

H10EC19 Principles and Developmental Objectives of ECCE

19.1 Introduction

The first six years are considered to be the golden period in a child's life. Children grow faster and learn to move quicker during the first six years than at any time later. In this formative period development takes place rapidly in terms of acquisition of skills, habits, attitudes, concepts and power of observance as well as ability to think and to communicate. The development of human personality rests on the sound foundation of social, emotional, physical and intellectual development of the child built during the stages of infancy and school going age. Early childhood care and education (ECCE) stands as a prelude to the entire development of the child in future. ECCE aims at the total development of the child-physical, motor, emotional, social, cognitive, language and moral. It is important to note that attendance in preschools does not automatically guarantee better academic achievements. Quality aspects such as a healthy environment, meaningful objectives, stimulating and encouraging activities, care-giving teachers are imperative to ensure all round development in children.

Learning objectives

This lesson imparts to the students

- The objectives of Early Childhood Care and Education
- The principles underlying the objectives of ECCE
- How ECCE enables the children to develop holistically

19.2 Developmental objectives of ECCE and activities

Early childhood, as a matter of fact is the foundation period of life. The total development of the child manifests itself in three dimensions namely

- a) Physical or motor
- b) Psychological including perceptual, intellectual and personality development as well as behaviour consisting of socio-emotional development and
- c) Language development

The need and scope of ECCE are very many. In order to fulfill the developmental needs of children during the formative period (0-6 yrs), ECCE is an essential component which promotes various skills.

i) Basic motor skills, good physique, adequate muscular and eye-hand co-ordination are to be developed in children.

- As the child grows physically, he progressively attains strengths, muscular co-ordination and precision in using the body parts; the more co-ordinated process is called motor development. Motor development depends upon neural and muscular maturation and readiness. There is a definite pattern followed in motor development- i.e from head to foot and proceeds from mass activities to specific activities. Motor skills are classified into-gross motor skills and fine motor skills. Gross motor skills are those that involve the movement of larger muscles such as crawling, running, skipping, jumping, climbing, walking, balancing, throwing, catching, swinging and kicking.
- Gross motor skills are subdivided into two types. The first is related to those skills that mainly lead to the physical development. Activities like walking, running, skipping and climbing fall into this category. There are other gross motor skills like throwing, catching, balancing, kicking, hitting and hopping which require more co-ordinated action of movements.
- Fine motor skills involve finer movements of muscles. They require proper co-ordination of eyes, hands and fingers. Writing readiness is one such skill which involves learning to hold a pencil and then mark with it in a desired direction. Skills like painting, sorting, drawing, folding, cutting, threading, pouring and clay modeling, pasting, marking and the like fall into this category.

The other activities that promote gross and finer motor activities are:

- Free and structured play activities involving running, jumping, climbing, hopping, throwing, catching, balancing, rolling, walking, cycling, hitting, bending, pushing, pulling, gripping, swimming, drawing, painting, tearing paper, cutting, crayoning, printing, making impressions, threading, sewing, sand and water play, clay work, free play with puzzles and wooden pieces, colouring, singing, dancing, building blocks, assembling toys, buttoning, fastening zips, action songs, walking forward and backward, wax crayons, pencils and chalk, folding papers, cutting paper with a small scissors, ascending and descending on a ladder, folding, tearing and pasting of a paper.

ii) Inculcation of good health habits in children and to build up basic skills necessary for personal adjustment

❖ Activities

- Child at this age needs to develop certain basic skills necessary for day to day life, which in turn become habits such as dressing, toilet habits, eating, washing and cleaning
- Skills for toilet habits, eating, dressing and undressing, folding in carpets, keeping the things in its place
- Washing hands before and after meal
- Maintaining personal cleanliness
- Eating in proper way (etiquette), using the toilet properly, putting garbage into dustbins, coming to the preschool regularly
- Habits of keeping class-room clean

iii) Develop desirable social attitudes and manners and to encourage healthy group participation making the child sensitive to the rights and privileges of others.

Beginning with the preschool stage the process of socialization continues throughout life. The ability of the child to interact with other children and adults at home and in social situations is referred to as social behaviour. The development of this ability enables the children to get adjusted to the social group. Through the process of socialization, the child learns the ways and norms of society, values and other social attributes of the culture.

❖ Activities

- The ECCE provides more opportunities for children to take part in group activities organised.
 - Greeting the teachers, waiting for 'ones' turn
 - Co-operative play, organised game and outdoor play activity are some of the activities through which children learn to wait for their turns and respect others
 - Children are guided by the teachers, to follow certain social ethics and use of words such as "thank you", "sorry" and, "please".
 - Fostering independence
 - Activities that requires sharing

- Celebrations, dramatic play, fancy dress show
- Allotting duties and responsibilities to children

iv) Develop emotional maturity by guiding the child to express, understand, accept and control his feelings and emotions.

Emotions are essential parts of one's life. Emotions are brief, intense and transitory. Some of the common emotions are love and affection, anger, fear, jealousy, aggression, anxiety and joy.

