Effective Practices in Early Childhood Education
Dedication

To Joe Bredekamp, for a lifetime of love, friendship, wonderful memories, and tolerance of craziness.
About the Author

Dr. Sue Bredekamp is an Early Childhood Education Specialist from Washington, DC. She serves as a consultant on curriculum, pedagogy, developmentally appropriate practice, and professional development for organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Head Start, the Council for Professional Recognition, state departments of education, and universities. Her seminal work on NAEYC's best-selling publications on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs has had a major impact on the education of young children and teacher preparation for more than 30 years. As NAEYC’s Director of Accreditation and Professional Development, she developed and administered their national accreditation system for early childhood centers and schools, and wrote standards for curriculum and assessment, and teacher education.

Dr. Bredekamp is a frequent keynote speaker and author of numerous books and articles on professional practice. She has been a visiting lecturer at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia; Monash University in Melbourne; New Zealand Tertiary College; University of Alaska; and University of Hawaii. Dr. Bredekamp holds a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction and an M.A. in Early Childhood Education from the University of Maryland. In 2014, the McCormick Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National Louis University recognized Dr. Bredekamp with its Visionary Leadership Award.

Dr. Bredekamp serves as Chair-Emerita of the Board of HighScope Educational Research Foundation. She served on the National Research Council’s (NRC) Committee on Early Childhood Mathematics which produced a landmark report, Mathematics in Early Childhood: Paths toward Excellence and Equity. She co-authored Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children and was the content developer and on-air faculty for HeadsUp! Reading, a live satellite television course on early literacy disseminated to more than 10,000 early educators. For more than 45 years, Dr. Bredekamp has worked for and with young children toward the goal of improving the quality and effectiveness of early childhood education programs.

About the Contributors

Dr. Kathleen (Kate) Gallagher is the Director of Research and Evaluation at the Buffett Early Childhood Institute at the University of Nebraska. Dr. Gallagher is an educational psychologist and early childhood professional, with more than 30 years of experience teaching, home visiting, and leading early childhood programs, including early intervention and inclusive preschool programs. Her research, evaluation, and teaching focus on practices, programs, and policies that support the development and well-being of young children 0–8 years and their families, particularly in the contexts of poverty, disability, and cultural diversity. Her recent work is focused on how organizations can implement policies and practices to support the wellbeing of early childhood professionals. Kate holds a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, a master’s in education from Marquette University, and a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education and special education from Cardinal Stritch University. Kate has presented two TED talks on the transformative power of early childhood education, and has published extensively on children’s early language and literacy, social-emotional development, and early intervention.
**Dr. Gail Joseph** is an associate professor of Educational Psychology and Early Childhood and Family Studies at the University of Washington. She teaches courses, advises students, provides service, and conducts research on early learning and equity, child care quality, teacher preparation, early childhood mental health, and school readiness. She is the Founding Executive Director of Cultivate Learning at the University of Washington and was the Director of the Head Start Center for Inclusion and Co-Director of the National Center for Quality Teaching and Learning funded by the Office of Head Start. At Cultivate Learning she oversees the quality ratings system for all licensed child care and pre-K programs in the state, and is the creator of numerous professional learning resources such as *Circle Time Magazine* and the *Meaningful Makeover* series. Additionally, she is the Founding Director of the EarlyEdU Alliance. The EarlyEdU Alliance is improving the quality of programs for more than 30,000 children nationwide by making relevant, affordable bachelor’s degrees accessible to the early childhood workforce. Using the latest research on optimizing child outcomes and adult learning, the technology-powered pedagogy of EarlyEdU creates degrees that make a significant contribution to individuals and the field. To serve as an innovation lab, Dr. Joseph led the development of the University of Washington’s first online B.A. completion degree in early childhood education which was just ranked #1 in the nation. Dr. Joseph is the 2018 recipient of the David R. Thorud Leadership Award at the University of Washington.

**Megan Schumaker-Murphy** has worked in early childhood education for 15 years as a special education teacher, early interventionist, and teacher educator. At last count, Ms. Schumaker-Murphy worked directly with more than 300 families and more than 150 teachers and early interventionists serving more than 1,000 young children across those settings. She is a doctoral candidate and instructor at DePaul University in Chicago where she lives with her family and two adorably naughty cats.
My motivations for writing the prior editions of this book were both personal and professional. I began my career in early childhood education more than 45 years ago as an unqualified child care teacher. During the intervening years, I’ve often wished that I had known even a fraction of what I know now about child development, and effective teaching and learning so I could have been a better teacher. I initially wrote this text to help ensure that new teachers get off to a better start than I did and that the children do, too.

My professional motivations emanate from the current explosion in research that should be informing our practice to a much greater extent than it is today. Neuroscience and research on child development, teaching, and curriculum provide considerable guidance about effective practices and what children truly need to be physically and mentally healthy and successful in school and life. In addition, I continue to feel the responsibility to clarify and explain what developmentally appropriate practice really means—that it is not ages and stages but rather a complex decision-making process on the part of teachers that is embedded in social and cultural contexts.

