

## **WSCC Child Development Program**

### **Mission of the WSCC Child Development Program**

It is the mission of the Child Development program at Wallace State Community College to provide students with a specialized quality education with the necessary knowledge and skills to become successful caregivers and administrators in early child care and education programs.

### **Vision of the WSCC Child Development Program**

It is the vision of the Child Development Program at Wallace State Community College to enable students to nurture and educate future generations so they will become productive citizens and leaders in their community and make a positive impact in the world.

### **Slogan of the WSCC Child Development Program**

*Nurturing Future Generations*

### **Strategic Objectives of the WSCC Child Development Program:**

At completion of the Child Development program, students will:

1. Identify oneself with the early childhood field and serve as an informed advocate for young children and the profession
2. Be knowledgeable in all domains of child development and in the influences that affect learning
3. Create environments that are safe, healthy, respectful, challenging, and supportive for each child
4. Know about and understand diverse characteristics of family and community
5. Build respectful, supportive and engaging partnerships with diverse families and communities
6. Develop cultural competence and know how to assist diverse families in finding needed resources and appropriate services including those whose children have disabilities or special characteristics or learning needs
7. Involve families and communities in their children's development and learning

8. Understand the goals, benefits and uses of developmentally appropriate assessment and how they can be used in the development of strategies and curriculum
9. Utilize a variety of assessment strategies including technology to positively influence and document each child's development
10. Use a range of developmentally appropriate approaches and strategies to support learning and interactions with children and families
11. Design, implement, and evaluate comprehensive curricula for all content areas
12. Use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching and learning approaches
13. Understand content knowledge and resources in academic disciplines
14. Design, implement, and evaluate meaningful and challenging curricula for children using own knowledge, appropriate learning standards and other resources
15. Know and use the central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of content areas or academic disciplines
16. Know about and uphold ethical standards and other professional guidelines related to early childhood practice
17. Engage in continuous and collaborative learning to inform practice and integrate knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education
18. Reflect on their work to improve practice to promote positive outcomes for each child and strive for continuous professional growth

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework is strongly linked to the program's mission and goals, to provide students with a specialized quality education with the necessary knowledge and skills to become successful caregivers and administrators in early childcare and education programs. To this end, the conceptual framework is comprised of four principles: thinking, feeling, interacting, and moving.

We believe that all children are thinking, moving, feeling, and interacting human beings. These principles firmly rest on the theoretical foundation of Jean Piaget's Constructivist Learning Theory which explains that children learn through active involvement. It is through direct experiences that children learn and have the potential to develop intelligence. All children,

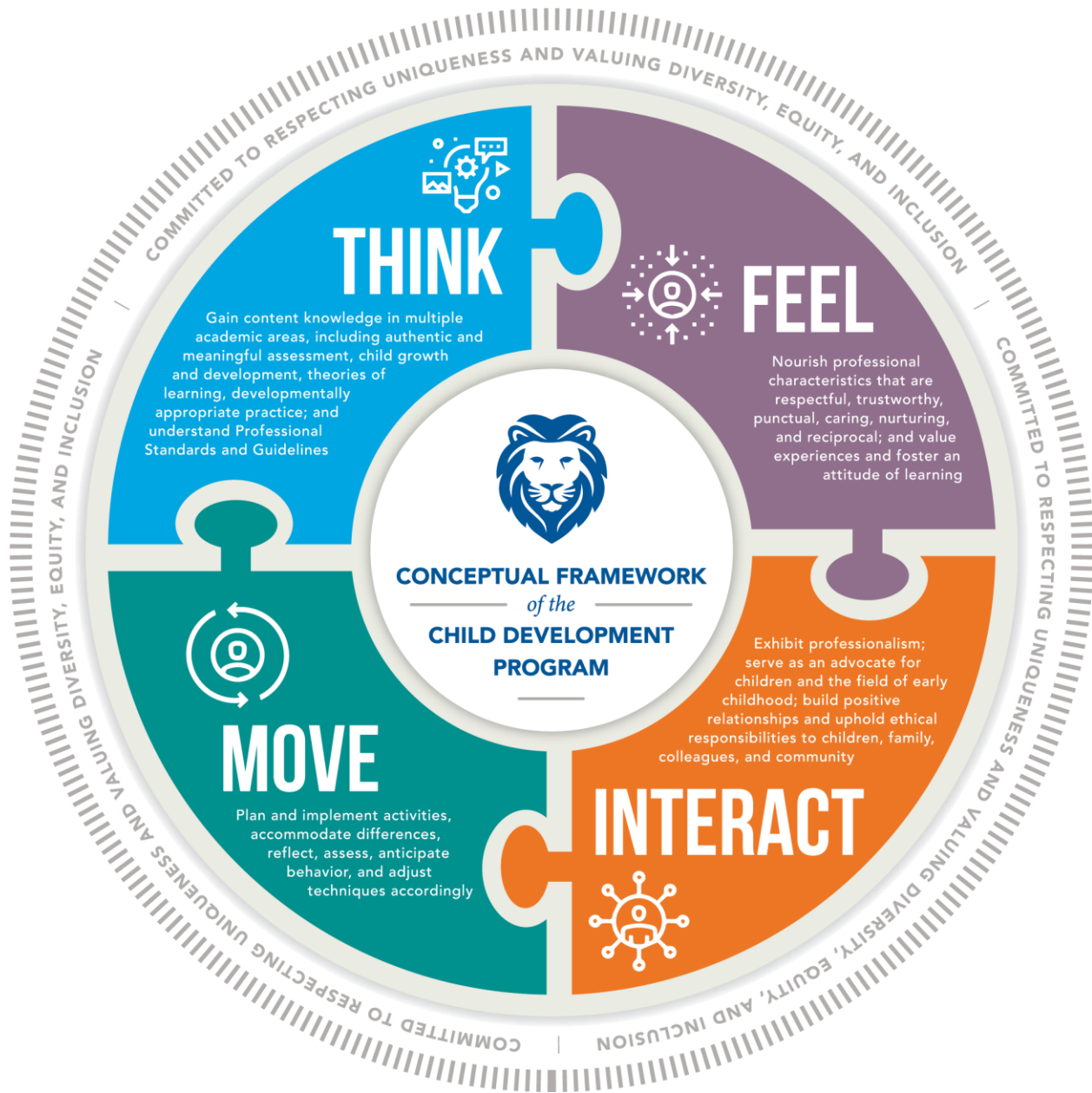
regardless of background experiences, culture, ethnicity or other differences, should be provided opportunities to construct knowledge through interacting with the environment. The Child Development program operates under the same premise. Our students need and are provided with direct experiences and active learning to best learn and to be able to provide all children with optimal experiences so that they will learn to their best potential and have the knowledge and skills they need to become successful caregivers and administrators in early childcare and education programs.

