

CHLD 101: Introduction to Early Childhood Education

Family Services at the Child Development Lab

Learning Outcomes	7.Explain the role and responsibilities of personnel in an early childhood setting in ensuring the diverse development and learning needs of all children and families are met, in accordance with state and federal mandates
DEC Recommended Practices	F7. Practices, supports, and resources support family participation in obtaining desired resources and supports to strengthen parenting competence and confidence. F9. Supports and resources provide families with information, competency-enhancing experiences, and participatory opportunities to strengthen family functioning and promote parenting knowledge and skills.
NAEYC Standards	2b: Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal, relationships. 2c: Involving families and communities in their children’s development and learning.

You will be returning to the Child Development Lab for this assignment to learn from the Program Assistant about the comprehensive services the lab school offers children and families. The purpose of this field experience is to discover the provisions that the Child Development Lab has made to ensure that families are involved in their child’s development and learning.

To prepare for the field experience:

- Review Chapter 3: Issues and Services in Early Childhood Education.
- Return to the web page for the CDL. Available from: <http://www.heartland.edu/cdl/>
Your goal in looking at the website is to explore what practices, supports, and resources the Child Development Lab has for families.
- If your instructor does not schedule this as a class activity, you will need to call (309) 268-8210 and schedule an appointment. Indicate to the staff that you need to meet with the Program Assistant and have a tour of the center.

Part I: Center Visit and Interview

- Observe the center from the Reception Area, Family Pods and observation windows so that you can watch any families that may be present.
- Take **objective** notes on what you observe. Also be sure to take detailed notes on the information shared by the Program Assistant regarding center practices supporting families. Be sure to take careful note of the following:
 - Questions pertaining to environment:
 - What environmental and interaction strategies are used to support family involvement?
 - What did you see as the environment’s strengths in providing services to families?

- What did you see as the environment’s challenges in providing services to families?
 - Questions pertaining to staff:
 - What methods were used by the staff to communicate with the families?
 - How was the staff interacting with the families?
 - What evidence did you see or hear about that the staff is attempting to “strengthen parenting competence and confidence”?
 - How is the staff attempting to ensure that families are involved in their child’s learning and development?
 - Would you suggest any strategies to support stronger staff engagement with the families?
- Ask for a copy of the Parents’ Booklet. It will help to explain center policies and guide you in responses to the Reflection questions.

Part II: Reflection Based on your observation completed during Part I, please respond to each of the following:

- Questions pertaining to families:
 - Describe the diversity-related characteristics of families within the center.
 - How were families interacting with the environment?
 - Did you feel there was a sense of community?
 - Did the families seem comfortable with the teachers/staff/each other?
 - Would you suggest any strategies to support further family engagement?
- Links to your learning:
 - In what ways did your field experience complement what you have learned in the course?
 - In what ways did your field experience contradict what you have learned in the course?
 - How do observed practices reflect evidence-based practices you have learned about in the course?

After you complete your field experience:

- Submit your objective notes collected in Part I and your Reflection developed in Part II to your instructor.