As I wrote this fourth edition, I reflected a great deal on my entire career. I had the privilege of spending time and videotaping at the Center for Young Children (CYC) at the University of Maryland, my alma mater. I’m proud of the fact that the CYC is NAEYC-accredited because I developed and directed the accreditation system. When I visit the program and many others like it in our country, I see what we early childhood professionals continue to envision for every child—a caring community of enthusiastic learners, effective teaching, engaging and challenging curriculum, and developmentally appropriate practice implemented as it is intended. My mentor, Dr. Carol Seefeldt was one of the visionaries whose work influenced the design and curriculum at the CYC. I feel her presence there and in my work every day.

Many parents, policy makers, economists, business leaders, and researchers now consider early education essential for long-term success in life. Our profession has a deep responsibility to meet these lofty expectations. But the power of early education depends on the quality of teacher-child interactions and the effectiveness of instructional practices. To achieve their potential, children need and deserve highly competent, well-educated, well-compensated teachers. But most of all, we have a responsibility to ensure that young children have safe, secure, and joyful childhoods. Only then can we fulfill the promise that lies within every child.
New to This Edition

- A new cross-cutting theme of the entire book is the importance of developing children’s executive function, self-regulation, and positive approaches to learning. Every chapter and many established features, such as *Becoming an Intentional Teacher and Promoting Play*, present examples of effective curriculum and teaching to promote these goals for children.

- New *What Works* features in 10 chapters discuss executive function, self-regulation, approaches to learning, or brain development.

- The revised Chapter 13 is a STEM chapter with discussion and examples of engineering and increased emphasis on science standards and teaching practices in addition to mathematics and technology.

- Chapter 1 is updated with discussion of new policies, changing demographics, and new research on child development and effective early education. The chapter addresses both trends in the field and challenging issues such as adverse childhood experiences, stress in children’s and families’ lives, the opioid crisis, threats to children’s play, bullying, and social media.

- Chapter 3 is updated with a discussion of new research and ongoing issues such as the importance of situating decisions in cultural context, scripted curriculum, and academic rigor and developmentally appropriate practice. The reorganized chapter includes learning materials with environments.

- Updated research and new strategies for dealing with toxic stress and challenging behavior appear in Chapter 8 and Chapter 14.

- The updated Chapter 2 includes the history of Reggio Emilia and discusses Loris Malaguzzi as a major historical figure.

- New *Promoting Play* features in six chapters emphasize protecting children’s right to play, especially in kindergarten.

- Chapter 1 and Chapter 16 provide a discussion of NAEYC’s *Power to the Profession*.

- Updated culture and language lenses are provided on culturally responsive curriculum, teaching, and learning, as well as discussions on professional ethics in challenging times.

- New examples of developmentally appropriate digital media for children, teachers, and families appear throughout the text.

- New artifacts of children’s work appear throughout.

Book Organization Continues to Reflect Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice

This book is designed to teach the concept of *developmentally appropriate practice* for students, because an understanding of its principles is the foundation on which to build early childhood programs and schools for children from birth through age 8. Chapters are organized according to NAEYC’s guidelines for developmentally appropriate practice, which I have coauthored for more than 30 years.

Part 1, “Foundations of Early Childhood Education,” describes the current profession and the issues and trends affecting it today (Chapter 1), the rich history from which developmentally appropriate practices evolved (Chapter 2), and an overview of its principles and guidelines, which are described in depth in later chapters (Chapter 3).
Part 2, “Dimensions of Developmentally Appropriate Practice,” includes chapters describing the key factors teachers must consider as they make professional decisions. Chapter 4 presents an overview of current knowledge about how all children develop and learn. Chapter 5 addresses the unique, individual differences among children, including children with diverse abilities. Chapter 6 discusses the critical role of social, cultural, and linguistic contexts on all children’s development and learning and how teachers must embrace a diverse society to help every child succeed in school and life. Though addressed in different chapters, these three dimensions are integrally connected.

Part 3, “Intentional Teaching: How to Teach,” describes the role of the teacher in implementing developmentally appropriate practices. Each of the interconnected aspects of the teacher’s role is addressed in separate chapters: building effective partnerships with families (Chapter 7), creating a caring community of learners and guiding young children (Chapter 8); teaching to enhance learning and development (Chapter 9); planning effective curriculum (Chapter 10); and assessing children’s learning and development (Chapter 11).

Part 4, “Implementing an Effective Curriculum: What to Teach,” describes both how and what to teach children from birth through age 8 in language, literacy, the arts, STEM, social-emotional development, social studies, physical development, and health. Each chapter demonstrates how the continuum of children’s development influences decisions about curriculum content and intentional, effective teaching strategies for children of different ages.

Early childhood educators join this profession and stay in it because they believe their work can make a difference in the lives of children and their families. But to make a lasting difference, our practices must be effective—they must contribute to children’s learning and development. This book reflects this core goal by building on the basic framework of developmentally appropriate practice while going beyond to emphasize intentional teaching, challenging and interesting curriculum, and evidence-based, effective practices for a new generation of early childhood educators. Each of these key themes is discussed on the following pages.
Intentional Teaching of Young Children

This text builds on the framework of developmentally appropriate practice emphasizing that effective teachers are intentional, thoughtful, and purposeful in everything they do.

