

ADVANCED DIPLOMA IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE)

ECE 201: STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

MODULE 7: STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Staff training and development is essential for teachers and trainers to acquire and improve their knowledge and skills in delivering lessons, and in general child care. This is especially so as many of these teachers and trainers had no formal training in working with young children. All early childhood educators need to be thoroughly familiar with early childhood practices and philosophy to implement effective programmes. One of the major features by which quality is measured in early childhood education is training received by the caregivers. It has been found that child educators with specialized training in child development and instructional techniques tended to provide higher quality care. Thus good training and proper development of staff leads to better and more effective interactions between children and staff, which in turn leads to improvement in children's cognitive, social and psychomotor learning. You must therefore be familiar with the idea of training and development of staff in early childhood education.

As teachers develop on the job, they pass through many stages until they finally mature as effective child trainers or teachers. As a teacher of children, you have many important roles to play. You must know these roles and how to play them. To be successful in the field, you need to possess the required professional qualities. Your activities, attitude and conduct must be guided by a set of professional ethics.

UNIT 1: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES TO STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

SECTION 1: CONCEPT OF STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

You should be aware that qualified, well-trained and stable staff members are an essential requirement for high quality early childhood education. It is imperative therefore for you as an early childhood educator to be well trained through programmes such as this. It is important also for you to improve your skills on the job.

Staff development often involves one type of training or another. The development should not be arbitrary. It should be based on specific needs. Trainings given must be effective and good. There is therefore the need to ensure that a staff development programme does not fail by evaluating such programmes from time to time. Depending on the need and the nature of the participants, staff training and development can be carried out using various approaches. You will be learning about these various aspects of training and development in this unit.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. explain the concept of staff training and development.
2. enumerate the needs upon which staff development programmes can be based.
3. describe the different strategies or approaches of carrying out staff development.
4. list the qualities of a good staff development programme.
5. explain the importance of carrying out periodic evaluation of staff training and development programmes.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Staff development is a systematic process of training aimed at improving knowledge, skills, attitudes and performance of the individual and institution. It should be such that there is improvement in individual skill leading to improvement in service delivery. In the context of education, staff development is seen in terms of benefit to and improvement of the trainers and teachers. The content must however be aligned to learner and institutional goals.

There are different approaches/types to staff development:

These include:

- (a) Induction/orientation
- (b) General basic training (e.g. basic courses or skills taught in colleges and universities).
- (c) Professional training/conferences/workshops.

There are different approaches or strategies for carrying out staff development:

1. **Institutional approach:** this is the conventional way of educational delivery. It involves institutions of learning providing courses or training sessions which can lead to the acquiring of academic qualifications. They can also carry out staff induction, information literacy, projects and research.
2. **Distance learning approach:** is an alternative mode of educational delivery leading to acquiring academic qualification. Learning is mainly off-campus but rather through the use of media and information technology services.
3. **Partnerships between specialists and staff:** staff developers and staff, interactions can focus upon learning process, learning outcomes, materials preparation and production. Also inter-institution, and international collaboration in training to achieve change in the face of globalization can be used.
4. **Formal structured mentoring:** is a situation in which a junior or less experienced staff can be teamed with a more experienced one (mentor) for advice and assistance in developing and delivering the lessons and other care-activities of children. Mentoring can provide long-term and continuing support to improve teaching and learning. They learn by watching and emulating their mentors and by obtaining guidance and counseling from them.
5. **Internship:** in which the staff is assigned to assist a more experienced colleague. In teaching, it is often in form of practice teaching.
6. **Newsletters and conferences:** where there can be sharing of colleagues' experience and keeping them up-to-date.
7. **Workshop approach:** is aimed at developing not merely the participants' knowledge but also their vocational competence and is based on carrying out activities.

Staff development programme should be planned on the basis of the needs the learners and the institution.

Such needs include:

- (a) Orientation for new staff entering the job,
- (b) Preparation of staff for newly defined or redefined post,
- (c) preparation of staff for a likely future responsibility,
- (d) preparation of staff for external and internal change,
- (e) providing new expertise for the teaching-learning process e.g. in computer training,
- (f) benefiting from the results of active research,
- (g) designing and employing criteria to monitor teaching and learning processes and outcomes,
- (h) promoting the development of the learning institution,
- (i) involving agencies in collaboration for the development of programmes and services,

- (j) development and mastering of teaching techniques,
- (k) learning to design, improvise and use instructional materials.

A good staff development programme must have the 3Ps

- (a) **Purpose:** which expresses the general reason for such a programme.
- (b) **Policy:** explaining the goals and provides the guidelines for planning the activities, clarifies the responsibilities of graduates and identifies the resources required and how they will be procured.
- (a) **Plan:** consists of details of what will be done to translate the purpose and policy into action.

A staff development programme can fail if:

- (a) the trainers' (i.e. teachers) lack adequate knowledge and skills
- (b) the organizers fail to prepare properly.
- (c) the content of learning is inappropriate.
- (d) the participants are unqualified.
- (e) duration of the events for the intended objectives is inappropriate.
- (f) attendance by participants is erratic.
- (g) there is a long time-lag before applying the new learning.
- (h) the training content is too remote from the real-work reality.

It is important to evaluate any staff development and training programme in order to have feedback on:

- (a) the effectiveness of the training methods and approaches.
- (b) the extent of the achievement of the objectives set by the trainers and the participants.
- (c) the extent to which the needs identified are met and reflected in improved work practice.
- (d) Participants' satisfaction with the training programme.

Staff development usually involves training. A training need arises

- (a) when there is an observable gap between the individual staff's present knowledge or competence and the standards identified as necessary to do the job effectively.
- (b) it can also be when an individual expresses preference for a particular training event or opportunity.
- (c) it can be at level of the need of the institution.
- (d) at the level of the special needs of the learners.

Characteristics of a good and effective training:

- (a) The needs must be accurately diagnosed initially.
- (b) It must lead to the solution of identified problems.
- (c) The objectives must reflect the needs of individual learners, the job or the organization.
- (d) Provision of adequate resources/facilities for the training.
- (e) Selection of participants must be appropriate using clear criteria.
- (f) Regular attendance by participants.
- (g) Provide opportunities for participants to discuss their training experiences with others in the schools/daycares/institutions.
- (h) Build positive expectations and motivations in the participants.
- (i) The learning structure, content, media and methods used must incorporate the sound principles of learning.
- (j) Must be cost-effective.
- (k) Must have follow-up plans for evaluating impact.
- (l) Must possess the required environment for effectiveness.

