

**Guiding Standards for Early Childhood Teaching
Programs in Chile.**

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Some facts.

Early childhood education in Chile.

- Well developed system: legislation and public policies since early 20th century.
- 43% of 0-6 year-olds enrolled in early childhood education.
- 90% of enrollment is publicly funded.

Early childhood teacher preparation in Chile.

- University-based preparation since 1944.
- Professional degree in Early Childhood Education is legally mandatory to work in early childhood education centers.
- Over 3,000 graduates per year.

Some antecedents of the Project.

- Project entrusted by the Ministry of Education to the University of Chile's Center for Advanced Research in Education, CIAE.
- Part of a larger Ministry of Education project, which also encompassed standards for elementary and secondary teaching programs.
- The Standards are not mandatory for universities to introduce them into their respective plans of study.
- Standards for early childhood teaching programs were developed during 2010 and 2011, being published in 2012.
- Main aim of the project:
 - > To define guiding standards for early childhood teaching programs, regarding the knowledge, skills and dispositions related to good practices in this field.

Foundations of the project.

- Acknowledgment of early childhood teachers as a crucial factor of early childhood education quality:
 - > Effectiveness and appropriateness of early childhood teachers' practices are related to the characteristics of undergraduate preparation.

(Barnett 2004; Fukkink & Lont 2007; Pianta 2011; Burchinal et al. 2011; Bredekamp & Goffin 2012).

- Recognition of important weaknesses of early childhood teacher programs:
 - > Vast heterogeneity in curricular coursework.

(Garcia Huidobro 2006; Rojas et al. 2008).

Standards validity based on the process of construction.

Technical validity:

- Considered the state of the art on early childhood teacher preparation around the world.
- Addressed the main strengths and weaknesses of early childhood teacher preparation in the country.
- Requested international experts' judgements .

Social validity:

- National early childhood education community involved:
 - > Over 60 specialists (head of programs, researchers, practitioners) and 17 institutions were part of work teams.
 - > All the institutions preparing early childhood teachers were consulted.

The spirit of the standards.

- Early childhood teaching is a complex profession.
- It is necessary to identify and agree the fundamental common core of knowledge, skills and dispositions for practice in early childhood education.

Synoptic review of the standards.

- Standards structure:
 1. Descriptive statement.
 - 1.1. Supportive explanation.
 - 1.1.1. Indicators.
- 21 standards:
 - > 13 Pedagogical standards.
 - > 8 Disciplinary standards.
- The standards comprise knowledge, skills and dispositions that are relevant for good practice.

Pedagogical standards.

The graduating early childhood teacher:

1. Knows the evolutive development of children and how they learn.
2. Is prepared to promote children's personal and social development.
3. Understands the curriculum for early childhood education.
4. Knows how to design and implement appropriate pedagogical experiences.
5. Designs and keep warm, safe and inclusive learning environments.
6. Applies assessment methods to observe children's progress, and uses obtained results to feedback her pedagogical practice.

Pedagogical standards (Cont.).

The graduating early childhood teacher:

7. Guide her professional behavior in accordance to ethical criteria that are valid in the field.
8. Effectively communicates in oral and forms in diverse professional situations.
9. Learns continuously and reflects on her practice and her participation in the educational system.
10. Takes responsibility for the well-being, learning and development of every child in her care.
11. Is interested in furthering her knowledge about the early childhood education field.
12. Builds partnership relationships with the family and the community.
13. Keeps collaborative professional relationships with different work teams.

Disciplinary standards.

The graduating early childhood teacher:

1. Has command of pedagogical strategies based on her understanding of autonomy development in early childhood.
2. Has command of pedagogical strategies based on her understanding of identity development in early childhood.
3. Has command of pedagogical strategies based on her understanding of social development in early childhood.
4. Has command of pedagogical strategies based on her understanding of visual, musical and dramatic arts in early childhood education.

Disciplinary standards (Cont.).

The graduating early childhood teacher:

5. Has command of pedagogical strategies based on her understanding of verbal language in early childhood education.
6. Has command of pedagogical strategies based on her understanding of mathematics in early childhood education.
7. Has command of pedagogical strategies based on her understanding of natural sciences in early childhood education..
8. Has command of pedagogical strategies based on her understanding of social sciences in early childhood education.

The standard on Language

Descriptive statement:

Graduate early childhood teacher has command of pedagogical strategies based on her understanding of verbal language in early childhood education.

Supporting explanation:

Verbal language is a fundamental instrument of representation and communication for human beings. It exerts influence on every aspect of development, favouring the acquisition of knowledge and skills, beyond the participation in family, community and society [...]

Indicators:

The graduating early childhood teacher:

1. Undertands the continuity and integration between corporal, gestual, preverbal, verbal and written language, how they are acquired, and the contexts that promote them [...]

The current state of the Standards.

- Standards published in 2012 by the Ministry of Education:
<http://www.cpeip.cl/usuarios/cpeip/File/librostandaresvale/libroparvulariafinal.pdf>
- The Ministry of Education is using the Standards as a source of the National Competency Test for Graduating Early Childhood Teachers.
- Circumstantial evidence suggests that most Early Childhood Teaching Programs of the country are adjusting their respective plans of study to the Standards.

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