



PILLAR 1

Early Childhood Education

Early childhood development lays the foundation for lifelong learning and future success. The University of Maryland College of Education boasts several academic programs and research centers aimed at providing children from ages 3 to 5 with high-quality learning experiences and cognitive and socio-emotional support that prepare them for kindergarten and beyond.



COLLEGE OF
EDUCATION

TRANSFORMING
EDUCATION FOR GOOD

RESOURCE GUIDE FOR THE
BLUEPRINT FOR MARYLAND'S FUTURE

College of Education faculty members have extensive experience working with children and families from diverse backgrounds, in both child care centers and home environments.

Learn more about our academic programs, centers and faculty experts.

Diverse, High-Quality Early Childhood Teacher Pipeline

- **The Dual Certificate Program in Early Childhood/Early Childhood Special Education** prepares knowledgeable and skilled teachers who are culturally responsive and ready to provide equitable learning experiences to students with and without disabilities. Students gain valuable experience through five semesters of field placements in early intervention programs, child care centers, Head Start and public schools.
- Launched in 2023, **the Maryland Early EdCorp Apprenticeship Program** recruits and prepares child care teachers to meet the needs of children with disabilities, children who are multilingual learners and children experiencing homelessness. Through the program,

candidates work toward their Preschool Child Development Associate credential, participate in paid apprenticeships at high-quality child care centers and receive 160 hours of professional development and mentorship.

Academic Centers to Support Early Childhood Research

- **The Center for Young Children (CYC)** is a nationally accredited, inclusive laboratory and demonstration school for children from ages 3 to 6. Through exploration, interaction and conversations with teachers and classmates, students gain firsthand experiences that aid their brain development and lay the foundation for future academic success. The CYC has achieved Maryland EXCELS Level 5, the state's highest rating, for its high-quality early childhood education program, and celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2023.

- **The Center for Early Childhood Education and Intervention (CECEI)** conducts high-quality research on early childhood education and early intervention programs to help inform state and federal policies, translate research into scalable education programs and best practices, and build capacity in schools and communities. CECEI also leads several key initiatives and programs, including
 - Maryland Early EdCorp Apprenticeship Program
 - Trauma-Informed Research, Policy and Practice Partnership
 - External Evaluation of the Efficacy of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Project
 - Children Discovering Their World Preschool Curricula
 - Evaluation of Maryland's Preschool Development Expansion Grant Program
 - Elevating Fully Inclusive Early Education Experiences

Faculty Expertise in Early Childhood Education

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Nathan Fox, *DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR*

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Development of emotion and emotion regulation; human developmental neuroscience

CONTACT: fox@umd.edu

Rachel Romeo, *ASSISTANT PROFESSOR*

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Adult-child interactions

CONTACT: romeo@umd.edu

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION

Christy Tirrell-Corbin, *DEAN'S IMPACT PROFESSOR*

AREA OF EXPERTISE: PreK3 and PreK4 curricula; external evaluations; childhood trauma

CONTACT: ctc@umd.edu

KINDERGARTEN READINESS

Kelly Mix, *PROFESSOR*

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Mathematics and spatial concepts in early childhood

CONTACT: kmix@umd.edu

Geetha Ramani, *ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR*

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Mathematics and spatial concepts; family math engagement; executive functioning skills

CONTACT: gramani@umd.edu

Rachel Romeo, *ASSISTANT PROFESSOR*

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Language and literacy; executive functioning skills

CONTACT: romeo@umd.edu

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Rachel Romeo, *ASSISTANT PROFESSOR*

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Language and literacy; executive functioning skills

CONTACT: romeo@umd.edu

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Natasha Cabrera, *PROFESSOR*

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Parent engagement

CONTACT: ncabrera@umd.edu

Ways to Engage with the College of Education

- Visit the Center for Young Children to observe high-quality and evidence-based learning. Contact Jennifer Smallwood-Holmes, director, at jsmallw1@umd.edu or 301-405-3168 to schedule an appointment.
- Become an internship site for students enrolled in our academic program. Contact Stephanie Varner, professional development school coordinator, at eceps@umd.edu or 301-405-2802.
- Become an apprenticeship site for students enrolled in our workforce program. Contact Amanda Schwartz, associate project director, at earlyedcorp@umd.edu or 301-405-2831.
- Request a program evaluation or support with curriculum development. Contact Christy Tirrell-Corbin, executive director of the Center for Early Childhood Education and Intervention, at cecei@umd.edu.

Learn More: education.umd.edu