



**INDIANA
EARLY CHILDHOOD
EDUCATION**

*REGISTERED TEACHER
APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM*

Apprentice Handbook



IVY TECH
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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About Ivy Tech Community College

Ivy Tech Community College is Indiana's largest public postsecondary institution and the nation's largest singly accredited statewide community college system, accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Ivy Tech has campuses throughout Indiana and also serves thousands of students annually online. It serves as the state's engine of workforce development, offering associate degrees, long- and short-term certificate programs, industry certifications, and training that aligns with the needs of the community. The College provides a seamless transfer to other colleges and universities in Indiana, as well as out of state, for a more affordable route to a bachelor's degree.



Ivy Tech Community College (ITCC) is the sponsor of the Early Childhood Education Registered Apprenticeship Program.

Introduction to the Early Childhood Education Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program

Welcome to the Early Childhood Education Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program! This program is designed to provide increased entry points into the field and strengthen the career pathways for educators by leveraging competency-based, job-embedded workforce models to make careers in early childhood education more appealing for students.

The Early Childhood Education (ECE) Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP) is an elective program that helps current high school students meet their Graduation Pathway requirements. It also allows students the opportunity to work in an early care and education environment, gain valuable hands-on experience, and earn college credits.

Importance of Early Childhood Education

A child's early years are a period of profound development, shaping their brains and laying the groundwork for future learning and success. This important foundation requires skilled educators to guide our youngest learners. The apprenticeship program provides a unique opportunity for high school students to gain valuable experience and prepare for a fulfilling career in early childhood education.

The demand for early childhood education educators in Indiana is expected to grow over the next few years. According to Indiana Career Explorer, there are projected to be 8,460 job openings through 2030.

Choosing a career in early childhood education can be deeply rewarding and impactful.

- **Making a Difference:** Educators play a crucial role in shaping young children's cognitive, social, and emotional development. This period is foundational for lifelong learning and development.
- **Career Opportunities:** There is a consistent demand for qualified educators due to the increasing recognition of the importance of early childhood education. Career opportunities range from classroom teaching to administrative roles, curriculum development, and specialized support services.
- **Professional Growth:** The field offers opportunities for ongoing professional development and learning. Educators can pursue advanced degrees, certifications, and specializations. Scholarship opportunities are also available, including some that pay 80% of tuition, fees, and books at partner institutions.

Program Eligibility

To enroll in ECE RTAP, apprentices must:

- Be at least 16 years of age and provide appropriate verification of age.
- Be enrolled in their high school's Early Childhood Career and Technical Education (CTE) program or participate in a dual credit or dual enrollment opportunity.
- Be physically capable of performing the essential functions of the apprenticeship program, with or without reasonable accommodation and without posing a threat to the health and safety of the individual or others.
- Submit a copy of their birth certificate and social security card.
 - ITCC will maintain a copy of these documents and will strictly follow all federal laws regarding confidentiality and all state laws regarding records retention. All records will be uploaded and maintained digitally on a secure Google Drive. The hard copies will be shredded and disposed of within five business days of being placed on the secure Google Drive. Before shredding, the original documents will be maintained in a locked cabinet. These records will be stored on the secure Google Drive for a period of five years from the last date of action. Once the retention period of the electronic files has passed, the files will be permanently deleted from the secure Google Drive.
- Sign a parent/legal guardian consent form.
- Complete all screenings required by the employer, such as pre-employment physical, Tuberculosis (TB) test, drug test, and criminal background check.

Apprentices may also need to meet other district-specific employment requirements and complete an application/interview process based on individual school district requirements.

All apprentices must complete screenings following the licensing guidelines of their employing early care and education environment. The early care and education environment will maintain these items and verify completion. CIESC will not receive results; it will only need proof of payment for the required tests and checks.

Equal Opportunity Statement And Selection

ECE RTAP is open to all students. No student will be discriminated against based on race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, past military service, or any classification protected by federal, state, or local laws when hiring, placement, termination, or compensation.

The initial selection of ECE RTAP may be determined by application and previous

recommendations and may include an interview. Participation will be determined annually based on prior performance and registration in the required coursework.

Anti-Harassment Policy

Apprentices should expect to work in an environment free from all forms of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Harassment negatively affects morale, motivation, and job performance. It is inappropriate and offensive and is, therefore, prohibited. If an apprentice believes they are a victim of harassment, they should report this to their supervising teacher, school counselor, or school administration. Reporting alleged harassment will not reflect the apprentice's status nor affect the apprentice's placement.

Program Structure

The apprenticeship program spans over two years, during which apprentices will engage in a combination of classroom instruction and hands-on experience in early care and education environments.

