Preface

Educating Children with Exceptionalities is a book about children who have disabilities/delays, children who are gifted and talented, and children who are both—whom we refer to as twice exceptional. Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, children with disabilities/delays are entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). This often means that children with disabilities/delays are placed in general education classrooms; thus, all early childhood educators must understand their responsibilities in supporting these children.

In today's diverse classrooms and early learning environments, educators must recognize and respond to a wide range of developmental and learning differences—and the sooner they can do so, the better. Early intervention is the key to positive outcomes for children who have developmental delays or who demonstrate advanced abilities beyond those of their peers—or those who exhibit characteristics in both of these categories. The first steps to recognizing exceptionalities are to build a strong foundation of knowledge of typical child development, learn the best practices for effective observation and assessment, and know how and when to collaborate with specialists and the children's families to provide the needed support.

Aligned to NAEYC's Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators, the Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) Position Statement, and the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children's Recommended Practices, *Educating Children with Exceptionalities* is rich in the history, theory, research, and best practices of this varied and complex field. The textbook is also laden with authentic stories, images, and critical thinking opportunities that bring the content to life and challenge students to imagine themselves as educators, advocates, leaders, and agents of change in a field that faces many challenges. This book will help build champions for a field that needs them.

About the Author

Dr. Wardle spent the first 12 years of his life growing up on a farm in the beautiful border country between England and Wales. He then lived with his family in the Green Belt outside of London. When he was 16, his family moved to the United States, where he completed his high school education. Dr. Wardle has a B.S. in Art Education from Penn State University, an M.S. in Cultural Foundations of Education from the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, and a Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, with a minor in Human Development and Family Life, from the University of Kansas.

After receiving his doctorate degree, Dr. Wardle decided he needed practical experience in the field. He became fully involved in the Head Start program, including as a classroom volunteer, educational coordinator, member of a local policy council, director for nine years, and a national program evaluator. His deep fascination of carpentry led him to design and build playgrounds for early childhood programs around the country and in Brazil. He later became a national expert on playground safety. His struggle to learn to read and write as a child motivated him to become a writer of a vast array of articles in handbooks, popular magazines, newspapers, trade publications, academic journals, and 10 books.

Dr. Wardle was the Director of Education for Children's World Learning Centers for four years, where he was in charge of staff training and the companies' programs for children with disabilities and delays. He has also taught kindergarten and grades 1–4 in several private schools.

When he decided to teach college students, he had a body of both academic and practical knowledge, which his students greatly appreciated. For over 20 years he taught graduate students at the University of Phoenix and early childhood students at Red Rocks Community College, where he taught classes in child growth and development, curriculum, and exceptional students. Over 25 years as a member of Partners of the Americas greatly broadened Dr. Wardle's international, cultural, and humanitarian perspectives on life, learning, and teaching.

In working with college students, Dr. Wardle focused on making sure they knew the field's rich history, encouraged them to continually question the field's assumptions and practices, and expected them to passionately advocate for young children—including those with exceptionalities—their families, and the overall early childhood field. His personal interests include all forms of children's play, diversity, interracial families and multiracial children, playgrounds, and increasing the number of men in the early childhood field.

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Reviewers

The author and publisher wish to thank the following industry and teaching professionals for their valuable input into the development of *Educating Children with Exceptionalities*.

Andrea Adelman
Professor, Program Director of Early Childhood Education
Florida International University
Miami, FL

Kimberly Avery
Educational Studies Faculty
SUNY Empire State University
Saratoga Springs, NY

Colleen Bartlett
Professor, Education
Central Wyoming College
Riverton, WY

Nan Brinkley
Early Childhood Care and Education Instructor
Atlanta Technical College
Atlanta, GA

Sharon Carter
Professor, Early Education and Leadership
Davidson Davie Community College
Thomasville, NC

Traci Daniel
Associate Professor, Early Childhood Education
Danville Community College
Danville, VA

Daniela Fenu Foerch
Clinical Assistant Professor
Florida International University
Miami, FL

Tian Foss
Early Childhood Care and Education Instructor
Central Georgia Technical College
Macon, GA

Tracy Galuski
Professor
SUNY Empire State University
Saratoga Springs, NY

Ashley Graham
School-Age Education Instructor
James Sprunt Community College
Kenansville, NC

Christine Maier
Assistant Professor, Early Childhood Education
Dean College
Franklin, MA

Margaret Moore
Math Coach and Early Childhood Instructor
Beaufort County Community College
Washington, NC

