

Alberta Child Care Staff Orientation Course

Session Overviews

Session 1: The Importance of Child Development Professionals

The purpose of this orientation session is to provide an overview and examination of the role of a child development professional and reinforce the importance and purpose of providing quality care for children.

Learning Objectives

- Describe expectations for successful completion of this course leading to certification as a Child Development Assistant
- Describe ethical conduct as a child development professional
- Describe quality care
- Differentiate between support functions and primary care responsibilities
- List some of the qualities of a child development professional

Session 2: Respecting Cultural Diversity

Children attending child care programs come from diverse backgrounds, so it is important to consider culture when working with children and their families. This session will increase cultural awareness and provide strategies for developing an inclusive environment.

Learning Objectives

- Increase cultural awareness
- Expand cultural knowledge
- Examine and develop cultural skills
- Identify cultural practices in your community

Session 3: Indigenous Peoples of Canada

The purpose of this session is to provide important information about the Indigenous peoples of Canada and explain why it is important to support the cultural identity of Indigenous children.

Learning Objectives

- Define terms relating to Indigenous peoples of Canada
- Describe aspects of Indigenous history and cultural identity
- Describe Indigenous practices
- Describe cultural protocol for approaching Knowledge Keepers and Elders

Session 4: Communicating Effectively

Effective communication is essential to building relationships with children and their families. The skills presented in the session will help you communicate effectively.

Alberta Child Care Staff Orientation Course

Session Overviews

Learning Objectives

- Describe principles of communication and the communication process
- Describe barriers to and methods of developing effective communication, as well as the effects of body language, cultural influences, and ethics on communicative processes
- Assess personal communication skills
- Define active listening
- List barriers to effective listening
- Describe the benefits and steps of active listening
- Practice listening skills associated with identifying messages within communications
- Identify the feelings behind body language and words
- Describe responses that facilitate positive communications

Session 5: Intentionally Observing Children

Intentionally observing children is an essential component of providing quality child care. Knowing how to observe and document observations properly will also help to prevent/manage behavioural problems and improve understanding of each child's own strengths and capacities.

Learning Objectives

- Explain the importance of observing children and documenting observations of child behaviour
- Describe ways that child care professionals can be prepared to engage in intentional observations in child care settings
- Understand the difference between observations and inferences
- Examine the effects of culture, experiences, traditions, personal history, and biases when recording and interpreting children's behaviours

Session 6: Physical Development

Physical development is the first of five areas of children's development this course will review (physical, cognitive, creative, social and emotional development). This session examines some of the factors that may influence physical growth and motor development in children from birth to 12 years of age. Knowing how physical development can be positively influenced will help to plan ways of promoting physical development in child care settings.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the difference between gross and fine motor abilities
- Describe different stages of physical development

Alberta Child Care Staff Orientation Course

Session Overviews

- Design activities that promote physical development for children birth to 12 years
- List factors that affect a child's physical development
- Understand the concept of physical literacy
- Define sensory perceptual development, kinaesthetic (movement), and physical growth
- Identify motor abilities and physical skills that are promoted through specific activities

Session 7: Cognitive Development

It is important for child development professionals to understand the importance of promoting cognitive development. Child development professionals should take every opportunity to explore ways to support children's thinking and enrich the childcare environment to promote learning.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the stages of children's cognitive development
- Describe how children play with materials differently at various stages in their development
- Describe of how children learn through experiences with their environment
- Describe practices that support children's cognitive development and that coincide with child care activities
- Explain what and how children might learn from exploring specific toys and materials • Describe different learning styles

Session 8: Language Development

This session focuses on how language develops in the first twelve years. A basic understanding of the principles of how language development happens in children and what children need to develop language skills will help you, as a child development professional, to promote children's language development.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the basic principles of language development
- Describe the milestones of language development for children from birth to five years
- Describe appropriate ways to promote language development
- Describe resources that promote language development for children
- Plan a learning experience related to language development for a child

Session 9: Social-Emotional Development

It is important for child development professionals to focus on the importance of meeting children's social and emotional needs. Child development professionals should take every opportunity to explore the ways that they can support children's social and emotional development to promote learning.

Alberta Child Care Staff Orientation Course Session Overviews

Learning Objectives

- Describe the meaning of social development and emotional development
- Describe important developmental tasks which children accomplish at various stages of their social-emotional development
- Describe effective caregiving behaviours for different stages of social and emotional development
- Describe what children need for healthy social and emotional development
- Outline the responsibilities of a child development professional that support healthy emotional and social development
- Describe ways to express appreciation

Session 10: Creative Development

Creativity is an important aspect in a child's development as a "whole" person. As a child development professional, it is important that you understand various aspects of creative development and how to promote creativity in children of all ages.