Program Components

ECE RTAP is designed to provide increased entry points into the field and strengthen the career pathways for educators by leveraging competency-based, job-embedded workforce models to make ECE careers more attractive for students. Components of ECE RTAP are:

- Related Instruction
- Credentials
- Supported On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Paid Work Experience
- Mentorship
- Rewards for Skills Gains



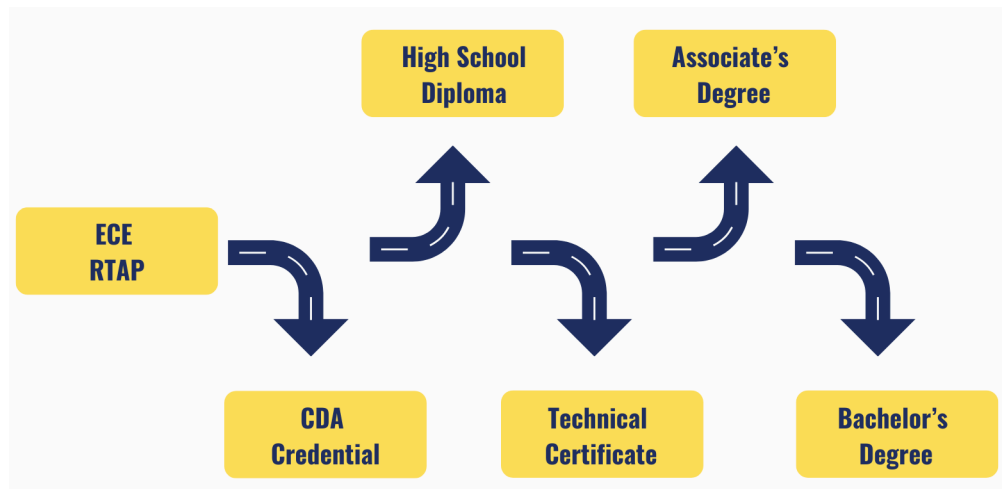
Related Instruction

ECE RTAP instruction aligns with the Early Childhood Pathway within the Next Level Programs of Study (NLPS) and includes a combination of high school and dual-credit college courses. Apprentices will earn a minimum of nine college credit hours but can earn up to 15 credit hours before graduation.

Principles	CTE Concentrator A	CTE Concentrator B	Pathway Capstone
Principles of Early Childhood Education	Early Childhood Education Curriculum	Early Childhood Education Guidance	Early Childhood Education Capstone

ECE RTAP focuses on developing apprentices' knowledge, skills, and abilities. These are known as competencies, and they represent what a person needs to be able to do to meet the demands of the profession. ECE RTAP competencies are categorized into seven job functions:

- Establishes and maintains a safe, caring, inclusive, and healthy learning environment.
- Plans and implements intentional, developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate learning experiences.
- Observes, documents, and assesses children's learning and development.
- Develops reciprocal, culturally responsive relationships with families and communities.
- Advances and advocates for a diverse and effective early childhood education profession.
- Engages in reflective practice and continuous learning.
- Meets the needs of all children by understanding and providing effective support.



Credentials

ECE RTAP has been cross-walked with post-secondary credits and credentials leading to a Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, technical certificate, associate's degree, and bachelor's degree. Students do not need to earn each of these; they can go straight to a four-year institution after high school.

Classroom Support Specialist Certificate

The Classroom Support Specialist Certificate (CT) provides a strong entry point into the field of early childhood education, equipping apprentices with foundational knowledge and practical skills for supporting young children in classroom settings. This certificate is awarded upon completion of ECED 101 Health, Safety, and Nutrition and ECED 104 Supportive Interactions and Behavior Guidance, two courses designed to build essential competencies in child well-being, positive relationships, and effective behavior guidance strategies. Ideal for those new to the field or seeking to begin a pathway of stackable early childhood credentials, the Classroom Support Specialist Certificate helps prepare learners for meaningful, supportive roles in early learning environments.

Child Development Associate Credential

Through ECE RTAP, apprentices can earn a CDA Credential. CDA is a nationally recognized credential that certifies individuals as competent educators in early childhood education.

It is administered by the Council for Professional Recognition and is often considered a stepping stone for those seeking to advance their careers in early childhood settings, such as preschools, centers, and family childcare homes. In Indiana, a CDA Credential is the foundation for teaching requirements in an early care and education environment. It should be noted that earning a CDA is not a requirement for completing ECE RTAP, and it does not preclude apprentices from earning an associate's or bachelor's degree in early childhood education.