Krissie Pickering
Early Childhood Education Program Chair
Ivy Tech Community College
East Chicago, IN

Shelley Sellwood-Davis
Adjunct Professor
Kentucky Community and Technical College System
Versailles, KY

Cheryl Tom
Assistant Professor, Early Childhood Programs
Navajo Technical University
Crownpoint, NM

Melissa Beck Wells
Director of Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development
SUNY Empire State University
Saratoga Springs, NY

Sara Westerlin
Assistant Professor
Peru State College
Peru, NE

Celestial Wills-Jackson
Assistant Professor
Lehman College-City University of New York
Bronx, NY

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Acknowledgments

The author and publisher would like to thank the following companies, organizations, and individuals for their contribution of resource material, images, or other support in the development of *Educating Children with Exceptionalities*.

Adams County Head Start
Nicolas Arizaga
George Basham, Taos Lion's Club
Bonnie McBeth Learning Center
Brazilian Public School, Brasília, Brazil
Sam Durgin
Exchange Press
María Angelita Salamea Cárdenas
Maia Casadei
David Haines
Richard Lemke
Mayan children from Panimasiguan, Highlands of Guatemala
New Meadow Run Bruderhof Kindergarten
Rifton Equipment®
Whitney Brothers

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Features of the Textbook

The instructional design of this textbook includes student-focused learning tools to help you succeed. This visual guide highlights these features.

Chapter Opening Materials

Each chapter opener contains a list of learning outcomes, a list of key terms, an introduction, and a list of standards covered in the chapter. **Learning Outcomes** clearly identify the knowledge and skills to be gained when the chapter is completed. These outcomes are labeled and correlated to related assessment elements to facilitate reporting and remediation. **Key Terms** list the key words to be learned in the chapter. The **Introduction** provides an overview and preview of the chapter content. **Standards** are an important part of preparing for a career. This feature provides students with an understanding of what key standards are covered in the chapter.

Additional Features

Additional features are used throughout the body of each chapter to further learning and knowledge. **Checkpoints** support reflection and knowledge after major chapter sections. **Videos from the Field** showcase original G-W videos, filmed in authentic, developmentally appropriate early learning environments, that highlight topics or concepts discussed in the text. **Spotlight** features present issues of current interest in the field. **Case Study** features present students with scenarios they are likely to encounter in their careers as early childhood educators, then challenges them to think critically about how they would handle those situations.



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Historical Lens features give students a glimpse into past movements and events that provide foundational knowledge for understanding the field as it is today. **Cultural Lens** features challenge students to examine relevant issues in the field, both past and present, through the lens of people from diverse backgrounds and characteristics. The **Teacher Profiles** highlight experiences and advice from real teachers who work with children with exceptionalities.

Illustrations

Illustrations have been designed to clearly and simply communicate concepts relevant to working with young children with exceptionalities. Photos are diverse, colorful, and helpful, and many are original images that were captured in three real early learning environments—including a multi-needs preschool classroom. Charts and tables communicate additional useful information for future educators to understand the chapter concepts.

End-of-Chapter Content

End-of-chapter material provides an opportunity for review and application of concepts. An expanded **Summary** matches the content to the learning outcomes for section-by-section review. This helps students focus on important concepts presented in the text. **Recall** questions extend learning and develop students' abilities to break down material into its component parts. **Critical Thinking** questions empower students to demonstrate knowledge, identification, and comprehension of chapter material.

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TOOLS FOR STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR SUCCESS

Student Tools

Student Text



Available in print and digital, *Educating Children with Exceptionalities* is a comprehensive text that provides a roadmap for educators who work with children with exceptionalities.

G-W Digital Companion

- E-flash cards and vocabulary exercises allow interaction with content to create opportunities to master terminology.

EduHub LMS-Ready Content

- Students will enjoy intuitive digital resources in their school's preferred platform.

Instructor Tools

LMS Integration

Integrate EduHub LMS-Ready Content into your preferred platform for a seamless user experience for both you and your students.