Intentional teachers know not only what to do with children but also why they are doing it and can explain the rationale for the decisions they make to other teachers, administrators, and families. To help students understand this concept, Becoming an Intentional Teacher features reveal what teachers are thinking in classroom situations, how and why they select the strategies they do, and challenge students to reflect further on these scenarios.

Current Research on Effective Practices

In an era of expanding research on child development and learning, Common Core State Standards, Early Learning standards, accountability, and rapid change in the field, the text makes research understandable and meaningful for students and illustrates the connections between child development, curriculum content, assessment, and intentional teaching.

What Works features present research-based practices in action, including descriptions of demonstrated effective practices such as strategies to develop executive function and using relaxation techniques to prevent challenging behaviors.

Language Lens

Preparing to Teach Dual Language Learners

Eight to nine languages are spoken among the students in Mrs. Mitchell’s bilingual kindergartens in Washington, D.C. Diversity serves to create a working understanding of each other as people and to appreciate differences in language. The three classrooms of 20–25 students are engaged in self-directed learning activities that are flexible and adapted from three themepaths this year.

The number of language speakers in Mrs. Mitchell’s classrooms ranges from three to five, with these varying somewhat within the room, but overall remaining fairly consistent. The students have been grouped into smaller sets for instruction. Writing, storywriting, math, science, and social studies projects are enhanced through the richness of language. Students work in small groups, with Mrs. Mitchell’s assistance, to make the use of language a natural process as they explore the curriculum and learn about themselves and their world. When language barriers prevent progress, Mrs. Mitchell provides assistance.
Connections between Curriculum and Child Development

Unlike many early childhood texts that focus on child development only, this text shows how child development and curriculum content knowledge are connected.

In the Developmental Continuum feature, the text provides an overview of the continuum of learning in the areas of language, literacy, mathematics, and cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development and describes how child development is linked to curriculum planning for children from birth through age 8.

- Chapters 12 to 15 help early childhood teachers understand right from the start that there is content in the curriculum for young children. They describe the goals for young children’s learning and development that predict success in school and life. Each of these chapters includes examples of effective strategies such as teaching children of diverse abilities in inclusive classrooms or ways to promote dual language learning.

The Promoting Play feature presents current research on the important role of play in development and effective strategies to help children learn through play or protect their right to play. These features address play across the full age range, from birth through age 8. Discussions of play are also integrated in each chapter throughout this book as an effective means to support all domains of development and promote learning in all curriculum areas. Today, many people are concerned about how the standards movement is negatively impacting play. We often hear statements such as “We can’t let children play because we have to teach literacy,” or “We don’t have time for outdoor play in primary grades because we have to get children ready for standardized tests.” Play should not be treated as a separate part of an early childhood program or day that can be cut if someone deems it unimportant. Therefore, you will find a discussion of play in every chapter of this book.

- The emphasis on effective curriculum reflects current trends such as the goal of aligning prekindergarten and primary education, NAEYC accreditation and CAPE professional preparation standards, and enhanced expectations for teacher qualifications as described in the 2015 report, Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth through Age 9: A Unifying Foundation by the Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council, the 2018 report of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM), Transforming the Financing of Early Care and Education, and NAEYC’s Power to the Profession initiative.

So what’s to be done? Reset the debate about play in academics. It is not an either-or choice. There is no need to choose play versus academics. Most children need both equally in order to develop skills, knowledge, and habits that will support their future success.

The report includes a call for early childhood professionals, policymakers, and the public to embrace this vision for the future of children and families and to make changes that will support the growth of high-quality early care and education programs that include time for play.
Revel™

This fourth edition of *Effective Practices in Early Childhood Education* is available in Revel™

- Provide an all-in-one solution
  - Fully digital and highly engaging, Revel gives students everything they need for the course—all in one continuous, integrated learning experience. Highlighting, note taking, and a glossary let students read and study however they like. Educators can add notes for students, too, including reminders or study tips.
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  - Revel was designed to help every student come to class ready to learn. To keep students engaged as they read through each chapter, Revel integrates videos, interactives, and assessments directly into the author-created narrative. Thanks to this media-rich presentation of content, students are more likely to complete their assigned reading and retain what they’ve read. So they’ll show up to class better prepared to participate and learn.
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  - Embedded *Check Your Understanding* concept checks afford students opportunities to check their understanding at regular intervals before moving on. Assessments in Revel let instructors gauge student comprehension frequently, provide timely feedback, and address learning gaps along the way.
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  - The writing functionality in Revel enables educators to integrate writing—among the best ways to foster and assess critical thinking—into the course without significantly impacting their grading burden. Assignable *Shared Writing* activities direct students to share written responses with classmates, fostering peer discussion.
Over more than four decades in early childhood education, I have had the privilege of working with and learning from countless friends, colleagues, teachers, and children. This book would not have been possible without the help and encouragement of the following people:

Deep appreciation goes to my three contributors without whom I would not have been able to complete this text. Dr. Kathleen Cranley Gallagher revised Chapter 4, Chapter 5, and Chapter 7. Kate’s expertise on early intervention, social-emotional development, and mental health greatly inform this edition.

