

WALDEN UNIVERSITY'S DEGREE GUIDE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CAREERS



The Richard W. Riley
College of Education and Leadership

WALDEN UNIVERSITY

CHOOSING THE RIGHT DEGREE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CAREERS



Early childhood, especially those years from infancy through third grade, is a time of great discovery, learning, and growth. The Richard W. Riley College of Education and Leadership understands that the care, respect, and knowledge that early childhood professionals bring to their work with young children and their families can contribute to a child's later success in school and in life.

Our early childhood degree programs, concentrations, and specializations can prepare you for work in and out of the classroom by helping you gain the knowledge and skills needed to:

- Create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for every child.
- Build relationships that support and empower families in their children's development and learning.
- Use research-based strategies and tools as you work with children and families with varied abilities, needs, and strengths.
- Address inequities and advocate for children and families.

Determining the right course of study depends on your unique career goals and aspirations. In this guide, you'll discover a wide range of career opportunities, along with the corresponding degree programs that can help you achieve your goals as a professional in the early childhood field.

To learn more about your chosen degree program, contact an enrollment advisor at **1-866-492-5336** or visit **www.WaldenU.edu/contact** to see a **list of international toll-free numbers**.

Walden Recognized as a Top Provider

In May 2010, for the fourth year in a row, Walden was identified as having the No. 1 largest online graduate program in education by enrollment, according to *U.S. News & World Report*.

Call 1-866-492-5336 or visit www.WaldenU.edu/education.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT DEGREE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CAREERS

Degree: B.S. in Child Development

Concentrations: Administration and Management, Family Health and Wellness, Child and Adolescent Studies, Dual Concentration (Preschool and Infant/Toddler), General Concentration, Infant/Toddler, Preschool, Psychology

Career Opportunities	Walden Advantage
<p>A Bachelor’s Degree</p> <p>Depending on the concentration, this degree can prepare you for a variety of roles in the early childhood field, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of a child care center • Owner/operator of a child care center • Preschool director • Program administrator for early childhood programs • Child care administrator • Staff member at a child-centric agency, hospital, or government department • Day care provider (private or public, small or large) • Head Start professional • Lead or head teacher in a private infant/toddler or preschool setting • Preschool professional • Teacher’s aide or paraprofessional • Social and human service assistant 	<p>An Integrated Approach</p> <p>Walden has one of a few non-licensure programs that includes a capstone course that integrates theories of child development, principles of effective early childhood practice, and methods of working with young children and their families.</p> <p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development of children from birth through adolescence. • Study developmentally appropriate practices at various age levels: infants, toddlers, preschool, or school-aged children. • Examine the foundational theories related to child development and infant, toddler, preschool, or school-aged care and education. • Develop an understanding of the goals, benefits, and uses of observation and assessment. • Study environments that are healthy, respectful, and supportive for every child and family. • Understand issues, theories, and current research related to child development, including diversity, equity, poverty, trauma, and partnering with families. • Gain knowledge of the ethical guidelines and other professional standards relevant to each age group.

Aligned With National Standards

Our early childhood programs, concentrations, and specializations take into consideration National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) advanced standards.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT DEGREE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CAREERS

Degree: Teacher Preparation Program with a Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.)
Specialization: Early Childhood Education (Birth–Grade 3)

Career Opportunities	Walden Advantage
<p>The Early Childhood Education specialization in Walden’s teacher preparation program can lead to teacher licensure and prepares you to work with children from infancy through grade 3.</p>	<p>Gateway to Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access Virtual Field Experiences that offer hands on learning opportunities as well as school and center-based field experiences. • Learn about current research and effective practice from national industry experts and practitioners via videos. • Participate in curriculum based on state and national standards. <p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an in-depth understanding of developmentally appropriate practices for infants, toddlers, preschool, and primary school-age children and foundational theories related to child development and early childhood education. • Study current research and issues related to early childhood education, including diversity, equity, and cross-cultural communication. • Apply effective practice to foster development and learning across content areas, including literacy, math, social studies, and science for preK–grade 3. • Examine strategies related to planning processes, pedagogy, positive classroom guidance and management, authentic assessment, and adult/child/family communication.

Funding Incentives

According to the White House Web site, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act includes \$5 billion for early learning programs, including Head Start, Early Head Start, child care, and programs for children with special needs (viewed online at www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education on Oct. 4, 2010).

