

Early Years Great Careers

Grow. Lead. Succeed.



What do early childhood teachers do?

Degree qualified early childhood teachers work with parents, health and wellbeing professionals and other educators to promote children's learning and develop their sense of identity, wellbeing, sense of their place in the community and communication skills.

Early childhood teachers:

- Observe and assess children's development and learning.
- Record children's progress and liaise closely with parents and other professionals to support children's learning and development.
- Plan activities to develop learning and development.
- Promote language development and self-confidence and encourage children to question, explore and be aware of their world.
- Promote health and safety concepts and social interaction with other children.
- Work to assist children as part of a team with professionals such as maternal and child health nurses, other educators and teachers, early childhood intervention specialists such as speech pathologists and psychologists.
- Work in metropolitan, rural or remote areas including Aboriginal communities.

Fast facts

- Employment opportunities for early childhood teachers continue to increase.
- Salaries vary according to employer, sector, responsibilities and role. For example, in local government services salaries can range from \$53,948 – \$84,517 a year.
- Early childhood teachers work in early childhood education and care services, kindergarten, long day care centres, occasional care, family day care, special education, government and non-government primary schools and outside school hours care services.

Future employment rating ★★★★★

*Future employment growth > 8.5 to 11% PA . Source: DEEWR

What should I study at school?

Useful subjects include English, maths, art, health and human relations, psychology, VET – Certificate II in Community Services Work and selected units of competency from Certificate III in Community Services Work and Certificate III in Education and Care (previously Certificate III in Children's Services.)

What should I study at university?

Bachelor of Early Childhood Education
(four years)

Bachelor of Education – Early Childhood
(four years)

Bachelor of Education – Early Childhood Education (four years)

Bachelor Degree in a related area, followed by a postgraduate qualification in education, specialising in Early Childhood Education.

Bachelor of Early Childhood – Education and Care (three years)*

Bachelor of Early Childhood Studies
(three years)*

Graduate Certificate in Education (Early Childhood)

Graduate Diploma in Education (Early Childhood)

Master of Teaching (Early Childhood)

Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

* These courses are generally designed for people who have a two year Diploma of Children's Services or equivalent

What are my other career and leadership options?

Other options for qualified early childhood teachers include primary school teacher, children's services centre manager, outside school hours care coordinator, family day care coordinator and kindergarten cluster program manager. Policy and management positions in government, and self-employment as the proprietor of an early childhood service, are also possible.

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Petrina Boles Early childhood teacher
Minifie Park Early Childhood Centre

What are your major qualifications?

I have a Master of Teaching (Early Childhood).

How long have you worked in early childhood and in your current role?

This is my first year and first role in early childhood.

What is a typical day?

My role is to deliver an engaging program for up to 22 children, reflecting their emerging interests and needs. No two days are the same, and my role involves changing 'hats' quickly, seamlessly, and at times, repeatedly: educator, carer, singer, observer, meal provider, storyteller, medic, hug distributor, umpire, counsellor, environmental scientist, pirate, missing sock detective, dance teacher, photographer. All before sitting down at the end of each day to document the plethora of learnings (the children's and mine)!

What influenced your interest in an early childhood career?

I wanted to be a teacher when I was five years old but in high school I was told I was "too smart" and should get a job that paid more. I picked a course at random and did a business degree in tourism management. This led me to travel and work managing European tours and resorts and later the events industry.

Now I am back to what I always wanted to do. I have always loved younger children and felt I have a natural connection with them. My friends call me the baby whisperer! I love it. I know I am doing what I should be.

What do you enjoy most about your career in early childhood?

Every day I go to work wondering what adventures we will have today. I love that the children are as excited to see me each day as I am to see them. I really get a kick from the sheer, unbridled excitement they show when they have learned something new or made a discovery for themselves that they can't wait to share. The children blow my mind daily grasping high-level concepts and understandings. I have 'goosebump' moments every day.

What is the best experience you have had as an early childhood professional?

When parents tell you how much their children enjoy the program and how pleased and amazed they are at the positive effect on their children's confidence and demeanour. It's a great compliment and confirmation that I'm doing something right!

What would you say to others who might be considering a career in early childhood?

It's important to be involved for the right reasons – a genuine determination to help children develop a lifelong love of

learning, not just because you 'like kids'. The early years are such a dynamic period for children and educators alike, and the rewards, while not necessarily financial, will be plenty for your efforts and creativity.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years' time?

With my business qualifications and experience I would love to utilise my combined knowledge and skills and maybe in 10-plus years' time I might be fortunate enough to be managing my own service.

Want to know more?

education.vic.gov.au/earlyyears-careers
deewr.gov.au
myfuture.edu.au
joboutlook.gov.au
acecqa.gov.au/qualifications



All indicative salaries in the document are gross before tax a year for full time employees. Indicative salary range taken from Local Government Early Childhood Education Employees Agreement and Victorian Early Childhood Teachers and Assistant Agreements. Salaries will vary according to employer, role and Award.

Information regarding course and professional pre-requisites is of a general nature. Please consult a career practitioner and/or check with individual institutions to confirm specific course requirements.