

SANTA MONICA COLLEGE



EDUCATION

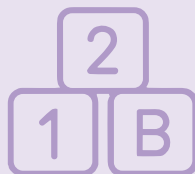
Inspire, Educate, Empower

EXPLORE YOUR PATH!

LOVE WORKING WITH YOUNG CHILDREN (BIRTH-AGE 5)?

Explore these programs that prepare you to support and educate infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children:

- **Introduction to Early Care (Noncredit)**
- **Early Childhood Associate Teacher**
- **Early Childhood Education**
- **Early Intervention/Special Education Assistant**
- **Nature-Based Pedagogy**



WANT TO TEACH SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN (TK-6TH GRADE)?

Check out these programs if you're interested in teaching in elementary school settings:

- **Transitional Kindergarten (TK)**
- **Elementary School Teacher**
- **Dance Teacher**



INTERESTED IN NON-TEACHING CAREERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH?

If you want to support children and youth through social services, counseling, or mental health fields, explore:

- **Child and Adolescent Development Program**



CHECK OUT OUR EDUCATION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

- Make a difference and help shape the next generation!
- Turn your passion into a career in education, counseling, social services, and more.

The SMC Education/Early Childhood Program prepares you for careers in early care and education—or for transfer to a four-year college or university. You'll gain real-world, hands-on experience through our fieldwork courses and the Early Childhood Lab School, so you're learning by doing. Plus, our experienced faculty are leaders in the field and are here to support you while helping you build valuable professional connections along the way.

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* These careers typically require a bachelor's degree. Students can complete transfer coursework and continue into an upper-division program at a four-year university.

** These careers may require state teaching credentials, a specific number of units in Child Development or Early Childhood Education, and completion of graduate programs and/or post-graduate licensure.

INTRODUCTION TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

(NONCREDIT-FREE)

This program gives you an introduction to both the ideas and hands-on skills needed to work with young children in an early care and education setting. You'll learn the basics of child development and classroom practices while building a foundation for your next step.

This Certificate of Completion is a starting point, but it does not replace an official Early Childhood Education certificate or an Associate degree. Those are required by the state if you want to earn a Child Development Permit and qualify for jobs like Associate Teacher or higher.

If your goal is to work in the field, this certificate can help you get started—but you'll need additional coursework and fieldwork to move forward.

POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS

CAREER TITLE	POTENTIAL JOB DUTIES	ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION	MEDIAN PAY (LA AREA AVG)	SKILLS NEEDED
Childcare Workers	Ensure child safety,prepare meals/snacks, support hygiene, change diapers, lead learning activities, maintain routines, monitor developmental concerns, keep child records	High school diploma or more	\$32,050 (year)	Communication, decision-making, interpersonal, patience, physical stamina
Nannies	Care for children in the home, support children's overall needs, plan and prepare meals, handle laundry and clothing care, organize play and outings, provide behavior guidance, offer learning and language activities, drive children as needed	High school diploma or more + licensing from Department of Social Services	\$35,000–\$60,000 (year)	Communication, decision-making, patience, ability to organize,plan, and manage schedules, maintain safe environment for children

PLACES TO LOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Childcare Centers
- Afterschool Programs
- Community Organizations (YMCA, Parks and Recreation)
- Family Resource Centers
- Camps
- Nanny/Babysitting Networks and Agencies



EXPLORATION COURSES

- ECE 901, Introduction to Early Care and Education

CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES

- Certificate of Completion – Introduction to Early Care and Education
- Certificate of Competency – ESL for College and Career Pathways

This program supports multilingual students in developing the academic and professional English needed to succeed in Early Childhood Education coursework and careers.

TRANSFER INFORMATION

This program is designed to prepare you for direct entry into the workforce by building the skills and experience needed for employment in the field. If you are also considering transferring to a four-year institution, meeting with an academic counselor can help you explore your options and create a clear educational pathway that aligns with your goals.

ACADEMIC COUNSELING

An Education/Early Childhood (ED/ECE) counselor can help you explore the program and create an education plan that fits your goals. For help scheduling an appointment, visit the ED/ECE Counseling Resources web page.



EARLY CHILDHOOD ASSOCIATE TEACHER

The courses in this program make up the Early Childhood Education Core, which includes 12 units. If you want to work in an early childhood setting, you'll need to complete these core classes as a minimum requirement.

POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS

CAREER TITLE	POTENTIAL JOB DUTIES	ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION	MEDIAN PAY (LA AREA AVG)	SKILLS NEEDED
Entry Level Assistant Teachers	Review lessons with students, reinforce classroom rules, assist with attendance and records, prepare materials and equipment, supervise students during non-class times	Two years of college coursework or an Associate's degree	\$35,240 (year)	Communication, interpersonal, patience, resourcefulness
Preschool Teachers, Except Special Education	Teach basic skills (colors, shapes, numbers, letters) work with children individually or in groups, plan and implement curriculum, organize activities that support learning and exploration, create schedules ensuring activity, rest, and routines, monitor emotional/developmental concerns and inform parents, keep progress records and update parents regularly	Associate's degree	\$37,120 (year)	Communication, creativity, interpersonal, organization, patience, physical stamina

PLACES TO LOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Schools (PK-3rd grade)
- Preschools and Childcare Centers
- Community Organizations (YMCA, Boys & Girls Club)
- Nonprofits Serving Children and Families
- Residential Youth Programs



EXPLORATION COURSES

- ECE 2, Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children
- ECE 11, Child, Family and Community
- ECE 17, Introduction to Curriculum
- PSYCH 11, Child Growth and Development

CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES

- Certificate of Achievement – Early Childhood Associate Teacher

TRANSFER INFORMATION

This program is designed to help you enter the workforce by building the skills and hands-on experience needed to work in the field. While the certificate focuses on career preparation, the classes can also be a great starting point for transfer.

If you're thinking about continuing to a four-year college or university, meeting with an academic counselor can help you explore your options and create a clear education plan that fits your goals.

ACADEMIC COUNSELING

An Education/Early Childhood (ED/ECE) counselor can help you explore the program and create an education plan that fits your goals. For help scheduling an appointment, visit the ED/ECE Counseling Resources web page.



NATURE-BASED PEDAGOGY

In this program, you'll get hands-on experience in outdoor learning environments and learn how to create and manage quality nature-based spaces for children. You'll explore nature-based teaching approaches—from simple outdoor activities to forest kindergarten practices—and discover strategies that help children build curiosity about the world around them.

POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS

CAREER TITLE	POTENTIAL JOB DUTIES	ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION	MEDIAN PAY (LA AREA AVG)	SKILLS NEEDED
After School Program Assistant	Supervising activities, assisting with homework, ensuring student safety, managing behavior, maintaining clean, organized activity areas	Certificate, possible Associate's degree + additional certifications (CPR/First Aid)	\$17–\$19 (hour) \$35,000–\$36,000 (year)	Patient, energetic, communication, able to work independently
Camp Counselor	Monitor campers during activities, lead or assist in running daily activities, act as role model, enforce safety rules, maintain cleanliness of facilities	Certificate + possible additional certifications (CPR/First Aid)	\$17–\$23 (hour) \$33,000–\$35,600 (year)	Experience working with children, high energy, ability to collaborate and communicate clearly, patience, adapt to changing daily needs
Lead Teacher (private preschool)	Design/implement weekly lesson plans, oversee daily activities, manage student behavior, mentor assistant teachers, conduct parent teacher conferences, maintain safety standards	Certificate or Associate's degree	\$22–\$25 (hour) \$45,692–\$48,016 (year)	Understanding of early childhood educational methods, ability to lead a classroom team and collaborate, strong verbal and written skills, time management

PLACES TO LOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Private Preschools with nature focus and outdoor programs, examples: Nature School LA, Aventuras Forest Preschool, Arroyo Nature School, LA Nature Kids
- Corporate childcare centers
- City Parks and Recreation departments
- Nature and adventure camps
- School district after-school programs
- Environmental education centers

EXPLORATION COURSES

- ECE 11, Child, Family and Community
- ECE 76, Children in Nature
- ECE 77, Nature: In, Out, and Beyond
- PSYCH 11, Child Growth and Development

CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES

- Certificate of Achievement – Nature-Based Pedagogy

TRANSFER INFORMATION

This program is designed to prepare you for direct entry into the workforce by building the skills and experience needed for employment in the field. If you are also considering transferring to a four-year institution, meeting with an academic counselor can help you explore your options and create a clear educational pathway that aligns with your goals.



ACADEMIC COUNSELING

An Education/Early Childhood (ED/ECE) counselor can help you explore the program and create an education plan that fits your goals. For help scheduling an appointment, visit the ED/ECE Counseling Resources web page.



TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN

Learn by doing in a fun, hands-on program that helps you get ready to teach Transitional Kindergarten (TK). TK is a free school program for 4-year-olds who turn 5 between September 2 and December 2. It helps kids get prepared for kindergarten by giving them a smooth transition from preschool to a regular kindergarten class.

POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS

CAREER TITLE	POTENTIAL JOB DUTIES	ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION	MEDIAN PAY (LA AREA AVG)	SKILLS NEEDED
Preschool or Pre-K Assistant Teacher	Review lessons with students, reinforce classroom rules, assist with attendance and records, prepare materials and equipment, supervise students during non-class times	Associate's degree	\$35,240 (year)	Communication, interpersonal, patience, resourcefulness
Transitional Kindergarten Teacher	Planning lessons for 4–5-year-olds, teaching early literacy, math, and foundational academic skills, supporting social-emotional learning and self-regulation, communicating with families, creating a safe, inclusive, and structured classroom environment	Bachelor's degree + teaching credential	\$30–\$45 (hour) \$60,000–\$95,000 (year)	Knowledge of early childhood development, classroom management for 4–5-year-olds, strong communication with families, collaboration with support staff and specialists
After School Program Leader	Lead and assist with after school activities, academic support, recreation, maintain safe and positive environment, supervise groups of students	Associates degree + CPR certification	\$20–\$24 (hour) \$24,000–\$28,000 (year)	Communication, interpersonal, group management, creativity in planning, crisis response and ability to act quickly in emergencies

PLACES TO LOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- **Public School Districts**
- **Childcare Centers and Preschools**
- **Community Organizations (YMCA, Boys & Girls Club)**
- **Nonprofits Serving Children and Families**

EXPLORATION COURSES

- **ECE 2, Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children**
- **ECE 24, Preschool and Early Primary Development**

CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES

- **Certificate of Achievement – Transitional Kindergarten**

TRANSFER INFORMATION

This certificate is designed to help you complete the 24 units of Early Childhood Education (ECE) required to teach Transitional Kindergarten (TK) in California. It is intended for students who already hold a current California Teaching Credential and want to meet the TK instructional requirements. However classes are open to all students interested in working with the TK population.

If you do not currently have a Multiple Subject Teaching Credential, we strongly recommend meeting with an academic counselor. A counselor can help you review your background, clarify your goals, and discuss the best educational pathway for you.



ACADEMIC COUNSELING

An Education/Early Childhood (ED/ECE) counselor can help you explore the program and create an education plan that fits your goals. For help scheduling an appointment, visit the ED/ECE Counseling Resources web page.



DANCE TEACHING (PRE-K – GRADE 5)

Designed for students pursuing work in dance or incorporating dance in child development settings. This two-semester Santa Monica College Dance Department program covers dance pedagogy, anatomy, modern, ballet, jazz, and world dance techniques, along with dance history, curriculum, psychology, and career preparation.

POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS

CAREER TITLE	POTENTIAL JOB DUTIES	ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION	MEDIAN PAY (LA AREA AVG)	SKILLS NEEDED
Dance Studio Teacher	Teach dance techniques and age-appropriate skills Plan lessons and choreograph routines, prepare recitals and showcases	Formal training (certificate, college course work)	\$16–\$27 (per hour) \$47,000–\$56,000 (yearly)	Demonstrate movements safely and clearly, adhere to studio policies, and communicate well with parents and staff
Enrichment Teacher	Implement activities to create movement and develop healthy habits	Some training	\$20 (hour) \$28,000 (yearly)	Experience working with children, energetic, outgoing,



PLACES TO LOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Public or private elementary schools (often as enrichment, *not classroom teacher)
- After-school programs
- Nonprofit arts or youth organizations
- Dance studios
- Preschools or early learning centers
- Summer camps or recreation programs

EXPLORATION COURSES

- DANCE 10, Fundamentals of Dance Technique
- DANCE 75, Dance for Children: Creative in the Pre-K and Elementary Classroom
- ECE 2, Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children
- PSYCH 11, Child Growth and Development

CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES

- Certificate of Achievement – Dance Teaching (Pre-K – Grade 5)

TRANSFER INFORMATION

This program is designed to prepare you for direct entry into the workforce by building the skills and experience needed for employment in the field. If you are also considering transferring to a four-year institution, meeting with an academic counselor can help you explore your options and create a clear educational pathway that aligns with your goals.



ACADEMIC COUNSELING

An Education/Early Childhood (ED/ECE) counselor can help you explore the program and create an education plan that fits your goals. For help scheduling an appointment, visit the ED/ECE Counseling Resources web page.



EARLY INTERVENTION/ SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSISTANT

The Early Intervention/Special Education Assistant program prepares students to work in public and private settings serving young children with diverse developmental needs. Graduates may become early childhood educators with special-needs expertise, special education assistants for children birth to age eight, one-to-one inclusion facilitators, classroom assistants specializing in exceptionalities, or assistant teachers on early-intervention teams serving infants and toddlers.

POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS

CAREER TITLE	POTENTIAL JOB DUTIES	ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION	MEDIAN PAY (LA AREA AVG)	SKILLS NEEDED
Preschool Teacher (Except Special Education)	Planning, teaching early literacy, math, and social-emotional skills, supervising children, communicating with families, maintaining an organized, engaging classroom	Associate's degree	\$22–\$23 (hour) \$47,000–\$49,000 (year)	Knowledge of early childhood development, classroom management, interpersonal skills, patience
Special Education Teachers, Kindergarten/Elementary	Developing and implementing IEPs, providing differentiated instruction for diverse learning needs, collecting data, collaborating with general education, communicating with families about goals and progress, ensuring compliance with special education laws and procedures	Bachelor's degree and education specialist teaching credential	\$35–\$50 (hour) \$70,000–\$100,000 (year)	Knowledge of disabilities and learning differences, IEP development and progress monitoring behavior-support strategies, collaboration with general education teachers, strong communication with families and teams
Special Education Aid	Supporting students with academic and behavioral needs, implementing accommodations and modifications assisting with IEP goals, behavior management and de-escalation basics, supervising students. Providing one-on-one or small-group support, assisting with classroom organization and materials	Certificate	\$18–\$24 (hour) \$32,000–\$48,000 (year)	Patience, flexibility, and clear communication, ability to follow teacher and specialist guidance, behavior management and de-escalation basics

