

Child Development Graduate Certificate Program



Why Erikson Institute?

There is a clear and growing need for well-trained professionals who work to improve the lives of children and families in a wide range of settings. And an expanding body of research has shown that to help children reach their full potential, practitioners who serve children and families are more effective when they understand critical developmental influences on the early years of life.

Drawing on the core curriculum in our flagship master's degree program, the courses in the 18-credit hour certificate program integrate key ideas from a range of disciplines including developmental psychology, neurobiology, anthropology, education, sociology, health, and social work. With this interdisciplinary developmental knowledge you will be able to support a child's optimal development. Whatever your field, you will be prepared to respond effectively to the needs, challenges, and strengths of children and their families.

If you wish to improve your practice by gaining a deep, research-based understanding of early childhood development and family dynamics, then our Child Development Graduate Certificate program should be at the top of your list of career development options.

In 1966, Erikson was founded on the belief that all children deserve the best chance we can give them to learn and grow. Three simple yet powerful ideas form the basis of an Erikson education:

- Professionals who work with children should understand the whole child. A child is more than his or her body, emotions, intellect, language skills, learning ability, cultural identity, and relationships. A child is all of these things, the interaction among them, and more. Because of this, our comprehensive curriculum draws on the fields of psychology, neurobiology, anthropology, sociology, education, and others to shed light on the complex interplay of influences on each child.
- Children, like adults, develop and learn best in responsive relationships. Our faculty engage you in relationships and encourage you to establish and enrich the relationships you have with the children and adults with whom you work.
- The key to improving practice is professional self-awareness. Through integrative seminars, you will develop the habit of reflecting on your work and on your role as a professional who works with children and families.

All three principles prepare you to work with children, families, and professionals who come from backgrounds very different from your own and our approach helps you understand how your own culture and beliefs influence your work.

Other Erikson programs

Degree programs

Master of Science in Child Development
Master of Science in Early Childhood Education
leading to initial teacher licensure
Master of Science in Early Childhood Education
(non-licensure, online)
Master of Social Work
Ph.D. in Child Development with Loyola
University Chicago

Graduate certificate programs

Infant Specialist Certificate
Infant Mental Health Certificate
Early Childhood Bilingual/ESL Certificate (online)

Continuing education

Erikson offers short courses, trainings, workshops, and custom programs for experienced practitioners. For current programs, visit www.erikson.edu/professionaldevelopment.

Program curriculum

Certificate program courses are offered in an asynchronous online format. You'll have all the advantages and support of our campus-based programs: dedicated advisers, academic writing support, extensive research resources through the library, career resources and advising, and a dedicated student services staff answering your questions. Plus, you'll be learning in an online environment like no other.

We understand that you don't have time to battle with technology. Our program was built by and for early childhood professionals, with your skills and comfort level in mind. You'll be using advanced distance learning and community-building technologies, carefully streamlined and supported so they're simple and seamless to use. We'll give you a thorough orientation to the online environment before you start, and there's a real person standing by to help if you need it.

Technical requirements

The EriksonOnline learning environment is built on Blackboard Learn, an industry-leading distance learning platform. You'll utilize other free, easy-to-use web-based tools like Adobe Acrobat Reader, Ensemble Video, WebEx, and Microsoft Office Online. To get the most out of your courses, you'll need access to a high-speed internet connection. For details on technology requirements, visit www.erikson.edu/onlinetech.

Course work

18 credit hours

Year One

C432	Family and Culture (3 credit hours)
C425	Physical Growth and Development (3 credit hours)
C421	Human Development I: Psychosocial Development in Infancy and Childhood (3 credit hours)

Year Two

C426	Development of Cognition, Language and Play I: Cognitive Development (3 credit hours)
C427	Development of Cognition, Language and Play II: Language Development (3 credit hours)
C460	Culminating Project and Seminar (3 credit hours)

Frequently asked questions

What is the difference between a post-baccalaureate certificate program and a graduate certificate program?

Post-baccalaureate certificate programs generally offer course work at the upper undergraduate level, while courses in graduate certificate programs are at the graduate level. There are always exceptions depending on the individual institution of higher education, but Erikson's certificate program courses are all taught at the graduate level.

If I enroll in a certificate program and then later decide to enter a master's degree program at Erikson, will my credits from the certificate program transfer to the master's program?