I am thrilled that Dr. Gail E. Joseph was able to revise Chapter 8 and 14. Gail wrote several chapters and the Including All Children features for the first edition. Her innovative work on early intervention, improving Head Start and child care, and cutting-edge professional development of teachers has made a significant contribution to the field and been a personal inspiration to me.

Appreciation goes to Megan Schumaker-Murphy for updating Chapter 11 on assessment. Her expertise and practical experience with assessment of children with and without disabilities provided practical examples that greatly enhance the chapter. Thanks to longtime colleague Dr. Gayle Mindes for connecting us.

Deepest gratitude goes to Carol Copple with whom I have collaborated on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs for several decades and who will always be my best thinking and conceptualizing partner. Warm thanks to Laura Colker for her unequalled generosity, sharing of ideas, and gracious support.

I want to thank Carol Brunson Day for teaching me so much about diversity, anti-bias education, and cultural influences on development; and Linda Espinosa and Luis Hernandez for research and practical examples of teaching dual-language learners.

Closest colleagues whose wisdom and encouragement have educated and sustained me for decades include Marilyn Smith, Barbara Willer, and Barbara Bowman. The debt is never paid to the late Carol Seefeldt, who taught the first early childhood course I ever took and mentored me through my dissertation. I hope that my work continues to reflect her vision.

A sincere thank you goes to the administrators, teachers, children, and families at the Center for Young Children (CYC) at the University of Maryland for welcoming me to observe and videotape there. I especially want to thank Mona Leigh Guha, Director; Anne Daniel, Assistant Director; Leslie Oppenheimer, Curriculum Specialist; and Bernadette Daly, special educator. I’m particularly grateful to these outstanding teachers: Kristin Bowman, Kelsey Blorstad, Amy Laakso, Danielle Miller, and Cici Fowler. Thanks to the children and their parents who allowed us to use the artwork and artifacts found in this book.

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I am grateful to my new editor at Pearson, Aileen Pogran, for stepping in and quickly becoming a true supporter, sharing her vast knowledge of educational content and publishing. I continue to be indebted to Julie Peters, my editor on the previous three editions, for her unwavering support of my work.
My life and work continue to be inspired by Patty Smith Hill, founder of NANE, whose vision for early childhood education laid the foundation for NAEYC’s commitment to developmentally appropriate practice.

I would also like to thank the many reviewers who contributed to the development of this book. They are:

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- Lucia Obregón, Miami Dade College
# Brief Contents

## Part 1  Foundations of Early Childhood Education  2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Continuity and Change in Early Childhood Education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Building on a Tradition of Excellence</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Understanding and Applying Developmentally Appropriate Practice</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Part 2  Learning and Developing from Birth to Age 8: Who We Teach  106

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Applying What We Know about Children’s Learning and Development</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Adapting for Individual Differences</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Embracing a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse World</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Part 3  Intentional Teaching: How to Teach  220

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Building Effective Partnerships with Families</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Creating a Caring Community of Learners: Guiding Young Children</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Teaching to Enhance Learning and Development</td>
<td>294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Planning Effective Curriculum</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Assessing Children’s Learning and Development</td>
<td>370</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Part 4  Implementing an Effective Curriculum: What to Teach  408

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Teaching Children to Communicate: Language, Literacy, and the Arts</td>
<td>408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Teaching Children to Investigate and Solve Problems: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM)</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Teaching Children to Live in a Democratic Society: Social-Emotional Learning and Social Studies</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Teaching Children to Be Healthy and Fit: Physical Development and Health</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Putting It All Together in Practice: Making a Difference for Children</td>
<td>558</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Part 1: Foundations of Early Childhood Education

## Chapter 1: Continuity and Change in Early Childhood Education

- What Is Early Childhood Education? ........................................ 4
- How Early Childhood Education Is Valued ............................. 4
- The Landscape of Early Childhood Education ......................... 5
- How Early Childhood Education Is Expanding ....................... 9
- Access to High-Quality Early Education ............................... 10
- How Early Childhood Education Is Changing ....................... 11
- Why Become an Early Childhood Educator? ......................... 13
- The Joys of Teaching Young Children .................................. 13
- Dimensions of Effective Intentional Teaching ....................... 14
- Career Options for Early Childhood Educators .................... 14
- The Culture of Early Childhood Education ........................... 17
- Early Childhood Program Quality and Measuring Effectiveness .......................... 20
  - Setting Standards for Quality ......................................... 20
  - Measuring Quality in Early Childhood Programs ................ 22
  - Measuring Effectiveness .................................................. 23
- The Positive Effects of Early Childhood Education .................. 23
  - Brain Research .......................................................... 24
  - Lasting Benefits of Early Childhood Education .................... 24
  - The Positive Effects of Prekindergarten, Head Start, and Child Care .......................... 26
  - Social Justice and Closing the Achievement Gap ............... 27
- Current Trends and Issues in Early Childhood Education ............ 29
  - Trends Impacting Early Education .................................... 29
  - Current Issues Confronting Children, Families, and Teachers ................. 32
  - Social Media and Technology ........................................... 34
  - Continuity and Change .................................................... 34

