Advanced Child Development. Manuela Fonseca, Lyndon State College and the Vermont Higher Education Collaborative
This course is designed to provide current and aspiring early childhood and early childhood special educators with an opportunity to acquire in-depth knowledge of children’s typical and atypical development across all domains from conception through middle childhood. The course will assist educators to acquire an understanding of children by critically integrating their empirical, theoretical, and experiential knowledge about children into an in-depth study.

In this course, participants will discuss and explore ways classroom science provides opportunities for children to extend their natural curiosity while providing them with direct experiences with hands-on learning materials, events and ideas imperative for later learning. Participants will engage in interactive hands-on activities as they increase their understanding of STEM content with an emphasis on Physical Science. Topics for discussion, exploration and implementation include: What is Science for Young Children?; Vermont Early Learning Standards; Importance of adult guidance and structure; Preparing for STEM explorations; Science as a process (scientific inquiry); Using picture books; STEM environments and materials in the classroom; Web resources; Conducting Action Research; Documentation Panels for observing and assessing children’s work; STEM with families.

Infants and Toddlers: Learning Through Relationships. Laura Butler, Springfield College
This course provides an overview of the development and education of infants and toddlers, and will emphasize relationships as the basis for learning and growth during this critical stage. The course will emphasize the important role of families and communities in infant and toddler development. The course will emphasize the diverse social contexts in which early care and education for infants and toddlers exists. Additionally, the course will explore the socioeconomic and political issues and challenges that families and caregivers face related to quality, accessibility to, and affordability of high-quality care and education programming for infants and toddlers.

Engaging Families and Communities. Donna Bailey and Deb Gass Parent/Child Center and Head Start
In this course, we will practice skills for: initial engagement with families, sustaining the partnership for the benefit of children, problem solving when concerns arise (either from the family or staff perspective) and transferring our learning to other families. We will review current research on family engagement, emerging best practice, and the growing consensus
about critical staff characteristics. We will discuss and practice the creation of community support networks for families, and the role we serve as advocates for policy changes.

**Early Literacy: Building Blocks. Brenda Buzzell, Stern Center**

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR LITERACY is an undergraduate/graduate course for early care and education providers, including pre-school and kindergarten teachers enrolled in higher education early childhood degree programs. The course provides a conceptual understanding of the research-based components necessary to deliver effective language learning opportunities in early care and education/Pre-K settings to assure literacy success. This course is aligned with the Vermont Early Learning Standards, integrating play-based strategies to demonstrate scaffolding skills within each key concept. Participants will become familiar with ongoing evidence-based practices that integrate current research with family and professional wisdom and values. Participants will learn how language acquisition, phonological awareness, shared book reading and the speech to print connection help children to build early literacy skills. They will also learn how to deliver these developmentally appropriate learning opportunities in a variety of settings, including individual (1:1), small group/large group, and teacher or child directed free play.

**The Trauma of Poverty: Developing Trauma-Informed Educational Practices. Ben Williams, Stern Center**

The last two decades have seen an immense growth in the scientific understanding of chronic stress and its role in child development. Many children who live with poverty are often overwhelmed and distracted by their circumstances and not ready for the social and intellectual challenges of the classroom. This course will explore the complex relationships between trauma and poverty in relation to learning, behavior and child development. Exploring brain theory, new discoveries in brain science, and emerging understandings of the impacts of chronic and toxic stress on behavior and learning, attendees will learn how to apply these findings to early childhood classrooms and other learning environments. Attendees will leave with trauma-informed practices that can be directly applied to the classroom. Attendees will also have structured time to review their own classrooms, practice and learning environments and look for ways to develop appropriate trauma-informed and self-care practices.

**Supporting Children who are Dual Language Learners. Sharon Cronin, Goddard College**

This Soy Bilingüe Seminar is designed to provide a framework for teaching children whose primary language is one other than English as well as teaching a second language to English speaking children. It will cover relevant theoretical and practical information related to bilingual early childhood and elementary education methods with a goal of the development of cultural competence and respect for learners growing up in a bilingual world. The emphasis is on the development of a language plan, selecting options for organizing language usage (time, schedule, teacher, or classroom based models), and responding to the linguistic and cultural backgrounds of children and their families in curriculum planning. The natural process of acculturation (or cultural transmission) through song-games will be a central component of this class. Participants will learn various Latino folkloric dances, songs, song-games, finger-plays, lullabies, and rhythms. Expect regular demonstrations, high-level interactions, and opportunities to practice in simulations, presentations, and role-plays.
Professional Learning, Ethical Practice, and Collaboration in Early Childhood Special Education. Ric Reardon, Castleton University

This course will focus on the professional learning, ethical practice, and collaborative aspects of Early Childhood Special Education. The 4-day institute and follow-up work will provide an overview of the historical, philosophical, theoretical/empirical, and legal bases for family centered, relationship based early childhood special education services. Emphasis will be on family systems, and the central role of families in facilitating development. Participants will demonstrate an understanding of past and current laws and policies in ECSE and will demonstrate skills required to build and maintain collaborative relationships through effective communication and teaming with families, children, professional colleagues, and community members. Resources in Vermont will also be shared.

Curriculum Development Birth-3rd Grade: Emphasis on STEM, Place-Based, and Nature Education

Young children are mud pie makers, shell collectors, fort builders, rock stackers, and stick-sword wielders. That is, they’re scientists, mathematicians, and engineers learning about the world around them, often creating their own tools for play and exploration. In this course, we’ll focus on how children make sense of and connect with their world through science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and through nature-based play and learning. We’ll discuss what STEM is, what it looks like in early childhood, what it means to our teaching practice, and how it is connected to nature and natural environments. And we’ll explore ways early childhood educators can nurture young learners by giving children opportunities to: be outdoors, explore, play, make observations, use all of their senses, question and discover. We will be outside a good deal during this course, rain or shine. In addition to the four-day institute, participants taking the course for credit will be expected to attend at least one of the autumn Saturday sessions.

Legal & Financial Issues in Early Childhood. Lori Harris, Union Institute and University

This course is designed for experienced early childhood and school age care professionals who are seeking to become credentialed program directors. The overarching purpose is to contribute to the quality and stability of child care settings by informing child care program directors about the many financial and legal issues that are pertinent to successful child care program management.

Note #1: This course may satisfy individual State requirements for individuals who seek the Director’s credential in their respective state. Check with your state’s credentialing agency to insure that it is an accepted course towards the credential.

Note #2: This course is a requirement of Step 2 of Vermont’s Early Childhood and Afterschool Program Director Credential. Vermont residents should view the steps for becoming credentialed in Vermont.

Using the Pyramid Model to Support the Social and Emotional Development of Young Children (Early MTSS). Vermont Agency of Education

This course aims to provide professionals with an in-depth, intensive learning experience around the Pyramid Model framework for addressing the social and emotional development of
young children. Evidence-based practices, tools, and strategies will be provided and used to support participants in understanding how to apply the Pyramid Model framework across home, program and community settings to support each child, including those who are culturally, linguistically, and ability-diverse. Emphasis will be provided on how this model can support the full participation of young children with challenging behavior. Drawing on examples from Vermont’s Early Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), the instructor will provide participants with high quality learning experiences related to promoting the social and emotional competence of each and every young children within a tiered framework, engaging and collaborating with families, improving systems and practices, and building systems of care.