Intro to Child Care Course  (Learning Plan 1)

Quality Child Care (4 hours)

Overview: A variety of child care settings exist - public and private group child care centers, care in a provider’s home, care in the home of another family, a hired caregiver in the child’s own home, day camps. Each can offer excellent care and experiences for children. However, each can also offer poor, unsafe and detrimental care as well. This Learning Plan looks at the licensing rules for family and group child care programs and how they promote the essential components necessary for a quality child care program.

Target Competency 1: Explore licensing standards that promote a quality child care environment.

Required Resources:

Internet links:
- Childcare Jobs in Wisconsin from indeed.com

Attachments
- Child Care Job Descriptions
- Ships Ahoy job descriptions for Master Teacher, Teacher and Director

Learning Objectives:

a. Identify the purpose of child care.
b. Examine Wisconsin’s Administrative rules and regulations governing family and group child care.
c. Differentiate among the various types of regulated child care programs.
d. Differentiate among the duties and responsibilities of staff within a child care center and in family child care.
e. Explore the meaning of “developmentally appropriate practice.”
f. Identify components of a developmentally appropriate child care setting for group and family care.
g. Determine staff to child ratios and maximum group sizes for group child care centers and for family child care.
h. Identify similarities and differences in how children are grouped in family and group child care settings.
i. Examine program requirements.
j. Examine rules governing equipment for child care settings.
k. Describe descriptions of family and group child care settings.
Introduction
The purpose of child care is to provide nurturing and responsive care and education for children while parents/guardians/caregivers are occupied with work or other responsibilities. Child care is an important part of American life and American families have almost two-thirds of their preschoolers in some kind of regular child care arrangement.

Quality child care programming includes staff planning and implementing developmentally appropriate activities that allow for the growth and development of the children. As a child care provider you have the extraordinary opportunity to teach and care for young children, helping to shape the future of your community.

Having made the decision to take this course means you have decided that you are interested in a career in the child care field. Consider the following characteristics many successful child care workers have:

- Passion for helping young children and families
- Patience to care for young children for many hours in a day
- Completing the education and required trainings annually
- Communication skills – parent communication will be key
- Physical energy
- Knowledge of state licensing rules and regulation
- Respect for children as individuals
- Understanding that parents are the child’s first and most important caregiver
- Knowledge of child development
- The ability to regulate his/her own emotions
- Keeping information confidential
**Assignment:** Review the above list of characteristics successful child care providers have and think of any *additional* skills or characteristics you feel are important. Make a list of 7 other skills not previously listed that you think are most important and describe why each is necessary.

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Types of Regulated Child Care
In Wisconsin there are two types of regulated child care, licensed and certified.

Licensed Child Care:
Under Wisconsin law, no person may provide care and supervision for 4 or more children under the age of 7 for less than 24 hours a day unless that person obtains a license to operate a child care center from the Department. There are a few exceptions to this rule:
- This does not include a relative or guardian providing care or supervision to their child
- Public or parochial school
- A person employed to come to the home of the child's parent or guardian for less than 24 hours a day
- A county, city, village, town, school district or library that provides programs primarily intended for recreational or social purposes
- Programs not operating more than 4 hours per day
- Group lessons to develop skills or talents, such as dance, music or group athletics
- A program with parents on the premises and who are engaged in non-work activities
- Seasonal programs of ten or less days in any 3-month period, including day camps, bible school and holiday child care programs
- Care and supervision for no more than 3 hours a day while the parent is employed on the premises
- A program provided where the child of a recipient of temporary assistance to needy families, or Wisconsin works, is involved in orientation, enrollment or initial assessment or where parents are provided training or counseling

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) is the state agency responsible for licensing and on-going monitoring of child care centers.

There are 3 different categories of state licensed child care:
- Licensed Family Child Care - provide care for up to 8 children. This care is usually in the provider's home.
- Licensed Group Child Care - provides care for 9 or more children. These programs are usually located somewhere other than a residence and can vary in size.
- Licensed Day Camps are seasonal programs that provide experiences for 4 or more children.