We recognize and value diversity, equity, and inclusion and we prepare our students to work in diverse and inclusive settings. Students have many opportunities for real experiences with children to help them better understand the development and needs of young children and how to teach them in developmentally appropriate ways. Students have opportunities to observe, document, implement, interact, assess and reflect about experiences with children in diverse and inclusive settings. Hands-on experiences are emphasized for both children and adults. Children and adults learn through doing and reflecting on what they have experienced to learn and grow.

This framework was developed collaboratively by the program director, students, and the advisory committee and is a living document. The conceptual framework is revisited at least twice each year during our regular advisory committee meetings. Advisory committee members are invited and encouraged to make any suggested changes.

Upon completion of the Child Development program, our students are inspired to:

- Think - gain content knowledge in multiple academic areas, authentic and meaningful assessment, intentional teaching, child growth and development, theories of learning, developmentally appropriate practice, understand Professional Standards and Guidelines
- Move - interact, plan, implement, reflect, assess, anticipate behavior, adjust
- Feel - respectful, trustworthy, punctual, caring, nurturing, reciprocal, value experiences, attitude of learning
- Interact- exhibit professionalism, serve as an advocate for children and the field of early childhood, build positive relationships and uphold ethical responsibilities to children, families, colleagues, and community



Conceptual Framework of the Child Development Program

**The Child Development program’s conceptual framework is influenced greatly by the NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs.** Students know, understand, and use knowledge of children’s characteristics, needs and multiple interacting influences to create environments and learning experiences that are healthy, respectful, supportive and challenging for each child. Respectful and reciprocal partnerships with

children's families and the community are critical for success as early childhood professionals. Students know, understand, and value the diverse and complex characteristics of children's families and communities. Early childhood professionals support, engage and involve families and communities in children's development and learning. Students know about, understand, and use child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment to positively influence the development of every child. The goals, benefits and uses of assessment in partnership with families are central to effective practice. Students know, understand, and use a wide variety of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families to positively impact each child's development and learning. Knowledge of academic disciplines, concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas are used to design, implement and evaluate experiences for children that promote positive development and optimal learning for children. Students conduct themselves as professionals and advocates for early childhood following ethical guidelines and other professional standards to make informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources.

**The Child Development program plans to address challenges and build on its current strengths.**

The strength of our conceptual framework is that it continues to be the driving force of the child development program. To continue to involve students in becoming familiar with and revising the conceptual framework as needed, the conceptual framework has been posted in Blackboard for comments from students of any desired feedback or suggested changes. Assignments throughout the program include expectations for students to think, feel, move and interact with children and each other. We will continue to prepare students in all Child Development classes to work in diverse, inclusive settings by using our conceptual framework to ensure our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Students will continue to have many opportunities to engage in learning that transforms lives and communities as they are actively thinking, feeling, moving and interacting with each other.

We recognize and are working on one weakness to ensure the Child Development's conceptual framework is well recognized in our community. We will continue to strive to share our conceptual framework with the candidates, field placement supervisors, and other stakeholders.

The conceptual framework of the program has been added to the program's student handbook and the Child Development website on the [www.wallacestate.edu](http://www.wallacestate.edu) link. We will continue to share the conceptual framework graphic on our Facebook page and on materials shared with field placement supervisors. Annual advisory committee meetings were held each year from March 2014 until Fall 2019 when a second annual meeting was added to meet in September, 2019. Members of the advisory committee will continue to be updated via email when new information arises to keep them informed. Members of the advisory committee are regularly encouraged to send comments and suggestions or ideas to the program director anytime during the year.