PLACES TO LOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Public school districts
- Charter schools
- Private special education schools
- Nonprofit learning centers
- County Offices of Education
- Early Intervention and Inclusion programs
- Preschools and Early Head Start Programs

EXPLORATION COURSES

- ECE 45, Introduction to Children with Special Needs
- ECE 49, Curriculum and Strategies for Children with Special Needs
- PSYCH 11, Child Growth and Development

CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES

- Associate Degree – Early Intervention/Special Education Assistant
- Certificate of Achievement – Early Intervention/Special Education Assistant

TRANSFER INFORMATION

This program is designed to prepare you for direct entry into the workforce by building the skills and experience needed for employment in the field. If you are also considering transferring to a four-year institution, meeting with an academic counselor can help you explore your options and create a clear educational pathway that aligns with your goals.



ACADEMIC COUNSELING

An Education/Early Childhood (ED/ECE) counselor can help you explore the program and create an education plan that fits your goals. For help scheduling an appointment, visit the ED/ECE Counseling Resources web page.



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Our Early Childhood Studies pathways get you ready to work with young children ages 0–8 in a variety of early learning settings. You'll gain hands-on knowledge and training to work in preschools and Pre-K programs, as well as before- and after-school programs. In addition our Infant and Toddler program prepares you to work with children 0–36 months, qualifying you to assist teachers in public infant/toddler programs or teach in private child-care settings

By the end of the program, you'll have the skills, knowledge, and professional mindset needed for entry-level jobs in early childhood settings. This degree also meets the requirements for the California Child Development Teacher Permit and includes the coursework needed to transfer to a four-year university.

POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS

CAREER TITLE	POTENTIAL JOB DUTIES	ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION	MEDIAN PAY (LA AREA AVG)	SKILLS NEEDED
Preschool Teacher	Teach children basic skills, work with children in groups or one on one, organize activities, watch for signs of emotional or developmental problems, keep records	Associate's degree	\$21.45 (hour) \$44,610 (year)	Active listening, communication skills, creativity, interpersonal skills, organizational skills, patience
Childcare Administrator /Director	Supervise childcare workers, hire and train, provide professional development opportunities, develop educational programs/standards, meet with parents, prepare budgets, ensure facilities are maintained	Certificate or possible Associate's degree	\$29.75 (hour) \$61,880 (year)	Interest in business, communication, interpersonal skills, leadership, and organizational skills
Preschool Site Supervisor	Confer with parents and staff, monitor students' progress, resolve problems, teach classes or courses, set educational standards and goals	Associate's degree	\$29.75 (hour) \$61,880 (year)	Active listening, coordinator, critical thinking, monitoring, communication, leadership
Infant/Toddler Teacher Early Head Start Programs	Develop and implement activities for infant/toddlers. assist and form relationships with families. create a safe and welcoming environment for children and their families.	Associate degree/ and or teacher permit	\$21–\$30 (hour)	Interpersonal skills, ability to work with other staff, open minded, flexible

PLACES TO LOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Preschools
- Childcare Centers
- Head Start & Early Start Programs
- TK-K classrooms (as aides)
- After School Programs
- Parks & Recreation Preschool Programs



EXPLORATION COURSES

- ECE 2, Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children
- ECE 11, Child, Family and Community
- ECE 17, Introduction to Curriculum
- ECE 46, Infant and Toddler Development
- ECE 71, Infant and Toddler Education and Care
- PSYCH 11, Child Growth and Development

CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES

- Associate Degree – Early Childhood Studies
- Associate Degree – Infant/Toddler Teacher
- Associate Degree for Transfer – Early Childhood Education
- Certificate of Achievement – Early Childhood Studies
- Certificate of Achievement – Infant/Toddler Teacher

ACADEMIC COUNSELING

An Education/Early Childhood (ED/ECE) counselor can help you explore the program and create an education plan that fits your goals. For help scheduling an appointment, visit the ED/ECE Counseling Resources web page.



TRANSFER INFORMATION

The Associate Degree and the Certificate of Achievement in ECE and Infant/Toddler are designed to prepare you for direct entry into the workforce by building the skills and experience needed for employment in the field. While the local degree/certificate focuses on career preparation, the classes can also be a great starting point for transfer.

Students interested in transferring are strongly encouraged to follow the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) in Early Childhood Education, as it prepares you to enter a Bachelor's program at a California State University (CSU) with similar majors.

