Chapter 2
Types of Programs

Quality in All Programs
Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs

- Standards for high quality child care
- Stressed activity-based learning environments
- Revised in 2009 to include both/and statements. There are many right ways to apply DAP principles.
Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs (cont.)

• Three Core Considerations

  1. What is known about child development and learning
  2. What is known about each child as an individual
  3. What is known about the social and cultural contexts in which children live
Copple and Bredekamp suggest 5 key areas of practice to guide the decision-making process.

1. Creating a caring community of learners
2. Teaching to enhance development and learning
Guidelines for DAP (cont.)

1. Planning curriculum to achieve important goals
2. Assessing children’s development and learning
3. Establishing reciprocal relationships with families
DAP principles benefit children in many ways:

1. In constructing children’s own understanding of concepts and benefit from instruction by more competent peers and adults.

2. Through opportunities to see connections across disciplines through integration of curriculum and from opportunities to engage in in-depth study.

3. With a predictable structure and routine in the learning environment and from the teacher’s flexibility and spontaneity in responding to their emerging ideas, needs, and interests.

4. By making meaningful choices about what children will do.

5. From situations that challenge children to work at the edge of their capacities and from ample opportunities to practice newly acquired skills.
What Does DAP Look Like

• Programs and curriculum respond to children’s interests as well as their needs

• Children are actively involved in their own learning, choosing from a variety of materials and equipment

• Play is the primary context in which young children learn and grow
What Does DAP Look Like (cont.)

• Teachers apply what they know about each child and use a variety of strategies, materials, and learning experiences to be responsive to individual children

• Teachers consider widely held expectations about each age group and temper that with challenging yet achievable learning goals

• Teachers understand that any activity has the potential for different children to realize different learning from the same experience
What Does DAP Look Like (cont.)

• All aspects of development—physical, social/emotional, cognitive, and language—are integrated in the activities and opportunities of the program
Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Practice

• Addresses the social and cultural contexts in which children live, highlights the intentionality to connect a child’s sense of cultural continuity between home and school
Factors that Determine Types of Programs

- Age
- Philosophical ideals
- Goals
- Purpose
- Requirements

- Quality of teaching
- Physical environment
- Make-up of the Community
- Financial stability
Early Childhood Programs: Serving Diverse Needs

- Programs can be both informal and formal
- Public or private
- Full day or half day
- Academic or enrichment
- Free, fee, or funded
- Homey or school-like
Developmental Advantages of Mixed-Age Groupings

- Younger children learn from older children
- Older children learn by teaching younger children
- Children advance as they are ready
- Age and competition are de-emphasized
- Sense of responsibility toward one another
- Diverse learning styles and multiple intelligences are appreciated
- Variety and number of different models for learning and friendships
- Children grow in independence in their work and socialization
More on Mixed-Age Groupings

- Age range is usually more than one year
- Teachers and children tolerate a wider range of individual differences and behaviors
- Cooperation, sharing, and helping one another are more frequent
- Younger children participate and contribute more than they would otherwise
- The older children spontaneously help the younger children
Risks of Mixed-Age Groupings

• Potential for the older children to take over and/or overwhelm the younger children
• Possibility that the younger children will pester the older children
• Requires monitoring by the teaching staff
Looping: Continuity of Care

• Looping
  – Keeping a group of children and their teacher together in the same class for at least two years
  – Proponents
    • Offers stability and emotional security
    • Gives teachers a greater opportunity to get to know the children and be able to individualize the program for them
    • Provides more instructional time
    • Fosters social interactions
    • Enhances a sense of family and community
Looping: Continuity of Care (cont.)

– Opponents
  • Need for experienced teachers who enjoy teaching across the age levels and can work with the same children for an extended time
  • Does not fit all teachers or all children
The Core of Programs of Early Childhood Education

• Traditional Nursery School/Preschools
  – Active learning in centers
  – Relationships and social competence emphasized
  – Free play valued

• Role of the teacher
  – Children need individual attention and warm relationships with important adults
  – Teacher/child ratio is low, six to ten children per teacher

• Universal Preschools
  – To promote school readiness
Child Care Centers

- Child Care Centers
  - Routine practices and learning opportunities, usually full-day and some evening programs
  - Licensed and regulated by state agencies
  - Profit and nonprofit agencies or companies
  - Staffing issues and education regulated
  - Standards for quality care should be established nationally and locally
Family Child Care

- Small number of children cared for in the home
- Mixed-age groups present challenges yet create opportunities for modeling
- Consistency and stability of provider an issue
- Weak educational requirements for provider

- Many are unregulated
- Quality
  - Safety
  - Communication
  - Warm and attentive relationships
Head Start

• 1965 federal government wanted to end the “war on poverty”
• Targeted at risk and poverty stricken children
• Wanted to expose children to quality programs to enhance schooling and in turn end poverty
Head Start

Guiding Principles

2. Parent participation and involvement
3. Services to families: paid jobs in program, continuing education, job training, health care.
4. Community collaboration
5. Multicultural/multiracial education
6. Inclusion of children with special needs
7. Ecology of the family
Early Head Start

Principles of Early Head Start est. 1994

• Serves low income families of infants/toddlers

1. High quality
2. Prevention of developmental concerns and promotion of healthy child development
3. Positive relationships and continuity in care-giving
4. Parent involvement
5. Inclusion
Early Head Start (cont.)

