



QUESTIONS

ANSWERS

THE EARLY
CHILDHOOD
DIRECTOR'S
GUIDE
to

SOLVING
EVERYDAY
CHALLENGES

Thomasa Bond, EdD

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Introduction

Having worked in the early childhood field for more than thirty-five years, I have had the opportunity to work in multiple positions: student assistant; lead teacher for toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children; program director; and educational coordinator. I earned a doctorate in education with a concentration in organizational leadership, with a minor in early childhood education. Currently, I am employed as a child-care licensing consultant, where I interact daily with a diverse population of early childhood professionals.

I started my career as a student assistant at the university lab school, which is why today I have a great appreciation for observation. The school had a one-way mirror in each classroom, and you never knew when you were being observed. (I'll discuss the importance of direct observation throughout the book.) After graduating, I worked for Head Start as a preschool lead teacher, center director, and education coordinator. Later, I worked as a program director for a chain center. After the birth of my second child, I worked part-time as a before- and after-school teacher for a school district, and then I moved to a position as a full-time toddler lead teacher. Within two years, I became the director of the program; this was my third program-director position. Each position was with a different type of organization that had different policies and required procedures. The only thing that did not change was the state requirements. For this very reason, I understand how important it is to know the licensing rules—with each new position, the licensing rules are one less thing to learn.

I served as a program director for many years before my licensing consultant encouraged me to apply for the open licensing position. I was not sure if I wanted to leave my position as a program director because I was very comfortable and the licensing position would create a substantial change for my family. One of the main reasons I decided to apply for the position was my desire to help child-care centers provide the best care possible for the children and families they serve.

This book is a resource that I wish I had had when I was first promoted to the program director position. At the time, I thought I was fully prepared to handle the new position. I can laugh about that now, because I had no idea what the program director position actually involved. I literally learned on the job and made mistakes along the way. My hope is that this book will help new and current program directors to avoid some of the mistakes that I have made and witnessed.

One of the things I've learned is that organization is crucial. I have been at centers where program directors have the required information, but they cannot locate it and they become frustrated. For years, I've blogged and presented at conferences on preparing for licensing inspections by reviewing the required postings, policies, procedures, and other inspection information. Being prepared and maintaining compliance will create a level of confidence between the program director and staff members. An organized program director can provide staff with the knowledge and support needed to be comfortable and confident within their positions, which will transfer to their interactions with the children and parents.

This book is designed to provide current and future early childhood program directors a solid foundation for managing staff and successfully operating a center. You will learn organizational tips and tools needed to help you become a productive and successful leader. This book examines common issues that directors and staff have experienced at real child-care centers. There are times when child-care professionals may feel like they are alone and they are the only ones who have experienced issues. I offer scenarios of actual situations¹ I've encountered, to show you are not alone in your experiences! And because there are always two sides to a story, whenever possible I offer the perspectives of both the director or staff and parents. This is not a book to place blame or to make anyone feel guilty or ashamed. It is designed to show how to avoid mistakes, oversights, accidents, and incidents as much as possible by developing and implementing policies and procedures and training staff to prevent these scenarios from occurring.

HOW THIS BOOK IS ORGANIZED

In the first chapter, I discuss the program director's qualifications and the role of the position, the importance of being a strong leader, how requirements for education and experience differ from state to state, and the different types of business models for child-care centers.

Each subsequent chapter is organized around an area of particular challenges. We'll explore licensing concerns and ways to reduce the anxiety related to onsite inspections. We'll look at how to maintain the building, and child health and safety. In chapter 5, we'll explore classroom arrangement and management. In chapters 6 and 7, we'll examine practices and pedagogy with infants and toddlers and with preschoolers. In chapters 8, 9, and 10, we will explore ways to successfully navigate challenges

¹ I've changed the names and altered any identifying factors to protect the privacy of those involved.

with parents, with children, and with staff. In chapter 11, we'll wrap things up with outdoor play. For each scenario I include, I describe an event that actually happened and then describe a resolution. In most cases, the resolutions are positive; in some, however, they were opportunities for learning even though they were not necessarily positive. I also offer ways to reduce the risk of an incident occurring and ideas for positive resolution if an incident does occur.

