

# Report on the Certificate Programme for the ECD Practitioner Level One

Department of Foundation and Education Management  
School of Education & Humanities  
University of Guyana  
August 2010 to November 2011



## *Launching Ceremony*

*From left: Ms Michelle Semple-McBean (ECD Coordinator, UG), Ms Alice Estwick (Lecturer, UWIOC, St Augustine), Ms Audrey Rodrigues (Programme Officer, Education, UNICEF), Mr Al Creighton (Dean, SEH, UG), Prof Vivienne Roberts (Deputy Principal, UIWOC), Ms Joan Bobb-Dann (Head, UWIOC, St Augustine), Ms Lesleann Whiteman (ECCE Coordinator, UWIOC, St Augustine)*

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Programme Coordinator  
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## **Introduction**

Completion of the Level One of the Certificate Programme for the Early Childhood Development (ECD) Practitioner is an historic one – this marks the first time practitioners in Guyana (who provide services for children within the age group birth - 3 years) would have completed a training programme that is in keeping with CARICOM's regulatory framework and training standards for promoting ECD in the Region. This training programme takes into consideration the characteristics of an ideal Caribbean person – 'a citizen worker who inter alia is expected to effectively carry out the duties of early childhood providers'. A successful graduate of this programme is expected to employ and promote regionally portable child rearing practices which can positively shape children's attitudes towards learning and influence their overall care and development in the Caribbean.

## **The Programme**

The Level One Certificate programme is designed to provide students with a broad base of foundation knowledge, practical skills and attitudes required for performing entry level jobs within child care provision settings. These foundational competencies are also the bases on which higher level training programmes in the area of early childhood are built and students who successfully complete this programme are eligible for entry into the Level Two programme.

At Level One, the student-practitioners completed 21 credit hours during the period August 9, 2010 to October 8, 2011.

The courses completed are:

- ECE 001 Introduction to Child Development
- ECE 002 Health Education
- ECE 003 Introduction to Child Care Curriculum
- ECE 004 Parent Involvement
- ECE 005 Child Care Profession I
- ECE 006 Child Care Practicum I

The importance of promoting children's sensory, motor, social and emotional development was highlighted in Introduction to Child Development. Key elements of this course included methods of stimulating the senses, promotional activities for gross and fine motor development, detection of developmental delays, abnormal behaviours and difficulties in motor performance. Students were also taught how to manage and promote appropriate behaviour in children, such as facilitating the resolution of minor conflicts and anti-social behaviour in the classroom.

The focus of study for Health Education was to expose students to the competency needed for providing for children's basic physical and nutritional needs. It included the promotion of skills such as bathing and changing infants, assisting with children's personal hygiene, cleaning and maintaining infants' clothing and equipment, preparing and serving meals, and providing opportunities for rest and sleep. In addition, students were introduced to the importance of observing, detecting and responding to signs of illness and abuse in children.

Introduction to Child Care Curriculum, designed to introduce students to the importance of promoting and supporting early intellectual stimulation, promoted the techniques used to help children recall and relate events, reinforce concepts, think critically, express creativity, and facilitate conversation and problem-solving.

In ECD, a key principle underpinning our occupational area is the need for parents to be involved in early stimulation and education of children. Because parents are considered critical to children's successes during the early childhood years, the course Parent Involvement sought to widen students' understanding of the importance of the family in the development of the young child. It also aimed to enable students to gain the requisite knowledge to promote the family's involvement in children's activities.

Child Care Profession I introduced students to current and recent developments in the field of early childhood internationally and regionally, and career opportunities within

Early Childhood Care, Education and Development. It focused on personal development, roles and functions, trade and professional ethics of personnel working in this sector, and highlighted laws governing the occupation.

