The development of the Positive Early Childhood Education Program

(PECE)

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Positive Early
Childhood Education

Declaration of competing interests

- Triple P and PECE are owned by The University of Queensland (UQ)

- Triple P International Pty Ltd is licensed to publish and disseminate the programs worldwide

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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

- Setting up a safe, engaging environment
- Creating a positive learning environment
- Teaching good social skills and behaviour
- Having realistic expectations
- Taking care of yourself
- 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

PECE online modules: Module navigation

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