



# BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH CIRCLE TIME

Successful Solutions Professional Development LLC

**[WWW.MYECECLASS-SOCIAL.COM/CIRCLE-TIME](http://WWW.MYECECLASS-SOCIAL.COM/CIRCLE-TIME)**

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**ECE Virtual Classroom**  
Online Courses for Early Childhood Educators



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# Building Community Through Circle Time

## *2 clock hours early childhood education*

### Course Description

Circle time is a common element in early childhood programs which gives teachers prime opportunities for instruction and interaction with their students. Circle time is used to teach important lessons and can also be used to build a sense of community within the classroom. This topic is designed to instruct teachers, caregivers, directors and staff of the importance of using circle time to build a classroom community. This makes children feel safe, respected, confident and capable and gives them the tools they need to become members of a larger community.

**Washington STARS credit: Program Planning and Development (2 hours)**

**CDA Content Area: Supporting Children's Social and Emotional Development (2 hours)**

### CDA Settings

- Infant/Toddler
- Preschool
- Family Child Care (Mixed-Age)

### Learning Outcomes

- ✓ Discuss the purpose of establishing a circle time routine for building a sense of community in an early childhood program
- ✓ Compare the circle time needs of different age groups
- ✓ Apply the knowledge from this course in developing community building circle time strategies
- ✓ Identify three ways to build community during circle time
- ✓ State the role of modeling desired behavior in an early childhood program
- ✓ Identify the benefits of building classroom community
- ✓ Determine the use of CDA Competency Standards that align with community building activities

### Course Content

1. Course Agenda
2. Circle Time
3. Practicing Circle Time Routines
4. Discussion: Establishing Routines (1/7)
5. Planning Circle Time
6. Circle Time Activity Example
7. Considering Attention Levels: Toddlers
8. Considering Attention Levels: Preschoolers



9. Considering Attention Levels: Pre-Kindergarten
10. Observations and Behavior
11. Guiding Circle Time
12. Real Approaches to Circle Time Community Building
13. Community Building Strategies (2/7)
14. Lesson Plan: Class Bracelets (3/7)
15. Lesson Plan: Our Classroom Book (4//7)
16. Lesson Plan: Big Ball, Medium Ball, Small Ball too! (5/7)
17. Lesson Plan: Bear Hunt (6/7)
18. End of Course Quiz (7/7)
19. Course Evaluation Form

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## Sources

- 1) The “Red Flag” Early Intervention Referral Guide for children 0-5 years by Queensland Government. [https://www.health.qld.gov.au/rch/professionals/brochures/red\\_flag.pdf](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/rch/professionals/brochures/red_flag.pdf)
- 2) Connecting Children to Their Cultures and Communities By Francis Wardle, Ph.D. by Early Childhood News  
[http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article\\_view.aspx?ArticleID=220](http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=220)
- 3) Building a Caring Community by Pearson Higher Education  
[http://www.pearsonhighered.com/assets/hip/us/hip\\_us\\_pearsonhighered/samplechapter/013\\_2658216.pdf](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/assets/hip/us/hip_us_pearsonhighered/samplechapter/013_2658216.pdf)
- 4) Building Community in the Classroom by Ellen Booth Church for Scholastic Early Childhood Today, <http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/building-community-classroom>

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## Glossary of Terms

### Development

Development refers to the gradual and predictable process of increasingly complex changes that occur over the course of a lifetime. Early childhood development follows the first, and most important, phase of human development: from birth to age eight.

### Developmentally Appropriate

Developmentally Appropriate are activities which are suitable for the age and stage of development of individual child.



## Developmental Stages

An expected, sequential order of obtaining skills that children typically go through. Examples include: crawling before walking and using fingers to feed themselves before using utensils.

## Executive function

Executive functions are a set of cognitive processes that are necessary for the cognitive control of behavior. It is an umbrella term for the neurologically-based skills involving mental control and self-regulation. These skills are controlled by an area of the brain called the frontal lobe.

## Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skill is the coordination of small muscles, in movements—usually involving the synchronization of hands and fingers—with the eyes. The complex levels of manual dexterity that humans exhibit can be attributed to and demonstrated in tasks controlled by the nervous system.

## Gross Motor Skills

Gross motor skills are involved in movement and coordination of the arms, legs, and other large body parts and movements. Crawling, running, and jumping are gross motor skills.

## Growth

Growth differs from development in that it usually means an increase in size or physical maturation—not an increase in the complexity of changes.

## Infant

Infant means a child birth through 12 months of age.

## Motor Skills

A person's ability to use large and small muscle groups. Gross motor skills refer to the use of large muscles in activities such as running or jumping. Fine motor skills refer to small muscle coordination required for things like writing or buttoning a shirt.