A key characteristic of the programme is “apprenticeship for industry”. Child Care Practicum I therefore ensured that mastery of outcomes is based on the demonstration of the competencies for promoting child care, education and development, rather than ‘test-taking skills’. Practicum assisted students to integrate theories and principles learned with practice in the field. **Practicum was therefore one of the most important elements of this programme.**

## **The participants**

The programme was delivered to 27 students comprising:

- 1 each from Red Cross Children’s Home, Mercy Wings Vocational Centre, Mothers’ Union Day Care, Ptolemy Reid Day Care, Mayor and Councillors of the City of Georgetown (M&CC) South Road and Festival City Day Care.
- 2 each from Min. Human Services & Social Security, Juliet Griffith Police Day Care, and M&CC Charlestown Day Care
- 3 from St. Francis Day Care Services, Berbice
- 4 from Verlin Brittlebank Mayor & Town Council of Linden Day Care, and
- 7 from M&CC Industrial Site Day Care

There are over 215 established child care facilities in Guyana (2009 ECD Situation Analysis for Guyana, pg: 43), Therefore in measurable terms the figure for the participating institutions would not be significant. However, this means that **6%** (n = 13) of the established child care facilities could now boast of having practitioners with the minimum qualification within CARICOM’s framework. Please refer to Table 1 for details.

**Table 1: List of Students and Institutions**

<b>No</b>	<b>NAMES</b>	<b>INSTITUTIONS</b>
1	Andrea Cox	Verlin Brittlebank M&TC Day Care, Linden
2	Faye Ann Daniels	
3	Kres Franklin	
4	Marcia Grenville	
5	Zaeer Ali	St. Francis Day Care Services, Berbice
6	Jacqueline Johnson	
7	Sonja Sampson	
8	Vashti Wilkinson	Red Cross Children's Home
8	Angela Cordis	Mercy Wings VC Day Care
10	Valerie Gittens	Mothers' Union Day Care Robb St
11	Concheeta Gray	Min. Human Services & Social Security
12	Tionna October	
13	Charlene Greene	Juliet Griffith Day Care (Police)
14	Fiona Rodrigues	
15	June James	M&CC Charlestown Day Care
16	Vanette Pompey	
17	Elizabeth Roberts	Ptolemy Reid Day Care
18	Shenez Yaw	YWCA Child Care Centre
19	Merlene Matthews	M&CC South Road Day Care
20	Pauline Schultz	M&CC Festival City Day Care
21	Pollet Beaton	M&CC Industrial Site Day Care
22	Sharon Bristol	
23	Yolanda Crandon	
24	Timolyn Henry	
25	Michelle Martin	
26	Sandra Ross	
27	Abena Williams	

## Highlights of the Results

For a student to be awarded a certificate at the level of Distinction he/she would have to acquire an overall grade point average of at least 3.4 out of a possible 4; at least 2.7 for a Credit, as well as a grade of **B** and above in the practicum component, and 2.0 for pass. The grading of certificates provides an objective criterion for matriculation to higher levels and is also an initiative to encourage practitioners to strive for excellence.

It is with pride to state that 21 (78%) out of 27 practitioners successfully completed the programme. Five have attained the level of Distinction and 8 the level of Credit. Many of our practitioners missed the credit bar by only one or two points. Congratulations are extended to Zaeer Ali, Pollet Beaton, Faye Ann Daniels, Jacqueline Johnson and Sonja Sampson (best graduating student) for having attained the level of Distinction. Angela Cordis was deemed the student with the greatest academic improvement.



*From left: Faye Ann Daniels, Angela Cordis, Zaeer Ali, Sonja Sampson, Jacqueline Johnson and Pollet Beaton*



*Ms Audrey Michelle Rodrigues, Programme Officer, Education, UNICEF, presents Awards (from left) to Best Graduating and Most Improved Students.*



*Graduating Class*

## **The Facilitators**

Nine facilitators delivered the Level One programme. They were required to have specialised knowledge of child development and related training experience. Their responsibilities included preparation of course materials, leading sessions and presenting course material, responding to trainees' feedback, evaluating the course, and assessing trainees.

