



# *Early Childhood Environmental Education Programs: Guidelines for Excellence*



## Summary

### **Program Philosophy, Purpose and Development**

- 1.1 Focus on nature and the environment
- 1.2 Focus on education of young children
- 1.3 Culturally appropriate goals, objectives, and practices
- 1.4 Environmental literacy: board, staff, and providers
- 1.5 Health and safety
- 1.6 Ongoing evaluation and assessment
- 1.7 Partnerships
- 1.8 Interpersonal and intergenerational relationships

### **Developmentally Appropriate Practices**

- 2.1 Based on research and theory
- 2.2 Authentic experiences
- 2.3 Child-directed and inquiry-based
- 2.4 The whole child

### **Play and Exploration**

- 3.1 Use of natural world and natural materials
- 3.2 Play and the role of adults

### **Curriculum Framework for Environmental Learning**

- 4.1 Social and emotional growth
- 4.2 Curiosity and questioning
- 4.3 Development of environmental understandings
- 4.4 Skills for understanding the environment
- 4.5 A personal sense of responsibility and caring
- 4.6 Physical health and development

### **Places and Spaces**

- 5.1 Spaces and places to enhance development
- 5.2 Natural components
- 5.3 Comfortable for both children and adults
- 5.4 Maintenance and usability
- 5.5 Health, safety, and risk
- 5.6 Environmental sustainability

### **Educator Preparation**

- 6.1 Foundations of early childhood environmental education
- 6.2 Professional responsibilities of the educator
- 6.3 Environmental literacy
- 6.4 Planning and implementing environmental education
- 6.5 Fostering learning
- 6.6 Assessment and evaluation