I offer information you can use to create policies and procedures to be *proactive* so that you can reduce the need to be *reactive* when an issue occurs. With sound policies and procedures in place, staff training will reduce mistakes. Through the scenarios outlined in the book, I will provide ways for staff and parents to work together, because when staff and parents support each other the children will flourish.

CHAPTER 1

The Many Roles of a Program Director

A child-care program director must wear many hats and multitask daily. Depending on the type of center, the program director's responsibilities may vary somewhat, but on any given day her duties may include the following:

- Greeting children
- Maintaining an open-door policy for parents, children, and staff
- Meeting with parents
- Recruiting, interviewing, and hiring new staff
- Training staff
- Observing classrooms
- Evaluating staff
- Addressing discipline issues with children
- Collecting tuition
- Conducting tours for prospective parents and enrolling new parents
- Paying the bills
- Reviewing and maintaining staff files
- Reviewing and maintaining children's files
- Scheduling field trips
- Caring for sick children

- Covering classrooms when needed
- Addressing staff concerns
- Maintaining accreditation
- Maintaining compliance with the state licensing requirements
- Creating menus and ordering or shopping for supplies
- Cooking and serving meals
- Overseeing building maintenance and arranging repairs
- Rewarding, reprimanding, or terminating staff
- Reviewing the teachers' lesson plans
- Conducting regular staff meetings
- Marketing the center to increase enrollment
- Managing the budget
- Handling payroll
- Supervising or screening volunteers
- Supervising specialists, such as speech pathologists, social workers, and occupational therapists
- Representing the center in the community

Yes, it is a lot! It is also an incredibly important and rewarding job. Child-care program directors nurture and influence the development of young children every day. In doing so, they help support families and ensure that children have a strong start in life.

QUALITIES OF A STRONG PROGRAM DIRECTOR

A skilled program director has interpersonal abilities beyond the required education and experience and an understanding of the state and program requirements. Let's explore the role of the program director in more detail and discover ways to be successful with the leadership and organizational portion of the position.

In his book *Introduction to Leadership* (2021), Northouse notes that there is no one path to take to become a successful leader because the process is complex. In my opinion, leadership qualities are a way of life, not the position you hold. Leadership is the transformation of yourself and others. Gini and Green (2014) define the role this way: "Leaders help to set the tone, develop the vision, and shape the behavior of all those involved in organizational life." Some leadership skills, such as friendliness, sensitivity, and empathy, are ingrained.

Leaders are confident in their abilities and the decisions that they make. They are also determined to motivate their staff to perform the necessary tasks to the best of their abilities. The program director's

success or failure is directly related to the cooperation of the staff. These leaders are charismatic and engaging with their employees, the parents, the children, and the community at large. They maintain an open-door policy that generates two-way communication between themselves and the staff. They provide consistency during their interactions, maintaining their integrity and the integrity of the center. They are articulate and communicate their vision for the center and expectations of the staff without abusing their power.

The program director should have previous experience working with children in a child-care setting. She should be able to articulate how she will perform the required duties in a timely and efficient manner. The program director should continue to learn and improve her skills by staying current on research and issues that are affecting the early childhood field. She should have the capability to change course as necessary and to address situations when they arise. A program director should also be able to acknowledge the areas where she needs growth in her leadership abilities.