Earning a CDA is a three-step process:

- **Prepare:** Students must complete 120 hours of formal early childhood education training, covering the growth and development of children, with at least 10 hours in each of the eight CDA subject areas. ECE RTAP provides all of these hours, ensuring students have the necessary knowledge and skills. Additionally, students must obtain 480 hours of professional work experience in an early care and education environment. Students must work with their school to ensure they can obtain enough hours.
- **Apply:** After meeting all the requirements in step one, students will apply online with the Council for Professional Recognition, the organization that awards the credential. While there is a \$425 fee for both the application and exam, students will be able to apply for and earn the credential at no cost.
- **Demonstrate:** Once the CDA application is approved, candidates will receive a *Ready to Schedule* notice and will schedule their CDA verification visit and CDA exam. The verification visit includes observing and assessing work in the early care and education environment. The exam is taken on a computer at a local testing

center. After passing both the verification visit and CDA exam, students will be awarded the credential by the Council for Professional Recognition.

Supported On-the-job Training/Paid Work Experience

Apprentices are employed in local early care and education environments and earn wages while engaged in on-the-job training. School districts will assign apprentices to their programs. Apprentices are expected to fulfill the obligations set forth by their employers.

The concepts taught during related instruction are applied in a high-quality early learning environment alongside a mentor educator who provides guidance and training on skills and knowledge needed to achieve proficiency in the competencies. On-the-job training is essential because it bridges the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application. It prepares apprentices to handle classroom challenges and provides them with the experience to confidently manage and support young children's learning and development. Furthermore, it allows for continuous professional development as apprentices encounter new situations and refine their techniques.

Mentorship

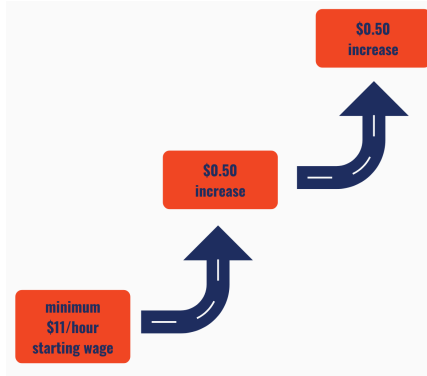
Mentors are crucial in supporting and guiding apprentices. They are experienced professionals with a deep understanding of early childhood education and a passion for nurturing the next generation of educators.

These supports include:

- **Modeling Best Practices:** Mentors demonstrate effective teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, and interactions with children. They serve as role models for apprentices, showing them what excellent early childhood education looks like in practice.
- **Coaching and Feedback:** Mentors provide constructive feedback to apprentices, helping them identify areas for growth and improvement. They offer guidance and support, encouraging apprentices to reflect on their practice and develop their skills.
- **Monitoring Progress:** Mentors regularly observe apprentices in the classroom, documenting their progress and mastery of program competencies. They provide ongoing feedback and support to ensure apprentices are meeting program expectations.

Mentors are essential to the success of our apprenticeship program. They provide apprentices with the guidance, support, and encouragement to develop into confident and competent early childhood educators.

Rewards for Skills Gains



Not only do apprentices earn a wage while completing their on-the-job training, they also receive progressive wage increases as their skills and knowledge increase, and they achieve milestones. All apprentices earn at least \$11 per hour; some employers may pay even more. Upon mastery of 15 of the 30 competencies and six dual credits earned, they will receive a \$0.50 per hour wage increase. Once all 30 competencies have been mastered and the apprentice has earned nine credit hours, they will receive a second \$0.50 per hour wage increase.

Roles and Responsibilities

District Leads: District Leads play a vital role in ensuring the success of the apprenticeship program within the school. They act as the school's primary point of contact. In cooperation with the ITCC ECE Pathways Team, the District Lead will:

- Ensure that apprentices meet the requirements of their NLPS classes and are on track for academic success.
- Participate in the orientation process for new apprentices, providing them with information.
- Participate in information sessions for sophomore students.
- Meet with the ITCC ECE Pathways Team monthly to discuss the program's progress, address any challenges, and ensure the program runs smoothly.

Mentors: Mentoring is an essential component of every registered apprenticeship program and critical to the success and retention of young apprentices. Mentor educators participating in Indiana's ECE RTAP will:

- Supervise apprentice on-the-job learning.
- Model skills, coach, and provide constructive feedback that promotes apprentice mastery of program competencies.
- Assess and document apprentice progress.

Apprentices: Apprentices will be responsible for:

- Meeting all program expectations of the early care and education environment where they work.
- Completing required dual-credit coursework.
- Maintaining accurate records of on-the-job training hours.
- Adhering to all policies outlined in the school and Apprentice Handbook.