ACTIVITY I

1. Describe the various approaches for carrying out staff development
2. Give six reasons why a staff development programme can fail
3. Describe the characteristics of a good and effective training

PERSPECTIVES ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

As a teacher you should be familiar with the principles that underlie classroom practices. Your behaviours and practices in the classroom must be consistent with these principles. The principles have led to the development of some models of learning which can guide you in choosing your teaching strategies. There is no ideal theoretical model. Rather, teachers should be trained to integrate many theoretical positions. The curriculum should be designed in such a way as to encourage teachers to do this integration.

1. Naturalist Model

This model assumes that intelligence is fixed at birth and that the rate of development is predetermined. Thus, there is little need for early stimulation since genetic inheritance sets the limits of the child's intellectual development and rate of growth. Educators holding this view believe that the child can only be supported in his intellectual and physical growth.

This model stresses that the teacher's role should be that of encouraging self-confidence, spontaneity, curiosity and self-discipline.

According to this model as a teacher you should:

- a. create a conducive environment in which the child can learn about himself through uninterrupted play and exploration.
- b. be a passive observer as the child controls much of his own learning.
- c. rarely intrude upon the child even when he/she demonstrates confusion in play/learning.
- d. Use non-directive statements in communicating with the child.
- e. evaluate the child's learning within his/her individual potential.
- f. not take on the responsibility of providing exercises to correct the child's misconceptions.

2. **Behavioural Model**

This model holds that although the upper limits of the child's potential are determined by heredity, the rate of intellectual development can be altered by the influence of the environment (Bloom, 1964 and Kirk, 1958). The major task of the teacher in this setting is the transmission of knowledge through direct instruction and serving as a model. The child is taught through a stimulus-response paradigm. The stimulus (a question or problem) is provided by the teacher, the child responds with the correct answer which the teacher reinforces. For example,

Teacher: This is a book. What is this?

Child: It is a book.

Teacher: Good, clap for her.

The desire of the child to learn is externally motivated by rewards or avoidance of punishment. The goal of learning is improved academic achievement. The curriculum is fixed and the child molded to it. Success in the cognitive domain is the all important thing for the child, with little room is left for spontaneous play, rather the child's play is adult-initiated and prescribed.

Strategies for Teaching: *The teacher*

- (a) makes most of the decisions on what and how skills will be learned by the child.
- (b) sets the stimulus (chooses the content and activity) expects one correct answer based on his/her perceptions and rewards children that meet the expectations.
- (c) encourages the use of workbooks and programmed texts.
- (d) functions as controller and transmitter of information.
- (e) evaluates the child's learning based on their conformity to his/her teacher's standard of correctness.

(3) **Developmental Model**

This model identifies the child as an information processor with a capacity for storing vast amounts of information from the environment.

The child is actively involved in his own learning, he/she both manipulates and is manipulated by the environment. Learning is dependent on experiences from the environment. The child can learn well with pictorial and linguistic symbols as well as actual concrete objects. They gain knowledge through concrete and mental operations on objects. Incidental learning is taken seriously. The teacher provides appropriate challenges in the environment to the child's present level of operation such that the child can learn effectively. Spontaneous, self-initiated play is vital to the child's learning in this model. Play allows active manipulation of the environment and learning through social interaction.

Strategies for Teaching. *The teacher should:*

- (a) emphasize the value of the child's active manipulation of materials and ideas.
- (b) function as an observer of children's individual activities as well as a facilitator providing an appropriate environment.
- (c) make learning a process of mutual decision making between him/her and the child.
- (d) use open-ended teaching strategies (e.g. questioning strategy).
- (e) provide the required experiences and challenges to help the child achieve preset and incidental goals.
- (f) support numerous responses and solutions to problems

ACTIVITY II

1. Describe the three models of child development
2. Enumerate the teaching strategies recommended by each of the models

GLOSSARY

Strategy: The means by which one chooses to reach an objective through a plan of action or policy.

Globalization: Covering or affecting the whole world.

REFERENCES

Association for Childhood Education International (1998). **Preparation of Early Childhood Education Teachers.** <http://www.udel.edu/bateman/acei/prepec.htm>

Bloom, B. (1964). **Stability and Change in Human Characteristics.** New York. John Wiley and Sons, Inc.

- Hunt, J.M. (1966). **The Epigenesis of Intrinsic Motivation and Early Cognitive Learning.** In *Current Research in Motivation.* Ralph Haker (ed.) New York, Holt, Rinhalt and Winston. p. 335-370.
- Kaplan-Sanoff, M. (1998). **Theory and Practice: A Model for Staff Training and Development in Early Childhood Education.** In Kaplan-Snoff, M. and Yablans Magid R. (eds.) *Exploring Readings in Early Theory and Childhood Practice.* New York, Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc. p. 435-442.
- Lewis, R. (1998), **Staff Development in Conventional Institutions Moving Towards Open Learning.** In Latchem, C. and Lockwood, F. (eds.). *Staff Development in Open and Flexible Learning.* London, Routledge. p. 23-32.
- Robinson, B. (1981). **A Strategic Perspective on Staff Development for Open and Distance Learning** in Latchem... p. 33-44.

UNIT 2: DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHERS AND STAFF

SECTION 1: DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

The change in the Nigerian work style of parents especially women put more children into some form of non-parental care everyday. The people who provide this care must be educated on the developmental and psychological needs of children. During the course of their careers, they must not remain as novice but must pass through the various developmental sequences in their professional growth. You must be able to identify your stage of development and ensure that you move up the ladder.

Each stage has its own characteristic features. In order to move up the stages, there are some specific training needs that can help you. Once you are exposed to these trainings, then you do not have to spend a long time on a stage before moving on to the next one. A good knowledge of these stages can guide the head teacher or ministry in assessing and evaluating the teachers and staff, designing required training and ultimately improving the quality of instruction and care that is provided for the children.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

1. list the developmental stages of preschool teachers;
2. list the general characteristics of the stages;
3. describe the developmental stages for pre-service teachers;
4. describe the characteristics and training needs of teachers in the four stages for in-service teachers;

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

There are various models of developmental stages for teachers. Individual teachers may vary greatly in the length of time spent in each of the four stages. These stages are distinct phases that teachers experience. They depend upon experience gained over time and are hierarchical in nature

Developmental stages address different but interrelated domains like:

- (a) cognitive
- (b) conceptual
- (c) ego
- (d) inter-personal development
- (e) values or morals.

The characteristics of the stages include:

- (a) distinct or qualitative differences in structures that perform the same function at various points in development.
- (b) different structures that form an invariant sequence in individual development.

- (c) different and sequential modes of thought that form a structural whole.

When a person moves from one stage to another, there are changes in the following:

- (a) quality
- (b) competence
- (c) form

Developmental stages for pre-service teachers is based on their concern.

