



Health: Identifying Family and Cultural Beliefs and Practices About Health

Focus Statement

Students become aware of different family, community, and cultural beliefs and practices that influence what and how children learn about health by reflecting on some of their own experiences and interviewing other students.

Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP) Student Learning Outcomes

The Curriculum Alignment Project's (CAP) lower division eight courses and student learning outcomes are mapped onto each instructional guide learning experience. See Appendix A for the specific student learning outcomes, objectives, and examples of course content and topics for the courses listed below.

- Child Growth and Development
- Child, Family and Community
- Introduction to Curriculum
- Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children
- Health, Safety and Nutrition
- Practicum-Field Experience

Instructional Methodologies

- Brainstorming—individual
- Class discussion
- Class presentation
- Interviews of community members
- Literature review
- Peer interviews
- Reflection—individual or large group
- Short paper or report
- Small group work

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California Early Childhood Educator Competency Areas to Consider

The Faculty Initiative Project will be undertaking a comprehensive process in the future to map the content of the instructional guides to the California Department of Education, Child Development Division's California Early Childhood Educator Competencies. "The Competency Areas to Consider" below are listed in this instructional guide as a preliminary exploration of how particular competency areas might be addressed through these learning experiences.

- Child Development and Learning
- Culture, Diversity, and Equity
- Relationships, Interactions, and Guidance
- Family and Community Engagement
- Special Needs and Inclusion
- Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- Leadership in Early Childhood Education
- Professionalism



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Before You Start

Because of the immense diversity of families and children in California, it is important for students to think about the impact and influence that children's families and communities have on children's health. In this learning experience, students have an opportunity to not only reflect on their own experiences in this area but also to gain a broader perspective by learning about their peers' experiences.

In this learning experience, students develop interview questions around family and cultural health beliefs and practices and then interview one of their classmates. The interviews may raise some issues for students that are uncomfortable to discuss. Therefore, it is important to let students know that they can respond to the interview questions however they feel comfortable doing so. Also, it may be helpful to plan the interviews and discussion so that students can have a break afterwards.

You may also choose to remind students that this experience provides an opportunity to become aware of and consider how different family and cultural beliefs and practices around health may impact children's acquisition of the knowledge and skills in the health foundations. It is important that students recognize if they are feeling judgmental and use that information for their own self-reflection. This self-reflection might allow the students to present questions and engage in discussions without judgmental behaviors.

Information Delivery

Students will be asked to become familiar with the strands and substrands in the health domain. These are found on page 79 of the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 2* (PLF, V2) and listed here for reference:



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Health Habits (Strand)

1.0 Basic Hygiene (Substrand)

2.0 Oral Health (Substrand)

3.0 Knowledge of Wellness (Substrand)

4.0 Sun Safety (Substrand)

Safety (Strand)

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1.0 Injury Prevention (Substrand)

Nutrition (Strand)

1.0 Nutrition Knowledge (Substrand)

2.0 Nutrition Choices (Substrand)

3.0 Self-Regulation of Eating (Substrand)

You may also present or ask students to research some demographic information related to health that is specific to your community, such as health behaviors, health status, mortality, disease prevalence, and so forth. The following Web sites provide information at the state and county levels:



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- <http://communityhealth.hhs.gov/HomePage.aspx>
- http://phpartners.org/health_stats.html
- <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>
- <http://www.chis.ucla.edu/>

Active Learning**Getting it started**

Begin by having students review the health domain strands and substrands and the section on “The Role of Families in Children’s Health” on page 72 of the *California Preschool Learning Foundations, Volume 2*. Then have students individually brainstorm a list of questions about health, safety, and nutrition beliefs and practices. You may prompt students’ thinking by having them recall sayings or practices from their own families. For example, were there certain foods that they were given when they were ill or to keep them healthy? What health practitioners did their families use?

Next have the students form small groups and share their lists with the other members of their group. Ask them to develop a list of six questions that incorporates the main information the members of the group are interested in learning. The groups may need to consolidate, rewrite, discard, and prioritize questions from the individual lists in order to come up with six.



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Then have each group post its list of six questions for the whole class. After the class has reviewed the list, conduct a discussion using these questions:

- Which question stood out for you?
- Which questions did you expect? Which ones surprised



you?

- Which questions do you think might be easiest to ask? Which ones might be more difficult? Which ones might give the widest variety of responses?
- From all the lists of questions, which five would you use? Have students each write down their answer to this last question.

Online Options

Students may post their interview questions online. When preparing to do the interviews, students can then select their interview questions from all the lists.

Keeping it going

Students then are to find a partner to interview using the five questions they selected. Students take turns interviewing each other, and these interviews can be done in class or outside of class.

Putting it together

After all the interviews are completed, the students meet in their original groups and share their interview results. Each group compiles or summarizes their interviews in a written report. Ask them to look for common themes, things that were unique, and what considerations they should keep in mind when they use the health foundations.

Online Options

Students could individually write a summary of their interviews and then post these for other students to review.

Taking it further

You may choose to have each group do a presentation of its report or make copies of each report available to all the students.

Another approach/way

Instead of having students develop interview questions on the whole domain, you may divide the students into groups and assign each group to a strand. You could then have students interview a student from another group. When the interviews are done, the students go back to their strand groups to develop a report.

Reflection



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Conclude this learning experience by asking students to reflect on the reports with these questions:

- What information from these reports caught your attention?
- What are some things that were new to you? Where would you like some clarification?



- What are some main themes or key points that emerge from these reports about health beliefs and practices?
- How could you use this information in your work with children and families?

You may do this reflection in a full class discussion or ask students to individually respond.

Online Options

After reviewing the posted interview summaries, students could individually respond to the closing reflection questions and post these for the whole class or just the instructor.

Deeper Understanding

Each student selects an interview question and researches answers through a literature review and/or interviewing people in the community. Students can document their research through a written report or a journal entry if students are keeping journals.