Call 1-866-492-5336 or visit www.WaldenU.edu/education.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT DEGREE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CAREERS

Degree: M.S. in Early Childhood Studies

Specializations: Administration, Management, and Leadership; Early Childhood Public Policy and Advocacy; Teaching Adults in the Early Childhood Field; Teaching and Diversity in Early Childhood Education

Career Opportunities	Walden Advantage
<p>A Master’s Degree</p> <p>Depending on the specialization, this degree can prepare you for a variety of roles in the early childhood field, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child and family advocate • Public policy coordinator • Elementary school teacher • Child development instructor • Professional development facilitator • Lecturer in early childhood studies • Child care administrator • Assistant director of a child care center • Director of a child care center or program • Owner of a child care center • Preschool director • Program administrator for early childhood programs 	<p>A Practical Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn from curriculum that combines current research and theory with practical strategies. • Gain access to recognized experts and practitioners in the early childhood field. • Prepare for a variety of roles that can impact and improve the profession. • Participate in a culminating capstone course to showcase your learning. <p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepen your understanding of child development and learning. • Expand your knowledge of effective programs and services in early childhood education and throughout the field. • Expand and deepen your knowledge of research, issues, and practice related to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion. • Study the impact of current issues and trends, including poverty, changing demographics, diversity, educational excellence, and teacher preparation.

MobileLearnSM

To complement the online convenience of your coursework in some courses, you’ll also have the flexibility to finish your reading assignments, listen to lectures, and more through your personal mobile device.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT DEGREE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CAREERS

Degree: Ph.D. in Education

Specialization: Early Childhood Education

Career Opportunities	Walden Advantage
<p>A Doctoral Degree</p> <p>The Early Childhood Education specialization of the Ph.D. in Education program can prepare you for a variety of roles in the early childhood field, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Administrator of a nonprofit early childhood program• Director of professional development for early childhood education• Early childhood specialist in a government agency• Developer of early childhood educational products• Early childhood research specialist• Director of a Head Start, early childhood, or preschool program• College professor• Faculty of an early childhood education department• Course developer in early childhood programs• Early childhood curriculum specialist• Early childhood program evaluator	<p>Flexible and Engaging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Combine online study with faculty-guided research and writing.• Collaborate with fellow students and faculty members and expand your professional network with face-to-face residencies.• Shape your studies around your own professional interests.• Contribute original research to the field of early childhood education. <p>Key Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare to create and implement new early childhood program practices.• Apply emerging research on development in the early years.• Conceptualize new paradigms for early learning.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT DEGREE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CAREERS



“Walden laid the foundation which I have used during my *professional* career as an assistant center director. I have gained knowledge about the ways to effectively deal with children, and, more importantly, I have gained the confidence to be a leader in their education. This has truly been a positive and rewarding experience for me. I loved the program so much that I am currently continuing my educational journey at Walden University in the M.S. in Early Childhood Studies program.”

Erica Watson
Walden B.S. in Child Development Graduate
Walden M.S. in Early Childhood Studies Student

Find information on costs, occupation types, completion rates, and median loan debt for these programs at www.WaldenU.edu/programdata.

Career opportunities may require additional experience, training, or other factors beyond the successful completion of these degree programs.

General Education Disclosure:

Walden offers both state-approved educator licensure programs as well as programs and courses that do not lead to licensure or endorsements. Prospective students must review their state licensure requirements prior to enrolling. For more information, please refer to www.WaldenU.edu/educlicensure.

Alabama Statement:

Prospective Alabama students: Contact the Teacher Education and Certification Division of the Alabama State Department of Education at 1-334-242-9935 or www.alsde.edu to verify that these programs qualify for teacher certification, endorsement, and/or salary benefits.

Washington Statement:

Prospective Washington state students are advised to contact the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at 1-360-725-6275 or prof.educ@k12.wa.us to determine whether Walden's programs in the field of education are approved for teacher certification or endorsements in Washington state. Additionally, teachers are advised to contact their individual school district as to whether this program may qualify for salary advancement.

Note to All Pennsylvania Residents:

Walden University's teacher preparation program and special education endorsement programs are approved by the Minnesota Board of Teaching as leading to licensure and endorsement, respectively. Because these programs are not reviewed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, candidates are instructed to apply for Pennsylvania certification as out-of-state graduates of a teacher preparation program.

Walden University is accredited by The Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association, www.ncahlc.org; 1-312-263-0456.

Call 1-866-492-5336 or visit www.WaldenU.edu/education.

**Call 1-866-492-5336 or visit
www.WaldenU.edu/education.**



The Richard W. Riley
College of Education and Leadership

WALDEN UNIVERSITY