- (a) Stage one in which the pre-service teachers continue to identify with the pupils in the observed class rather than themselves as teacher.
- (b) Stage two addresses an early concern about how to survive as teachers.
- (c) Stage three, includes limitations of the teaching context where the teachers are concerned about their own performance but not yet about whether the pupils are learning.
- (d) Stage four, the teachers become concerned about pupil learning and begin to see pupils as individuals with individual needs.

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES FOR IN-SERVICE TEACHERS

There are four stages: survival, consolidation, renewal and maturity.

Stage 1: Survival

At this stage, the teachers' concern is whether they can survive, how they can cope on a daily basis, questioning their personal and professional competence and their desire to teach. Their encounters with parents and young children provokes their anxieties. They focus on themselves and their own needs, and have little understanding of their students and their needs. Characteristics of teachers in this stage.

- (a) Teachers do not take responsibility for what occurs in their classroom. They may try to rationalize their inability to teach effectively by not acknowledging that they have a problem or by blaming the school context or the students. Thus, these teachers tend to blame the students, head-teacher, the lack of materials or anything but themselves when they are not able to accomplish the task of teaching.
- (b) The teachers do not believe that they have any control over their teaching context.
- (c) They do not have clear routines in the classroom nor consistent procedures for managing students behaviour.
- (d) They tend to react to situations that occur rather than prevent potential problems. They are self-centered.

- (e) They prepare their lessons and go through them as if they are scripts that cannot be changed.
- (f) They do not recognize students' reactions to the lesson.
- (g) They make no modifications to address the differing needs of individual students in their classroom.
- (h) Their teaching style is often teacher-directed with students in passive roles rather than active participation.

What training survival teachers need to develop. Teachers at this stage need the following to be provided on site in the classroom: Support, understanding, encouragement, reassurance, comfort and guidance. Specifically they need

- (a) Instruction in specific skills and insight into the complex causes of behaviour.
- (b) Suggestions for the specific situations they are experiencing at that time.
- (c) Resources to help them develop and present their lessons.
- (d) Guidance as to how materials can be used to meet objectives.
- (e) Management strategies that can be used to create a positive learning environment.
- (f) Provide multiple options that can be applied as situations arise.

Stage 2: Consolidation

By the end of the first year, the teachers usually decided that they can survive. They are now ready to consolidate the gains made during the first year. at this stage, teachers begin to focus on instruction and the needs of individual children. He looks out to find answers to the question of how children can learn and overcome problems that affect learning.

Characteristics

- (a) can identify individual children whose behaviour departs form the pattern of most others children.
- (b) have lessons that meet the needs of the students in the class.
- (c) focus on unique problems and special needs of children.
- (d) majority of the students in class are well-managed.
- (e) the instructional activities meet the needs of the average students in the class.

What consolidation teachers need to develop?

- (a) on-site assistance, access to specialists, colleague advice, consultants and advisers.
- (b) exchange of information and ideas with more experienced colleagues and also with teachers in similar stages of development.
- (c) provision of a wide range of resources to meet the specific needs of children in their classes.
- (d) access to information about opportunities for staff development workshops or course works.

Stage 3: Renewal

Teachers generally reach this stage at about the third or fourth year of teaching. They get tired of monotonous way of doing the same things and are interested in new developments and changes. They have become competent in the practice of teaching children. Activities and patterns previously established have become routine and boring.

Characteristics of Renewal Teachers

- (a) have mastered the management strategies and explored and conquered various instructional strategies.
- (b) their students are actively engaged in tasks that are appropriate to their individual needs.
- (c) are always striving to improve their classes and are continually trying new methods and teaching patterns.
- (d) curious to learn about new materials, techniques, approaches, ideas etc.
- (e) interested in professional development opportunities
- (f) are interested in sharing ideas with colleagues.
- (g) are self-motivated

What Renewal Teachers Need

- (a) Regional and national conferences and workshops
- (b) Membership of professional associations and participation in their meetings.
- (c) Opportunities for wide reading from magazines, journals and viewing films.
- (d) Visits to demonstration projects, teachers' centers etc.

Stage 4: Maturity

Teachers can reach this stage after three or more years of teaching. This final stage occurs when teachers begin to ask questions of themselves and their teaching that focus on insights, perspectives and belief of teaching children. They are still interested in new ideas and resources; however, they begin to ask deeper and more abstract questions about their philosophy of teaching and the impact they may be making in and out of the school setting.

Characteristics of a Mature Teacher

- (a) has come to terms with himself/herself as a teacher.
- (b) now has enough perspective to ask deeper and more abstract questions about issues like his/her philosophical roots, nature of learning, how educational decisions are made, how schools can change the society, teaching as a profession and so on.
- (c) tend to make excellent mentors because they have experienced all of the developmental stages of teachers and understand the needs of teachers moving through these stages.

What Mature Teachers Need

- (a) Participation at seminars conferences institutes, courses and degree programmes.
- (b) reading of books, journals, magazines.
- (c) interaction with other educators.

Why is the Knowledge about Developmental Stages of Teachers Important.

- (a) A consultant/ministry official/head teacher's knowledge of the stages and each teacher's place within it will help to determine the type of intervention and assistance required by the teacher.
- (b) It will help to explain the teacher's actions in the classroom.
- (c) To guide his or her reflection about what has occurred within the lessons.
- (d) To identify the needs of the teachers.

INTRODUCTION

One cannot assume that a teacher's years of experience are directly related to the teacher's developmental stage as individual teachers move through these stages at different rates. Also, passing through the stages is not independent of the other conditions of one's life like personal factors (home, life crisis, death, economic, social factors).

Other factors that can affect development include movement from one school setting to another (e.g. rural to urban).

EVALUATION OF DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

Formal and informal methods can be used to examine teacher characteristics that will indicate the stage of development.

There are formal assessment instruments that have been developed. Informal methods can be designed through observation, documenting behaviours and interactions that may fall into the stages described.

ACTIVITY I

1. List five domains addressed by the development stages.
2. Enumerates the general characteristics of the development stages.
3. Describe the four developmental stages for pre-service teachers.
4. Describe the four developmental stages for in-service teachers.
5. List the characteristics and training needs of teachers in each of the developmental stages for in-service.
6. Give five reasons why knowledge about the developmental stages of teachers is important.
7.
 - (a) How can one evaluate a teacher's developmental stage?
 - (b) What stage can you assess yourself to be?
 - (c) Determine the developmental stage of another teacher in your institution with reasons.

LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

There are professional skills and competences that professionals need in order to work with children. These professionals (teachers, trainers, care-givers) who constitute the staff in early childhood education can increase their knowledge and skills in the content areas through training/education. The content areas include children's socio-economic backgrounds, special needs and education setting. There are various levels of acquisition of these skills and how much one acquires determines to a large extent the level of development. Early care professionals become increasingly specialized and developed as they achieve higher levels of formal education.