Certified Child Care:
State law (s. 48.651) requires counties or tribes to certify providers who receive public funding but are exempt from the licensing law. DCF establishes standards for the certification of child care providers and contracts certification functions to local counties and tribes. Certified child care programs provide care and supervision for less than 24 hours per day for no more than 3
Wisconsin Administrative Rules and Regulations:
The state of Wisconsin has established licensing rules for both group and family child care programs, each with its own rule book. These rules are necessary for child care providers to know and understand as they are a guide to keeping children in your care safe and healthy. The following activity is going to provide an opportunity for you to explore these rule books and begin to gain a better understanding of the regulation rules for child care in Wisconsin.

children under age 7 with a maximum group size of 6, including the provider’s own children under age 7.
Assignment:

Wisconsin Administrative Rules and Regulations Scavenger Hunt

Wisconsin Administrative Licensing Rules and Regulations for Family Child Care -

Wisconsin Administrative Licensing Rules and Regulations for Group Child Care -

Using the both the DCF 250 Licensing Rules for Family Child Care Centers and DCF 251 Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers, compare the similarities and differences in the following rules. Consider the reasons for any differences.

Search for rules related to:

1. Provider Education (family child care/teacher/assistant).

   Similarities:

   Differences:

   Why might there be differences?

2. Staff-to-Child Ratio

   Similarities:

   Differences:

   Why might there be differences?
3. Handwashing
Similarities:

Differences:

Why might there be differences?

4. Program Planning
Similarities:

Differences:

Why might there be differences?

5. Kitchens and Food Handling
Similarities:

Differences:

Why might there be differences?
6. Outdoor Play Space
Similarities:

Differences:

Why might there be differences?

7. Diapering and Toileting of Children under 2
Similarities:

Differences:

Why might there be differences?

8. Care for a Mildly Ill Child
Similarities:

Differences:

Why might there be differences?
9. Responsibilities of Staff

Similarities:

Differences:

Why might there be differences?
Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Regulations from the state of Wisconsin set the standards for adequate child care, but they cannot guarantee quality care. One step toward providing quality childcare is using developmentally appropriate practices or DAP.

In a classroom or learning environment where developmentally appropriate practices are used, you will see the following:

- Respectful, frequent and responsive interactions between teachers and children
- Children offered choices, given opportunities to make decisions and are active participants
- A print-rich environment with many opportunities for children to interact with and explore the written word, including a writing area
- Open-ended art materials available as a choice throughout the day with art displayed at the children’s level
- A stimulating, interactive science area, with real objects
- Painting at the art easel available daily, as an on-going choice
- Sensory tables open daily
- Multi-cultural materials incorporated throughout the environment
- Pictures of “real” objects and people (vs. cartoons)
- Children using problem-solving skills as teachers facilitate
- Learning areas that are well-defined and inviting
- Self-help skills and independence are encouraged
- Adults being aware of the interests of children and planning accordingly
- Age-appropriate expectations Ex: Mistakes and accidents are ok
- Children’s individual needs and skill levels taken into account
- Many opportunities for children to experience success
- Smooth transitions with minimal waiting and lining up
- Children’s feelings are acknowledged and validated
- Role of the family acknowledged, with participation encouraged and valued
- Activities facilitated in small groups instead of large groups with forced participation
- Physical needs of children incorporated, with opportunities for large motor experiences available daily
- The goal of guidance and discipline is in the child developing self-control to make better choices
Every day, policy makers, administrators, and teachers/caregivers make a great many decisions, at all levels, both long-term and short-term, that affect young children. It is these many decisions that determine whether what actually happens in a classroom or family child care home is or is not developmentally appropriate.

