



Child Development 1

Curriculum

Board Approved: 02/19/2026

Course Information

High School Semester Course

Course Description:

Child Development I introduces students to the fundamental aspects of human development from conception through 24 months of age. The course covers prenatal development, labor and delivery, infant growth and development, intellectual, social, emotional, and biological development of children, parenting roles and styles, health and safety concerns, and effective caregiving and guidance techniques. Students will engage in meaningful, hands-on learning experiences, including a parenting simulation using an advanced infant simulator. This simulation provides valuable insight into the realities and responsibilities of modern parenting. An alternative project is available for those who choose not to participate in the simulation. This course is ideal for students considering future parenting, living with younger siblings, or planning to work with children in any capacity. It is strongly recommended for those interested in careers in education, healthcare, social work, or other human and health services.

Transfer Goals:

- Students will demonstrate best practices and skills for parenting, caring for, guiding, and directing the development of children prior to birth and through the first 24 months of age.

Curriculum Standards: <https://www.leadfcsed.org/national-standards.html#/>

Curriculum Resources: Child Development. Early Stages Through Adolescence. 10th Edition. G-W Publishers

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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Unit 1: Parenting

Timeframe: 1 Week - Ongoing

Unit Description: In this unit, students will learn that parenting is a learning process that offers many challenges and rewards. It is necessary to consider if one is ready for the role of parenting by considering effective parenting characteristics, maturity, health concerns, financial stability, resource and time management, and research-based parenting skills.

Enduring Understandings:

- Effective parenting requires a dynamic balance of protection, provision, and education, critically shaping a child's foundational physical, emotional, and intellectual development.
- Parenting is a continuum of adaptive roles, requiring caregivers to constantly adjust guidance, rules, and expectations based on the evolving developmental stage of the child.
- Parents have legal obligations to provide for their children and ensure they receive an education and medical care.
- Healthy family function and stability depend on the accessibility and utilization of robust external support systems and community services.
- The effectiveness of parenting is influenced by the complex interplay among cultural beliefs, familial structures, socioeconomic factors, and the responsible utilization of time, finances, and community resources.

Essential Questions:

- How does parenting fundamentally shape a child's foundational physical, emotional, and intellectual development?
- In what ways must parenting roles, guidance, and expectations adapt and evolve to effectively meet the changing needs and developmental stages of a growing child?
- How do complex factors (such as culture, socioeconomic status, and family structure) interact with the management of time and resources to determine the overall readiness and effectiveness of a parenting plan?
- How do accessible external support systems and community services function as critical resources for maintaining healthy family stability and function?

Unit 1 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
12.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze principles of human growth and development across the lifespan.
12.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze current and emerging research about human growth and development, including but not limited to brain development research
12.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze conditions that influence human growth and development.
12.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can identify and analyze strategies that promote and foster positive human growth and development across the life span
12.3.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze the role of educational and family and social services support systems and resources in meeting human growth and development needs

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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15.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can analyze the physical, emotional, mental, and financial factors related to the parenting process.
15.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can analyze the roles and responsibilities of a parent

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 2: Prenatal Development and Pregnancy

Timeframe: 5 weeks

Unit Description: In this unit, students will be provided a comprehensive exploration of fetal development, from conception up to birth. We will examine the factors that influence healthy fetal development, the importance of prenatal care, and the various stages of pregnancy. Through scientific inquiry, research, and respectful discussion, students will gain a deeper appreciation for the complexities of human reproduction and the responsibilities associated with nurturing new life.

Enduring Understandings:

- Fetal development is a highly sensitive and sequential biological process where adverse internal or external conditions can result in irreversible, long-term consequences for the future health and development of the child.
- Optimal prenatal health requires conscious lifestyle management, recognizing that maternal physiological health and choices directly influence the biological and neurological foundations established during gestation.
- The health outcomes of a child are determined by the complex interaction of both inherited characteristics (genetics) and the prenatal environment.
- Access to continuous, high-quality prenatal care is essential for monitoring and mitigating risks associated with pregnancy, birth, and potential long-term complications.

Essential Questions:

- How do the critical factors affecting prenatal health influence and align with the specific stages of fetal development to determine a child's overall well-being?
- How does a mother's conscious lifestyle management and physiological health choices fundamentally influence the establishment of optimal biological and neurological foundations during gestation?
- What specific roles does continuous, high-quality prenatal care play in effectively monitoring and mitigating the complex risks associated with pregnancy, birth, and long-term complications?
- How can understanding the interaction between inherited characteristics (genetics) and the prenatal environment inform screening, prevention, and intervention strategies for maximizing healthy birth outcomes?