It has been found that there is a direct relationship between professionals' level of training and quality of work with children especially in terms of the effect on children's language development, social skills and learning. Thus, a good knowledge or the level of development is required to enable you to grow as an early childhood educator. as an early childhood educator. You do not need to grow only in terms of your knowledge and skills but also with relation to your ego or self-concept. All of these affect the quality of your teaching.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this section, you should be able to:

1. describe the levels of professional development of early childhood educators.
2. identify the characteristics of the level of ongoing professional growth.
3. enumerate the developmental stages of ego in an early childhood teacher.
4. identify the leadership characteristics an early childhood staff should possess.

LEVELS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There are five identified levels of development in which you can find early childhood education professionals. These levels can be identified based on the characteristics exhibited by the teacher or trainer. These characteristics determine the quality of the teacher's output and very importantly the overall development of the child.

These levels are:

Level 1

- a. Enjoys working with children and models a positive attitude.
- b. Exhibits good hygiene and personal appearance.
- c. Demonstrates good work habits.
- d. Supports and complies with regulations and licensing standards.

- e. Values reflection on teaching and learning, using staff interaction, training/education, and journals.
- f. Is aware of the professional code of ethics for early care and education and its main topics.
- g. Behaves ethically, maintaining confidentiality and impartiality.
- h. Shows commitment to the programme's goals.

Level 2

- a. Manages demands of personal and professional commitments.
- b. Uses problem-solving skills in programme.
- c. Interacts in a manner reflecting value of self and respect for others.
- d. Performs well as team member.
- e. Promotes quality in child-care services.
- f. Demonstrates a commitment to professional code of ethics.

Level 3

- a. Routinely engages in reflection of teaching practices and the behaviour of children.
- b. Is familiar with current trends in early childhood education.
- c. Articulates professional code of ethics
- d. Recognizes potentially unethical practices.
- e. Participates in programme decision-making
- f. Makes programme decisions based on professional standards.
- g. Describes relationship between theory and practice.

Level 4

- a. Participates in group problem solving of ethical dilemmas.
- b. Articulates personal philosophy of early childhood education based on knowledge of child development and best practices.
- c. Articulates and uses a professional code of ethics for making professional decisions.
- d. Recognizes causes and symptoms of "burnout" and develops strategies to prevent it.
- e. Evaluates current trends in early childhood education and revises practice as appropriate.

Level 5

- a. Initiates and mediates group problem solving of ethical dilemmas.
- b. Keeps up to-date on research and policy relevant to early care and education.

- c. Revises practice according to research.
- d. Advocates for children and families.

Levels of Ongoing Professional Growth

These are activities you must carry out as a teachers/trainer to ensure that you keep growing professional are able to move from one level to another as identified about.

Level 1

- a. Seeks out knowledge to improve practice.
- b. evaluates his or her own performance and sets goals to advance knowledge of field.

Level 2

- a. Is aware of professional resources.
- b. Takes advantage of opportunities to improve competence, both for personal and professional growth and for the benefit of children and families.
- c. Accepts advice and constructive criticism to improve practice.
- d. Actively participates in professional associations.
- e. Follows accreditation standards.

Level 3

- a. Uses professional resources to improve practice.
- b. Seeks out professional relationships to enhance professional growth (e.g., securing a mentor).
- c. Develops and carries out a personal professional development plan.
- d. Works toward credentials, degrees, and/or programme accreditation.

Level 4

- a. Articulates a professional value system and implements ongoing professional self-reflection.
- b. Actively participates in career development.
- c. Integrates knowledge of historical, philosophical, psychological, and social foundations of education, including early childhood education, into planning and decision-making.
- d. Serves as a mentor.

Level 5

- a. Explores models of professional development and evaluates/assesses opportunities to promote others' professional growth.

- b. Designs staff development opportunities for colleagues.
- c. Disseminates knowledge at local, state, regional, and national conferences.
- d. Identifies change process and develops practices to support professional growth.
- e. Recognizes the differences in adult and early childhood learning styles and applies knowledge to practice.

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF EGO OR SELF-CONCEPT

The self-concept of a teacher has been associated with the teaching styles in the classroom. A teacher needs to develop in his self-concept to be able to function effectively in the classroom.

There are identified stages of self-development.

Concrete stage: is self-protective and would be likely to have an authoritarian classroom with a very rigid system of rules. The classroom may be run like a military class, and it is clear that students are at the bottom of the power structure. A teacher in the middle stage of Conformist, has the most common kind of classroom we see, where social acceptance is important, and students and teachers are expected to conform to the rules established in the classroom. It is important in this classroom that each person respect his or her responsibility for following the rules, and students' status is defined by their ability to follow these rules. If a teacher is in the Conscience stage, they run an efficient, effective classroom here there is concern for interpersonal communication. The teacher and students are concerned with achievement, rational thinking, mutual concern for communication, and planning and coordinating the various tasks in the classroom. The classroom of a teacher in the Autonomous stage is usually like a learning or growth center where there is a great deal of flexibility, creativity, and change. The classroom is collaborative where control, authority, and respect for individual contributions are respected and valued. Students have a great deal of choice and are able to make decisions about how their learning will occur and how they best add their talents to the classroom structure.

LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD STAFF

The highest level of development for the early childhood staff is when he/she becomes a leader and is influential to the learners, parents, other teachers/staff, community and even the government. Along with his/her school and normal classroom activities, such a staff must be able to:

- a. recognize and model professional behaviour.
- b. identify community needs that affect children.
- c. initiates problem solving and conflict resolution for school and staff.
- d. Explains how government policies affect early childhood care and education.
- e. Holds office in a professional association.

- f. Serves as a spokesperson to the community and the media on early care and education issues.
- g. Develop and carry out advocacy plan.
- h. Provides a work culture that fosters staff initiative to solve problems and resolve conflict.
- i. Serves on professional boards and committee.

ACTIVITY I

- 1. Describe the 5 levels of development for early childhood professionals.
- 2. List the characteristics of the five levels of ongoing professional growth.
- 3. Describe the developmental stages of ego of an early childhood teacher and the implications for classroom practice.
- 4. Enumerate 10 leadership characteristics an early childhood staff should strive to attain.

GLOSSARY

Teachers' centers are places where teachers can meet to help one another learn or relearn skills, techniques and methods.