❖ Activities

- Gradual adjustment to school
- Opportunities to express positive and negative emotions in a healthy manner
- Able to recognize common emotional status like happy, sad, afraid
- Creating an atmosphere that breeds trust and security in the child
- Variety of activities that satisfy the child's needs for both boisterous and quiet play
- Paper tearing, scribbling on a paper, clay modeling, finger printing, dancing, singing and water play are few activities that channelize the negative emotions
- Imaginative play, play in a doll corner, shop play (dramatization) through which children act out or express situations which may cause anxiety

v) Encourage aesthetic appreciation

❖ Activities

- Creative activities such as painting, crayoning, colouring, printing
- Field trip, nature walk, appreciate beauty in nature
- Sand play
- Craft and art work, decorations in the school

vi) Stimulate the beginning of intellectual curiosity concerning the environment and to help to understand the world.

Just as the physical structure of the body grows due to the assimilation of nourishment available from food, the mental or intellectual structure obtains the nourishment through receiving, reacting and interacting with the environmental stimuli. For example, a child who can grasp, bite, shake or throw an object, when confronted with a new object, say a doll, will try the same to understand or assimilate information about it.

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❖ Activities

Development of five senses

- Games and activities for visual discrimination
- Activities with touch cards, varying textures to develop the sense of touch
- Storytelling, songs and informal talk with children, question-answer session, for sound discrimination
- Activities with objects varying in smell
- Activities with different foods for taste

Development of memory and observation

- Zigzag puzzles
- Identifying similar and different objects
- Activities for self exploration
- Treasure hunt
- Story narration by recall

Development of skills of classification

- Provision of play equipment, blocks, puzzles in different shapes, colour, size
- Activities that imparts different concepts

Development of problem-solving and reasoning

- Activities involving solving of problems like relationship cards, answering simple questions
- Story narration

Formation of basic concepts

- Activities to identify and name different colours- colour concept
 - Activities to match, identify and name the basic colours, i.e., red, blue, yellow, black and white by 3 to 4 years
 - Activities to understand that mixing/blending of colours leads to formation of new colours
 - Activities to enable the child to match, identify and name colours like orange, purple, brown and pink, by 4 to 6 years
- Activities to match and identify circle, square and triangle- concept of shape
 - Activities to enable the children to identify a circle, a square and a triangle; draw a circle by 3 to 4 years

- Activities to enable the children to name a circle, a square, a triangle and relate these to objects in the environment
- Ability to match, identify and name, big – small, long- short, heavy-light, tall-short, thick-thin, wide-narrow, far-near through various activities such as water play, sand play, block play, dramatization, rhymes, games, puzzles / blocks, sand, clay and form the number concept
- Development of ability to re-organise positions like in-out, over-under, left and right, front-back, above-below, top-bottom, before-after, here-there, to form the concept of space
- To form the concept of time, activities such as informal talk, readiness programme telling day-night, afternoon-evening, before-after, early-late, hours related to daily routine, recall of daily routine, the use of clock for reading time, names of the month, days of the week
- Development of positive self concept- such as awareness of themselves and feel good about who they are, what they are, i.e., have feelings of self-worth
- Some suggested activities are celebrate each child's birthday, month wise calendar of birthdays can be made and hung in the class, make name cards of each child in the class, put up child's drawings prominently for display, praise children liberally
- Concept of temperature, science activities to identify hot and cold
- Formation of environmental concepts through conversation, free talk, displays, sand model, field trip, simple experiments, dramas and organised games- concept of myself, family, pet and wild animals, vegetables and fruits, plants, transport, community workers, festivals, air, water, universe and seasons

vii) Develop the child's ability to express his feelings and thoughts in fluent, correct and clear speech

Development of listening skills – Developing the skills of sound discrimination, enhancing listening span and listening comprehensions.

- Activities such as structured conversation, listening and vocabulary games, rhymes, dramatization, story-telling, reading aloud, puppet show, picture-

word matching, help children to acquire sound discrimination, enhance listening span and comprehension

Development of verbal expression

- Vocabulary development, fluency and clarity of expression, talking in sequence and creative self-expression through rhymes/songs, riddles, making puppets, puppet show, picture-word matching. Vocabulary related to body, home, biological, physical and social environment to be developed through activities like free conversation, story telling, role play.

Development of reading, writing and arithmetic readiness - Readiness is a stage

when children are mature enough and are ready to learn without undue intellectual or emotional stress. In order to develop reading readiness, specific activities are required to be undertaken in:

- Auditory discrimination
- Visual discrimination
- Auditory – visual associations
- directionality

viii) Encourage independence and creativity by providing the child with sufficient opportunities for self expression

❖ Activities-

- Free play, by choosing their activity
- Assigning responsibilities to child like putting away the material, keeping the room in order, fetching registers, etc.
- In group activities let children, by rotation, take on lead roles in singing or playing games, telling stories individually to the group

ix) Foster new interests through opportunities to investigate and experiment

- Treasure hunt, hide and seek, musical chair are the common activities that promote interest in children

x) Development of an attitude of empathy and care towards the old, the differently abled and the needy

- Structured conversation, story-telling and dramatization are activities which through which children can be exposed to the concepts of ‘old’, ‘differently abled’ and ‘needy’ and the need to empathise with them and care for them

xi) Development of self confidence

- Should be able to develop confidence for participating in group activities; suggested activities are circle games, group recitation of rhymes and songs, dramatisation, free conversation, encourage children to perform individually in front of other children.