Principles of Early Head Start
1. Culture
2. Comprehensiveness, flexibility, responsiveness and intensity to respond to families needs
3. Smooth transitions into Head Start programs
4. Collaboration with local communities to maximize resources available to families
Evaluating Early Intervention Effectiveness

• The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study
  – Most of the children in the high-quality early childhood program required less remedial education
  – Had better earning prospects
  – Were less costly to the welfare and justice systems, early intervention in education was shown to be cost-effective
Head Start Today

• Expanded in the 1990’s
• Model that challenges the effect of poverty
• Promotes physically and mentally healthy families
• By 2013, all Head Start head teachers will be required to have a bachelor’s degree
Variations of Early Childhood Programs

- Infant Toddler Programs
- Kindergarten
- Early Elementary/Primary Grades
- Homeschooling
Infant and Toddler Programs

- Recent demand for care
- New research suggesting programs can be more than routine care
- Relationship of the care provider is critical
- Group care needs to be scrutinized
- Care supplemental to the family life
Infant and Toddler Programs (cont.)

• Infant as an involved person with intellectual and emotional abilities
• Promote optimum development of the child
• Need for more one-to-one
• Intentional rather than discovery learning
• Quality of care is critical
• Most are of poor quality
• Lack of qualified and consistent staff
Kindergarten

- Public, private, school-related, and churches
- Half, full, alternative days
- Entry date is an issue (academic redshirting)
- Concern for academic versus developmental curriculum
- Kindergarten retention does not boost subsequent academic achievement
- Programs should be inclusive with developmentally appropriate practices
- Teachers need to be trained in child development
Early Elementary/Primary Grades

• Serving children ages six to eight years
• Integrated curriculum: basic skills, the arts, and sciences
• Poorly trained teachers in developmentally appropriate active learning create early school failure
• Instructional practices that are incompatible with how children learn
• Class size is an issue
• A child’s character is shaped during these crucial early years
Homeschooling

• A growing phenomenon over the last 20 years
• Was illegal in many states until the last 10 to 20 years; it is now legal in every state
• Today, approximately 1.5 million students are home schooled
• Nearly 83 percent of parents cite religion as the primary reason for homeschooling
• Other reasons include better education and poor learning environments in public schools
Homeschooling (cont.)

• Educational philosophies
• Range from pre-packaged curricula to “relaxed home schooling” (involving real-life projects as teaching opportunities)
• Education often tailored to the child’s interested and abilities
• About 7 percent use no curriculum plans – “unschooling”
Homeschooling (cont.)

Downsides

• Regulations vary widely regarding teaching qualifications, evaluation of student work, and accountability
• Fewer socialization opportunities
• Fewer sports, arts, and extracurricular opportunities
• Great time commitment for teacher-parent
• Students insulated from the issues of society
• Loss of revenue for the public schools
Indicators of Quality

• The teacher-child ratio; that is, the number of children cared for by each staff member
• The total size of the group or class
• The education, experience, and training of the staff
High Quality Programs = DAP

• Relationships
• Curriculum
• Teaching
• Assessment of child progress
• Health and safety

• Teachers
• Families
• Community relationships
• Physical environment
• Leadership management
Three Studies on Quality

- Carolina Abecedarian Project (1999)
  - Tracked students from infancy to age 21
  - Showed those in high-quality early childhood program were more likely not to have to repeat a grade or be placed in special education programs
  - Also showed participants in the quality ECE programs were more likely to attend college, have better jobs, and delay parenthood
• The Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study (CQCOS, 1995)
  – Found that average child care is mediocre in quality and can threaten children’s emotional and intellectual development
  – Children who receive good quality child care have better social and cognitive skills in kindergarten and beyond
  – Closer relationships with child care teachers led to better behavior and social skills through second grade
Three Studies on Quality (cont.)

- Child Parent Centers in Chicago
  - Longest follow-up ever
  - Participants showed higher level of education, socioeconomic status, and better jobs than those that did not attend an early childhood program that offered comprehensive services to children and families
  - Participants showed lower levels of substance abuse, grade retention, drop-out rates, arrest and incarceration than those that did not attend an early childhood program that offered comprehensive services to children and families
Issues in Child Care

• Lack of affordable quality care, especially for low-income families
• Lack of state requirements for training and education of providers
• High staff turnover due to wages and conditions of employment
• Under-regulated programs for staff/child ratios
• Lack of a qualified and educated workforce
The Process of Assessing Programs

• Includes:
  – Curriculum
  – Materials and equipment
  – The environment
  – Children’s behavior
  – Teacher effectiveness
Why Program Assessment is Important

- To gain an overview of:
  - Children’s progress
  - Teacher’s performance
  - Curriculum development
  - The financial structure
  - Family involvement
  - The community at large
  - The governing organization of the school

- To establish accountability
- To make improvements
- To acquire accreditation (to be affiliated with a larger organization)
How to Evaluate a Program

• Define objectives
• Choose evaluation instrument to meet objectives
  – NAEYC's accreditation guidelines
  – Environmental Rating Scale
    • (ECERS-R)
    • (ITERS-R)
    • (SACERS)
    • (FCCERS-R)
Essential Steps Before You Begin

- Set goals
- Define expectations
- Be inclusive
- Define the objectives
- Choose an evaluation instrument
Implement the Findings

• Once evaluation is complete
  – A process is put into place for addressing issues
  – A calendar is established to create a timeline for improvement
  – Appropriate staff members are assigned responsibilities for making changes
  – Process begins anew
Evaluation Plan

- Evaluations are only as useful as the implementation plan
  - Identify specific concerns
  - Determine areas of growth and potential development
  - Blueprint for the future