Philosophy

Conceptual

REFERENCES

- Katz, G.L. (1981). **Developmental Stages of Preschool Teachers**. In Kaplan-Sanoff, M. and Yablans-Magid, R. (eds.) *Exploring Readings in Early Theory and Practice*. New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. p 479-482.
- Stroot, S., Keil, V., Stedman, P., Lohr, L., Faust, R., Schnecariol-RASNDALL, > < Sullivan, A., Czerniak, G., Kukchcunski, J., Orel, N., & Richter, M. (1998), *Peer Assistance and Review Guidebook*. Columbus, O.H. Ohio Department of Education.
- Kansas and Missouri (2001) *Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals*. First Edition.

UNIT 3: TEACHERS ROLE IN EARLYCHILDHOOD EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood institutions have the responsibility of creating a stimulating learning environment in which all children are encouraged to explore their full potential. The teachers have major roles to play in this setting to ensure the actualization of this goal. The teacher has every opportunity to make the world a better place. Every society has an established set of virtues and vice's and it takes conscious and unconscious measures at the various levels of education to promote the virtues and eliminate the vices. Parents and teachers are central in providing an atmosphere to their children which is congenial to the development of higher virtues. Thus, as well as teaching the contents of the curriculum, the teacher must help the child to develop his or her full potential.

The teacher is very important to the quality of learning that a child is exposed to in the buildings, library, laboratory etc. It is the teacher that makes school setting, all these work. How much the set goals and objectives of education is achieved depends largely on the teacher. Thus, the roles the teacher will perform are in many capacities and forms, all of which he/she must be aware of and must be effectively carried out to ensure the overall success of the child and achievement of the noble goals of education.

Although, the child is the central figure of any programme in the school, the teachers have to be in control of whole lot of things in the school organizing and directing many school activities and so they must be clearly aware of their roles. You as a teacher must continually re-define what you do in school and constantly re-examine yourself to achieve success of the pupils based on the identified roles.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this section, you should be able to:

1. describe the roles of teachers in early childhood education
2. identify the roles carried out by teachers in their early childhood institutions.

ROLE OF TEACHER

In order to carry out child-centered programmes, you as a teacher have major roles and responsibilities to carry out in the school. Thus you must free yourself from old stereotypes that might limit what you do with and for the children. The roles of teachers are ultimately to carry out the function of a school which is to teach learners to think critically and analytically to cooperate, communicate, compete, assume responsibility for themselves, solve problems and learn. The cardinal duty of the teacher is o assist the students to learn and so the various identified roles of the teacher are such that help students to learn. The teacher severally carry out many roles. These multidimensional roles should be carried out with a lot of patience, kindness, energy, tolerance, empathy and sympathetic understanding of children's problem.

1. **A Mediator of Learning/A Facilitator**

The traditional role of the teacher is helping their students to learn. They expose learners to the curriculum using various instructional materials and techniques. They provide learning experiences that can lead to desired changes in behaviours or they help to disseminate information to learners. They also evaluate whatever learning has taken place. They serve to impart knowledge, skills and habits on the children. Thus as facilitators can ensure organization and presentation of their lessons, provide good learning environment.

2. **Facilitator**

As facilitators of learning, we need to give up some of the control that accompanies the traditional role of “teacher”. Instead of being dispensers of knowledge, we should serve as guides to the children in our care. Therefore, the facilitator is deeply interested in the classroom environment, how it is set up and how it affects individual children. The role of facilitator is time consuming and requires additional planning and research hours to seek out the most current information about children and learning and to reflect on how educational theory relates to our particular programmes.

Communicator

We are all inherently social beings. We seek contact with others and along with this contact comes the exchange of thoughts and ideas. The communicator role is probably the least developed in our profession. Because of time constraints, we often “just do the job”; we seldom have the opportunity for professional conversations. We must make an effort to talk to one another on a regular basis. In addition to talking, we need to listen. Listening should comprise half of the communication process, but always seems to be less. By minimizing the use of listening, we send hidden messages to the children indicating that our thoughts are more important than theirs.

4. **Community Leadership**

A teacher must be a good citizen, a community leader with pervasive influence beyond the confines of the classroom. He must serve as the surrogate of the middle-class morality as reflected in his speech, good manners, honesty, responsibility and tolerance.

5. **A Disciplinarian**

A teacher must help to mould the character of the children as it is the children of today. This however, should not be done through the easiest means of fear, for this is full of dangerous consequences for the pupils. It is better to correct with love and understanding. They maintain a level of order and good conduct in the school. They reinforce desirable behaviours.

6. **A Surrogate of Middle-Class Morality**

The teacher behaves in such a way as to reflect what is expected of one in the society. His role is reflected in portraying correct speech, good manners, modesty, prudence, honesty, responsibility, friendliness and tolerance. He should also have refined tastes and sophistication. He should be a good citizen. The learners should see and learn these ideals from you as their teacher.

7. **A Parent Substitute**

The teacher supplements what the parents do at home. He mentors and develops not only the affective domain of the child, but is highly interested in the social, affective and psychomotor domains of the child. During the child's stay in the school, he/she ensures the safety, good health and happiness of the child.

8. **Storyteller**

Many children come from backgrounds where family stories are not passed on or valued. Even in homes where children are given rich learning experiences, quality time and the opportunity to know and learn from extended family members are limited. I often wonder if we are losing the value of memories. If storytelling is a skill that is being lost, perhaps our classrooms are the perfect arena to reintroduce that talent.

9. **Researcher**

Early childhood professionals are in a perfect position to help further our knowledge base about educating young children. We have massive amounts of information about the way children learn, but lack knowledge on how particular populations react in a specific environment. These things cannot be determined anywhere except in existing classrooms. Using data from authentic situations will help to build new bodies of knowledge. A major role for teachers is the ability to conduct useful educational researches into various parameters of the classroom. They should be able to diagnose problems in their classes and proper solutions to them.

10. **Model**

The teacher should serve as a good example for the child to follow. He should also be a confidant to the child. He/she must be able to guide and counsel the children on academic personal and vocational matters. This role may be the most significant one we undertake. We should not use the adage "Do what I say, not what I do". Today's children seldom accept something as fact. Because of the multitude of experiences they are exposed to at an early age, they seem to be more sophisticated, more alert, and certainly better able to question adult practices. Therefore, it is vital that we do as we want them to do. We will discuss this into details in the next section.

11. **Supervisor of Co-curricular Activities**

The teacher should not just take interest in activities inside the classroom, he/she must help the children to integrate other school experiences outside the classroom. They

must ensure that children have an all-round development. Thus, they must engage children in activities like sporting activities, quiz competition, debates and music. They should also encourage children to be involved in social organizations like red-cross, girls guide, boys' scout. In this way children can grow up to be good citizens.