A Complete Teaching and Learning Package

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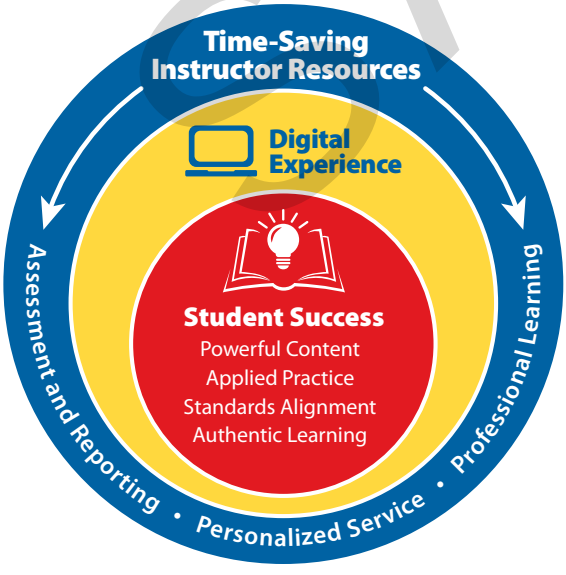
Online Instructor Resources

- Tap into time-saving preparation tools: answer keys, editable lesson plans, and other teaching aids.
- Take advantage of Instructor's Presentations for PowerPoint® with fully customizable, richly illustrated slides that help you teach and visually reinforce the key concepts from each chapter.
- Videos capture authentic examples of classroom interactions between children and teachers in developmentally appropriate learning environments.
- Easily create, customize, edit, and print prebuilt questions and tests using G-W Assessment, our cloud-based platform. No more downloads, uploads, or imports needed! Student assessments are autograded and flow automatically into your gradebook when you integrate with your LMS.

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Introduction

The purpose of this book, *Educating Children with Exceptionalities*, is to present prospective and/or current teachers with the myriad of issues that comprise the field of early childhood special education for children birth to 8 years of age. The book begins by recognizing that the field of exceptional young children encompasses three overlapping groups: those with a variety of identified disabilities/delays, those who are gifted and talented, and those who are twice-exceptional children, meaning they have one or more disabilities/delays and are also gifted and talented. Further, this book describes the process of screening, identifying, and assigning these children with an IEP or IFSP. As we explore these issues, it is understood that each child's life experiences are deeply embedded within their family and a variety of powerful social networks.

It is critically important to understand the overall philosophy of teaching exceptional children, with its fractured history of exclusion and eugenics, along with the passage of significant federal laws. Central to both these concepts is our society's commitment to fairness and equality, and the continual efforts to improve the care and education of young children with exceptionalities. While our national laws—and their subsequent reauthorizations and legal changes through litigation—are used to codify our society's commitment to children with exceptionalities, this text goes beyond simply understanding and meeting these legal mandates.

Several ideas, beliefs, and important questions are woven throughout the content of this textbook. They include:

- Being disabled/delayed is a judgment call by our society. Maybe the biggest challenge in the field is to continually ask, who has a disability, and who decides? Central to this question is the concept of normalcy: what is normal, and who is a normal child? While we explore ways to improve the development, skills, and behaviors of exceptional young children, we are also cognizant of the desire to change schools and society to be more inclusive of children and people with a vast array of exceptionalities.
- In exploring ways to care for and educate young children with exceptionalities, it is critical that we examine two broad bodies of knowledge: the general body of knowledge and approaches used with typically developing young children, and the specialized knowledge gained from a vast variety of fields involved in working with exceptional children. Everything we do with young children who have exceptionalities must be deeply embedded within our knowledge of working with children who are typically developing.
- All young children thrive within a complex network of social settings, including family, community, religious organizations, and programs/schools. To maximize our impact on each child's growth, development, and learning, we must continually improve the collaboration and support between these entities.
- Every child has the desire and the need to be empowered, effective, independent, and fulfilled. It is critical that while addressing a child's disabilities/delays, we never forget this deep need. This is a central reason to actively include the arts in all of our programs, and to make sure every child identified with a disability/delay is also a potentially gifted and talented student.
- What are the various innovative ways new technology, such as artificial intelligence, can be harnessed to help us more impactfully serve young children with a vast diversity of disabilities/delays? This is an exciting new frontier we must fully embrace!
- Many young children identified with a disability/delay are also gifted and talented; many children identified as gifted and talented may also have one or more disabilities/delays. We must embrace a paradigm shift and include gifted and talented students in all of our early childhood and education programs.
- For a variety of historical and legal reasons, the vast majority of young children with exceptionalities are served in public school programs. This creates many challenges, including public schools being overwhelmed with these children. We need to explore ways to balance this important responsibility between all childcare, early childhood, and school programs.
- Blindly supporting the philosophy of inclusion does not adequately serve all children with exceptionalities. We are required to provide the best educational environment for each child, based on their unique needs and not the wishes of the school, teachers, or advocates. Often the family is the best judge for what works best for their child.

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