Note: Students planning to transfer to a UC, private, or out-of-state institution should meet with a counselor *before applying*, as transfer requirements may differ. Additionally, UC does not have a similar major to Child Development/Early Childhood Education, and some CD/ECE units are not UC transferable.

Local CSU options:

- CSU Dominguez Hills, BS Child Development-Early Development & Learning
- CSU Fullerton, BS Family and Community Contexts
- CSU Los Angeles, BA Child Development General
- CSU Long Beach, BA Child Development and Family Studies – General
- CSU Northridge, BA Early Childhood Development
- CSU East Bay, BA Human Development: Early childhood Development Concentration – Online

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

This program is for students interested in working with children in TK–6th grade. It prepares you to enter a teacher preparation program and work toward a California Teaching Credential. You'll learn key professional standards and ethics, complete fieldwork to understand diverse student needs and the role of the teacher, and build foundational knowledge across subjects taught in elementary schools.

POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS

CAREER TITLE	POTENTIAL JOB DUTIES	ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION	MEDIAN PAY (LA AREA AVG)	SKILLS NEEDED
Teacher Assistant	Supervise students in multiple environments, tutor and assist children individually or in small groups, teach social skills, help teachers with record keeping	Associate's degree	\$45,420 (year)	Active listening, social awareness, communication, patience, resourcefulness
After School Program Leader	Maintain a safe environment, observe and monitor children, communicate with parents, plan activities	Associate's degree and possible certificate	\$38,070 (year)	Social perceptiveness, active listening, planning and coordination, patience, communication
Kindergarten Teacher	Create lesson plans, teach students and evaluate abilities, communicate with parents, develop and enforce classroom rules, supervise children outside classroom	Bachelor's degree + teaching credential and possible additional certifications (ex.CPR)	\$102,610 (year)	Communication skills, patience, physical stamina, resourcefulness, organization, creativity
Elementary School Teacher (grades TK-6)	Create lesson plans, instruct students individually and in groups, establish and enforce rules, guide and counsel students, adapt teaching methods to meet student needs	Bachelor's degree + teaching credential	\$100,580 (year)	Communication skills, patience, physical stamina, resourcefulness, organization, creativity, critical thinking, learning strategies

PLACES TO LOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Local Public School Districts (TK-6)
- District after-school programs
- Preschools and Childcare Centers
- Parks and Recreation Youth Programs
- Local Tutoring Centers (entry level roles)
- Private Tutoring (elementary homework support)

EXPLORATION COURSES

- **EDUC 12, Introduction to Elementary Classroom Teaching and Field Experiences**
- **PSYCH 11, Child Growth and Development**

CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES

- **Associate Degree for Transfer – Elementary Teacher Education**
- **Certificate of Achievement – Elementary Teacher**

TRANSFER INFORMATION

The AA-T in Elementary Teacher Education helps you complete the lower-division classes needed for the Liberal Studies major at a CSU. Liberal Studies is a teacher preparation pathway that leads directly to earning a California Multiple Subject Teaching Credential. Many CSU campuses also offer an Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP), which allows you to earn your Liberal Studies bachelor's degree and your Multiple Subject Teaching Credential at the same time.

Students planning to transfer to a UC, private, or out-of-state institution should meet with a counselor *before applying*, as transfer requirements may differ. UC Riverside is the only UC campus that offers a Liberal Studies major. Other UC campuses offer the Education major, which does not have a teaching credential component.

The chart below outlines the differences between the CSU Liberal Studies programs and the UC Education Major.

Feature	CSU – Liberal Studies	UC – Education Major
Main Purpose	Prepare students to become K–8 classroom teachers	Study education as a social system and discipline
Focus	Broad content knowledge (math, science, history, literacy, arts)	Theory, research, policy, & social justice in education
Teaching Credential Alignment	Directly aligned with California teacher credentialing	Not credential-embedded
Path to Teaching	Designed as the standard pathway to a Multiple Subject credential	Requires additional steps/programs to teach K–12

Local CSU Options:

- CSU Chico, BA Liberal Studies General – Online
- CSU Dominguez Hills, BA Liberal Studies, Early Teaching and Learning
- CSU Fullerton, BA Liberal Studies General
- CSU Los Angeles, BA Liberal Studies
Offers CSET waivers
- CSU Los Angeles, BA Urban Learning
Offers ITEP program in Multiple Subject Credential, Education Specialist, Bilingual
- CSU Long Beach, BA Liberal Studies
Offers ITEP programs; Multiple Subject Credential, Education Specialist, Bilingual
- CSU Northridge, BA Liberal Studies, Pre-Credential Program
Offers ITEP programs; Multiple Subject Credential
- CSU Pomona, BA Liberal Studies, Pre-Credential Program

Local UC Options:

- UC Irvine, BA Education Sciences
- UC Los Angeles, BA Education and Social Transformation
- UC Riverside, BA Liberal Studies & BA Education, Society, Human Development

Private Schools:

- Loyola Marymount University, BA Liberal Studies

ACADEMIC COUNSELING

An Education/Early Childhood (ED/ECE) counselor can help you explore the program and create an education plan that fits your goals. For help scheduling an appointment, visit the ED/ECE Counseling Resources web page.