The director sets the tone for the center. An effective program director cares for, nurtures, and directs the staff in a way that produces an appropriate atmosphere for the children and families served. In contrast, an ineffective program director is negative and focuses on the staff's mistakes. An effective director is a competent communicator. An ineffective program director lacks people skills. An effective program director explains what is needed and why. An ineffective director gives orders without explanation or a reason. An effective director is well organized and conducts regular staff meetings; an ineffective director is disorganized and does not consistently hold staff meetings. An effective director talks *with* the staff and listens; an ineffective director talks *at* the staff and is unwilling to listen to their concerns. An effective director is committed to the growth of the program and its staff. An ineffective director does not encourage staff to attend early childhood conferences or workshops or to develop their skills.

The best leaders use their power with intellect by placing their priorities on meeting and exceeding the program's goals and objectives. They recognize the staff's strengths and encourage them to develop their skills in that area. They also recognize the staff's weaknesses and provide training and support to improve their skills. They possess excellent conflict-resolution skills. The leader has to be able to both lead and follow.

STRONG INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

People skills are important because it is not what you say but how you say it that makes the difference. Chawla and Renesch (2006) define *people skills* as an individual's ability to communicate in a positive, effective manner with employees. Positive communication is very important in all areas because people want to be respected and treated fairly. Chawla and Renesch point out that individuals with various skills can make it to the top, but interpersonal effectiveness is required to maintain that leadership position. Individuals tend to follow leaders who are more charismatic because they have the

ability to create a work environment where employees are empowered to be innovative. According to Sergiovanni (2007), charismatic leaders know and focus on what is important. They care deeply about their work and learn from their successes and failures. These individuals tend to take calculated risks and tend to be trustworthy. They share knowledge and are often leaders within an organization before they gain the official title.

Strong leaders hold the knowledge of the organization's goal and objectives, and they are successful in incorporating the best practices to meet and exceed the organization's objectives. These individuals are not only confident in their abilities and decisions; they are also determined to be the best while motivating the staff to perform to the best of their abilities.

A HANDS-ON ROLE MODEL

Many individuals see the role of the program director as a desk position with minimal classroom interactions. However, the actual role requires overseeing the day-to-day operations and establishing and maintaining the overall philosophy of the center. The program director can lead by empowering the employees within their positions, giving employees the confidence to perform at a higher level, which, in turn, will elevate the program.

I have discovered over the years that the best program directors are hands-on in the classrooms but do not micromanage. They are able to work with many different personalities and bring out the best in their staff while meeting the needs of the families. They influence the staff by modeling the appropriate behavior that sets the tone for the center. If the staff observe the program director behaving poorly or inappropriately, they will get the idea that their poor behavior will be excused, or they will view a correction of their behavior as hypocritical. Program directors must be professional in their actions and proactive rather than reactive when situations arise.

Effective program directors know their staff and recognize their strengths and their weaknesses. They set high expectations, provide the necessary training to develop and grow the staff, and recognize and reward their staff members' individual strengths. Their expectations do not change, and they do not alter their style based on their mood or outside influences. Employees appreciate program directors who provide support, guidance, and correction when needed.

They allow flexibility in the ways their staff fulfill their duties, so long as the tasks are completed. They recognize that there are many ways to provide a developmentally appropriate classroom environment for the children; if that goal is achieved, then parents will be satisfied.

When issues arise, a strong program director is an effective communicator, a good listener, and offers prompt, constructive, and specific feedback. As Cooper, Robertson, and Tinline (2003) point out, "Feedback should be given face to face, not via written communications. The feedback should be linked to a plan of action and feedback should be provided as soon as possible."

Caregiver Hit a Child on the Hand

PROBLEM

Jill, the assistant program director, was standing in the hallway when she saw Senna, a parent, walk out of the toddler classroom with her daughter. Shortly after, Kiki, the toddler teacher, asked Jill to come to her classroom because she needed help. Kiki told her that she had hit a child named Jace on the hand a few times while Senna was in the classroom. Senna asked Kiki if hitting the children was allowed at the center, and Kiki replied that it was not allowed but that Jace was not listening and she was trying to keep him safe.