The facilitators were:

1. Paulette Bollers, Director, M&CC, Municipal Day Care Services
2. Ninian Blair, Technical Officer/ Nutritionist and Coordinator, National Breast Feeding Programme, Ministry of Health
3. Barbara Lawrence, Director of Rehabilitation Services, Ministry of Health
4. Joan Stewart, Chief Health Visitor, M&CC, Municipal Day Care Services
5. La Shanna Anderson, Graduate Nursery Head Teacher
6. Ingrid Trotman, Assistant Chief Education Officer – Nursery, Ministry of Education
7. Godryne Wintz, Early Childhood Lecturer, UG
8. Grace Lambert, Early Childhood Lecturer, UG
9. Michelle Semple-McBean, Early Childhood Lecturer/Coordinator, UG

These facilitators sufficiently ensured that the participants understood what was expected of them as well as the concepts and techniques being presented. They facilitated the achievement of the respective Course objectives using a variety of creative participatory teaching methods.

In addition to these lecturers, 2 external examiners from the University of the West Indies Open Campus (UWI OC), Trinidad and Tobago provided critical review on the conduct of the programme. They were Ms Lesleann Whiteman, Coordinator, ECCE and Ms Joan Bobb-Dann, Head of UWI OC.



It was earlier stated that this programme is an historic one because it marks the first ECD practitioners' training programme, in Guyana, conducted within CARICOM's regulatory framework for promoting ECD in the Region. It must be added that **all** of the facilitators delivering this programme have been certified as Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) Assessors which is also in keeping with the Competency based Education and Training (CBET) model adopted by CARICOM. These ECD facilitators are the first trained CVQ Early Childhood Development Assessors in Guyana. This was confirmed by the National Training Agency of Trinidad and Tobago (NTATT) – the training agency responsible for providing CVQ training.

**Phase One: Pre Certification Exercise, CVQ Assessors Training**



*Participants engaged in small group activity*



*CVQ Trainers: Fitzroy Marcus and Erlene Benjamin interacting with one of the participants*



*ECD Professionals focused during lecture session*



**Phase Two: Certification Exercise, CVQ Assessors Training**



*Reflective lecture session*



*Seated: left and right - Royeta Moore and Erlene Benjamin (NTATT Facilitators), Centre – Michelle Semple-McBean (ECD Coordinator). Standing from left: CVQ Assessors – Abeeda Ali, Bibi Ally, Romeo McAdam, Godryne Wintz, Shirley Madray, Ninian Blair, Barbara Lawrence, Ingrid Trotman, Gillian Orderson, Jewell Ward, La Shanna Anderson, Paulette Bollers, Allison Thomas and Grace Lambert*

# APPRECIATION

## Municipal Day Care Services

Earlier it was stated that the Practicum was one of the most important elements of this programme. In keeping with the CVQ philosophy “apprenticeship for industry”, it was mandatory for students to perform practical demonstrations in ECD settings that met minimum service standards for the Caribbean. In the absence of an ECD Centre of Excellence at the University of Guyana, the Administrator and staff of Industrial Site Municipal Day Care Services provided by the Mayor & Councillors of the City of Georgetown kindly agreed to host our students for the Practicum course.

## UNICEF

For each ECD practitioner, UNICEF paid the tuition fee of \$147,000.00. For each course, UNICEF also provided students with individual modules and access to some of the most modern texts in ECD. UNICEF’s philosophy of Child Friendly Schools was also extended to the University through the transformation of one of the “most unfriendly classrooms” on campus, to the friendliest and most aesthetically pleasing space - now referred to as the Early Childhood Resource Room.

### Before and after photographs of ECD Resource Room

*BEFORE*



*AFTER*



Tuition costing the sum of \$3,280,000.00 was provided for professional development of the 20 ECD lecturers and supervisors who participated in the CVQ Assessors programme delivered by the National Training Agency of Trinidad and Tobago.

The partnership between the School of Education and the UWI has also been strengthened in the area of ECD due to the continued support of UNICEF. During 2011, five ECD lecturers were sponsored to participate in ECD study tours and innovative programmes at both the UWI OC and the regular campuses. In addition, because of UNICEF's support, external review of the administration of the programme was done by members of UWI who travelled as far as Blackbush Polder on the Corentyne and to Mackenzie, for the purpose of observing the ECD practitioners in "action".

The successful administration of the Certificate Programme for the ECD Practitioner could not have been possible without UNICEF's significant contribution.