) Communication
  - 6) Motor coordination
- c. Awareness and Acceptance:
  - 1) Diversity
  - 2) Anti-biases
  - 3) Multi-culturalism
  - 4) Mental and physical challenges
  - 5) Community and ecological environments
- d. Free-play:
  - 1) Blocks
  - 2) Housekeeping and dramatic play items
  - 3) Manipulatives such as puzzles, sewing cards, Tinker Toys®, Duplos®, etc.
  - 4) Picture books and magazines
  - 5) Art activities
  - 6) Sensory activities such as sand and water experiences
  - 7) Themed experiences with specific manipulatives (e.g., farms yards with barns, animals, machinery)
  - 8) Woodworking
  - 9) Listening devices for stories, music, poetry
  - 10) Large muscle development activities (climbing and crawling apparatus, slides, etc.)
- e. Learning centers and activities:
  - 1) Literacy: Books on CD, various writing utensils and papers, picture books, etc.
  - 2) Math: Counters, pattern blocks, etc.
  - 3) Bible: Flannel board with Bible story felts, Bible story picture books, Bible times clothing, clay pots, etc.
  - 4) Science, nature, research, gardening: Collections, tools, plants, etc.
  - 5) Social studies: floor maps of neighborhoods with trucks, cars, signs, buildings,
  - 6) multicultural dolls in family units, etc.
  - 7) Art, crafts and cooking
  - 8) Music, rhythm and drama activities

f.

Physical care:

- 1) Nutritional meals and snacks
- 2) Drinking water
- 3) Toilet training
- 4) Handwashing, covering mouth when coughing and sneezing, etc.
- 5) Rest periods /sleep
- 6) Fresh air and sunshine

4. Extra-curricular Activities

- a. Field Trips - Appropriate and well-planned field trips are a recommended part of the early childhood curriculum.
- b. Guest presenters – Annual invitations to the local civil services (fire and police departments, etc.) or health providers, (dentist, Urgent Care/ER nurse, etc.) are recommended to enhance themes of study in the curriculum.

**CURRICULUM MODIFICATION**

**7320**

Center and school administrations wishing to implement an additional curriculum, or needing to use another specific curriculum due to licensing or other requirement, may make a formal request to do so.

Deviation from the curriculum adopted by the Southern Union Board of Education must have the approval of the local Conference Office of Education in counsel with the union office of early childhood education. Requests must be submitted and approval received prior to implementation in the classroom. Permission granted to deviate may be withdrawn by mutual decision of the Conference and union. The center/school will then be required to implement an approved curriculum within a time frame specified by the union and conference's decision.

To receive permission, the director, principal or prekindergarten teacher must submit a written request for approval with the local Conference Office of Education. This request must include the desired curriculum's name, publisher and copyright date, the reason for requesting its use, the cost of the curriculum and additional materials it requires, and how the curriculum will be used. Approval must be received in writing prior to curriculum implementation.

**CENTER FACILITIES**

**7400**

When planning for and organizing early childhood education facilities, consult your state licensing agency for specific requirements with reference to:

1. Space for children (indoor and outdoor)
2. Bathroom facilities
3. Sanitary regulations
4. Drinking water facilities
5. Lighting
6. Ventilation, heating/cooling systems, climate control
7. Food service area
8. Office and storage space
9. Plants and shrubs
10. Passage ways and required emergency exits
11. Fire codes and drills

12. Natural disaster regulations.
13. Isolation area for illness
14. Phone system and emergency numbers
15. Vehicles and transporting children
16. Grounds and maintenance
17. Playground specifications
18. Ceiling heights and flooring materials
19. Baby changing areas
20. Doors and locks
21. Pickup and drop-off procedures
22. Windows

**COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC SAFETY/EMERGENCY PLAN**

**7410**

See Code 1249.

**EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS**

**7450**

It is imperative when planning for and selecting equipment and materials that the program facilitators consider all of the following:

1. Guidelines to consider before purchasing equipment and materials:
  - a. Number of children involved
  - b. Number of children an item will accommodate
  - c. Ages of children involved
  - d. Ages of children an item will accommodate
  - e. Safety factor
  - f. Durability
  - g. Care and upkeep
  - h. Creative utilization
  - i. Variety of uses
  - j. Storage for item
  - k. Cost factor
  
2. Recommended minimum list of equipment:
  - a. Tables and chairs of various sizes
  - b. Cots
  - c. Storage cabinets for teaching supplies
  - d. Bulletin boards
  - e. Chalkboards and white magnetic boards
  - f. Teacher's desk
  - g. 2-drawer file cabinet
  - h. Storage area for children's personal items
  - i. Rugs or carpeting for circle time area / quiet area
  - j. Furniture for play house area
  - k. Rhythm instruments
  - l. VCR/DVD player & television
  - m. CD/cassettes player
  - n. Wheel toys, e.g. tricycles, wagons, etc.