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

The Child and Adolescent Development program prepares you for careers supporting children, teens, and their families in schools, community programs, social services, counseling, and youth-focused agencies. You'll gain a strong understanding of social, cognitive, physical, and cultural development from birth through adolescence. This degree offers a solid foundation for transfer and for careers in child and youth services.

POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS

CAREER TITLE	POTENTIAL JOB DUTIES	ENTRY-LEVEL EDUCATION	MEDIAN PAY (LA AREA AVG)	SKILLS NEEDED
After-School Program Leader	Lead and assist with after school activities, academic support, recreation, maintain safe and positive environment, supervise groups of students	Associates degree + CPR certification	\$20–\$24 (hour) \$24,000–\$28,000 (year)	Communication, interpersonal, group management, creativity in planning, crisis response and ability to act quickly in emergencies
Case Manager for Children and Youth	Identify and address the basic needs of child/ youth, work with community entities to connect client to resources	Associate's degree	\$21 (hour) \$40,320 (year)	Communication skills, show empathy, ability to manage multiple cases at a time, work with diverse families and communities, maintain/organize records
Child Life Specialist	Preparing children for medical procedures through age-appropriate education, providing therapeutic play to reduce stress and support coping, offering emotional support to children and families during medical experiences, advocating for the psychosocial needs of pediatric patients, collaborating with healthcare teams to coordinate child-centered care	Bachelor's degree + possible state licensure	\$25–\$33 (hour) \$52,000–\$70,000 (year)	Child development knowledge, trauma-informed communication, therapeutic play techniques, emotional regulation & crisis-support skills, collaboration with medical teams
Social Worker	Lead daily activities, supervise groups, ensure safety and positive behavior, support social-emotional development, communicate with parents, model enthusiasm	Bachelor's degree or Master's	Possibly seasonal work. \$18–\$22 (hour)	Communication, patience, ability to lead, creativity, flexibility, behavior management, teamwork and collaboration

PLACES TO LOOK FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- Non-Profit and Advocacy Community Organizations (Para Los Ninos, Our Village)
- Hospitals and Medical Centers
- County and Public Health Centers
- Residential Youth Programs
- Juvenile Facilities and Probation Programs



EXPLORATION COURSES

- ECE 11, Child, Family, and Community
- PSYCH 11, Child Growth and Development
- PSYCH C1000, General Psychology

CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES

- Associate Degree for Transfer – Child and Adolescent Development

TRANSFER INFORMATION

Students are strongly encouraged to follow the Associate Degree for Transfer (ADT) in Child & Adolescent Development (CAD). This pathway is designed to prepare you to smoothly transfer to a similar major at a California State University (CSU).

In addition to supporting transfer, this degree provides a strong academic foundation for students who may be interested in continuing their education beyond a bachelor's degree. The coursework introduces key concepts that can lead to future graduate studies in fields such as child development, counseling, developmental psychology, and social work

Note: Students planning to transfer to a UC, private, or out-of-state institution should meet with a counselor *before applying*, as transfer requirements may differ. Additionally, UC does not have a similar major to Child & Adolescent Development.

• Local CSU Options:

- CSU Dominguez Hills, BS Child Development General
- CSU Fullerton, BS Child & Adolescent Development
- CSU Los Angeles, BA Child Development General
- CSU Long Beach, BA Child Development and Family Studies – General
- CSU Northridge, BA Applied Developmental Science
- CSU Sacramento, BA Child & Adolescent Development – Online

ACADEMIC COUNSELING

An Education/Early Childhood (ED/ECE) counselor can help you explore the program and create an education plan that fits your goals. For help scheduling an appointment, visit the ED/ECE Counseling Resources web page.



PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EDUCATIONAL SECTORS

California’s education system is made up of two main sectors: public and private. Each sector has its own rules and expectations for teachers, including different education, credential, and licensing requirements. The chart below highlights the key differences to help you better understand which path may be the best fit for your career goals.

SECTOR	TITLE 22 – PRIVATE EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER	PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER (TK–12)
Preference	Best for students who want to start working with young children sooner	Best for students who want to teach in public schools
Where you work	Private child care centers, preschools, Infant/toddler programs	Public school districts
Where you teach	Infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children (birth–5)	Transitional Kindergarten (TK) to 12th grade
Education required	ECE Core 12 units minimum	Bachelor’s degree Completion of a teacher credential program
Credential	No teaching credential required Optional: Child Development Permits (Associate Teacher, Teacher, etc.)	California Teaching Credential Multiple Subject (Elementary/TK) Single Subject (Middle/High School)
Time to start working	Shorter pathway Many students work while completing classes	Longer pathway Requires transfer to a four-year university

SANTA MONICA EARLY CHILDHOOD LAB SCHOOL

The **Santa Monica Early Childhood Lab School**, opened in **September 2021**, was created through a dynamic partnership between **Santa Monica College, City of Santa Monica, RAND Corporation**, and **Growing Place**, the child development program that operates the site. This collaboration offers a high-quality learning environment that supports both children and college students, making it an ideal space to learn, grow, and gain real-world experience.