Policies and Procedures

Program Placements

School districts will assign apprentices to their early care and education environments. Apprentices must fulfill the obligations outlined in their assigned early care and education environment.

Program Requirements

Accurate Time Records

Apprentices must maintain their time records and record the actual hours worked each day. Time records should reflect the hours worked, not the hours expected to work. Before submitting time records for processing, apprentices should review them to ensure accuracy. If there are any errors, apprentices must make the necessary corrections before submitting the time records. By signing or approving their time records, apprentices certify that they are complete and accurately reflect all hours worked during the pay period.

Safety in the Workplace

Apprentices should note that they must complete health and safety training in compliance with Indiana's regulatory guidelines for early care and education environments. Training and expectations will vary by placement.

Closing Procedures

Apprentices should listen to their local radio and television stations in emergencies, such as weather, and follow their school or early care and education environment guidelines.

General Emergency Guidelines

Apprentices should know who to contact in an emergency and their numbers. Know the early care and education environment protocol for contacting 911. Know where exits, first aid supplies, and emergency equipment are located.

Injury/Incident Reporting

Apprentices should be sure to report any work-related injury to their early care and education environment contact and their high school instructor.

Any apprentice injury must be immediately reported to an early care and education environment staff member.

Security

Apprentices may be expected to assist in maintaining security in their early care and education environment and should know the environment's protocols and expectations.

Expectations at Placements

Adhere to School Rules and Policies

- Follow all rules and expectations outlined in the high school's student handbook and applicable school board policies.
- Adhere to all school attendance policies. If an apprentice will be absent from school or the placement, they must promptly notify their high school instructor and mentor.

Maintain Confidentiality

- Do not discuss a child's personal information or progress with anyone outside the early care and education environment. This information should be shared only by the early care and education mentor with parents/legal guardians.
- Do not take pictures of children or share any photos of the children on social media.

Be Flexible and Prepared

- Be prepared for changes in the daily assignments and show flexibility.
- Understand the early care and education environment mentor's daily plan and expectations.
- Arrive early and be ready to begin the tasks.

Respect and Professionalism

- Treat children and other staff members with respect.
- Be familiar with the early care and education environment and know who to ask for help.
- Dress appropriately by following the high school's student handbook and the early care and education environment guidelines.
- Wear any issued identification.
- Keep cell phones and personal computers out of sight during the assigned time.

Communication and Relationships

- Communicate any unique or unusual requests from parents/legal guardians or children to the early childhood mentor.

- Build positive relationships with children. Be confident and fair in all interactions.
- Be actively involved in the early care and education environment by interacting with children and assisting the early childhood mentor.
- Remain in the assigned learning environment unless given permission to briefly step out.

Safety and Conduct

- Only release a child with prior authorization from the early childhood mentor or the early care and education environment director.
- Be aware of and follow emergency procedures. Participate actively in drills and be prepared for unexpected situations.

Food and Drink

- Follow the early care and education environment's guidelines for bringing food or drink into the center.

The expectations are not exclusive. Other conduct deemed contrary to this program's mission, though not listed, may be grounds for disciplinary action or removal from the program.

Progress Monitoring

Mentors will monitor the apprentices' progress by regularly observing them in the early care environment. They will document the apprentices' progress and mastery of program competencies. Providing ongoing feedback and support will enable the apprentices to meet and exceed program expectations.

High school apprentices will actively track their progress, embracing continuous learning and self-reflection as integral steps to their development. This proactive approach will foster their growth and provide valuable insights into their skill development, benefiting both the apprentice and their mentor. Regular self-reflection allows apprentices to demonstrate their commitment to professional growth and contribute meaningfully to their apprenticeship journey.

Next Steps

Students interested in participating in ECE RTAP must complete the steps identified below. The process for submitting the required documentation will be shared at the orientation meeting as this will differ by school district.

- Parent/guardian signs and submits the parent/guardian consent form.
- Provide copies of your social security card and one of the following, driver's license, birth certificate, or state identification card.

After the student is enrolled in ECE RTAP, the student and parent/guardian must sign and submit the apprenticeship agreement.

Support and Resources

Purpose	Point of Contact
Questions about apprenticeship paperwork	ITCC ECE Pathways Team
Questions related to documenting OJT hours and competency mastery	ITCC ECE Pathways Team
Questions related to apprentice supports	ITCC ECE Pathways Team
Questions related to dual credit course admission and registration	Guidance Counselor High School Instructor
Questions about high school coursework	High School Instructor
Questions related to employment requirements	Employer Supervisor District Lead
Questions regarding the daily operations of the early care and education placement site	Mentor Teacher

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