

Consider College!

Many child care professionals choose to continue their education in a variety of fields at the university level. A college education significantly enhances quality of care and may qualify you for increased compensation. There are many exciting options for those considering college today.

- Research various programs of study that most interest you and will help you reach your goals
- Contact colleges that are convenient to you or that offer distance learning
- Determine how the coursework relates to your work as a childcare professional
- Find out if college credits taken for a credential or certificate are transferable to a degree program
- Find out if the program will qualify you for a new position and how college credits will satisfy job requirements
- Research scholarships and loans that are available
- Speak with an academic advisor to discuss goals and plans

Contact Information

- City University of New York
800-286-9937
www.cuny.edu
- Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition
800-424-4310
www.cdacouncil.org
- FinAid- The Smart Guide to Financial Aid
www.finaid.org
- Free Application for Federal Student Aid
800-433-3243
www.fafsa.ed.gov
- New York City Department of Health
Bureau of Day Care
212-280-9251 (Family Day Care)
212-676-2444 (all except Family Day Care)
www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/dc/dc.html
- New York State Office of Children & Family Services-Regional Office Listings
518-473-7793
www.ocfs.state.ny.us
- State University of New York
518-443-5555
www.suny.edu
- SUNY Training Strategies Group
Early Childhood Education & Training Program
 - Educational Incentive Program:
800-295-9616
 - Videoconference Training:
888-399-0549
www.fsg.suny.edu

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Opening Doors

How To Choose Quality Training

for the Early Care & Education Field

Prepared by the SUNY Training Strategies Group,
Educational Incentive Program under contractual
agreement with the New York State
Office of Children & Family Services

Welcome to a "how-to" brochure developed specifically for you-the early childhood professional! Good training and education are the link between well educated caregivers and their ability to offer high quality programs for young children.

Before you decide which training or educational activity meets your needs, keep the following key areas in mind.

The choice is yours!

Plan For Your Future!

Before selecting your child care training, develop goals regarding your professional development. Your goals should lead you to identify the classes most appropriate to your needs. The more well defined your goals, the clearer your career path will become.

- Establish professional development goals
- Decide how each training you choose will help you to meet your goals
- Identify skills and knowledge areas relevant to your job that you want to improve
- Decide whether required training hours, a child care credential, certificate, or degree program best meets your needs
- Contact the organization or college of interest about requirements, prerequisites, deadlines, costs, and length of process

Know How Much Training Costs!

The cost of training varies significantly. As a consumer, it is your responsibility to identify all costs before registration. By doing so, you can determine how well the training fits your budget and how the organization's payment policies work.

- Identify costs of training at several different organizations or colleges
- Compare costs of the same training offered by different organizations or colleges
- Maintain records of costs, fees, and tuition
- Contact different organizations to find out:
 - What happens if you can't go to the training? Do you get your money back?
 - What other costs are associated with the training (books, travel, postage, membership fees, evaluations, etc.)?
 - When are the payment and registration deadlines?
 - What forms of payment are accepted?
- Research funding sources (scholarships, grants, financial aid, savings, employer tuition reimbursement programs, EIP, etc.)
- Contact financial aid advisors of organizations or colleges of interest

Increase Your Child Care Knowledge!

You may be selecting courses to fulfill your job requirements or to reach personal and career goals. In either case, the content and curriculum should not duplicate the knowledge and abilities you already have. Instead, it should build on your understanding of the early childhood field and offer you new skills for your program.

- Discuss topic areas covered in the training with the organization
- Ask about what new ideas and approaches this training will help you implement in your child care program
- Determine how the training will improve the quality of care you provide
- Evaluate whether the level of the training will be right for you (beginner, intermediate, or advanced)
- Confirm that the training is different from training you have taken in the past

Choose the Right Educational Organization for You!

With so many different organizations offering training, research is a must in determining which training is best for you. Organizations offer different forms of training such as classroom-based instruction, online learning, correspondence courses, on-site training, and fieldwork. While doing your research, find out what each organization has to offer and what its policies are before beginning classes.

- Discuss the following topics with the organization:
 - methods, information, and materials used in the class
 - how classes are tailored to child care professionals
 - experience and knowledge of the trainer
 - the best methods of contacting a trainer (office visit, phone, email, etc.)
 - how you will be evaluated once the course is complete
 - what proof of completion you will receive
 - how you can evaluate the training once the course is complete
- Find the location and time of training that best fits your lifestyle and schedule
- Find out what co-workers, friends, fellow students, and others know about the organization
- Locate the organizations that offer the courses you want. To help you in your search, your local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency maintains a list of training in your area.