## Chapter 2: Building on a Tradition of Excellence

- Learning from the Past ...................................................... 38
- Why History Is Relevant ..................................................... 40
- The Changing View of Children .......................................... 41
- European Influences on American Early Childhood Education ........... 45
  - John Amos Comenius ..................................................... 45
  - Johann Pestalozzi ......................................................... 45
  - Friedrich Froebel ......................................................... 46
  - Maria Montessori .......................................................... 47
  - Loris Malaguzzi ............................................................ 49
Leaders and Events in the Early Childhood Movement in the United States .................................................. 51
The Kindergarten Movement ........................................... 51
Progressive Education .................................................. 52
The Nursery School Movement ...................................... 54
The Child Care Movement .............................................. 58
A Wider View of Early Childhood History—Contributions of African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans ................................. 60
African Americans in Early Childhood History ..................... 60
African American Kindergartens and Teacher Training ............. 61
Native American Early Childhood History .............................. 63
Hispanic/Latino Early Childhood History ............................... 64
How History Influenced Head Start and Early Education Today .......... 66
The Story of Head Start .............................................. 67
The Prekindergarten Story .............................................. 68
Building on a Tradition of Excellence ..................................... 69

Chapter 3 Understanding and Applying Developmentally Appropriate Practice ........................................ 72
What Is Developmentally Appropriate Practice? ..................... 74
NAEYC’s Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice .................. 75
Current Issues in Developmentally Appropriate Practice .............. 75
Developmentally Appropriate Practice in the Classroom ............. 78
What is Intentional Teaching? .......................................... 80
Purposeful Planning .................................................. 81
Understand and Explain Practices ..................................... 81
Developmentally Appropriate Decision Making .................... 83
Make Informed Decisions .............................................. 84
Consider All You Know When Making Decisions ..................... 88
The Complex Role of the Teacher ..................................... 89
Create a Caring Community of Learners .............................. 90
Teach to Enhance Learning and Development ......................... 91
Plan Curriculum to Achieve Important Goals ......................... 92
Assess Children’s Development and Learning .......................... 92
Build Collaborative Partnerships with Families and Communities .... 92
The Teacher’s Role in Context ......................................... 93
Widening the Lens: Moving from Either/Or to Both/And Thinking ...... 93
Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environments ............... 95
Organize the Physical Space .......................................... 95
Provide Developmentally Appropriate Learning Materials ............ 97
Organize the Day .................................................. 97
Research on Developmentally Appropriate Practice ................. 100
Research Reviews .................................................. 100
Research on Elements of Developmentally Appropriate Practice .... 101
The Future of Developmentally Appropriate Practice .................. 102
Chapter 6

Embracing a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse World

Defining and Explaining the Influence of Cultural Contexts

What Is Culture?

The Role of Culture in Development

How Culture Functions: Principles to Keep in Mind

A Framework for Thinking about Culture

Individualistic Cultural Orientation

Interdependent Cultural Orientation

Continuum of Common Cultural Values

Applying the Continuum in Practice

Understanding Your Own Cultural Perspective

Become Aware of Your Own Cultural Experiences

Learn about the Perspectives of Various Cultural Groups

Guard against Implicit Bias

Teaching in a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse World

Why Does Culture Matter to Teachers?

Embracing Linguistic Diversity

Cultural Competence: The Key to Effective Teaching

Cross-Cultural Communication

Culturally Responsive, Effective Practices for Diverse Learners

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Linguistically Responsive Teaching