Facilities in the ECCE centre

Indoor Facilities

The classrooms in a preschool/ early childhood centre actually are shaped as interest centres where they can easily move about and make choices. Separate spaces may be arranged for:

- i) Building blocks
- ii) Household set, doctor's set, doll corner set for make-believe games
- iii) Simple construction tools
- iv) Picture books, comics
- v) Science experiments
- vi) Manipulative materials
- vii) Assorted items for cognitive development like beads, mathematical numerals, crayons, scissors, paints, gums, clay, brushes for creative activities
- viii) Pets and plants
- ix) Rhythmic instruments

Outdoor Facilities

Neat and clean environment in an ECCE centre is a must for health, habit formation and sending the proper message to the community. The other factors to be considered are:

- i) Adequate ventilation and lighting
- ii) Sound proofing
- iii) Colour treatment to walls, cabinets, floors, ceilings
- iv) Avoiding sharp corners and edges
- v) Providing non-skid surfaces

Objectives of ICDS

Now Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) being the world's largest programme as one of the leading ECCE centres; having 5652 ECCE centre projects operational all over India with 4533 projects in rural areas, 759 projects in tribal areas and

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360 projects in urban areas, it is necessary to understand the specific objectives of ICDS, such as:

- i) Improvement in health and nutritional status of children below 6 years
- ii) Reduction in mortality
- iii) Reduction in morbidity
- iv) Reduction in malnutrition
- v) Laying the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of children
- vi) Reduction in school dropout rates
- vii) Co-ordination of policy and implementation
- viii) Enhancement of mother's capacity to look after the health and nutritional needs of the children

ICDS has already reached a stage where it is essential not only to universalize its expansion but also to enrich its contents. This emerging profile of ICDS rededicates itself to promoting early childhood care for survival, protection and development.

These objectives are met through the package of services provided in the Anganwadi centre and include supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check up and treatment of minor ailments, referral services, preschool education, nutrition and health supporting services such as drinking water and sanitation.

19.3 Principles followed for formulating the objectives of ECCE

- i) **Children's development covers various domains such as physical, motor, emotional, cognitive and moral development.**

The programme should be organised to meet the needs of these domains.

- ii) **Age appropriate activities to foster the various domains of development. In ECCE centres children from 2 to 6 years are enrolled. Their developmental levels vary.**

Hence the programme should be different according to age and developmental level. So grouping is important. i.e.,

2 to 3 years – Pre KG

3 to 4 years – LKG

4 to 5 ½ years – UKG

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iii) Family background and immediate environment need careful consideration.

Family income, size of the family, parents education, number of siblings and residential area have to be considered.

iv) Keep in mind the individual differences of the child.

Some children are fast in development, few are slow in growth. This individual differences is to be kept in mind while framing the objectives and planning activities

v) Balance between formal and informal learning.

There should be the activities of both formal and informal

vi) Thematic approach.

Children enter ECCE centres, without much orientation. They have to be oriented with various themes to know about the world. Various themes such as family, community workers, colours, wild animals, etc could be introduced.

vii) Play based activities.

More of play based activities to be included in the objectives

viii) Balance between individual and group needs, active and passive activities, outdoor and indoor activities, free and structured activities

- Individual and group activities are necessary to meet the individual's and group's needs for development; for example free play or organised game
- Programmes in an ECCE centre to be balanced between active play and quiet play. If only active play, children become tired. In order to think creatively, quiet play is necessary
- Free and structured play. Children playing in an outdoor area on their own as they like is called free play. A play activity planned by the teacher for prescribed number of children with certain rules is known as structured play

ix) Activities encourage self-discipline, independence and self expression.

Independence, self-discipline and self-expression are essential to become an adult. So when formulating objectives, this to be kept in mind

x) Teacher-pupil ratio to be followed while framing the objectives of ECC.

The teacher-pupil ratio should be kept in mind. If it is in urban area teacher-pupil ratio can be 1:25 and in rural area 1:40

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xi) **Availability of space for outdoor activities and free play in the indoors.**

Equipment available. Based on the availability of space, number of children and teacher equipment to be purchased

19.4 Conclusion

The focus of the objectives of the ECCE/preschool is on the holistic development of the child. Objectives emphasize on the provision of a rich and stimulating playful environment. The experiences gained through a variety of activities lead to intellectual, language, social-personal, emotional and physical or motor development of the child. Instruction in ECCE is through play activities. Activities are conducted in small or large groups. Assessment is continuous and non-judgemental and not based on tests/assignments. The school environment encourages exploration and self-discovery; for which there is a process of opportunity as well as the obligation providing a 'fair start' to children as they move from womb to the classroom and from the close environment of the family to the larger world.