Unit 2 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
15.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can evaluate parenting practices that maximize human growth and development
15.4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze biological processes related to prenatal development, birth, and health of child and mother

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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Unit 3: Labor, Delivery, Postpartum, and the Newborn

Timeframe: 4 weeks

Unit Description: This unit explores the final stages of pregnancy, focusing on labor and childbirth, postpartum recovery, and the care and development of a newborn. Students will learn about the signs and stages of labor, common delivery methods, medical options, and the physical and emotional changes that occur during the postpartum period. The unit also covers newborn characteristics, basic care practices, bonding, and early development. Emphasis will be placed on both the medical and emotional aspects of this life stage, encouraging empathy and understanding of the challenges and responsibilities of parenthood.

Enduring Understandings:

- The experience of labor and delivery involves complex physiological and psychological shifts, necessitating informed decision-making regarding medical interventions and delivery methods.
- The successful transition to parenthood relies heavily on comprehensive postpartum physical and emotional support, which is critical for the long-term well-being of both the caregiver and the newborn.
- The early establishment of responsive caregiving and secure attachment is fundamental to the newborn's survival, physiological regulation, and capacity for future emotional connection.

Essential Questions:

- How do individuals navigate the complex physiological and psychological shifts of labor and delivery to make informed decisions about medical interventions and birthing methods?
- Why is comprehensive physical and emotional support during the postpartum period critical for ensuring the long-term well-being and stability of both the newborn and the caregiver?
- How does the quality of early responsive caregiving and secure attachment fundamentally influence the newborn's immediate survival, physiological stability, and capacity for forming future emotional connections?

Unit 3 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
15.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can evaluate parenting practices that maximize human growth and development
	From Previous Units: 12.2, 12.2, 15.1, 15.4, 15.4.1

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Unit 4: Development of PIES, Birth- 2 Years

Timeframe: 4 weeks

Unit Description:

In this unit, students will explore the foundational stages of infant growth and development during the first two years of life. Development will be examined through the lens of PIES—Physical, Intellectual, Emotional, and Social. Students will examine how infants grow, develop, and change in each area, the importance of early experiences, and how caregivers can support healthy development.

Enduring Understandings:

- Human development during infancy (birth–2 years) is characterized by rapid, integrated growth across all four domains (PIES), shaped dynamically by the interplay between genetics and environmental conditions.
- Exploration, experience, and play are the primary mechanisms through which infants construct knowledge, develop sensorimotor skills, and build a foundational understanding of cause and effect in the world.
- Responsive caregiving that fosters secure attachment is fundamental to mitigating the risks of developmental failure and ensuring optimal cognitive and emotional temperament.
- Caregivers utilize knowledge of typical developmental milestones to effectively guide and support a child's progress, recognizing that all developmental domains are interconnected.

Essential Questions:

- How does the dynamic interplay between genetics and environmental conditions drive the rapid, integrated growth across the physical, intellectual, emotional, and social (PIES) domains during the first two years of life?
- How do exploration, experience, and play function as the primary mechanisms for infants to construct knowledge, develop sensorimotor skills, and build a foundational understanding of cause and effect?
- Why is responsive caregiving, which promotes secure attachment, fundamental to mitigating risks of developmental failure and fostering optimal cognitive and emotional temperament in infants?
- Since all developmental domains are interconnected, how do caregivers strategically utilize knowledge of typical milestones to implement guidance techniques and access external resources to support a child's holistic progress?

Unit 4 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From Previous Units: 12.2, 12.2, 12.3, 15.2

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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Unit 5: Community and Careers

Timeframe: 2 Weeks

Unit Description: In this unit, students will explore the important roles children play in our community, the resources available, and the many different jobs that people do to help children learn, grow, and stay safe. Students will learn about various careers that directly involve working with children, understanding what these professionals do and why their work is so valuable.

Enduring Understandings:

- A foundational understanding of child development principles is critical for professional success and ethical practice across a wide spectrum of career pathways, extending beyond direct education and healthcare roles.
- Effective family well-being relies on the proactive identification and utilization of formalized community resources, early intervention programs, and support systems designed to address developmental, financial, and health needs.

Essential Questions:

- Why is a foundational understanding of child development principles essential for ensuring professional success and ethical practice across diverse career fields, including those outside of direct care?
- How does the proactive identification and utilization of formalized community resources and early intervention programs directly contribute to maintaining effective family well-being and addressing varied developmental, financial, and health needs?

Unit 5 Standards	
STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
	From Previous Units: 4.1 , 15.1
4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can demonstrate professional practices and standards related to working with children, youth and adults, including diverse populations
7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze career paths within family and human services
7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze factors in providing family and human services
7.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze the impact of conditions that could influence the well-being of individuals and families
15.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can evaluate external support systems that provide services for parents

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