Anti-Bias Education

Part 3

Intentional Teaching: How to Teach

Chapter 7

Building Effective Partnerships with Families

Contemporary Families and Their Role in Children’s Development

Welcoming All Families

Family Dynamics

Family Circumstances and Challenges

Reciprocal Relationships with Families and Family-Centered Practices

Roles of Teachers and Parents

Family-Centered Practices
Research-Based, Effective Teaching Strategies .............................. 300
  What Are Teaching Strategies? .................................................. 300
  Teacher-Initiated and Child-Initiated Experiences ........................ 300
  Using an Array of Teaching Strategies ...................................... 301
  The Power of Scaffolding: An Integrated Approach ....................... 308
Helping Children Make Meaning, Develop Concepts, and Acquire Executive Function and Higher-Level Thinking ......................... 310
  Reflect on Your Own Learning .................................................. 310
  Strategies That Make Learning Meaningful .................................. 311
  Strategies That Develop Concepts ............................................. 313
  Strategies That Promote Higher-Level Thinking and Problem Solving ................................................................. 314
Grouping as an Instructional Approach ........................................ 317
  Learning in the Whole Group ................................................... 317
  Learning in Small Groups ....................................................... 318
  Teaching in Learning Centers .................................................. 318
Play as a Context for Teaching and Learning .................................. 320
  Teachers' Involvement During Play ............................................ 321
  Teachers' Role During Play ..................................................... 322
Effective Teaching with Digital Media .......................................... 324
  Professional Decision-Making .................................................. 325
  Classroom Practices ............................................................... 325
  Research on Digital Media ....................................................... 326
  Assistive Technology for Children with Diverse Abilities ................... 327
Chapter 10  Planning Effective Curriculum .................................... 332
Defining Curriculum ...................................................................... 334
  What Is Curriculum? ............................................................... 335
  Curriculum Models, Approaches, and Frameworks ......................... 336
  Written Curriculum Plans ....................................................... 336
  The Teacher's Role ................................................................. 338
Components of Effective Curriculum ............................................ 340
The Role of Standards in Curriculum Planning ............................... 343
  What Are Standards? ............................................................... 343
  How Do Standards Affect Curriculum? ....................................... 343
  Alignment of Standards and Curriculum Across Age Groups ......... 344
Approaches to Planning Curriculum .............................................. 347
  Emergent Curriculum .............................................................. 347
  Integrated Curriculum ............................................................ 348
  Thematic/Conceptual Curriculum .............................................. 348
  Webbing ............................................................................... 349
  The Project Approach ............................................................. 350
  Scope and Sequence ............................................................... 351
Research-Based Early Childhood Curricula .................................... 352
  Comprehensive Curriculum ..................................................... 353
  Focused Curriculum ............................................................... 356
  The Reggio Emilia Approach .................................................... 357
  Research on Preschool Curriculum ............................................ 359
Developmental Continuum: Oral Language .......................... 413
Impact of Common Core Speaking and Listening Standards ........... 414
Scaffolding Children's Language Development ......................... 415
Supporting Language Development in Babies and Toddlers ......... 415
Scaffolding Preschoolers' Language Development ..................... 416
How Children Learn a Second Language .............................. 421
Developmental Continuum: Dual Language Acquisition ............... 422
Teaching Dual Language Learners .................................. 423
Promoting Early Literacy: Birth through Age 5 ......................... 425
Developmental Continuum: Early Literacy Learning ................. 425
Literacy-Rich Environments ....................................... 426
Early Literacy from Birth to Kindergarten ......................... 427
Literacy Instruction in the Primary Grades ....................... 435
Learning to Read .................................................. 435
Developmental Continuum: Literacy in Kindergarten and Primary Grades ... 435
Evidence-Based Reading Instruction ................................. 437
Impact of the Common Core State Standards ......................... 438
Digital Literacy .................................................. 439
Communicating Through the Arts ................................ 440
The Value of Creative Arts ......................................... 440
Visual Arts ......................................................... 443
Music, Movement, and Dance ...................................... 446
Drama .............................................................. 448
Seeing the Arts with New Eyes .................................... 448

Chapter 13 Teaching Children to Investigate and Solve Problems: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) .... 452
The Importance of Mathematics and Science ......................... 454
The Need for an Educated Workforce ................................ 455
The Mathematics Achievement Gap .................................. 455
The Cognitive Foundations of Early Learning ......................... 456
The Continuum of Cognitive Development ............................ 456
Executive Function ................................................. 458
Children's Thinking ................................................ 458
Language and Cognition ............................................. 460
Mathematical Language and the Achievement Gap .................. 461
Effective Mathematics Curriculum and Teaching ..................... 463
Mathematics Curriculum Content .................................. 463
Mathematics Process Skills ........................................ 467
Effective Mathematics Curriculum .................................. 469
Effective Mathematics Teaching ..................................... 470
Effective Science and Engineering Curriculum and Teaching .... 473
Science and Engineering Curriculum ................................ 473
Science Content .................................................. 474
Effective Science Teaching .......................................... 476
Engaging All Children in STEM Learning ............................. 478
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 14</th>
<th>Teaching Children to Live in a Democratic Society: Social-Emotional Learning and Social Studies</th>
<th>492</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social-Emotional Foundations of Early Learning</td>
<td>492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional Development</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Self-Regulation</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Development</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stress in Children's Lives</td>
<td>496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers' Roles</td>
<td>497</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continuum of Social and Emotional Development</td>
<td>498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infants and Toddlers</td>
<td>498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preschool and Kindergarten</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary Grades</td>
<td>502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diversity and Social-Emotional Development</td>
<td>503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Role of Play in Social-Emotional Learning</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional Development and Play</td>
<td>505</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Development and Play</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective Social-Emotional Curriculum and Teaching</td>
<td>508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social and Emotional Curriculum Goals</td>
<td>508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective Social Studies Curriculum and Teaching</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What Is Social Studies?</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies Content Goals</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective Strategies for Teaching Social Studies</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter 15</th>
<th>Teaching Children to Be Healthy and Fit: Physical Development and Health</th>
<th>524</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Importance of Physical Fitness and Health</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Benefits of Physical Fitness</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Childhood Obesity Crisis</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implications for Programs and Schools</td>
<td>527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How Physical Development Occurs</td>
<td>528</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Continuum of Physical Development</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phases of Motor Development</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gross-Motor Development</td>
<td>530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fine-Motor Development</td>
<td>536</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Role of Play in Physical Development and Health</td>
<td>543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Childhood Experiences with the Natural Environment</td>
<td>544</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outdoor Play Environments ........................................ 545
Outdoor Environments for Children with Disabilities ......... 546
The Value of Rough-and-Tumble Play .......................... 546
Health and Safety Standards: The Teacher’ Role .......... 547
  Prevent Illness ......................................................... 547
  Prevent Injury ......................................................... 548
  Balance Risk and Challenge .................................... 549
Effective Curriculum and Teaching to Promote Physical
  Fitness and Health .................................................. 549
  Curriculum for Physical Development ....................... 549
  Effective Health Curriculum and Teaching ................ 552