Jill checked Jace for any bruising. Jace was not crying and had no visible marks on either of his hands. Jill told Kiki to leave the classroom and wait for Lizzy, the program director. Jill called the office to inform Lizzy, who stated that she was speaking with Senna.

Senna informed Lizzy that she had just witnessed Kiki hitting Jace on the hand three or four times. She said she had asked Kiki if hitting is allowed per the center's discipline policy. Senna stated that Kiki admitted to hitting Jace's hand and that hitting was not allowed at the center. Senna reported that Kiki had said that she had asked Jace to stop touching the toys, but he would not listen. Senna was extremely concerned that Kiki was hitting Jace and was obviously not following the center's discipline policy. Senna was so upset by what she had witnessed that she promptly disenrolled her daughter from the center.

Lizzy headed to the toddler classroom and found Kiki standing outside the room. They returned to the director's office where Lizzy asked Kiki about Senna's allegations. Kiki admitted to hitting Jace on the hand. She explained that she had asked Jace to stop touching the toys that had been put away and that he had just looked at her. She said she was trying to get Jace to stop touching the toys because the area was closed and she did not want him to get hurt. She said she only hit him on the hand to get him to listen to her.

RESOLUTION

Lizzy terminated Kiki's employment but not before explaining to her how wrong her actions were and that under no circumstances are any teachers, staff, or volunteers allowed to hit a child. Instead, they are to use redirection and verbal reminders when a child is not listening. Lizzy was upset that one of her employees would hit a child.

When Jace's mother, Rosa, arrived to pick him up, Lizzy informed her that another parent had witnessed a caregiver hitting Jace on the hand. Lizzy explained that that behavior was not allowed at the center and the staff person had been immediately terminated. Rosa was not happy that a staff person had hit her son, but she appreciated the fact that Lizzy had informed her and that the person was no longer employed at the center. Lizzy also told Rosa that she had

scheduled a training at the end of the week to retrain all of the staff on the center's discipline policy. Rosa did not disenroll Jace.

Staff must understand that if they get in a power struggle with a child, they will lose every time. When Jace refused to do as Kiki asked, she should have redirected him to an alternative activity or even considered letting him play in the closed area. To reduce temptation when a center is closed and the teacher wants children to engage in a different activity, she can simply turn the cabinet around or cover the toys. Children are unlikely to try to play with toys they cannot see.

When staff are trained (or retrained), they should sign an acknowledgement that they have received, read, and understand the discipline policy and the ramifications of not following the policy.

SUPPORTIVE

An effective program director creates a supportive atmosphere that shows her commitment to the staff and their professional growth. She holds regular staff meetings and encourages the staff to discuss their concerns and offer ideas for improving the center. This practice will help a director to determine the areas that need to be addressed immediately. She offers the staff positive feedback and validation of their concerns. She outlines goals and objectives for the center and the part that the staff will have in meeting those goals. This approach will allow the staff to connect and function as a team.

They should see that the program director is actively addressing issues in the center. In this way, the staff and program director can create a positive work environment and share a vision for the staff and the center. The keys to developing trust are to be consistent and trustworthy.

A New Program Director

Cassandra has been hired to take over for a program director who was not supportive of her staff. Cassandra knows she will have to demonstrate to the staff that she is not going to operate in the same fashion as her predecessor. To develop trust, she implements an open-door policy, inviting them to come to her when they are struggling with an issue or just want to talk something over. She also schedules regular staff meetings and intentionally listens to staff concerns and suggestions.

PROBLEM

As part of learning about the center, Cassandra visits each classroom to observe, learn about the teachers' techniques, and get to know the children better. After visiting the older three-year-old and the four-year-old classrooms, she realizes that the use of worksheets is widespread in the center. The teachers seem to think that the children need to do worksheets to prepare them for kindergarten. Cassandra knows that children learn best through play, so she considers how to address the problem.

