



Early Childhood Policy In Institutions of Higher Education

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and the Buffett Early Childhood Fund*

Created originally as a prototypical module by the Early Childhood Policy in Institutions of Higher Education (ECPIHE) initiative, this document has been modified for use by (*insert university name*) for use in its (*insert program name*). This document supports ECPIHE’s foundational intent to create and support a cadre of scholars who address early childhood policy. Moreover, it acknowledges ECPIHE’s purposeful creation of comprehensive and adaptive materials that are designed to be modified to reflect the instructional goals and needs of diverse contexts and users. For more information about ECPIHE and/or to learn about additional coursework related to the initiative, please visit <http://policyforchildren.org/ecpihe/>

This module is Module 2 of 12 90-minute modules that have been developed as part of the Early Childhood Policy in Institutions of Higher Education (ECPIHE) effort funded by the Heising-Simons Foundation and Buffett Early Childhood Fund. The work herein represents the collective effort of the project’s Content Work Group, which includes Linda Espinosa, Sharon Lynn Kagan, Kristie Kauertz, Helen Raikes, Aisha Ray, Adele Robinson, Catherine Scott-Little, Linda Smith, and Albert Wat. Eva Landsberg and Samantha Melvin contributed to the work, as well. Each module contains distinct content so that it may be used individually or in combination with other modules. Taken together, the 12 modules could form a course.

Title	<i>Module 2 - Child Development</i>
Learning Outcomes	<p><i>By the end of the session, students will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the unique importance of the early childhood years (birth to age 8); • Discern between different domains of development, stages of development, and developmental theorists; • Identify major environmental influences on early childhood development; • Explicate how child development knowledge has been, and can continue to be, manifest in public policy.
Content	<p><i>PART I – Introduction: What’s So Special About Early Childhood? / Why Should Policymakers Care About Child Development? (~5 minutes)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Theoretical Rationale:</i> Learning theorists describe key developmental shifts in how children learn around age 7-8, so we need to treat policy and practice differently in the period preceding this. • <i>Developmental Rationale:</i> A great deal of brain architecture is formed during the early childhood period (particularly in the first 1,000 days), and

	<p>many outside sources influence this process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Economic Rationale:</i> The earlier we invest in children, the greater the returns on our investments to society (include Heckman equation). <p><i>PART II – Foundations and Definitions (~20 minutes)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple domains of development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Physical, motor, brain, language/communication, cognitive (including executive function), social/emotional, moral (briefly review each) ○ These areas all develop simultaneously, with many individual differences in the points at which children reach developmental milestones • Different services support development across domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family supports (including employment supports) ○ Child care, education ○ Health, mental health, and nutrition services ○ Social services (including food, housing, child welfare) • Key stages of development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Different learning theorists have defined different stages (Freud, Piaget, Erikson) ○ In general, we can consider: infancy (0-3 years), early childhood (3-8 years), middle childhood (8-12 years), adolescence (12-18 years), and adulthood (18+) • Development is based on social, cultural, and environmental variables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory of Development (including Zone of Proximal Development) ○ Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory of Development <p><i>PART III – Influences on Child Development (~30 minutes)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adverse influences on child development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Abuse and neglect (example: Romanian orphanages) ○ Poverty (examples: poverty and brain development; 30 million word gap; food insecurity) ○ Other adversities (examples: maternal mental health, neighborhoods, harsh parenting, malnutrition) • Influences on child development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sensitive/responsive parenting (examples: attachment, “serve and return” interactions, buffering effects of sensitive parenting) ○ Early childhood intervention programs (examples: Perry/Abecedarian, recent pre-K examples, home visiting impacts) ○ Social services (examples: Medicaid, WIC provisions for pregnant mothers and children)
Delivery Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 minutes: Opening activity: What is “child development?” – Students will brainstorm what they know about child development, independently or as a group (e.g. a word-map on the board or via web-app responses) • 50 minutes: Lecture/PPT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 minutes: Case study activity: Could be done as whole group discussion or in small groups • 15 minutes: Takeaways and summary
Application Activity/ies	<p><i>PART IV – Case Study: How Has Child Development Knowledge Shaped Policymaking? (~20 minutes)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example case: Increasing knowledge about the adverse effects of poverty on child development → Head Start/EHS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide a case study reviewing the history and key elements of Head Start (including initial historical context, holistic focus on health/nutrition/education, parenting education/dual generation approaches, addition of EHS modalities in the 1990s as early brain development literature was ramping up, etc.) ○ What social problem(s) was the INITIAL Head Start policy trying to address? (Poverty and its impacts on child development) ○ What aspects of child development knowledge are manifest in the provisions of the policy? (Be sure to probe about addition of EHS around the same time as major brain development literature was emerging) ○ How could the policy be expanded/improved to better address contemporary knowledge about child development?
Suggested Readings	<p>Black, M. M., Walker, S. P., Fernald, L. C., Andersen, C. T., DiGirolamo, A. M., Lu, C., ... & Devercelli, A. E. (2017). Early childhood development coming of age: Science through the life course. <i>The Lancet</i>, 389(10064), 77-90.</p> <p>Center on the Developing Child. (2007). <i>The science of early childhood development</i>. Retrieved from https://46y5eh11fhgw3ve3ytpwxt9r-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2007/03/InBrief-The-Science-of-Early-Childhood-Development2.pdf</p>