In their decision making, effective early childhood educators keep in mind the desired outcomes for children’s learning and development, and they understand that:

1. Knowledge Must Inform Decision Making
2. Goals Must Be Challenging and Achievable
3. Teaching Must Be Intentional to Be Effective

To make decisions that ensure their practice is developmentally appropriate, effective early childhood educators take into consideration knowledge in three areas:

1. **What is known about child development and learning**—referring to research-based knowledge of age-related characteristics that permits general predictions about what experiences are likely to best promote children's learning and development. [This knowledge is reflected in the DAP Position Statement in the form of "12 Principles of Child Development and Learning"]

2. **What is known about each child as an individual**—referring to what educators learn about the specific children that has implications for how best to adapt and be responsive to that individual variation.

3. **What is known about the social and cultural contexts in which children live**—referring to the values, expectations, and behavioral and linguistic conventions that shape each of the children's lives at home and in their communities that educators must strive to understand in order to ensure that learning experiences in the program or school are meaningful, relevant, and respectful for each child and family.

To recap this decision-making process: An effective teacher begins by thinking about what children of the age and developmental status represented in that program’s group are typically like. This knowledge provides a general idea of the activities, routines, interactions, and curriculum that should be effective. The teacher also must consider each child in that group, including looking at the child as an individual and within the context of that child's specific family, community, culture, linguistic norms, social group, past experience (including learning and behavior), and current circumstances.

Only then can the teacher see those children as they are to make decisions that are developmentally appropriate for each of them.
2. Goals Must Be Challenging and Achievable

Meeting children where they are is essential, but no good teacher simply leaves them there. Keeping in mind desired outcomes and what is known about those children as a group and individually, the teacher plans experiences to promote the children's learning and development.

Learning and development are most likely to occur when new experiences build on what a child already knows and is able to do and when those experiences also entail the child stretching a reasonable amount in acquiring new skills, abilities, or knowledge. After the child reaches that new level of mastery in skill or understanding, the effective teacher reflects on what goals should come next; and the cycle continues, advancing the child's learning in a developmentally appropriate way.

3. Teaching Must Be Intentional to Be Effective

A hallmark of developmentally appropriate teaching is intentionality. Good teachers are intentional in everything they do—setting up the classroom, planning curriculum, making use of various teaching strategies, assessing children, interacting with them, and working with their families.

Intentional teachers are purposeful and thoughtful about the actions they take, and they direct their teaching toward the goals the program is trying to help children reach.

Excellent teachers translate the developmentally appropriate practice framework into high-quality experiences for children through the decisions they make. Such teaching is described in the DAP Position Statement in the form of "Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practice" across five key aspects of the teacher's role:

1. Creating a Caring Community of Learners
2. Teaching to Enhance Development and Learning
3. Planning Curriculum to Achieve Important Goals
4. Assessing Children's Development and Learning
5. Establishing Reciprocal Relationships with Families

These five aspects of every teacher's work are closely interrelated. Each is a vital part of what teachers and early childhood programs do to achieve key goals for children. None can be left out or shortchanged without seriously weakening the whole.

To find out more visit;  

http://www.naeyc.org/dap/core
**Assignment:**
Create a list of 10 things every child needs (Consider what you have just learned about DAP)

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Physical Space and Equipment:
Assignment:
In this next section we will take a closer look at the physical space and equipment requirements. Using the Wisconsin Rules and Regulations books or links, https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/publications/pdf/4069.pdf or https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/files/publications/pdf/4024.pdf review the rules governing equipment for child care settings, including the indoor and outdoor space needs for both family and group child care. After reviewing these, answer the following True or False questions:

1) 35 square feet is required for each child indoors at a child care setting? ______________

2) There must 35 square feet of space for each child using the outdoor play space at any given time. __________

3) The storage for cots, bedding and other equipment can be counted in the square footage available for children. __________

4) The boundaries of the outdoor play space must be defined with a permanent enclosure not less than 3 feet high to protect children. __________

5) If a program is going to make changes to their plan for the outdoor play space, the plans must be approved by the licenser. __________

6) Children under one must have a cot, bed or 2 inch thick mat or sleeping bag. __________