RESOLUTION

Cassandra reaches out to the center owner, and she gets the okay to have a professional- development trainer work with the staff. She hires a trainer to do an all-day session on play-based, developmentally appropriate practice. While this does require that the center be closed for a day, she believes the benefit to the children in the long run is worth it. The owner agrees and is impressed with Cassandra's commitment to helping her staff develop their skills and knowledge.

Not only will a strong program director be responsive to the needs of the staff as a whole, she will also help her staff understand that it is okay for individual staff members to ask for help when they are having problems with children in the classroom. If a staff member finds herself frustrated, she should ask for assistance and know that she will receive the support she needs.

That said, the director must draw a firm line between her responsibilities and those of her staff. A program director should not have lead-teacher responsibilities on top of her director duties; these are two separate positions and should not be overlapped. The program director can and should help in the classrooms when needed, but that should not be part of her main duties.

Too Many Hats

Alice, who has a bachelor's degree in early childhood education, is the program director at a center with five classrooms for children ranging in age from six months to five years. The center is open each weekday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Alice is scheduled to work from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Alice is also the preschool lead and is required to work in the classroom from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. This schedule leaves Alice with a half hour in the morning and one-and-a-half hours in the afternoon to perform her program-director duties. She must work longer hours at the center to complete billing and payroll and to address parent concerns.

PROBLEM

When Alice is in the classroom, she cannot address staff concerns, maintain staff and children's files, observe, and evaluate the staff in the classroom, communicate regularly with staff or parents, or update the center's policies if needed. Without a full-time program director completing the duties, the center does not function properly, and the situation results in parent and staff complaints.

RESOLUTION

Alice met with the center owner to discuss the situation. She emphasized the importance of positive parent reviews of the center in encouraging new families to enroll. The center owner realized that Alice needed another lead teacher for the preschool children. She agreed to add that position and authorized Alice to start seeking applicants.

OPEN TO GROWTH AND CHANGE

In his book *Building the Learning Organization* (2011), Marquardt points out, "Being a learning organization² is not a static condition. Change is constant, and the need for learning is never finished." For program directors to transform their centers into learning organizations, they must take incremental steps. "Organizations committed to quality take continuous improvement seriously because one question is always uppermost in everyone's mind: "How can we do this better?" says Marquardt. The objective is to continually look for new ways to improve the center.

To become a child-care center functioning as a learning organization, the program director—with the support of the center owner, executive director, or regional or district managers—must create a process for embracing change. Program directors of learning organizations look at the larger picture for the direction of the company. They have a desire to learn and reinvent themselves, their staff, and their centers through training and education. Having the capability to change course when necessary is essential and can produce a competitive advantage. Where to start? I suggest the following:

- **Begin with assessment:** Conduct a survey of the staff and the parents to determine what changes are needed.
- **Categorize the information:** Review the survey feedback. Categorize the list of items that need to be addressed and the time frames needed for each section.
- **Weigh the benefits and costs of implementing change:** All change will take time and money. Outline the pros and cons related to the change, then define each goal.

² Clarification: Marquardt's use of the term *learning organization* refers to any organization—not just an educational program—that intentionally pursues learning as a route to improvement and growth.

- **Identify the application:** Outline the objectives for each goal and the tools needed to make the necessary changes. For example, what training will be required? How will the training be implemented?
- **Apply the ideas from gained knowledge:** Once you have determined the who, what, why, when and how of the change, implement the change based on the knowledge gained.

When a director takes the time to seek information, develop a timeline, and outline the change that will be implemented based on the information, she will be able to articulate the goals and the vision because she has included all parties in the process from start to finish.

Operating as a learning organization, child-care centers will encourage ideas to flow in both directions between the program director and the center staff. All parties will work together, displaying their mutual respect for the center's philosophy and vision. The program director will incorporate new ideas and different ways of thinking to improve the center's operation for the betterment of the program for the children, families, and staff.

The director should survey the staff to determine what type of training they would like and need, then provide multiple opportunities for the staff to obtain training, whether onsite, virtual, or in-person offsite. Offering various ways for the staff to obtain training is beneficial for different learning styles and time schedules.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE BUSINESS OF OPERATING A CHILD-CARE CENTER

In the following section, we will take a quick look at the business of operating a child-care center and the program director's role in each type of center. There are many types of child-care centers: family home care, child-care chains, corporate centers, privately owned centers, government-funded centers, and franchises. They differ in setup, design, and curriculum, but all are required to follow the laws and rules of their states.

CHAIN CENTERS

Chains are branded centers that have multiple locations with the same owner. Decker and Decker (2005) explain that "a chain is ownership of several facilities by the same proprietorship, partnership, or corporation. These facilities are administered by a central organization." Chains may exist within one state or in multiple states. They typically have screening, hiring, and termination policies that directors and staff must follow. They also have recruiters who work hard to find new employees for the centers, so the program director does not have to spend time on recruiting, which can save many hours of work. They have a human resources (HR) department located in the state where the corporate

office is located, and all staff are screened and officially offered a position after being vetted by the HR department. Chain centers will often provide monetary support to the individual centers for advertising and marketing. Like corporate centers and franchises, chains will often use the same building design and classroom design across all of their centers. The educational staff, executive director, or board of directors often design and distribute the curriculum. Because the curriculum is mandated by the corporation, there is little to no opportunity for the teaching staff to create individual lesson plans for the children. This can cause a problem for teachers who have students who need additional or even different activities to promote their development. We will dig deeper into developmentally appropriate teaching practices in chapter 7.

FRANCHISE CENTERS

A franchise is a business in which the owners lease the business name, business plan, operating practices, and sometimes the buildings to franchisees. Essentially the franchise is the owner, and the franchisee is the renter. They have staff hiring and firing guidelines and processes. The franchise owners handle marketing and advertising for their franchisees. Each building will have the same layout and classroom setup, so if a parent leaves one center and goes to the same franchise in another city or state, the layout would be identical. Like corporate centers and chains, the educational staff, executive director, or board of directors often design and distribute the curriculum for the franchise. Because the franchisor provides the curriculum that the centers will use, there is often little to no opportunity for the teaching staff to create individual lesson plans for the children. This can cause a problem for teachers who have children that need additional or even different activities to promote their development.

CORPORATE CENTERS

Corporate child-care centers support or operate a center for the use of the corporation's employees on-site or within close proximity to the work site. These centers provide their employees the opportunity to work while having their child(ren) close enough to check on frequently during the workday. This approach supports a positive work-life balance.

They may recruit and hire independently or utilize the corporation's HR department to hire the staff. If the center is physically located on-site, it is typically for the exclusive use of the employees of the corporation. If the center is located off-site, it will generally accept families that are not associated with the corporation. Smaller corporations will often choose an off-site location to help reduce the cost of child care for their employees; they supplement by accepting additional families who do not work for the corporation.

The corporation protects individual center employees “from certain liabilities by creating a decision-making and accountable board of directors. Although the board may delegate decision-making power to a director, [the board] is still responsible” (Decker and Decker, 2005). Like chains and franchises, the educational staff, executive director, or board of directors often design and distribute the curriculum for corporate centers.

PRIVATELY OWNED CENTERS

In this model, the center is owned and operated by a private entity. The owner will either purchase or lease the property where the center is located. These centers are typically located within standalone buildings, churches, strip malls, or public or private schools. Privately owned centers can be for profit or nonprofit, depending on the program. They handle their own recruiting and hiring, as well as advertising and marketing efforts. The owner or program director chooses classroom designs and curriculum.

