

The development of the Positive Early Childhood Education Program

(PECE)

KAREN TURNER, CASSANDRA DITTMAN,
MATTHEW SANDERS, JULIE RUSBY



Positive Early
Childhood Education



Declaration of competing interests

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The critical role of nurturing environments

- Nurturing environments teach, promote and reinforce prosocial behaviour and monitor and limit opportunities for problem behaviour
- Research from diverse fields shows that nurturing environments provide children with the learning, language, self-regulatory and physical skills needed to do well in school and life
- Nurturing environments also have the power to buffer the effects of early childhood adversity





High quality early education and care are linked to long-term social and academic gains for children



Participation in early childhood education has increased significantly in the past decade (80% of 3-5 year olds)



But, quality of childcare is varied, staff turnover is high and managing child behaviour is a source of stress



Professional development and learning programs based on behavioural principles potentially beneficial



Aims for the development of PECE

- Develop a program based on Triple P for early childhood education and care settings
- Develop an effective model for training early childhood educators in positive child care strategies
- Develop protocols for mentoring and coaching to support educators to implement the strategies
- Conduct pilot work to examine efficacy and consumer acceptability





Target settings

- Childcare and long daycare centers
- Centre-based early learning and education (e.g. kindergarten, preschool)
- Family day care
- Outside school hours care
- Particularly beneficial for new educators or those dealing with challenging behavior





Logistics of taking staff off-line for training

Ensuring sustained implementation

Resistance to some behavioral strategies (e.g. exclusionary time out) and language (e.g. disobedience)

Consideration of philosophies of early childhood education



Principles of positive child care

- 1. Setting up a safe, engaging environment
- 2. Creating a positive learning environment
- 3. Teaching good social skills and behaviour
- 4. Having realistic expectations
- 5. Taking care of yourself
- 6. Working as a team





Positive child care strategies

Building children's social and emotional skills

Setting up engaging activities

Managing transitions

Talking with children

Descriptive praise

Giving attention

Individual time

Affection

Helping children develop a positive approach to learning

Setting a good example

Incidental teaching

Ask-say-do

Teaching backwards

Encouraging early learning

Behaviour charts

Rewards

Helping children learn new ways to behave

Setting rules and limits

Directed discussion

Diversion

Planned ignoring

Clear, calm instructions

Consequences

Sit and watch

Quiet time



Training model

Professional training for mentors

Face-to-face training for center directors or head teachers in the content of the online program and consultation skills for coaching sessions

Online modules for educators

4 online modules over 6 to 8 weeks covering positive childcare strategies

Practice and coaching

Up to 4 practice sessions with mentor to support strategy implementation



PECE online modules

- 4 modules each taking approximately 60 minutes to complete
- Educators receive individual log-in details
- Video clips used to present information and model strategies
- Interactive exercises and activities
- Customisable and printable personal workbook
- Encourages personal goal setting and self-reflection





PECE online modules: Homepage

Home Resources Workbook Menu - Logout



Home

Welcome to Positive Early Childhood Education Program. The program modules open up in order. When you complete a module you will be able to move on to the next one. Previous modules stay unlocked so you can go back any time.

Karen



Program progress: 22%

Current module: 2

You have 364 day(s) left in Positive Early Childhood Education Online.

[Edit my details](#)

Quick start
Module 2: Introduction

Module 1
What is Positive Early Childhood Education?



Module 2
Building children's social and emotional skills

[Jump to current topic](#)



Module 3
Helping children develop a positive approach to learning



Module 4
Helping children learn new ways to behave



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PECE online modules: Module navigation

The screenshot shows the PECE online module navigation interface. At the top, there is a green navigation bar with the PECE logo on the left, the text "Home Resources Workbook" in the center, and "Menu Logout" on the right. Below the navigation bar, there are four tabs for "Module 1", "Module 2", "Module 3", and "Module 4", with "Module 2" selected. The main content area is titled "Building children's social and emotional skills" and features a video player. The video player shows a man in a dark suit and light blue shirt speaking, with a smaller inset video showing a woman interacting with a child in a classroom setting. The video player controls show a progress bar at 0:27 / 2:29, with buttons for play/pause, previous, next, full screen, and close. Below the video player is a "Do activity" button. On the left side of the main content area, there is a vertical menu with the following items: "Check in", "Introduction", "Setting up engaging activities", "Managing transitions", "Talking with children" (highlighted in green), "Descriptive praise", "Giving attention", "Individual time", "Affection", "Make a plan", "Get active", and "Quick start Module 2: Talking with children". At the bottom of the page, there is a green footer bar with the text "About the program | Help | Disclaimer | Privacy | Copyright".





Practice sessions: Aims

- Provide educators with clear, specific and helpful information about their interactions with children in their care
- Prompt and support the educator's use of skills such as self-tracking, self-identification of strengths and weaknesses, and self-selection of goals
- Overall, encourage educators to take personal responsibility for their own behaviour and professional learning





Practice sessions: Timing and frequency

- Two to four practice sessions, lasting 40–50 minutes each
 - number of practice sessions required may vary
- Generally conduct sessions on a weekly to fortnightly basis
- Can eventually incorporate peer coaching and feedback into regular supervision or team meetings





Practice sessions: Main components

- Set agenda – goals for observation
- Observation period: facilitator observes educator using strategies from online modules (15–20 mins)
- Feedback period: educator self-evaluation of implementation of strategies and feedback (using the self-regulatory framework) (15–20 minutes)
- Discuss other issues and goals for between-session practice (up to 10 minutes)





Considerations

- Fit
 - Philosophy and pedagogical approach
 - Language and strategy acceptance
 - Local regulations
 - Qualification differences within the sector and across countries
- Logistics
 - Enhancing engagement with online modules
 - Coaching component – mentor vs peer vs self-directed
 - Timing of training – pre-service vs. in-service

