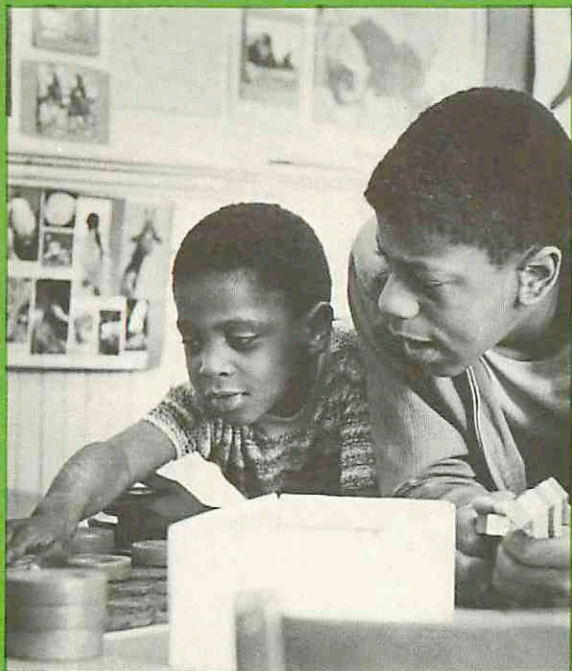


Human development is a process of continual growth and potential in which the individual, from the moment of birth, influences the people and the world around him, and is shaped by those people and that world. This view might be defined as mutuality, reciprocity, or interaction. However defined, the message declares that one draws strength from and is influenced by one's past, by one's peers and elders, and by one's culture, but that one is bound by none of these.

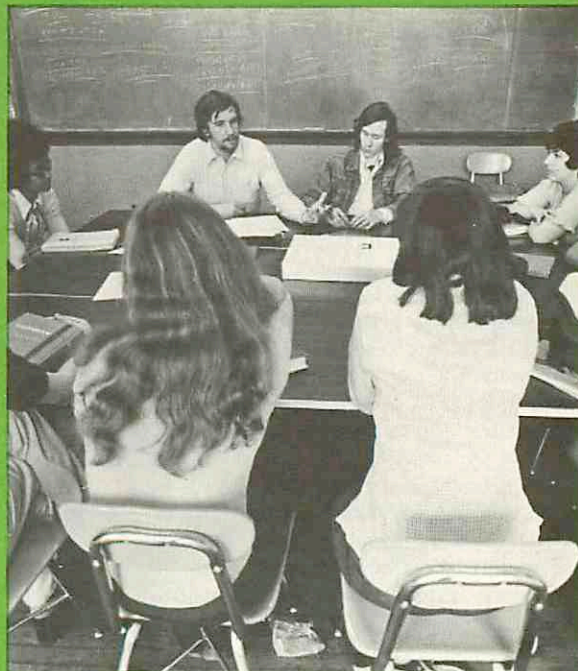
More than promoting any specific body of information or any particular skill, **EXPLORING CHILDHOOD** suggests an attitude toward development that stresses the capacity of the person — whether child, adolescent, or adult — to synthesize past experience and to continue to grow in relationship with others.



M Harris



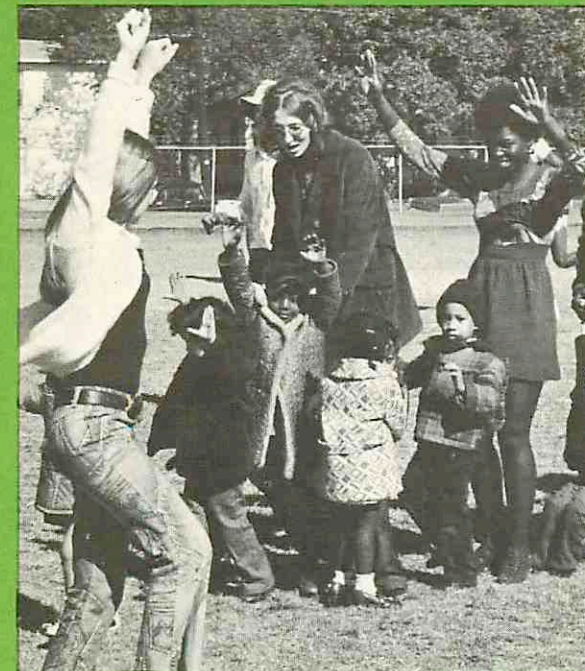
R Gregoire



R Gregoire

EXPLORING CHILDHOOD

A program in which high school and junior high school students work with young children while learning about human development and their own identity



EDC

Why a Field Experience?

EXPLORING CHILDHOOD students spend two or more hours a week working at day care centers, kindergartens, or other child care centers. There are two reasons why working with children is an essential component of the program:

- Adolescents need the experience of taking on roles that are interesting and useful in order to develop a sense of worth; they need tasks in which they can be aware of their own growth of competence and in which they are likely to have some success.
- In order for learning to occur, there must be a dynamic tension between experience, knowledge, and reflection. The experience must be the kind that adolescents find worth doing and that matters to others; for many students, work with children is such an experience.

The Course: A Framework for Experience

Understanding the way children experience the world is a major theme of **EXPLORING CHILDHOOD**, approached through materials that build a working sense of how children's ages, families, and cultures shape their daily experience. The theoretical foundation of the course reflects the contribution of many scholars in the social sciences, and of practitioners in child care professions.

Major goals of the program are to help students to understand the biological and social forces affecting human development and to become better prepared to take on adult responsibilities involving the care of the young. For example, at the same time that students are

becoming skilled at helping children with art activities, they are discovering that the way children draw reveals patterns in development.

Course materials are designed to help students make the link between experience and reflection in an "enactive" mode of learning: one in which they get involved in questions, exercises, and activities requiring a high level of initiative on their part. In class students are helped to clarify their own values, to understand the values of others, and to work cooperatively with others. They develop the ability to evaluate and use a variety of data — theory, field work with children, their own childhood — and become able to measure their own progress and growth during the year. Additionally, **EXPLORING CHILDHOOD** is designed to help students develop a positive sense of family and personal identity.

Materials and Learning Approaches

Just as knowledge cannot come from one source alone, neither can one type of classroom material give students the range and breadth of learning resources they need. **EXPLORING CHILDHOOD** offers written materials, role plays, films, posters, audio-cassettes, and records, each of which is designed to give students a particular starting point for the questions they are addressing.

Similarly, learning approaches and exercises are varied. In addition to the very important component of field work, there are small group work, independent research, team projects, discussion, reading, and film viewing. Exercises range from trying to solve a problem from a child's point of view to finding out

what child care services are available in the community.

Materials for teachers include teacher's guides, evaluation strategies, seminars, background readings, records of classroom experiences, audiovisual materials, a guide for child care teachers, and a manual for setting up the program. Seminars for parents of **EXPLORING CHILDHOOD** students are also available.

EXPLORING CHILDHOOD has been field tested in over 200 classrooms around the country. Using feedback from this field test, we have selected those materials that seem to make the most useful, well-rounded curriculum for inclusion in a package of materials for a full-year program. All program materials are also available in smaller basic units, because people representing a range of fields and concerns have expressed interest in particular subjects and issues.

For a complete description of materials, including ordering information, write for our free catalog:

EXPLORING CHILDHOOD
Education Development Center
School and Society Programs
55 Chapel Street
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