GOVERNMENT-FUNDED CHILD CARE

The U.S. Department of Education provides funding to states for a range of early childhood programs, including the following:

- Initiatives to support high-quality preschool services and expand preschool to all four-year-olds from low- and moderate-income families
- Coordinated early learning and development systems and programs for children from birth through age five
- Programs and services for children with disabilities and their families
- Community learning centers to provide academic-enrichment opportunities during nonschool hours for young children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools
- Programs to support school readiness

Government-funded programs such as Head Start have specific requirements that are often higher than the minimum state requirements. In hiring program directors, for example, if the federal government requires program directors to have a bachelor’s degree and the state requires program directors to have an associate’s degree, the federally funded program must hire program directors who have a bachelor’s degree. These programs can pay the program director a higher salary because they receive their funds from the federal government; unlike other centers, they are not reliant on the parents for income to operate the center. The local governing body will determine the curriculum that the center will use. They will provide an opportunity for the teaching staff to create individual lesson plans to meet the needs of the children.

STATE REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM DIRECTORS

Regardless of the type of center, the program director is responsible for supervising the implementation of all policies, requirements, and procedures for the program. Without a strong program director leading the center, the program will suffer. Program directors can be successful by continually learning and sharing their knowledge with their staff.

All states have program director or administrator requirements related to education and experience, but the requirements vary from state to state. In addition, owners, executive directors, and district or regional directors of chains, corporations, franchises, and privately owned centers can set requirements for their individual program directors. They follow a sliding scale for education and child-care experience required by the state licensing department, so they may have program directors at different locations with different qualifications.

In this book, I outline and compare the program-director licensing requirements for Michigan, Mississippi, Arizona, Montana, Washington, and Alaska. If you would like additional information on other state licensing requirements, visit the National Database of Child-Care Licensing Regulations at <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/licensing>

For most states, program directors must be either a minimum of eighteen or twenty-one years of age. Michigan, Mississippi, Arizona, and Alaska require the program directors to be at least twenty-one years old; Montana and Washington require them to be at least eighteen.

Education requirements vary from state to state, ranging from having completed state-approved training to having earned a bachelor's degree or higher in early childhood education. A program director's qualifications must be approved by the state licensing department before the person can be appointed to the position. (Note: The information listed here is not comprehensive. Please refer to your state's official licensing rules and procedures.)

In Michigan, early childhood program directors must have one of the following:

- a bachelor's degree or higher in early childhood education or child development;
- a bachelor's degree or higher in a child-related field, with eighteen semester hours in early childhood education or child development and 480 hours of experience;
- a Montessori credential, with eighteen semester hours in early childhood education or child development and 480 hours of experience;
- an associate's degree in early childhood education or child development, with eighteen semester hours in early childhood education or child development and 480 hours of experience;
- a valid Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, with eighteen semester hours in early childhood education or child development and 960 hours of experience; or
- sixty semester hours, with eighteen semester hours in early childhood education or child development and 1920 hours of experience.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Regardless of the type of early childhood center you lead, you have a diverse set of responsibilities, and managing them all can often feel like a delicate balance. Have you ever wondered if you are the only director facing a specific situation?

The Early Childhood Director's Guide to Solving Everyday Challenges

examines real-world issues experienced at actual child-care centers. Drawing on her years as a child-care licensing consultant and her extensive personal experience as a director, Dr. Thomasa Bond describes scenarios and shares positive resolutions to these situations. Whenever possible, she offers the perspectives of the director, teacher, and parents.

Discover how to avoid mistakes, oversights, and incidents as much as possible by developing policies and procedures and by implementing staff training to reduce risk. Follow the practical steps provided to create a plan so you are prepared to address issues if they do occur.

Learn how to proactively address issues related to:

- › The business of operating a child-care center
- › Hiring and managing staff and volunteers
- › Building maintenance and safety
- › Keeping children safe and healthy
- › Classroom management
- › Developmentally appropriate teaching practices
- › Challenging child behavior
- › Working with parents



Thomasa Bond, EdD, has more than 14 years of experience as a child-care licensing consultant and 30 years in early childhood education. She earned her doctorate in organizational leadership and works with program directors to help them build safe centers that provide quality learning environments for children.


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