## Physical development

Physical development refers to the advancements and refinements of motor skills, or, in other words, children's abilities to use and control their bodies. These advancements are evident in gross- and fine-motor skills, and they are essential to children's overall health and wellness.



## Preschool-age

Preschool age child means a child 3 through five years of age.

## Social skills

Social skills are the skills we use to communicate and interact with each other, both verbally and non-verbally, through gestures, body language and our personal appearance.

## Toddler

Toddler means a child twelve months through thirty-six months of age.

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## Optional Resources for Further Study

- 10 tips for Circletime in the Preschool Classroom, by Deborah Stewart, <https://teachpreschool.org/2013/03/25/ten-tips-for-circletime/>
- Best-Loved Circle Time Books, Preschool Inspirations, <https://preschoolinspirations.com/best-loved-circle-time-books/>
- 14 Circle Time Activities and Ideas for Preschoolers, Kids Creative Chaos, <https://www.kidscreativechaos.com/2014/05/12-circle-time-activities-and-ideas-for.html>
- Making Circle Time Successful, Teach Me to Talk, <http://teachmetotalk.com/2011/02/15/making-circle-time-successful/>
- Toddler Circle Time Activities for the Montessori Classroom, NAMC Montessori Teacher Training Blog, <http://montessoritraining.blogspot.com/2009/04/toddler-circle-time-in-montessori.html>
- Ask the Expert: Teaching Tips for Successful Circle Times By Sharron Werlin Krull Child Development Specialist, [http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article\\_view.aspx?ArticleID=511](http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/article_view.aspx?ArticleID=511)
- Circle Time Resource List by Teaching Preschool , <https://teachpreschool.org/literacy-2/circle-time/>
- Getting the Most out of Circle Time by Early Head Start, <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/workshops-teachers-getting-the-most-out-of-circle-time.pdf>



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## Course Author

### **The curriculum for this course was developed by Aurora Tollestrup, BS Ed.**

Aurora is a full time Coordinator of Online Learning and Instructional Technology with Successful Solutions Training in Child Development. She is also an approved PD Specialist. She can be found in the PD Specialist search on the CDA Council website under Port Orchard, WA.

Aurora Tollestrup graduated from Grand Canyon University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education and a minor in English. She has worked with children and families from preschool to seventh grade in public and private schools in her community as a teacher, advocate and volunteer. A strong community connection and working relationships with colleagues influenced her teaching practices and continue to inspire her work in Education

Aurora strives to create a comfortable learning environment for participants. She provides competency-based education through online instruction to adult students and encourages student success in the online class environment. Aurora strives to provide leadership to our team of skilled facilitators; to command attention, generate interest, and foster total learner engagement in the virtual classroom environment.

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## ECE Virtual Classroom Academic Coach

The Virtual Classroom Academic Coach's role is to support the ECE students through the training process. The Virtual Classroom Academic Coach reviews assignment per directions, monitors discussion threads, answers inquiries/emails, monitors student engagement, provides online student support, and regularly collaborates with team members on development. The Virtual Classroom Academic Coach serves as the facilitator and grader, while the Online Educators are the official state approved trainers.

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## Student Support

The best way to reach us is through live student support chat. Look for the Chat with Us bubble on the bottom left corner of the website.

Website: [www.myececlass-safety.com](http://www.myececlass-safety.com)

E-mail: [info@myececlass.com](mailto:info@myececlass.com)

Phone: (360) 602-0960



## Student Support Hours

### Chat & Email Support

Monday - Friday	7 am – 6 pm
Saturday & Sunday	9 am – 6 pm
Holidays (Email Only)	10 am – 4 pm

### Phone Support

Monday - Friday	7 am – 6 pm
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## Required Assignments

### Reading

The text on each page should be read. When you submit the worksheets, discussion boards, and click on the NEXT PAGE button, it will create a record of your progress moving through each page.

### Videos

Watch the videos as you encounter them. If you have trouble with the videos playing, this may require that you update flash player on your computer. Optionally, some students find that if they are having difficulties playing the videos on their computer, they can view them on their phone. There is a link above the videos to view them on YouTube directly. You may wish to save the Youtube link for the video to refer to in the future, or in order to use another device for viewing.

### Discussion

The discussion questions are a required part of the course. You may either post on the discussion board where you are contributing to the thread with other students. Alternately, you have the option of clicking on the link above the discussion board and submitting your response on a worksheet form. The ECE Virtual Classroom Coach will be tracking your submission of the discussion board assignments as part of meeting the learning outcomes for the course.

### Worksheets

Check for Understanding worksheets are provided throughout each course. The worksheets allow opportunities to reflect on the course materials as you are progressing through the training. Watch your email in-box for trainer feedback. You may not receive feedback for every single assignment, depending on how quickly you are moving through the course. Instead, you may receive an email letting you know that your work was done well, with a certificate



attached. If you need guidance, the trainer or the academic coach will be sending you emails with feedback with instructions for resubmission. Certificates will not be issued if worksheets are skipped, incomplete, or filled in with inappropriate responses.