- o. Playground equipment, e.g. swings, sandbox with cover, etc.
  - p. Balls of various sizes
  - q. First aid kit
  - r. Weather alert radio
  - s. Phone system
  - t. Clock
3. Recommended minimum list of materials:
- a. Picture books and children's magazines on nature, character development, etc.
  - b. Manipulatives & games, e.g. Memory, puzzles, objects for patterning, sorting, & counting
  - c. Science equipment, e.g. magnifying glass, fish tank, terrarium
  - d. Art materials, e.g., crayons, pencils, markers, scissors, glue, paper of various sizes and textures, non permanent paints and various sizes of brushes, etc.
  - e. Socio-dramatic play items such as dishes, brooms, dolls of ethnic variety and anatomical correctness, dress-up clothes, telephones, briefcases, etc.
  - f. Christian & educational story and music tapes, CDs, videos & DVDs
  - g. Building/construction toys such as various sets of blocks, animal, i.e., farmyards & wildlife, etc.

#### **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

**7500**

1. Orientation and communication:
  - a. Develop a warm and meaningful relationship
  - b. Accept parental differences
  - c. Organize and conduct regular parent-center meetings, i.e. parent-teacher and parent education meetings
  - d. Maintain on-going communication through newsletters, notes, visits, phone calls, invitations, etc.
2. Advantages of parent involvement:
  - a. Promotes better rapport between parents and teachers
  - b. Gives parents the satisfaction of making a contribution to their children's education
  - c. Provides a role model for parents in working with their children
  - d. Increases a child's sense of family pride
  - e. Provides opportunity for social interaction among parents in the daily program and at parent meetings
  - f. Presents an opportunity for parent education
  - g. Gives the program facilitators, support staff and teachers an opportunity to become a support system for the family
  - h. Supplies additional resources for teachers
  - i. Provides release time for teachers to work with children
  - j. Allows the program director/lead teacher to refer parents to other community services and organizations, e.g. speech pathologist, guidance counselor, etc.
3. Opportunities for parent involvement:
  - a. Volunteering as room mothers & fathers
  - b. Preparing materials at home or school for classroom use
  - c. Assisting with specific classroom projects or lessons
  - d. Chaperoning on field trips



- e. Assisting with fund raising activities
- f. Helping with grounds upkeep / maintenance

**RECOMMENDED MATERIALS/RESOURCES FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION INFORMAL HOME TRAINING**

**7600**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church recognizes that in attempting to aid parents in meeting the child's educational needs, it should assist with necessary materials and techniques. Consequently, the church has materials and programs for parents on informal home training of young children. The materials for the child correspond to early childhood education. Parents are encouraged to contact their Conference Office of Education for information regarding available materials.

1. For parent education:
  - a. Education by Ellen G. White
  - b. Child Guidance by Ellen G. White
  - c. The Adventist Home by Ellen G. White
  - d. Kay Kuzma's materials available at the Adventist Book Center
  - e. Paul Roesel's materials available at the Adventist Book Center
  - f. Family ministries department of the local Conference office
  - g. SDA websites such as [www.kidsindiscipleship.org](http://www.kidsindiscipleship.org), [www.childmin.com](http://www.childmin.com), [www.adventistheritage.org](http://www.adventistheritage.org),
  - h. [www.lifetalk.net](http://www.lifetalk.net) , [www.sdaedspiritualresources.org](http://www.sdaedspiritualresources.org) , [www.adventistedge.org](http://www.adventistedge.org)
  - i. Home study courses from Home Study Institute / Griggs University in Silver Springs, Maryland
  - j. Loma Linda University parenting newsletter
  - k. Parent study groups (Bible Families)
  - l. Seminars on parenting conducted by local schools and church ministries
  - m. Church programs Home & School Association materials
  
2. For children:
  - a. Ladder of Life books & tapes
  - b. Home edition of God, Creation and Me
  - c. Courses for kindergarten and preschool from Home Study Institute / Griggs University
  - d. Child evangelism materials in the Adventist Book Center
  - e. Children Ministries Department of the local Conference office
  - f. Church-based children's programming
  - g. Sabbath school programs
  - h. Vacation Bible School programs
  - i. SDA websites such as [www.kidsbibleinfo.com](http://www.kidsbibleinfo.com) , [www.primarytreasure.com](http://www.primarytreasure.com)

Conference: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Church or School applying to operate/re-open and/or operate licensed early childhood program.

Church or School: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

If church board is applying, name of pastor: \_\_\_\_\_

If school board is applying, name of principal: \_\_\_\_\_

Target date for opening/re-opening/operation: \_\_\_\_\_

ECP Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Facility Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

ECP Director's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Has local Conference risk management director been consulted regarding plans to open? Yes  No

Has local Conference human resource director been consulted regarding employment of ECP Personnel? Yes  No

Desired ages of children to be served: \_\_\_\_\_

Desired days and hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial funds allocated for start-up: \_\_\_\_\_

Income:

Weekly rate for each age group:

Other:

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Record of Actions: