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**The Child Development Laboratory**  
Supporting the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
cdl.illinois.edu
The Child Development Laboratory (CDL) is a National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited, university-based early care and education program, sponsored by the Department of Human Development and Family Studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The CDL offers full-day programming for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years in 12 different classrooms. These programs help fulfill the three-part teaching, research, and service mission of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

By addressing this three-part mission, the CDL is able to articulate the interconnectedness between theory, research, and practice for this early childhood community. Support needed to facilitate the teaching, research, and outreach/engagement activities outlined in this report is provided by the Department of Human Development and Family Studies, the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences, and the Office of the Provost at the University of Illinois.
As a Laboratory School, we support these missions by:

- Facilitating student observations of children
- Allowing select research and teaching projects to occur at the school
- Serving as a center for teacher training
## 30-Year Growth

### 1990-1991

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<td><strong>28</strong></td>
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To say the 2019-20 school year was unusual would be an understatement. As a program we started the year on a high note, with the five-year National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) reaccreditation of the CDL. Accreditation, which includes a year-long self-study of how we address 300+ standards of excellence beyond state-mandated licensing requirements, is one way we ensure that we are implementing evidence-based best practices both in our classrooms and the program as a whole. The process includes validation visits, during which an external review of the accuracy of our self-study is conducted through observations and assessments by trained professionals. Although we were unable to complete the validation visit for the ECDL, we fully expect our accredited status to be maintained. Few university laboratory schools meet the criteria for accreditation while also providing high quality early childhood care and education and supporting the teaching and research of university faculty and students. Maintaining NAEYC accreditation is a testament to the collective expertise and high levels of commitment that are exhibited daily by our teachers and administrators.
This year was also a time of personal reflection for me, as I completed my 30th year as Director at the Child Development Laboratory. Looking back at the first CDL Annual Report of my tenure, compiled for the 1990-91 academic year, I can identify the positive impacts of CDL teachers and leadership as we developed and refined policies, protocols, and procedures to fully integrate CDL programming into the academic missions of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Significant growth in CDL support and facilitation of teaching and research has occurred over this 30-year time period.

I would be remiss if I did not also highlight how the CDL has quickly and effectively responded to the COVID-19 global pandemic. Once the University transitioned to an online instructional format for students in March and the Governor implemented a “stay at home” directive for the state, engagement in the academic activities typically highlighted in the Annual Report ceased. The administrative team immediately applied for an emergency childcare license from the Department of Children and Family Services and was able to safely provide care for up to 28 children of critical/essential personnel.

Amidst these changes,
CDL teachers were creative in their outreach and engagement activities for our 160 children and families, allowing for connection between students, teachers, and families to remain strong despite the distance. The examples of these activities, found at the end of the report, highlight the important ways in which teachers continued their crucial role in supporting child growth, learning, and development.

As we moved into Phase 3 of the Restore Illinois plan in May, we returned to providing care for approximately 88 of our 160 children. When we moved into Phase 4 in June, we were able to expand our services to 144 children. Reduced enrollment will be in effect until we move into Phase 5 of the Restore Illinois plan. As a result, CDL teachers and administrators are developing an action plan for how to facilitate teaching and research activities for faculty and students, while adhering to mitigation guidelines outlined by our licensing agency. We do not have a complete picture of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the CDL programming as we transition to the 2020-2021 academic year, but remain hopeful about the opportunities we will be able to provide. Although we expect a reduction in the scope of teaching and research activities occurring in the upcoming year, we
anticipate that we will be able to maximize opportunities to safely integrate CDL programming, teaching, and research to support the mission of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign while continuing to provide high quality early care and educational programming to our children amidst a global pandemic.

The activities outlined in the 2019-2020 Annual Report highlight the multiple ways in which the Child Development Laboratory supports the teaching, research, and service missions of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. We look forward to being able to continue this important role as we move forward.

Respectfully,

Brent A. McBride, PhD
Director, Child Development Laboratory
July, 2020
13 DEPARTMENTS | 31 COURSES

3684 TOTAL OBSERVATIONS

2945 Individual Observations

452 Group Observations

287 Parent Observations
Courses Supported by Observations

ARTD 101  ARTD 401  ARTD 499  ARTD 503
ADV 495   CHLH 485  CI 415    CI 465
HDFS 105  HDFS 206  HDFS 290  HDFS 301
HDFS 305  HDFS 494  HDFS 499  HDFS 590
HDFS 591  FSHN 322  KIN 259  KIN 262
IHLT 375  IHLT 474  IHLT 475  NURS 341
PYSC 216  PSYC 363  SHS 375  SOCW 506
SOCW 516  SPED 414  SPED 450

Programs Supported by Observations

HDFS Summer Academy
Early Childhood students and faculty from:
East China Normal University and Konan University, Japan
Champaign Central High School Child Psychology students
Heartland Community College’s PTA 140 Course
Complementary Feeding Questionnaire Development

Investigator(s): Alexandra Lundquist, Doctoral Student, Division of Nutritional Sciences, and Brent A. McBride, Professor, Human Development and Family Studies

Subjects: All teachers in infant classrooms

Purpose: To use cognitive interviews to develop and pilot a self-report survey that assesses teachers’ understanding of infants’ decision-making process about their critical transition to complementary foods.

Development of an Electronic Test of Early Numeracy

Investigator(s): Art Baroody, Professor, and Michael Eiland, Visiting Project Coordinator, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Subjects: All CDL children between the ages of 3-5

Purpose: To gather data to refine and norm a novel tablet-based test of early numeracy achievement.
Developmental Trajectories of Mental State Language Use

Investigator(s): Marie Channell, Assistant Professor, Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences

Subjects: All available CDL children between the ages of 3-5 years

Purpose: To develop assessment paradigms for measuring children’s use of mental state language during a narrative storytelling experience.

How Do Families Understand Math: The Development of a Family Interview

Investigator(s): Stephanie Smith, Assistant Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Subjects: 10 parents of preschool aged CDL children

Purpose: To develop, pilot test, and refine an interview protocol designed to assess parents’ understanding of how to embed math concepts into everyday parent/child activities within the home.

Infant Development Project

Investigator(s): Nancy McElwain, Professor, Department of Human Development and Family Studies

Subjects: All infant and toddler classrooms

Purpose: To use CDL classrooms as an instructional site for training data collectors to acceptable levels of reliability when assessing children’s development via standardized assessment tools such as the Bayley Infant Neurodevelopmental Screener.
Motivations to Facilitate Children’s Interest in Learning Ocean Knowledge

Investigator(s): Qiuyan Tang, Graduate Student, School of Art and Design/Industrial Design

Subjects: All children in the Preschool II classroom

Purpose: To explore the feasibility in the use of robotic technology for increasing young children’s understanding of ocean ecologies.

Speech and Voice Perception in Noisy Environments

Investigator(s): Mary Flaherty, Assistant Professor, Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences

Subjects: All CDL children with older siblings between the ages of 5-17

Purpose: To identify specific acoustic voice/speech cues that can improve speech-in-noise perceptions for children with hearing loss.

Understanding Infant Feeding Practices

Investigator(s): Brent McBride, Professor, Human Development and Family Studies/Division of Nutritional Sciences

Subjects: All infant classrooms

Purpose: To gather data for use in developing and establishing the feasibility and reliability of an observational coding scheme for assessing teachers’ use of responsive feeding behaviors.
Class Projects

**ARTD 101 | Introduction to Industrial Design**

*3 students spring 2020*

Group assignments that immersed students into the phases of product development, design, and creation.

**ARTD 230 | Design Thinking/Need-Finding**

*5 students fall 2019*

Interactions with CDL teachers that provided insight on alternative approaches to designing new outdoor play spaces for young children.

**ARTD 499 | Special Topics in Design**

*1 student fall 2019*

Senior thesis project that designed, developed, and evaluated a new toy that targeted young children’s understanding of robotics.

**CI 415 | Language Varieties, Cultures, and Learning**

*15 students spring 2020*

Guided observations and interactions that explored children’s learning approaches in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms.

**CI 465 | Language Literacy in Early Childhood Ed**

*20 students fall 2019*

Development and implementation of literacy center activities that focused on strengthening oral language, pre-reading, and pre-writing skills. Activities were then implemented within the CDL classrooms.

28 courses | 1,715 students
**FSHN 322 | Nutrition and the Life Cycle**  
**35 Students Spring 2020**  
Structured observations during mealtimes that conducted nutritional analysis of dietary intake. Anthropometric assessments of all children (height and weight to calculate BMI) were also conducted.

**HDFS 105 | Introduction to Human Development**  
**262 Students Fall 2019 | 242 Students Spring 2020**  
Guided observations that identified differences in the ways in which boys and girls interact with peers and adults.

**HDFS 290 | Introduction to Research Methods**  
**38 Students Fall 2019 | 40 Students Spring 2020**  
Observational group projects that led to formulation of a research question, development of an observational plan, and collection of observational data.

**HDFS 301 | Infancy and Early Childhood**  
**66 Students Fall 2019**  
Semester-long group projects that documented the presence of various developmental phenomena during the infancy, toddlerhood, and preschool periods through targeted observations.

**HDFS 494 | Applied Research Methods**  
**13 Students Fall 2019**  
Activities that resulted in the development of a working knowledge of formalized assessments with young children and the requisite skills and competencies needed to conduct developmentally appropriate formalized assessments.
Class Projects

HDFS 499 | Seminar
2 Students Spring 2020
Guided observations that explored the impact of children’s physical and social environments on the nature and quality of play being exhibited.

HDFS 590 | Advanced Research Methods
13 Students Fall 2019
Structured assignments that developed students’ observational skills necessary to document growth and behaviors of young children.

HDFS 591 | Qualitative Methods
5 Students Spring 2020
Structured assignments that developed the ethnographic data collection skills (e.g., observations, interviews, document reviews) necessary to gain holistic views of social life as it occurs in natural settings.

HDFS RAP | Research Apprenticeship Program
6 Students Summer 2019
Naturalistic observations of preschool children in a childcare setting that taught how to conduct research and explored whether gender differences occur among preschool children.

IHLT 375 | Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Health
1 Student Spring 2020
Guided observations that led to an understanding the impact of community-based programs on child outcomes in a variety of settings.

IHLT 474 | Pre-Field Experience in Health
2 Students Fall 2019 | 4 Students Spring 2020
Guided observations that narrowed and defined potential project areas for part of internship placements the following semester.
IHLT 475 | Field Experience in i-Health
5 Students Fall 2019 | 2 Students Spring 2020
Development, implementation, and evaluation of projects that immersed children in classroom experiences to broaden their understanding of health issues from an interdisciplinary perspective.

KIN 262 | Motor Development, Growth, and Form
34 Students Fall 2019 | 26 Students Spring 2020
Weekly lab observations that documented different ages and stages of motor skill development during infancy and early childhood.

KIN 259 | Motor Development and Control
104 Students Fall 2019 | 79 Students Spring 2020
Observations that introduced research methods and observation of motor development, including differences in gender and across age groups and the classification of fine and gross motor skill performance.

NURS 341 | Nursing Care of Children and Families
28 Students Fall 2019 | 28 Students Spring 2020
Semester-long applied assignments that provides students with experience conducting developmental screenings, health histories, and nutritional assessments with young children.

PSYC 216 | Child Psychology
241 Students Fall 2019 | 218 Students Spring 2020
Guided observations that compared differences in a pre-chosen area of development (e.g., social, language, motor, and cognitive) across age levels.

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Class Projects

**PSYC 363 | DEVELOPMENTAL CHILD PSYCHOLOGY LAB**

39 students Fall 2019 | 53 students Spring 2020

Guided observation assignments that developed protocols for relating students’ observations to classroom concepts about typical motor, cognitive, communicative, and social development among children.

**PTA 140 | HEARTLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE | CLINICAL**

14 students Fall 2019

Guided observation assignments that provided insight on how children’s fine and gross motor skills are influenced by the physical environment for students pursuing the Physical Therapy Assistant training program.

**SHS 375 | COMMUNICATION PARTNERS AND HEALTH**

20 students Spring 2020

Collection of anecdotal records and observations of target children that provided an assessment of children’s speech and conversational skills.

**SOCW 506 | PRACTICE WITH CHILDREN/ADOLESCENTS**

3 students Fall 2019

Semester placement that applied preventive and remedial intervention methods for infants and young children and practice of observation skills and concepts learned in class.
**SOCW 516 | Child, Youth, and Family Services**  
16 students spring 2020  
Guided observations of target children that provided insight on the developmental status of the children across multiple domains and how adult interactions with children can potentially impact child outcomes.

**SPED 414 | Assessment in Early Childhood Special Ed**  
13 students fall 2019  
Structured observation activities that demonstrated the functionality of play-based assessments and observations of children's development.

**SPED 450 | Intro to Early Childhood Special Ed**  
23 students fall 2019  
Assigned shared book reading experiences that provided opportunities to identify if children, based on age levels, recognize developmental disabilities and comprehend the impact of such disabilities on the day-to-day functioning of children.

**Illini Union | Legacy Scholar Project**  
1 student fall 2019  
Semester-long service project that developed an understanding of key indicators of program quality through immersion into a high quality early care and education program.

**Graduate College | Image of Research Project**  
1 student spring 2020  
Photo-based project that developed images that communicate important aspects of social science research, focusing on the relationships between children’s dietary intake and nutritional/health status.
COVID-19 Response

Providing our children with learning opportunities

Toddler class Zoom story time (above); Zoom time group scavenger hunt (below)

Preschool classroom Zoom group time (above and below)
Connecting with our parents and families

Sharing emotions with families (above); Parent/teacher Zoom conference (below)

New parent enrollment meeting (above); One-on-one with families (below)
Serving the University of Illinois and the Champaign-Urbana community
ILLINOIS
Human Development & Family Studies
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Child Development Laboratory
They Learn. We Learn.