All **in-person, hybrid, and fieldwork classes** are held right at the **ECE Lab School**, so students are fully immersed in an authentic early childhood setting. From day one, you'll build confidence and practical skills through hands-on learning, observation, and meaningful first-hand experience in the field.



RESOURCES FOR EDUCATION AND ECE STUDENTS

STUDENT HANDBOOK

The Education/Early Childhood Student Handbook is filled with helpful tools and information to support you at every stage of your journey—from getting started in the program, to moving through your pathway, preparing for hands-on fieldwork, and getting ready to complete your studies at SMC.



EDUCATION/EARLY CHILDHOOD DEPARTMENT FACULTY AND SUPPORT STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION



ECE 900

Education and ECE students are encouraged to enroll in this free, non-credit course each semester. While it is not a traditional class, it offers students access to valuable resources and support.

Tutoring

- Assistance with assignments, and over all help with EDUC & ECE courses

Lending Library

- Borrow required text books for class

Student and Family Resource Center

- Computer Lab
- iPad Lends (for on-campus use only)
- Free photocopy and printing

CREDIT FOR PRIOR LEARNING

You can earn college credit for learning you've already done outside the classroom—like work experience, training, or certifications. If you've gained skills on the job or through hands-on experience, they might count toward your degree. Find out how it works below:



smc.edu/cpl

Students can gain knowledge and skills from a variety of experiences, such as:

- Military training
- Industry training
- State/federal government training
- Apprenticeships, internships, work-based learning, or other industry-based experiential learning
- Validated volunteer and civic activities (e.g., Peace Corps)



STATE CREDENTIALS, PERMITS, AND LICENSING RESOURCES

CALIFORNIA CHILD DEVELOPMENT PERMITS

A California Child Development Permit is a state-issued credential that shows you're qualified to work with children in early care and education programs. It allows you to teach, assist, or supervise in settings like preschools, child care centers, and state-funded programs, based on your education and experience.

To learn more about the requirements and how to apply for a state permit, visit the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) webpage.



[ctc.ca.gov/credentials/
req-child-dev](https://ctc.ca.gov/credentials/req-child-dev)

CALIFORNIA TEACHER CREDENTIAL

To teach in California, you'll need to earn a teaching credential. A great place to explore your options is the Tools for Credentialing from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). This resource can help you understand the steps, requirements, and pathways to becoming a licensed teacher in California.



CHILD DEVELOPMENT TRAINING CONSORTIUM (CDTC)

The CDTC supports students and professionals working with children by offering training, assistance, and helpful resources. Notable resources include:

- **Child Development Permit Stipend:** Covers the cost of the state Permit application at all levels.
- **Early Childhood Education Support Grant:** Provides extra financial support for students employed in preschool or Head Start programs, or those enrolled in a fieldwork/practicum course



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES (DSS)

The Department of Social Services is the main agency responsible for licensing child care programs in California. If you're interested in opening your own daycare or preschool, DSS is where you'll go to learn about licensing requirements, health and safety standards, and ongoing compliance. They help ensure programs are safe, well-run, and supportive for children and families.



CASE STUDY: STUDENT A

"I'm a first year student and I'm not quite sure what I want but I know I want to get through school fast and work with children as soon as possible. Maybe at a child care?"

Approximate Time Investment: 1–2 years

SMC Programs/Certificates/Degrees Needed: Early Childhood Associate Teacher

Certificate of Achievement

PATHWAY OVERVIEW



EXPLORATION

- Meet with a Career Counselor
- Take **Counseling 12: Exploring Careers and College Majors** to gain clarity and direction
- Attend an Education Program information session

BEGIN COURSEWORK

- Meet with an ECE Academic Counselor
- Enroll in foundational ECE classes
- Start the **Early Childhood Associate Teacher Certificate of Achievement**

GAIN EXPERIENCE

- Apply for on-campus child development internships
- Volunteer or work part-time in childcare settings

COMPLETE REQUIRED CERTIFICATE

- Finish all courses for the **Early Childhood Associate Teacher Certificate of Achievement**
- Meet with a counselor to confirm certificate completion

PREPARE FOR EMPLOYMENT

- Meet with Career Services for: resume building, interview practice, job search strategies, and more
- Ask instructors or supervisors for references
- Search for Assistant Teacher positions in local childcare centers

CAREER OUTCOME

Eligible for roles such as:

- Assistant Teacher
- Classroom Aide
- Childcare Worker

CASE STUDY: STUDENT B

"I've completed one year at SMC and I want to be a Preschool Teacher but I'm not sure how long this will take or what my next steps are. Do I have to transfer?"