Chapter 16 Putting It All Together in Practice: Making a Difference for Children ........................................ 558
  Life as an Early Childhood Educator ......................... 560
    Caring for and Educating Infants and Young Toddlers .... 560
    Teaching the Whole Child in the Preschool ................. 562
    Teaching the Whole Child in the Kindergarten .......... 564
    Teaching the Whole Child in the Primary Grades ....... 567
  Beginning Your Journey as an Early Childhood Professional 569
    Become a Professional .......................................... 569
    Protect Children from Abuse and Neglect ................. 576
    Join a Profession That Makes a Difference ............... 578
  Glossary .............................................................. 583
  References .......................................................... 591
  Author Index ...................................................... 602
  Subject Index ...................................................... 611
Special Features

Promoting Play

Ch. 1: Protecting Play in Kindergarten .............. 33
Ch. 2: The Image of the Child and the Role of Play ................. 44
Ch. 3: Does Developmentally Appropriate Practice = Play? .................. 79
Ch. 4: Pet Project ................................ 138
Ch. 5: Supporting Toddlers with Autism Using Play ..................... 168
Ch. 6: African American Children and Play ........... 201
Ch. 7: Playful Homework ............................ 238
Ch. 8: A Member of the Class ..................... 265
Ch. 9: Guided Play .................................. 324
Ch. 10: Playful Mathematics Curriculum ............ 357
Ch. 11: Play as an Assessment Context ............... 389
Ch. 12: How Play Supports Language and Literacy Development .......... 434
Ch. 13: Math Games ............................... 486
Ch. 14: Learning Interpersonal Problem-Solving Skills through Games .......... 512
Ch. 15: Teaching Sports Skills in Primary Grades .................. 537
Ch. 16: Resolving an Ethical Dilemma about Play ........ 572

What Works

Ch. 1: High Quality Programs Promote Executive Function .................. 25
Ch. 2: Developing Self-regulation with the Montessori Method .............. 50
Ch. 3: Rigorous Developmentally Appropriate Practice .................. 95
Ch. 4: Supporting Development of Executive Function in Young Children .......... 113
Ch. 5: Universal Design ................................ 173
Ch. 6: Making Education Culturally Compatible .................. 207
Ch. 7: Two-Generation Approach to Support Children’s Self-Regulation ........ 246
Ch. 8: Teaching Emotional Literacy .................. 278
Ch. 9: Strategies to Build Executive Function .................. 316
Ch. 10: Using Tools of the Mind to Promote Executive Function .......... 355
Ch. 11: Assessing Executive Function .................. 402
Ch. 12: Using E-Books Effectively .................. 439
Ch. 13: Mathematics, Science, and Executive Function .................. 459

Becoming an Intentional Teacher

Ch. 1: Modeling Positive Approaches to Learning .................. 16
Ch. 2: Expanding Children’s Experience .................. 58
Ch. 3: Easing Transitions through Developmentally Appropriate Practice ........ 82
Ch. 4: Mastering Serve and Return Interactions in Kindergarten ............ 143
Ch. 5: Individualizing in Large Group Time .................. 180
Ch. 6: Responding to Cultural Differences .................. 215
Ch. 7: Responding to Parents: Welcoming “Complainers” .................. 236
Ch. 8: Am I Stuck at a Red Light? .................. 267
Ch. 9: Working in Small Groups .................. 319
Ch. 10: Adapting Scripted Curriculum .................. 340
Ch. 11: Using Assessment to Inform Teaching .................. 392
Ch. 12: Teaching the Alphabet and Phonological Awareness .................. 429
Ch. 13: Early Childhood Engineering .................. 478
Ch. 14: Integrating Social Studies Content to Meet Standards .................. 517
Ch. 15: Supporting Physical Development in Toddlers .................. 543
Ch. 16: I Wish My Teacher Knew .................. 574
Ch. 14: Relaxation for Children: The Snow Globe ......................... 511
Ch. 15: Unstructured Play Activities Support Children’s Executive Functioning ........ 552
Ch. 16: Parents as Partners in Advocacy ......................... 575

Developmental Continuum/Learning Trajectory
Ch. 12: Oral Language ......................... 413
Ch. 12: Second Language Learning ......................... 422
Ch. 12: Early Literacy ......................... 425
Ch. 12: Literacy in Kindergarten and Primary Grades ......................... 436
Ch. 13: Cognitive Development ......................... 457
Ch. 14: Social-Emotional Development in Infants and Toddlers ......................... 500
Ch. 14: Social-Emotional Learning in 3- through 5-Year-Olds ......................... 501
Ch. 14: Social-Emotional Learning in the Primary Grades ......................... 502
Ch. 15: Gross-Motor Skills from Birth through Age 8 ......................... 531
Ch. 15: Fine-Motor Skills from Birth through Age 8 ......................... 538