Yes. With the exception of C460 Culminating Project and Seminar, the other 15 credits of course work in the Child Development Certificate program can be used towards the M.S. in Child Development or M.S. in Early Childhood Education programs at Erikson. Up to 12 credits of the course work can be used towards the Master of Social Work program.

I don't need to take any more courses for graduate credit. Do I have the option of enrolling in the courses for professional development credit instead of academic credit?

Yes. Contingent on approval from the program director and the admission committee, you can take the certificate program courses on a pass/fail basis for professional development credit.

Please consider the following as you explore this option:

1. Courses taken for professional development credit are not eligible for federal or Erikson financial aid.
2. Courses taken for professional development credit are generally not eligible to be transferred to another degree program, either at Erikson or at another institution of higher education.
3. If you are enrolled in a certificate program to earn a professional credential or license, courses taken for professional development credit may not fulfill the requirements for the respective credential. We strongly recommend that you get written documentation from the credentialing body that courses taken for professional development credit will be accepted for the respective credential or license.

Admission

Who should apply?

Professionals who work in child services, social work, early education, healthcare, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychology, law, museum education, after school care, administration, policy, and other related fields are strongly encouraged to apply to this certificate program. While previous hands-on experience with children is helpful, it is not a requirement for admission to the program.

Program length and start date

The program is designed to be completed in 24 months, but you can craft an individualized program plan that will allow for completion in a shorter period of time. Students typically start the program in the spring semester, which begins in the first or second week of January.

Application process

To be considered for admission to the child development certificate program, you must submit the following:

- A completed application form
- Applicant self-disclosure form
- Official sealed academic transcripts from previous colleges or universities where 30 or more credit hours were completed
- Two short essays
- Two letters of recommendation

An interview with a faculty member is an important and required component of the admission process.

All application materials, with the exception of official academic transcripts, are submitted online at www.erikson.edu/apply.

For more information

If you have questions about the admission process, please contact the Office of Admission at admission@erikson.edu or 312.755.2250.

Financial Aid

Eligible students enrolled in the Child Development Graduate Certificate program have access to the following sources of financial aid funding:

Stafford and Graduate PLUS Direct Loans

Erikson participates in the William D. Ford Direct Loan program. Eligible students may borrow under two different loan programs: Stafford unsubsidized loans and Graduate PLUS loans. In order to receive federal student loans, you must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be a U.S. citizen or eligible non-citizen
- Be accepted to, or continuing in, a degree or certificate program at Erikson Institute
- Not be in default on a student loan or owe a refund on any federal Title IV financial aid
- Submit all required federal and/or institutional documentation
- Maintain satisfactory academic progress as outlined in the Student Handbook

Gateways to Opportunity Scholarships

The Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship program is an individual-based scholarship opportunity for eligible Illinois practitioners working in early care and education or

school-age care programs. The Gateways Scholarship Program will pay a percentage of tuition and fees dependent upon availability of funding. For information about the Gateways to Opportunity Scholarship program, please visit www.ilgateways.com.

Applying for financial aid

To apply for financial aid, you must:

- File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at fafsa.ed.gov.
- Complete the Erikson financial aid application, available at www.erikson.edu/financialaid.

We encourage you to begin the financial aid process at the same time as your application for admission. You do not need to wait to be admitted in order to start the financial aid process.

For more information

If you have questions about the financial aid process, please contact the Financial Aid Office at FinAid@erikson.edu or call 312.755.2250.

Additional information about tuition and fees, financial aid application materials, and payment plan options is available at www.erikson.edu/financialaid.

It is the policy of Erikson Institute not to discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, age, disability, or veteran status in matters of admissions, employment, or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates, in accordance with civil rights legislation and institutional commitment. Any alleged violations of this policy should be directed to the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty.

Erikson Institute reserves the right to change without notice any statement in this publication concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, tuition, fees, curricula, and courses.

Graduate School in Child Development


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On the cover

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About Erikson Institute

Erikson Institute is the nation's premier independent institution of higher education committed to ensuring that all children have equitable opportunities to realize their potential. We uniquely prepare leaders in child development, social work, and early childhood education to improve the lives of young children and their families. We educate, create new knowledge, provide direct services, and advocate—because nothing matters more than a child's early years.