If you need assistance, we have student support available via Live Student Support Chat 7 days a week (Mon.-Fri. 7 am-8 pm and Sat.-Sun. 9am-6pm PST).

## Quizzes

The end of course quizzes are primarily multiple choice and true or false questions, with occasional open-ended questions. 70% or better is required to pass the quiz. You can review the course materials and retake the quiz as many times as needed to pass. Automated emails are sent to you confirming that you have submitted the worksheets and quizzes and provide you with a link to resume at the next page.

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## Optional Course Items

The items below are offered in each course as options. Optional means that you have the choice to utilize them, or not.

### Optional Resources for Further Study

We have included a wealth of resource links for you to explore and further your knowledge about each topic.

*The resource links provided in our website are provided solely for your convenience and may assist you in locating other useful information on the Internet. When you click on these links you will leave our website and will be redirected to another website. These websites are not under the control of Successful Solutions Training in Child Development. Successful Solutions Training in Child Development is not responsible for the content of linked third party websites. We are not affiliated with these third parties nor do we endorse or guarantee their products, services, website content, etc. We make no representation or warranty regarding the accuracy of the information contained in the linked websites. We suggest that you always verify the information obtained from linked websites before acting upon this information.*



## Parking Lot

The Parking Lot is offered as an optional opportunity to interact with the trainer about a question that you may have about the course topic. If you do not have a question, it is not necessary to fill out this form, it is not required. If you choose to submit a question to the trainer, she will respond to you by email. Be sure to watch your email in-box.

You can always leave a message for student support on our Live Chat on the bottom left corner of the website, any time of day or night. If we are not available, we will respond by email as soon as possible.

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## Certificates

When you submit the evaluation form, that prompts the academic coach to review all of your work. We will evaluate your work to assure that you have met the learning outcomes. Once that assessment is complete, you will receive your certificate by email. [Click Here](#) for a sample certificate. (This certificate is an example. The student certificate may vary slightly). Certificates are prepared 7 days a week between 7 am and 7 pm PST. In most cases, you should receive your certificate by email within a few hours after you submit the evaluation form, or first thing the next morning.

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## State Training Approval

This training may, or may not, meet annual training requirements in your state. Please provide us with your state, and any State registry ID number on the evaluation form, and if we are able to record your completed training with your state, we will. In some cases, for annual state credit, you will need to submit the certificate to the appropriate registry and they may or may not award annual credit. Providing a State Registry number to us does not guarantee that your state will approve the training for annual continuing education credit.

### **The following states have *pre-approved* our courses:**

- Washington State DEL MERIT Trainer: *Aurora Tollestrup STARS ID 4070153592*
- Louisiana Pathway: *Aurora Tollestrup Trainer Number IND-001526*
- Texas: *Aurora Tollestrup Trainer Number 13257*
- Illinois - *Organization Approval Number B102312 (Successful Solutions Prof. Dev.)*
- Colorado Early Childhood: *Aurora Tollestrup Approved Trainer number 547*
- NewMexicoKids Trainer Registry Master Trainer: *Aurora Tollestrup*
- Minnesota Level 2 Trainer: *Aurora Tollestrup*



- Wyoming: *Aurora Tollestrup STARS Trainer ID 4563*
- Ohio (*Aurora Tollestrup OPIN # 1118-074*) \* (*Entity OIN # 21084413*)
- North Carolina - Organization approval (*Successful Solutions Prof. Dev.*)
- Utah - Organization approval for Online Career Ladder Courses (*Successful Solutions*)
- Vermont - Organization Approval (*Successful Solutions Prof. Dev.*)
- Arkansas: *Aurora Tollestrup - Intermediate Level Trainer #27540*

Our courses may be accepted many states that do not require pre-approval.

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## Technical Requirements

- Laptop or PC
- Most students are able to use mobile devices such as tablets to complete courses. However, each device is different, and an individual's skill level with the device may determine their success with using a mobile device.
- Recommended web browser: Google Chrome
  - Microsoft Edge, Safari and Firefox are other acceptable browsers.
  - Internet Explorer is no longer supported by Microsoft, and you may have issues if you use it to take training.
- Operating System
  - Make sure you're using a current operating system (for example, Windows 10).
  - Outdated operating systems may cause technical difficulties.
- Internet Speed
  - Slow internet speed may impact loading time.
- Videos may require Adobe Flash Player.

Adobe Reader is required to open PDF files. Download Adobe Reader can be downloaded free <https://acrobat.adobe.com/us/en/acrobat/pdf-reader.html>