Including All Children
Ch. 1: What Does Inclusion Mean? ......................... 9
Ch. 2: Early Childhood Special Education in Historical Perspective ......................... 68
Ch. 3: Developmentally Appropriate Practice and Children with Disabilities ......................... 86
Ch. 4: Teaching Social Skills to Children with Disabilities ......................... 132
Ch. 6: Cultural Diversity and Diverse Ability ......................... 200
Ch. 7: Family-Centered Practices ......................... 231
Ch. 8: When to Teach Social and Emotional Skills ......................... 279
Ch. 9: Technology for Children with Special Needs ......................... 328
Ch. 11: Individually Appropriate Assessment Practices ......................... 387
Ch. 13: Science Exploration ......................... 480
Ch. 14: Fostering Friendships in the Inclusive Classroom ......................... 505
Ch. 15: Nutrition and Children with Developmental Disabilities ......................... 554
Ch. 16: Advocating for Effective Inclusion of Children with Disabilities ......................... 577

Culture Lens
Ch. 2: Early Childhood Education through the Lens of Non-Western Culture ......................... 61
Ch. 3: The Role of Culture in Development ......................... 88
Ch. 4: The Effect of Culture on Research and Theory ......................... 111
Ch. 5: Responding to Cultural and Individual Differences ......................... 156
Ch. 6: Developing Partnerships with Hispanic/Latino Families ......................... 232
Ch. 8: Helping Each Child Adapt to School ......................... 269
Ch. 10: Culturally Responsive Curriculum ......................... 364
Ch. 12: The Power of Storytelling ......................... 420
Ch. 12: Understanding and Responding to Code Switching ......................... 424
Ch. 14: Learning about Cross-Cultural Similarities ......................... 516
Ch. 15: Cultural Influences on Gross-Motor Movement and Development ......................... 533
Ch. 16: Professional Ethics in Challenging Times ......................... 573

Language Lens
Ch. 1: Preparing to Teach Dual Language Learners ......................... 12
Ch. 9: Teachable Moments with Dual Language Learners ......................... 320
Ch. 10: Curriculum Approaches for Dual Language Learners ......................... 342
Ch. 1: NAECY Early Learning Program Standards ......................... 21
Ch. 2: Historical Figures and their Contributions to Early Education ...... 66
Ch. 3: Learning Centers and Suggested Materials .......................... 98
Ch. 5: Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences ........................... 157
Ch. 7: Characteristics of Family Systems ................................. 227
Ch. 7: Planning and Conducting Family Conferences ...................... 241
Ch. 7: Strategies for Engaging Families ................................. 244
Ch. 8: What a Caring Community Looks Like .............................. 268
Ch. 8: Focus on Desired Behaviors ........................................ 275
Ch. 8: Strategies for Teaching Conflict Resolution ....................... 280
Ch. 8: Effective Teaching and Intervention Strategies for Boys .......... 287
Ch. 9: Effective Teaching Strategies ........................................ 302
Ch. 10: Continuum of Curriculum Approaches and the Teacher’s Role .... 339
Ch. 10: Components of Effective Curriculum .............................. 341
Ch. 10: Individualizing Instruction with an Activity Matrix .................. 365
Ch. 11: Matching Purpose and Types of Assessment ........................ 380
Ch. 11: Effective Assessment Practices ...................................... 382
Ch. 11: Learning to Observe .................................................. 390
Ch. 11: Methods of Gathering Assessment Information: Advantages and Disadvantages .................... 391
Ch. 11: Methods of Recording Assessment Information: Advantages and Disadvantages .................... 398
Ch. 12: Improving Teacher–Child Conversations ............................ 417
Ch. 12: Dialogic Reading CROWD Prompts ............................... 421
Ch. 13: Effective Science Teaching Strategies .............................. 477
Ch. 14: Levels of Social Play ................................................. 507
Ch. 14: Social Studies Themes and Concepts .............................. 514
Ch. 14: Geography Education Standards .................................. 518
Ch. 14: Teaching Early Economics ......................................... 519
Ch. 15: Phases of Motor Development ...................................... 531
Ch. 15: Effective Strategies: Gross-Motor Skills from Birth through Age 5 ...... 534
Ch. 15: Effective Strategies: Gross-Motor Skills in the Primary Grades .... 535
Ch. 15: Effective Strategies: Fine-Motor Skills in Infants and Toddlers ........ 539
Ch. 15: Effective Strategies: Fine-Motor Skills in Preschool and Kindergarten .... 540
Ch. 15: Effective Strategies: Perceptual-Motor Development from Birth to Age 8 .......... 542
Ch. 16: Considerations for Infant/Toddler Teachers ....................... 562
Ch. 16: Considerations for Preschool Teachers ............................ 564
Ch. 16: Considerations for Kindergarten Teachers ........................ 566
Ch. 16: Considerations for Primary Grade Teachers ........................ 568
Ch. 16: Recognizing Potential Signs of Child Abuse ....................... 578