12. **Keeping of School Records**

There are some important academic and administrative records that the teacher needs to keep in the school. Like the diaries, marks' book, attendance register, lesson notes, students' report sheets, master report sheet, syllabus and marks book. Examples of administrative records includes the National Policy on Education, admission register, school time table, staff movement book, visitors book, punishment book and minutes' book (staff and parents-staff).

Record keeping is important for many reasons:

- (a) to provide accurate information required to make useful decisions about children, staff and the school as a whole.
- (b) to provide information for parents and employers about the children and school.
- (c) as a basis for guidance and counseling.
- (d) for effective school administration.

13. **Cleanliness of Children**

Ensuring the personal hygiene and environmental sanitation is an important role for the teacher especially at this level. Children must be encouraged to be clean, tidy, they must learn good toilet and eating habits. Children are prone easily to many diseases that result from dirty habits. The teacher must ensure that the surroundings are clean, keep away any source of disease, ensure proper waste disposal and good diet.

14. **Development and Improvement of the Curriculum**

Teachers should be adequately involved in development of the curriculum in terms of the content. They should contribute to decisions about topics, activities, instructional materials, scope and other important aspects. They are the ones that implement the curriculum. They have a role in putting in their resourcefulness to ensure that children learn. They are actively involved in turning the curriculum into an instructional process that lead to learning. In the process of implementation, they have the role of selecting appropriate instructional materials and putting in their ingenuity to improvise where necessary. Children in particular learn better using instructional aids and participating actively in the lessons.

ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN AN EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOM

There is no one prescribed way to view the role of the teacher in an early childhood classroom. Early childhood teachers bring their own unique strengths and learning styles to

their teaching. A caring responsive teacher does however have certain roles and responsibilities in a supportive environment.

- a. Using his or her knowledge of child development, the teacher will set up the classroom, mindful that children come to pre-school with diverse learning styles and “multiple intelligences”.
- b. The teacher will learn more about each child through a process of observing the children in various settings (arrival, open play, snack, rest time, group time and preparing to go home) playing alone and in small groups, in times of active engaged learning and in times of more open-ended play.
- c. By promoting a sense of fairness through open, supportive approaches to problem-solving, and by creating a sense of community, children will gain confidence and build a positive sense of self-esteem.
- d. By fostering an integrated dynamic approach to curriculum, respectful of children’s diverse learning styles, the teacher will provide concrete opportunities for children to play, explore, experiment and recreate their experiences.
- e. Knowledge of each child, based on observation and responsive care and engagement, enable the teacher to build partnerships and to communicate effectively with each child’s parent.

ACTIVITY I

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Enumerate fourteen roles that a teacher can play in early childhood institutions.2. <ol style="list-style-type: none">a) Which of these roles are not effectively played by teachers in your institution.b) What can be done to ensure that teachers play these roles?3. Describe the importance of the various roles that teachers play in early childhood education.4. Identify the roles that you play as a teacher in your institution. |
|--|

UNIT 4: PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

There are set ways of behaviour of any professional in a particular field. These are important in order to have public confidence and trust. These accepted ways and values are generally stipulated by members of a particular profession and are mandatory on all members. Abiding with these guidelines will go a long way in determining success, personal satisfaction and improved performance in the job. All teachers are expected to be accountable to the guidelines of the teaching profession and so should protect their reputation based on them. There are specific standards of conduct expected of a teacher before he can be accepted as doing well, such standard cover aspects such as diligence, probity, firmness, sincerity, thoroughness, consistent, transparent, creative, cooperative and decent, accountability and competent.

The set guidelines which assist the teacher in functioning well in his or her roles in the school and community. It will guide in determining conducts like how to organize and present lessons, type of relationship with students, parents and the community, maintenance discipline and attitude to school records and confidential matters. You must therefore know what is expected of you such that you can function effectively in the school.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you must be able to:

1. explain what professional ethics are.
2. list the functions of professional ethics.
3. enumerate reasons why NUT cannot effectively enforce the code of ethics.
4. list the commitment of teachers to the
 - (a) Parents.
 - (b) Students.
 - (c) Community.
 - (d) Profession.
 - (e) Employer.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN NIGERIA

Professional ethics are the standard basic habits made up of set principles, guidelines or rules which are designed to guide the good conduct of members of as profession. They are otherwise tagged the good behaviour expected of any one in a profession. Any behaviour contrary to these set standard are deemed unethical and usually there are sanctions for members found guilty of them. The professional ethics is usually a code consisting of morally

acceptable values, traditions and practices intended to guide and regulate the conduct of members of a profession.

In the school, the professional ethics helps to guide and control all the activities of the teacher.

The ethics are expected to serve some important functions in members.

- (a) basis for self-control in conduct and activities.
- (b) provide ethical orientation for the practice.
- (c) help to attain success (in schools, it can lead to teacher effectiveness and improved students' performance).
- (d) basis for respect and trust for the profession.
- (e) source of personal satisfaction.
- (f) lead to improvement of the profession.

The Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) is the umbrella professional organization for all teachers in the preprimary, primary and secondary schools in the country. It has stipulated its own code of Ethics of the Teaching Profession in Nigeria and it is mandatory on all teachers. It has however been difficult for NUT to enforce this code because of various reasons like:

- (a) there are many qualified and unqualified people in the profession and so it becomes difficult to comb.
- (b) there is no body charged with the enforcement of the code.
- (c) there are no laid out disciplinary measures.

CODE OF ETHICS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN NIGERIA

The code is broken down into five sections dealing with the obligation or commitment of teachers to the students, parents, community, employers and the profession.

First Principle

The primary obligation of the teaching profession in Nigeria is to guide children, youths, and adults in the pursuit of knowledge and skill, to develop healthy attitudes that enable them live in harmony with all other Nigerians, and to help them become happy, useful and responsible citizens. The ultimate strength of the nation lies in the social responsibility, economic competence and moral strength of the individual. In fulfilling our obligation to the student every teacher shall:

1. deal justly and impartially with pupils and students regardless of their physical, mental, emotional, economic, social, racial or religious characteristics;
2. recognize and respect the differences among pupils and students and seek to meet their individual education needs;

3. help students to develop an understanding and appreciation not only of the privileges and benefits which they can enjoy but also of their corresponding responsibility to the nation which makes these privileges and benefits possible;
4. not enter into any indecent relationship with the students and pupils in his school;
5. withhold confidential information about a student on his home except that its release is to authorized agencies or is required by law;
6. make discreet use of all available information about the students;
7. avoid all damaging or defamatory comments upon a student especially on his home.

Second Principle: *Commitment to the Parents.*

We members of the teaching profession share with parents the task of shaping each student's behaviour towards socially acceptable ends. We share with all other citizens the responsibility for the development of sound public policy. We are particularly accountable for participating in the development of sound educational programmes and policies and of interpreting them to the public. But we believe that the effectiveness of teaching is dependent upon the healthy relationship with the home and the community. In fulfilling our obligation to the parents, all teachers shall:

1. share the responsibility of improving the educational opportunity for all;
2. respect the basic desire of parents in Nigeria for the education of their children.
3. seek to establish friendly and co-operative relationship with the home of the students;
4. help to increase the student's confidence in his home and endeavour to avoid disparaging remarks which undermine that confidence;
5. provide parents with information that will serve the interests of their children and make careful and wise use of information received from parents;
6. keep parents informed about the progress of their children as interpreted in terms of the purposes of the school.

Third Principle: *Commitment of the Community.*

Teaching profession in Nigeria occupies a position of public trust involving not only the individual teacher's personal conduct, but also the interaction of the school and community. Education is most effective when these many relationships operate in a friendly co-operative and constructive manner. In fulfilling our obligation to the community, every teacher in Nigeria shall:

1. adhere to reasonable pattern of behaviour by the community for professional persons;
2. assumed full political and citizenship responsibilities but avoid exploiting the institutional privileges of the teaching profession in Nigeria to promote political activities;
3. discuss controversial issues with an objectivity that will keep his students from partisan opinion;

4. recognize that the school belongs to the community, encouraging lay participation in shaping the purposes of the school and strive to keep the public informed of the educational programme which is being provided;
5. respect the community in which he is employed and be loyal to the school system, community, state and nation;
6. work to raise educational standards and to strengthen the community's moral, spiritual and intellectual life.

Fourth Principle: *Commitment to the Employer*

The members of the teaching profession in Nigeria are inescapably involved in employer – employees relationship. For the purpose of fulfilling our obligation to our students, the stated and our nation, employer – employee relationship should be so regulated that there shall be mutual respect, understanding and good faith. In fulfilling this fourth principle, the teacher in Nigeria shall:

1. conduct hi professional duties through the proper channels and accept no remuneration for teaching except in accordance with approved policy;
2. refrain from discussing confidential and official information with unauthorized persons;
3. apply for a specific position only when it is known to be vacant and refrain from underbidding or maligning other applicants to prejudice the employer;
4. adhere to the conditions of a contract or to the terms of appointment until either it has been terminated formally by mutual consent or legally;
5. give sufficient notice of any change of status or position or services;
6. refuse to take an appointment from which in the opinion of the N.U.T. Executive, a member of the Union has been unjustly dismissed;
7. engage in no gainful employment outside of his contract, where such employment affects adversely his professional status or impairs his standing with students associates and the community.
8. not seek promotion or obtain the position of another teacher by unfair methods;
9. apply for a position only on the basis of professional and legal qualifications.

Fifth Principle: *Commitment to the Profession*

The teaching profession is a unique occupation and we believe that the quality of the services of the teaching profession in Nigeria directly influences the future of the nation and its citizens. We the members of the teaching profession in Nigeria must strive to9 give our best to the nation by making the teaching profession attractive so as to encourage persons worthy of the trust to take up teaching as a career. Aware of the value of united effort, we contribute our professional organization. In fulfilling our obligation to the profession, every teaching in Nigeria shall:

1. deal justly with other members in the profession in the same manner as he himself wishes to be treated;
2. show a spirit of willingness to help an unemployed member to obtain work;
3. stand by other teachers who have acted rightly on his behalf and at his request;
4. avoid making defamatory statement or comments in the presence of pupils or parents about a fellow teacher;
5. maintain active compulsory membership in professional organization and through participation, strive to attain the objectives that justify such organized professional body;
6. speak constructively of the teaching profession, and make the teaching profession so attractive in ideals and practices that sincere and able young people will want to enter it.
7. not make any statement in newspaper, magazine or any other information media, that is detrimental to the interests of the Union;
8. be fair in all recommendations that are given concerning the work of other teachers and his subordinates;
9. not seek to compel another teacher to perform outside the ordinary school hours, any tasks which is not essentially connected with the ordinary work and organization of the school;
10. not impose upon another teacher, out of the ordinary school hours, an excessive and unreasonable amount of work of any kind;
11. not disregard any lawful instruction of the Union;
12. not make adverse report upon another teacher to the manager, proprietor, school board, Education Officer, Education Department or in the log book without first acquainting the teacher with the report;
13. not conduct himself in a manner detrimental or injurious to the interests and /or honour of the profession or of the Union; and
14. not solicit to his school, pupils already connected with another school.

ACTIVITY I

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explain what you understand by professional ethics.2. List the functions professional ethics are meant to serve.3. Enumerate reasons why it is difficult for the NUT to enforce the code of ethics.4. List the commitment of teachers under the code of professional ethics to:
(a) Parents (b) Students (c) Employer
(d) Community (e) Profession. |
|--|

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Many daily decisions required of those who work with young children are of a moral and ethical nature. The code of ethical conduct in early childhood education is designed by the National Association for the Education of young children (1998) to offer guidelines for responsible behaviour and sets forth a common basis for resolving the ethical dilemmas encountered early childhood care and education. The primary focus is on daily practice with children and their families in programmes for children from birth through 8 years of age. This covers preschools, child care centers, kindergartens and early primary schools. These guidelines are applicable to trainers, teachers, administrators, parents, college teachers and ministry officials. The standards set are based on the commitment to core values that are deeply rooted in the teaching profession.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this section you should be able to:

1. Explain why there are codes set for.
 - (a) Children
 - (b) Families
 - (c) Colleagues
 - (d) Community.
2. Enumerate the principles of the commitment of teachers to children, families, colleagues and community.

CODE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The code sets forth a conception of our professional responsibilities in four sections: To (a) Children (b) Families (c) Colleagues (d) Community.

Each section consists of the principles defining practices that are required, prohibited or permitted. These principles are intended to guide conduct and assist in resolving ethical problems encountered in the field.

Ethical Responsibilities to Children

Above all, we shall not harm children. We shall not participate in practices that are disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitative, intimidating, emotionally damaging, or physically harmful to children. This principle has precedence over all others in this Code.

We shall not participate in practices that discriminate against children by denying benefits, giving special advantages, or excluding them from programmes or activities on the basis of their race, ethnicity, religion, sex, national origin, language, ability, or the status, behaviour, or beliefs of their parents. (This principle does not apply to programmes that have a lawful mandate to provide services to a particular population of children).

We shall involve all of those with relevant knowledge (including staff and parents) in decisions concerning a child. For every child we shall implement adaptations in teaching strategies, learning environment, and curricula, consult with the family, and seek

recommendations from appropriate specialists to maximize the potential of the child to benefit from the programme.

