

VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF CHILD CARE AND
REGULATORY SERVICES

Partnership with the University of the
Virgin Islands

Inclusive Early Childhood Education
Program

Overview of Office of Child Care and Regulatory Services

- The Office of Child Care and Regulatory Services (OCCRS) is a Division of the Virgin Islands Department of Human Services
- OCCRS is responsible for operating the Child Care Subsidy program which is largely funded by the federal Child Care Development Fund

Overview of OCCRS

- OCCRS is also responsible for the licensing of all child care programs in the Virgin Islands
- Annually, child care subsidies are provided to about 1,000 children and over 200 child care programs obtain their licensure through OCCRS
- The Virgin Islands has a population of about 110,000 people

HISTORY OF OCCRS/UVI INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

- In 1995, the University of the Virgin Islands initiated a Task Force to develop the Inclusive Certificate Program funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Composition of Task Force
 - UVI Education Professors
 - University Affiliated Program Staff
 - V.I. Department of Education Primary Grades Coordinator
 - Department of Human Services Head Start Coordinator
 - Department of Human Services Office of Child Care and Regulatory Services Director
 - Department of Education Special Education Coordinator

HISTORY OF OCCRS/UVI INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

- Initially, the Inclusive Early Childhood Certificate Program was designed to meet the educational and professional development needs of entry level personnel
- To qualify to enter the Certificate Program, students had to have a high school diploma or equivalent and meet the basic skill requirements in English to enter the program operated under the V.I. University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (VIUCEDD)
- For the first five years, the Department of Human Services OCCRS paid for all students pursuing the Inclusive Early Childhood Certificate

HISTORY OF OCCRS/UVI INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

- The Certificate Program provided the basis and served as a prerequisite for the Associate of Arts Degree in Early Childhood Education
- The program design for the Associates Degree drew on the recommendations and guidelines of national legislation and standards for teaching and professional development established by national organizations which recommended practices in Inclusive Early Childhood Education

HISTORY OF OCCRS/UVI INCLUSIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

Organizations Include:

- Head Start and Early Start Performance Standards
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation
- Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children Personnel Standards for Early Education and Early Intervention
- National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education Program Standards for Elementary Teacher Preparation
- National Council for Teachers of Mathematics: Principles and Standards for School Mathematics

Funding for the Inclusive Early Childhood Certificate and Associate Degree Programs

- OCCRS primarily depended on Quality Expansion CCDF monies to assist the initial cohort of students
- Students applied for scholarship monies from OCCRS at the Department of Human Services. Initial funding only covered the costs of the Certificate Program and later only the core education courses required for the Associates Degree

OCCRS Rationale for Providing Scholarships for the IECE

- To improve the quality of child care provided
- To upgrade the knowledge and skills of child care providers and early childhood professionals
- To ensure that these professionals were trained to provide quality inclusive early childhood programs in child care centers and other school age programs (After School Centers, Summer Camps, etc.)
- To provide a continuum of educational opportunities

UVI IECE PROGRAM DESIGN

- All aspects of the IECE Program are designed to ensure that students learn about the variability of young children and the adaptations and modifications needed to ensure typical development and learning experiences

UVI IECE PROGRAM DESIGN

- Stresses the importance of natural environments, play support and the integration of developmental and learning experiences into the curriculum
- Students are trained to assume the primary role of facilitators of child development and learning and parent-child relationships

UVI IECE PROGRAM DESIGN

- Students learn through a combination of coursework, creation of portfolios and guided supervised fieldwork that teach about inclusionary early childhood education models and principles.
- Classes are comprised of lecture, group activities, videos, discussion, case studies, role plays and opportunities to develop and practice observation, recording and analysis skills

IECE GRADUATES SUMMARY

- From 2002-2006, a total of 36 graduates sponsored by the Department of Human Services have earned their Associates Degrees
- Over 100 students have earned the IECE Certificate

Where are IECE Graduates Now?

- Graduates are now teaching in Head Start Classrooms which are operated by the Department of Human Services
- Graduates are in private child care centers
- A number of these graduates went on to complete their bachelors degrees.
- OCCRS employs one of the graduate as our Education Specialist.

IECE Bachelor of Arts Degree

- In 2004, the UVI Board of Trustees unanimously voted to add the Bachelor of Arts Degree in Inclusive Early Childhood Education
- Head Start Teachers are currently enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts Degree Program
- OCCRS currently pays for students enrolled in cohorts who are pursuing the Associate of Arts degree. A number of these students are employed in private centers throughout the territory, many of which are subsidized by CCDF.

Other OCCRS Collaborations

Promoting Inclusive Early Childhood Education

- OCCRS continues to offer workshops and technical assistance to private centers who are serving children with special needs
- Annually, we include workshops on best practices in IECE as a part of our territorial Best Beginnings Early Childhood Conference

VIRGIN ISLANDS CHILDREN BENEFIT FROM IECE Programs



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Be The Change Summer Program We Are the Catalyst for Change !



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VIRGIN ISLANDS CHILDREN BENEFIT FROM IECE



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
OFFICE OF CHILD CARE AND
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MAKING A DIFFERENCE
FOR THE CHILDREN AND
FAMILIES IN THE VIRGIN
ISLANDS!