

**Early Care and Education Professionals** nurture and teach infants through age 5 in child-care centers, nursery schools, preschools, Head Start, Universal Pre-K, after-school programs, and family child-care homes. They play an important role in a child's development by caring for the child when parents are at work or away for other reasons. Early caregivers spend most of their day working with children, planning and implementing developmentally appropriate activities in a team setting.

Preschool children learn mainly through play. Recognizing the importance of play, preschool professionals build their program around it. They capitalize on children's play to further language development (storytelling and acting games), improve social skills (working together to build a neighborhood in a sandbox), and introduce scientific and mathematical concepts (balancing and counting blocks when building a bridge or mixing colors when painting). Thus, a less structured approach is used to teach preschool children, including small group lessons, one-on-one instruction, and learning through creative activities.

Early Childhood Education professionals are responsible for maintaining open communication with families, through informal meetings or scheduled conferences, to discuss each child's progress and needs. They keep records of each child's progress and suggest ways that parents can increase their child's learning and development at home. Often programs actively recruit parent volunteers to work with the children and participate in administrative decisions and program planning. Early care and education professionals focus on the whole child and support their social, emotional, physical and cognitive development.

In cooperation with the Western New York Child Care Council, the Early Childhood Certificate at Monroe Community College is designed to meet the training requirements of the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA). It is a national credential designed to provide performance-based training, assessment, and credentialing of child care staff, home visitors, and family child care providers.

**Salary Information:**

- Early Childhood, Certificate  
\$17,000 (Follow-up Study, Monroe Community College Graduates, 2005)
- Preschool Teacher/Worker  
\$39,490 Entry Salary (Finger Lakes Region, NYS Department of Labor, 2007)  
\$41,920 - \$45,920 Average Salary (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2007)  
[\*Salary varies based on education/advanced degree, work-experience & setting/location.]

**Additional Information:**

- Council for Professional Recognition, Early Childhood Education:  
[www.cdacouncil.org](http://www.cdacouncil.org)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children: [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)
- Center for the Child Care Workforce: [www.ccw.org](http://www.ccw.org)