7) A program open for 3 hours or more must have an outdoor play space. __________

8) Trampolines are okay to have on the play space children have access to. __________

9) Enough indoor play equipment needs to be provided so children have at least 3 activities to choose from when all children are using equipment. __________

10) Outdoors, all children must have at least one activity provided when all children are using equipment at the same time. __________
Staff-to-Child Ratios
Being aware of the staff-to-child ratios is of utmost importance in caring for young children and keeping them safe. Each staff person who is counted in ratios must meet the training requirements and qualifications of the position. Below is a table of the maximum number of children in care per provider:

Table DCF 250.05 Licensed
Maximum Number of Children in Family Child Care per Provider

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children Under 2 Years of Age</th>
<th>Children 2 Years of Age and Older</th>
<th>Maximum Number of Additional School-age Children In Care For Fewer Than 3 Hours a Day</th>
<th>Maximum Number of Children</th>
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<td>0</td>
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TABLE DCF 251.05-D Licensed
Maximum Group Size and Minimum Number of Child Care Workers in Group Child Care Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of Children</th>
<th>Minimum Number of Child Care Workers to Children</th>
<th>Maximum Number of Children in a Group</th>
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<tr>
<td>Birth to 2 Years</td>
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<td>2 years to 2 ½ Years</td>
<td>1:6</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 ½ Years to 3 Years</td>
<td>1:8</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>3 Years to 4 Years</td>
<td>1:10</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>4 Years to 5 Years</td>
<td>1:13</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Years to 6 Years</td>
<td>1:17</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Years and Over</td>
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<td>36</td>
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The tables above are for licensed child care programming. Below you will find the staff-to-child ratio for certified child care programming.
MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN CERTIFIED CHILD CARE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Related children under age 7**</th>
<th>Non-related children under age 7</th>
<th>Additional children over age 7</th>
<th>Maximum number of children*</th>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Additional children ages 7 and older may be cared for as long as the maximum total number of children is not exceeded</td>
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*The maximum number does not include the certified child care operator’s natural, adopted, step, or foster children 7 years of age and older, or any children 7 and older who live in the residence.

**“Related to the provider” means the provider’s natural or adopted children, foster children, stepchildren, grandchildren, brothers, sisters, first cousins, nephews, nieces, uncles and aunts.

Note: Under s. 48.65 (1), Stats., if a provider takes care of 4 or more children under the age of 7 who are not related to the provider, for compensation, the provider must obtain from the Department of Children and Families a license to operate a child care center.

WHEN CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 2 YEARS ARE PRESENT

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<th>Number of children under 2 years of age</th>
<th>Maximum number of children***</th>
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***The maximum number does not include the certified child care operator’s natural, adopted, step, or foster children 7 years of age and older, or any children 7 and older who live in the residence.
Assignment:
After reviewing the staff-to-child ratio tables, record your observations regarding the similarities and differences in how children are grouped in family and group child care settings.
Job Descriptions:
To learn more about the types of jobs available, expectations and educational requirements for various positions, you will spend some time reviewing job descriptions. Using the following resources to look at the current job openings and descriptions:

- Childcare Jobs in Wisconsin from indeed.com
  - Link: http://www.indeed.com/jobs?q=Childcare&l=Wisconsin
- Child Care Job Descriptions attached

Assignment:
Using the information gathered during the review and other resources available, write an introductory paragraph that could be used in a cover letter that identifies the position you wish to hold in a child care setting. Include the education and experience necessary for that position and describe your personal attributes that will contribute to a successful work experience.
**Assignment:**
To learn more about the work of a child care provider find a provider who is currently working in the field and interview him/her, asking the following questions and any others you might be wondering about:

1. What do you like best about working in child care?
2. What challenges do you face working in child care?
3. Why did you choose to go into child care?
4. What do you do to keep up with new things in child care?

Summarize your interview experience including where the provider works, the type of program it is, his/her responses and any thoughts you might have.