

PRESCHOOL TEACHER REQUIREMENTS AND CAREER INFORMATION

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ANNOTATION

Today, in order to provide good education to children in preschool educational organizations, teachers are required to have at least a bachelor's degree, additional certificates, skills in working with children, and work experience for a certain period of time. This article describes the requirements for teachers in preschool educational organizations around the world and their importance in the process of children's learning.

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Being a preschool teacher requires a joy for interacting with young children and a desire to foster creativity and engagement. Preschool teachers prepare children to enter kindergarten by providing support, guidance and learning activities. This career typically requires one to have some formal education or training and state licensure. Preschool teachers educate children between the ages of 3 and 6. They provide preschool students with foundations for academic success and creative expression while preparing them for kindergarten. Requirements for becoming a preschool teacher rely heavily on the school's location, though all states require licensure and training in early education. A minimum of a high school diploma or associate's is often required, however most preschool teachers for public schools must earn a bachelor's degree. A Child Development Associate (CDA) certificate is a common credential that is required by many states. CPR and first aid certification may also be required. All states require preschool teachers to hold child care licensure; however, requirements differ in each state and often by employer. Some states call for preschool teachers to hold associate's degrees in applicable fields, while others require only high school diplomas and Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials. Some licensing boards may have their own preschool teacher training programs. Programs funded by states or the federal government have strict conditions and require teachers to hold undergraduate degrees.

Some employers prefer to hire preschool teachers with associate's degrees in early education or child development. For example, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that preschool teachers employed by Head Start, a Federal program for

preschool children, must hold at least associate's degrees. Associate's degree programs in early education are available at community colleges and technical schools and prepare students for entry-level positions in childhood education. Courses may include creativity in learning, child observation, health and nutrition education, early literacy and special needs children.

The Council for Professional Recognition offers CDA programs that are available to applicants with high school diplomas or equivalency degrees, as well as junior and senior high school students in vocational programs. Applicants must submit proof of 120 hours of formal training and 480 hours of early childhood education experience earned within the last five years. Eligible candidates may then earn their CDA by passing a 2-hour multiple-choice exam and sitting for an oral interview. CDA credentials must be renewed after the initial three years and subsequently every five years. Preschool teachers play an important role in developing children's interest in learning. Through various techniques and activities, such as games, group play, artwork and music, preschool teachers instruct in reading, writing and basic math concepts. Preschool teachers also encourage creativity and social interaction. Those in private schools generally have greater control over curricula and much smaller class sizes. Most preschool teachers work part-time hours and do not work during summer vacation, though some may work side jobs or pursue advanced education during that time. Preschools employed by day care centers generally work year-round.

The BLS reported that preschool teacher employment is expected to increase 2% from 2019-2029. This predicted growth is an effect of an increasing demand for accessibility to early education programs and the rising population of preschool-age children.

Preschool teachers can pursue several paths to become qualified in early education. No matter what form of training they receive, these teachers contribute to the well-being and learning of preschoolers.

Preschool teachers care for and instruct young children between three and six years of age. They teach their young students basic skills through the use of dramatic play, games, songs, and formal instruction. For example, preschoolers are taught the alphabet, numbers, colors, and social skills. They may also learn how to write their own names.

Education and training requirements for preschool teachers can vary depending on the environment and state. In childcare centers, preschool educators usually need at least a high school diploma and certification in early childhood education. Preschool teachers in Head Start programs must have a minimum of an associate's degree, such as an Associate in Arts in Teaching, designed for those who want to transfer to a four-year college. Public school preschool teachers almost always need a bachelor's degree and a teaching license.

Prospective preschool teachers can earn an associate's or bachelor's degree in early childhood education. Common courses include those in educational psychology, behavior assessment and management, teaching methods, and reading instruction. Education programs require teaching practicums, where students work directly in classroom settings. An associate's degree typically takes two years to complete, while a bachelor's degree takes four years.

The Child Development Associate (CDA) designation is part of a national credentialing program administered by the Council for Professional Recognition. Some states recognize the Child Care Professional (CCP) designation administered by the National Early Childhood Program Accreditation. Requirements for the CDA include:

- Coursework in early childhood education
- Experience in early childhood education
- Undergoing a professional observation while at work with preschoolers
- A passing score on an exam

Entry-level educators can pursue a CDA credential while acquiring experience with preschool children in three settings, including a center-based preschool setting, family childcare setting, or home visitor setting. Requirements for the CCP are similar to those for the CDA. The CDA credential has to be renewed every three years, while the CCP must be renewed every two years.

A few states require public school teachers to earn a master's degree after obtaining their initial certifications. Certified teachers may also enroll in a master's degree program to further their careers. In addition, some master's degree programs are designed for those who've earned a bachelor's degree but aren't certified. At the graduate level, preschool teachers study curriculum development in early childhood education, child abuse prevention, and educational research.

Let's briefly go over what we've just discussed. Educational requirements for preschool teachers can vary from a high school diploma and professional certification, such as the Child Development Associate (CDA), to an associate's or a bachelor's degree in early childhood education. In May 2019, preschool teachers earned an average annual salary of \$34,650.

Preschool teachers are responsible for introducing children from the ages of three to six into the world of organized schooling. Preschool teachers use a variety of educational methods including storytelling, games, and hands-on activities that will help a child develop vocabulary, learn social skills, and grasp a variety of educational and behavioral concepts.

Most employers require that prospective preschool teachers have at least an associate's degree in education or a related field. While in school, students should take classes that focus on child development, classroom management, child behavior, curriculum methods, instructional technology, and parent-child relations. Preschool

teachers may also have to undergo background checks and be certified in infant and child CPR. Licensure may be required in certain states.

Preschool teachers must be able to communicate with their students and understand their educational and emotional needs. Teachers have to be organized, patient, dependable, creative, and have the ability to reach students and educate them. Teachers need excellent interpersonal skills and must work cooperatively with parents, other teachers, and administrative personnel.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), there could be an increase of 15% in job opportunities for preschool teachers between 2021 and 2031. This is mostly due to the increasing demand for preschool programs. The BLS reports that the median salary as of May 2021 for preschool teachers was \$30,210 per year. Creating lesson plans, grading papers, and supervising children are just some of the duties of a teacher. In terms of education, kindergarten teachers need to have a bachelor's degree in elementary education and be certified if working in a public school. In general, this category was projected to have a 4% growth in employment from 2021 to 2031, according to the BLS, which is as fast as the average. Kindergarten teachers, except those in special education, made a median salary of \$60,900 in 2021. Preschool is one of the only environments in school where the focus is on play and creativity, rather than intense curricular standards.

Preschool teachers use playtime and story time to:

1. Teach problem-solving skills
2. Encourage social development
3. Hone fine motor skills

Preschool teachers need to love children, be patient, and have a nurturing personality.

Their main goal is to participate in a child's growth and development, learn to understand and help their students, and to use a child's natural curiosity to develop a learning plan that is developmentally appropriate. Preschool teachers need to create an atmosphere where risks can be taken and discoveries can be made all while maintaining a child safe environment

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