Adventist Colleges Teach Early Childhood

The primary purpose of an Adventist early childhood education and care (ECEC) program is to provide opportunities for children, in a loving, caring, and intellectually stimulating environment, to learn about God and Jesus Christ as their Savior. The nurture and well-being of the whole child - intellectual, emotional, spiritual, social, and physical - is the primary concern of the center. Adventist ECEC programs are in a unique position to provide support, counseling, and spiritual guidance to families, thus engaging in the evangelistic mission of the Seventh-day Adventist church at a personal level often inaccessible to pastors, churches, or evangelists.

Hence, it is of vital importance that prospective employees have training in areas related to these important goals.

Teacher preparation programs in Seventh-day Adventist institutions differ markedly from one another especially within the realm of early childhood education teacher preparation. The following summarizes the early childhood emphasis, programs, and plans of Seventh-day Adventist colleges in the United States:

Pacific Union College
The Early Childhood Education Programs in the Education Department offer two degrees in the traditional on-campus program: an Associate of Science and a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education. Only the Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education is offered in the off-campus Degree Completion Program.

The two-year Associate of Science Degree is designed to meet the requirements for the California Child Development Permit Matrix and qualifies the graduate to become a lead teacher in any state/province within the North American Division.

The Bachelor of Science Degree meets the requirements for the California Child Development Permit Matrix and qualifies the graduate to become a lead teacher in any state/province within the North American Division.

The Bachelor of Science Degree in Early Childhood Education also prepares the student for graduate studies in Child Development, Early Childhood Education, or Child Life (a degree which qualifies persons to become directors or teachers for Child Life Programs in hospital settings).

Students interested in a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education and also wishing to obtain the California and an Adventist Elementary Education Teaching Certificate may do so by combining the Early Childhood Education requirements with those for a Multiple Subject Credential.

Atlantic Union College
Atlantic Union College offers a minor in Early Childhood Education which is taken with a Liberal Studies Major. This qualifies students to get a state of Massachusetts credential to teach Pre-K through 2nd grade and Kindergarten through 8th grade with a Seventh-day Adventist teaching certificate.

Columbia Union College
Columbia Union College has Early Childhood Education Associate of Science and Bachelor of Science Degree Programs in the Education Department, which are State of Maryland approved. Students may graduate with the Associate of Science Degree; however, presently more students will need to become enrolled for the Bachelor of Science Degree Program before additional courses are offered. The curriculum is very similar to

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An paradigm shift

When I became a mother, I visited different infant programs and left weeping for the parents who were forced to use them.

When I became a mother, I realized the value of spending time with my baby and that there is no such thing as quality versus quantity.

When I became a mother, I cherished each feeding, refused to use bottles, and dreaded the day when weaning would begin.

When I became a mother, I carefully screened books and toys, vigilant to monitor everything presented to my daughter for learning.

When I became a mother, every cry seemed to be a crisis – it wasn’t – but the emotional upheaval made it appear as if it were.

When I became a mother, I suddenly understood why parents feel guilty for using child care and I vowed to avoid it as long as possible.

When I became a mother, I found ways to work from home and chose an employer – with less pay – who supported my decision.

When I became a mother, the emotional agony of my clientele can build rapport with them, but building a relationship requires empathy.

I have always loved children; but until I became a mother and had one of my own, I had no idea what it took to give my child to strangers while I walk away, fighting fear and tears.

Because I’m a mother, I will no longer sympathize and understand the emotional agony of my clientele. I will empathize. I will comfort. I will share their experience and cherish their children all the more.

- Byrne
that at Pacific Union College with the exception of the following main courses which Columbia Union College offers: Early Childhood Methods-Social Studies and Religion, Materials and Methods of Early Childhood Math and Science, and Process and Acquisition of Reading. Columbia Union College does not require a technology course for students preparing for the teaching field.

**Griggs University**

Currently, Griggs University offers college-level coursework to help students complete general requirements and electives toward an ECE/CD degree program. Coursework specific to an ECE/CD major or minor is still being developed.

**La Sierra University**

La Sierra University is planning to offer an Early Childhood Education Bachelor of Science degree in a few years. Currently, an emphasis in early childhood can be obtained while completing the Masters in Education degree.

**Oakwood University**

Oakwood University offers a Bachelor’s degree in Human Development and Family Studies in the Family and Consumer Sciences Department, with an on-campus preschool for observations and practicum. This degree covers the human life-span; however, it does qualify students to teach in pre-school in Alabama. If students take a fifth-year they are qualified to teach Kindergarten through 3rd Grade.

**Southwestern Adventist University**

Southwestern Adventist University does not offer an early childhood program. However, the university does offer the state required number of early childhood relevant courses which qualifies credential candidates for an elementary certificate within the state of Texas.

**Avondale College, Australia**

The Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) degree is designed to prepare Early Childhood teachers to work with children aged from birth through to eight years. Graduates are qualified to teach in the Seventh-day Adventist Church school system both in Australia and overseas, as well as in the wider educational sector of government and non-government schools and in a diverse range of early childhood settings, including pre-schools, K-2 primary classrooms and long day-care centers.

The Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood) is an integrated course of 192 credit points normally spread over four years of full-time or equivalent part-time study taught through the on-campus or distance education program. The course requirements include 105 days of professional experience between semesters in February and July of each year. The course is comprised of Christian Studies subjects, a discipline elective, curriculum studies, education studies, and professional development and experience.

In addition to these, the International Board of Education recently approved early childhood education teacher preparation programs at the following:

**Central America Adventist University** (B.S. in Education with an emphasis in Preschool; License in Education with an emphasis in Teaching of Preschool)

**Dominican Adventist University** (B.A. in Preschool Education)

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**The purposes of ACCN:**

1. To affirm, encourage and empower all engaged in the weekday ministry to children. (On-going)
2. To provide opportunities for professional and spiritual growth. (On-going)
3. To provide networking opportunities for Seventh-day Adventist Child Development Centers. (On-going)
4. To set certification standards for child care providers. (In process)
5. To foster unity between all areas of child development within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. (In process)
6. To encourage the incorporation of Early Childhood Education in the nurture and outreach programs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. (In process)
7. To foster working relationships with the world church, unions, conferences, local churches, and schools. (In process)
8. To encourage surveys and research in the area of Child Development and Early Childhood Education in cooperation with the North American Division. (In process)
9. To counsel with the North American Division and General Conference in the development and review of programs and strategies for Child Development. (In process)
10. To provide guidance and resources to training organizations, colleges, and universities. (In process)
11. To advocate the hiring of Early Childhood specialists at all organizational levels of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. (In process)
12. To develop working relationships with other Early Childhood Education organizations. (On-going)
13. To encourage child care centers to obtain national accreditation. (In process)

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**Join ACCN**

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Dental Care for Young Children

Television personality and bestselling author Joan Lunden has partnered with Oral-B Stages and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the preeminent professional organization of children’s health professionals, to raise awareness of the importance of children’s oral health during Children’s Dental Health Month. A 2007 report released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that the prevalence of cavities in children ages two to five years has increased four percent from a decade ago (24 to 28 percent). In fact, almost 20 percent of children ages two to three have at least one untreated cavity.

Tooth decay is the most common chronic childhood disease today, five times more common than asthma. Both the U.S. Surgeon General and Congress acknowledge that this “silent epidemic” in oral health needs to be addressed by parents and healthcare providers. The culmination of children’s dental illness in the U.S. results in a loss of 51 million school hours each year. Providing parents with resources to teach healthy oral care habits from an early age is an important step in curbing the impact of oral disease on children.

“Many of the dental-related illnesses that children develop are easily preventable, provided parents are able to establish proper oral care habits for their children, even before that first tooth comes in,” says pediatrician, David Krol, MD, MPH, FAAP. “It is important that parents speak to their pediatricians about their children’s oral health and obtain the information they need to create a proper dental routine for their children.”

Joan Lunden, a mother of seven, knows the importance of establishing dental routines for her kids. “I help my children get off to a good start by teaching them how to brush and care for their teeth, so that they can continue to have a lifetime of happy smiles and good dental health. As children grow, their oral care needs change. That’s why an important first step to those healthy smiles is to choose products that are designed for each stage of your child’s oral care development, such as Oral-B Stages,” said Lunden.

Parents can take the first step in their children’s oral health by doing the following:

- Begin oral care routine early – Parents should begin by regularly cleaning their newborn baby’s gums with a damp washcloth following feedings. When the first teeth appear, parents should begin brushing them to avoid the build-up of plaque. Avoid prolonged exposure to sugary drinks (milk, formula, juices, etc.) while the baby sleeps, as it can increase the risk of decay in the upper front teeth, also known as Early Childhood Caries.
- Selecting the right tools – Use a toothbrush with extra-soft bristles and a cushioned head, plus a non-fluoridated toothpaste until age two, when it’s safe to switch to toothpaste with fluoride. Choose products that are designed to meet children’s needs at different ages such as dentition (formation of their teeth and jaw), dexterity (ability to handle a toothbrush) and development (emotional changes and interest).
- Visit the dentist regularly – A child’s dental visit should begin when the child’s first tooth erupts, with additional visits determined by the dentist to ensure proper oral development. A good rule of thumb is first visit by first birthday. Parents should discuss their children’s oral health with the pediatrician even before the first dental visit.
- Take first steps to healthy eating – Proper nutrition is important to your child’s oral health. Foods high in sugars and starches help decay-causing bacteria make acid that destroys teeth. Choose nutritious snacks that build strong teeth and resist decay and gum disease such as veggies, fruit, yogurt and cheese.
- Make brushing fun – Brush your teeth together to set a good example. Choose toothbrushes and toothpaste with popular kids’ characters. Sing a two-minute song to your child to encourage brushing for the dentist-recommended time. Making the brushing routine fun will encourage proper habits early and help prevent oral care issues later in life.

Parents and children can learn more oral-care tips by visiting www.orahl.com/kids or www.aap.org.

Retrieved February 17, 2008 from: http://pressreleases.kcstar.com/?q=node/5944