Approximate Time Investment: 2–3 years (transfer not required, but recommended for upward mobility and salary increase)

SMC Programs/Certificates/Degrees Needed: Early Childhood Education Associate Degree for Transfer, Early Childhood Studies Associate Degree

PATHWAY OVERVIEW



EXPLORATION

- Meet with a Career Counselor
- Take **Counseling 12: Exploring Careers and College Majors**
- Attend an Education Program information session

BEGIN COURSEWORK

- Meet with an Academic Counselor to gain clarity on Educational Plan
- Enroll in foundational ECE classes
- Start the **Early Childhood Education Associate Degree** requirements

BUILD SKILLS AND GAIN EXPERIENCE

- Apply for on-campus child development internships (meet with Career Services or your ECE Counselor for ideas)
- Work or volunteer in preschool or childcare settings
- Enroll in two fieldwork/practicum courses to gain experience

COMPLETE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

- Finish general education courses
- Meet with a ECE counselor to confirm AA degree progress
- Complete required fieldwork hours

PREPARE FOR EMPLOYMENT

- Create a professional resume with Career Services
- Request references from instructors or supervisors
- Apply for Preschool Teacher positions in local programs

CAREER OUTCOME

Eligible for roles such as:

- Preschool Teacher

CASE STUDY: STUDENT C

"I'm in my first year at SMC and I've always known I wanted to be an Elementary School teacher, not sure of the grade yet, but what can I do next to narrow it down and what are my steps to become a teacher?"

Approximate Time Investment: 4+ years

SMC Programs/Certificates/Degrees Needed: Associate Degree for Transfer in Elementary Teacher Education

**This career path requires additional education by transferring to obtain a Bachelor's degree AND a Teaching Credential.*

PATHWAY OVERVIEW



EXPLORATION

- Meet with a Career Counselor
- Take **Counseling 12: Exploring Careers and College Majors**
- Attend an Education Program or Teacher Prep information session

BEGIN COURSEWORK

- Meet with an Academic Counselor and enroll in required courses
- Start general education requirements
- Learn about the **AA-T in Early Childhood Education** or **AA-T in Elementary Teacher Education**

GAIN EXPERIENCE

- Volunteer in after-school programs or elementary classrooms
- Apply for on-campus child development internships
- Join education-related student clubs or activities
- Consider taking **Education 12** for fieldwork experience

COMPLETE SMC DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

- Finish courses for the degree you are pursuing
- Meet with a counselor to confirm transfer eligibility
- Complete required fieldwork hours

TRANSFER TO A FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY

- Apply to CSU campuses with Teacher Preparation programs
- Complete a BA in Liberal Studies
- Begin early field placements or practicum experiences

PREPARE FOR CREDENTIALING

- Complete state-required teacher preparation coursework
- Begin the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential program
- Complete student teaching

CAREER OUTCOME

Eligible for roles such as:

- Elementary School Teacher (K–6)
- After-School Program Teacher
- Instructional Support Specialist

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR EDUCATION

START BUILDING YOUR ACADEMIC AND CAREER PLAN

Before you register for classes at SMC, connect with an academic counselor to map out a clear, personalized education plan. Check the program pages in this brochure for instructions on how to schedule your appointment.

NOT SURE ABOUT YOUR MAJOR OR CAREER YET?

You're in the right place. This brochure gives you a quick, easy way to explore your options. Inside, you'll find:

- Career paths in each program — plus the education and salary ranges they typically require
- Key skills employers look for
- Exploration classes to help you discover what you enjoy
- Certificates and degrees you can earn
- Transfer resources to keep you moving forward

Explore Your Options with Counseling 12: Exploring Careers and College Majors

Discover your interests, strengths, values, and goals while learning how to make confident career decisions. This 8-week, 1-unit course is transferable to CSU and designed to help you gain clarity fast.

Get Personalized Career Guidance

If you're a current SMC student enrolled in 3 or more units and want help choosing a major or career direction, schedule a 30-minute career planning appointment.

Santa Monica College Career Services Center

Phone: **(310) 434-4337**

Email: **careerservices@smc.edu**

Webpage: **smc.edu/careercenter**



Scan QR code for Career
Services Center webpage

BECOME AN SMC STUDENT

Welcome to SMC! Applying to the program of your choice is easy.

1

Apply

smc.edu/apply

2

Apply for Financial Aid

smc.edu/financialaid

3

Complete New Student Orientation

smc.edu/orientation

4

Review Your Placement

smc.edu/placement

5

Develop an Education Plan/See a Counselor

smc.edu/stellic

smc.edu/counseling

6

Enroll in Classes

smc.edu/cc

7

Develop a Career Plan/See a Career Counselor

smc.edu/careerservices



Explore Our Seven Campuses

smc.edu/about/campuses



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