We shall be familiar with the symptoms of child abuse, including physical, sexual, verbal, and emotional abuse, and neglect. We shall know and follow state laws and community procedures that protect children against abuse and neglect.

When we have reasonable cause to suspect child abuse or neglect, we shall report it to the appropriate community agency and follow up to ensure that appropriate action has been taken. When appropriate, parents or guardians will be informed that the referral has been made.

When another person tells us of a suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected, we shall assist that person in tasking appropriate action to protect the child.

When a child protective agency fails to provide adequate protection for abused or neglected children, we acknowledge a collective ethical responsibility to work toward improvement of these services. When we become aware of a practice or situation that endangers the health or safety of children, but has not been previously known to do so, we have an ethical responsibility to inform those who can remedy the situation and who can protect children from similar danger.

Ethical Responsibilities to Families

Families are of primary importance in children's development. (The term family may include others, besides parents, who are responsibly involved with the child). Because the family and the early childhood practitioner have a common interest in the child's welfare, we acknowledge a primary responsibility to bring about collaboration between the home and school in ways that enhance the child's development.

We shall not deny family members access to their child's classroom or programme setting. We shall inform families of programme philosophy, policies, and personnel qualifications, and explain why we teach as we do, which should be in accordance with our ethical responsibilities to children (see section I). We shall inform families of and when appropriate, involve them in policy decisions. We shall involve families in significant decisions affecting their child.

We shall inform the family of accidents involving their child, of risks such as exposures to contagious disease that may result in infection, and of occurrences that might result in emotional stress.

To improve the quality of early childhood care and education, we shall cooperate with qualified child development researchers. Families shall be fully informed of any proposed research projects involving their children and shall have the opportunity to give or withhold consent without penalty. We shall not permit or participate in research that could in any way hinder the education, development, or well-being of children.

We shall not engage in or support exploitation of families. We shall not use our relationship with a family for private advantage or personal gain, or enter into relationships with family members that might impair our effectiveness in working with children. We shall develop

written policies for the protection of confidentiality and the disclosure of children's records. These policy documents shall be made available to all programme personnel and families. Disclosure of children's records beyond family members, programme personnel, and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality shall require familial consent (except in cases of abuse or neglect).

We shall maintain confidentiality and shall respect the family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we have reason to believe that a child's welfare is at risk, it is permissible to share confidential information with agencies and individuals who may be able to intervene in the child's interest.

In cases where family members are in conflict, we shall work openly, sharing our observations of the child, to help all parties involved make informed decisions. We shall refrain from becoming an advocate for one party. We shall be familiar with and appropriately use community resources and professional services that support families. After a referral has been made, we shall follow up to ensure that services have been appropriately provided.

Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues

In a caring, cooperative work place, human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are modeled. Based upon our core values, our primary responsibility in this arena is to establish and maintain settings and relationships that support productive work and meet professional needs. The same ideals that apply to children are inherent in our responsibilities to adults.

In decisions concerning children and programmes, we shall appropriately utilize the education, training, experience, and expertise of staff members. We shall provide staff members with safe and supportive working conditions that permit them to carry out their responsibilities, timely and no threatening evaluation procedures, written grievance procedures, constructive feedback, and opportunities for continuing professional development and advancement.

We shall develop and maintain comprehensive written personnel policies that define programme standards and, when applicable, that specify the extent to which employees are accountable for their conduct outside the work place. These policies shall be given to new staff members and shall be available for review by all staff members. Employees who do not meet programme standards shall be informed of areas of concern and, when possible, assisted in improving their performance.

Employees who are dismissed shall be informed of the reasons for their termination. When a dismissal is for cause, justification must be based on evidence of inadequate or inappropriate behavior that is accurately documented, current, and available for the employee to review. In making evaluations and recommendations, judgments shall be based on fact and relevant to the interests of children and programmes

Hiring and promotion shall be based solely on a person's record of accomplishment and ability to carry out the responsibilities of the position. In hiring, promotion, and provision of

training, we shall not participate in any form of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, national origin culture, disability, age, or sexual preference. We shall be familiar with and observe laws and regulations that pertain to employment discrimination.

Ethical Responsibilities to Community and Society

Early childhood programmes operate within a context of an immediate community made up of families and other institutions concerned with children's welfare. Our responsibilities to the community are to provide programmes that meet its needs, to cooperate with agencies and professions that share responsibility for children, and to develop needed programmes that are not currently available. Because the larger society has a measure of responsibility for the welfare and protection of children, and because of our specialized expertise in child development, we acknowledge an obligation to serve as a voice for children everywhere.

We shall communicate openly and truthfully about the nature and extent of services that we provide. We shall not accept or continue to work in positions for which we are personally unsuited or professionally unqualified. We shall not offer services that we do not have the competence, qualifications, or resources to provide. We shall be objective and accurate in reporting the knowledge upon which we base our programme practices. We shall cooperate with other professionals who work with children and their families. We shall not hire or recommend for employment any person whose competence, qualifications, or character makes him or her unsuited for the position.

We shall report the unethical or incompetent behaviour of a colleague to a supervisor when informal resolution is not effective. We shall be familiar with laws and regulations that serve to protect the children in our programmes. We shall not participate in practices which are in violation of laws and regulations that protect the children in our programmes.

When we have evidence that an early childhood programme is violating laws or regulations protecting children, we shall report it to persons responsible for the programme. If compliance is not accomplished within a reasonable time, we will report the violation to appropriate authorities who can be expected to remedy the situation.

When we have evidence that an agency or a professional charged with providing services to children, families, or teachers is failing to meet its obligations, we acknowledge a collective ethical responsibility to report the problem to appropriate authorities or to the public.

When a programme violates or requires its employees to violate this Code, it is permissible, after fair assessment of the evidence, to disclose the identity of that programme.

GLOSSARY

Transparent: openness in the conduct of learning activities.

Accountable: justifying honest actions to students.

Probity:

Diligence:

Ethics:

ACTIVITY II

1. Explain why it is important to have code of ethical conduct for teachers towards:
(a) Children. (b) Families. (c) Colleagues.
(d) Community.
2. Enumerate the principles of the commitment of early childhood educators to:
(a) Children. (b) Families. (c) Colleagues.
(d) Community.
3. How will you assess the adequacy of the code of ethical conduct for early childhood education in Nigeria?

REFERENCES

- Oyekan, S.O. (2000). **Foundations of Teacher Education**. Ondo, Ebun-Ola Printers Nig. Ltd. p. 153-185.
- Igwe, S.O. (1989). **The Concept of a Profession and Teaching in Nigeria**. Agbor, Central Books Ltd.
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (1998). pubaff@naeyc.org.