Learning Objectives

- Describe aspects of creative development
- Describe the stages that children progress through in creative expression
- Describe how children might use specific creative materials at different stages of development
- Describe elements in environments that promote creativity
- Describe safe materials and activities used in various child care interest centres to promote children's creative development
- Describe the feeling of creating
- Describe the role of the child development professional in promoting creativity in children
- Explain the difference between open-ended and close-ended experiences for children
- Describe open-ended questions that encourage creative responses from children
- Plan an age-appropriate experience that promotes creative development in children

Session 11: Developing Through Play

Play is a critical component of children's development. In this session, you will learn how you can provide and support play experiences that encourage children's development.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the importance and nature of personal play experiences
- List five characteristics of children's play

Alberta Child Care Staff Orientation Course

Session Overviews

- Describe the developmental stages of play
- Explain the value of play for children's physical, cognitive, creative and social-emotional development
- Describe intrinsically-motivated play
- Describe examples of how a child development professional can support and enhance play

Session 12: Providing for Play

Play is vital to the emotional, physical and cognitive development of children. It is important for child development professionals to understand the components of play and how to develop play activities that will enrich and enhance the environments of children.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the components that enhance play
- Describe materials that support play activities
- Identify the different stages of social play
- Describe the importance of observation as a tool to enhance children's program planning
- Describe the role of child development professionals as part of the playing process • Describe principles of inclusion

Session 13: Healthy Eating Environments and Nurturing through Daily Routines

Good nutrition and well-planned routines are essential to children's healthy development. This session will describe how to plan and assess healthy meals and snacks, introduce new foods, and implement effective routines in a child care setting.

Learning Objectives

- Identify appropriate practices for child development professionals to use in daily routines
- Explain how to promote healthy eating for children in child care programs
- Evaluate the appropriateness of eating practices
- Appraise the value of child care expectations and practices related to resting
- Discuss toilet training practices
- Review the challenges and importance of implementing appropriate transitions • Observe and assess routines in a child care program

Session 14: Guiding Children's Behaviour

Alberta Child Care Staff Orientation Course

Session Overviews

Children grow and develop their abilities best when they can learn self-control while maintaining their self-esteem. As a child development professional, you have the opportunity to help children learn to control their behaviour in a positive manner. Helping children develop self-control will also contribute to a positive child care environment for all children.

Learning Objectives

- Differentiate between guidance, discipline, and punishment
- Describe effective practices for the prevention of behavioural problems
- Describe effective guidelines used to prevent discipline problems, toy/equipment damage, and injury
- Describe how to use redirection strategies to avoid problem situations
- Describe techniques to help children use problem-solving strategies
- Understand the types of bullying and what you can do to prevent them
- Describe how standard child guidance practices should be modified when bullying is involved

Session 15: Licensing Legislation and Health/Safety/Supervision

Ensuring the health, safety and well-being of children is part of providing effective supervision and one of the most important roles of child development professionals. This module will examine some of the components of the Child Care Regulation and the role of the child care licensing officer. It will also explore ways to effectively supervise children.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the legislation governing child care programs in Alberta
- Describe the role of the child care licensing officer
- List ways to engage in effective supervision of children

Session 16: Together with Families

As a child development professional, helping children develop to their full potential means working together with families. Understanding how to create a working relationship with families and overcome any barriers to working with a child's family is crucial to the child's happiness and development while at the child care program.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the stresses facing families and the role of child care in supporting families
- Describe supportive and positive caregiver-family relationships
- Describe the steps of problem solving and how these may be used with family members
- Describe strategies that can improve relationships and communication with parents

Alberta Child Care Staff Orientation Course

Session Overviews

Session 17: Child Abuse and Family Violence

Child care professionals understand the critical importance that children should be nurtured, respected, and protected. Child abuse strikes the very core of our commitment to children. Many child development professionals may encounter children that have been abused or neglected at some point in their careers. They must learn how to respond to it professionally and in accordance with their legal responsibility.

Learning Objectives

- List types of child abuse
- Recognize some indicators of child abuse and neglect
- Understand the child development professional's responsibility in reporting suspected child abuse and his or her role in preventing abuse
- Describe the appropriate process for reporting
- Describe the effects of domestic/family violence and its impact on children
- Describe strategies for supporting children and families in abusive situations

Session 18: Becoming a Child Development Professional

This final session of the Child Care Orientation Course allows for the opportunity to reflect on all the information presented in the course and consider how it can be applied when working as a child care professional. It is important to understand that this course is only the first step in becoming an Early Childhood Professional and that continuing your education in the field is critical to your effectiveness and success as a child development professional.

Learning Objectives

- Describe your role as a member of a child development professional team
- Identify opportunities for further professional development
- Identify networks and organizations that support professional child care professionals
- Understand the purpose of the *Play, Participation and Possibilities: An Early Learning and Child Care Curriculum Framework for Alberta*
- Describe what the Orientation Course has taught you