

FEBRUARY
2022



LEGACY



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What do you think of when the concept of “legacy” comes to mind?

Take a minute.

Now that you have taken time to gather your thoughts on this concept, have you ever considered your own legacy? Deep question, right? But it’s actually simpler than it seems! First, let’s explore the term “legacy”.

Some people may associate the concept of legacy with death. This is understandable considering many times we speak of a person’s legacy in the past tense, or as something they left behind. Legacy can be defined as money or material items left for someone. The Cambridge Dictionary lists one of their definitions of legacy as, “something that is part of our history.” While this is true, it is important to note that our legacy is also part of our present. It is something that we are building every day.



What determines a legacy?

A legacy does not have to be something big, fancy, or famous. In fact, most are not. Your legacy can be defined by what comes to mind when people think of you. The great news is that you are in control! Your choices, words, and actions each day are writing your legacy. Below are a few things to consider about your own personal legacy.

- Passion- Think about the things you are passionate about or things you enjoy doing. These things could be your work or a hobby. Both can be part of your legacy.
- Connections- Another part of your legacy is the connection to the people in your life. All of our legacies are intertwined in some way. The things we do throughout our lives have a direct or indirect effect on the people we encounter.
- Motivation- What motivates you to succeed? This could also be part of your legacy. Are you internally motivated? Are you motivated by external factors such as children or family members?

Examining your own personal legacy by exploring the ideas above could be a great journal activity. Prompts like these help us to learn more about ourselves and grow in our purpose.



Legacy in your early childhood education program

Legacies extend beyond just the personal realm. Your early childhood education program also has a legacy that you continue to develop each day. The stories of our programs are woven into the history of child care throughout the years. Here are some things to consider when examining the legacy of your program.

- Mission statement/philosophy- A great place to start is by examining the values of your program. Does your mission statement and philosophy reflect your beliefs about educating and caring for young children?
- Inclusion and diversity- Is your program a welcoming place for all families? If this is part of your program policies be sure it is reflected in your practice. Encourage families to share about their cultures. Diversify the books and materials in your classroom(s).
- Family involvement/communication- Think of your program as a community. Are families able to be involved in different aspects of your program? What else could you do to increase family involvement? Consider sending out a survey to families to find out their interest.

Creating an early childhood legacy is not just for administrators or family child care educators. Everyone involved with the program has an opportunity to contribute to the legacy. Keep these things in the back of your mind as you go through your days. What is the legacy you want to project to the community? Think about how you want families and children to speak about your program long after they have moved on. Is that reflected in your work? The best part is that there is always time to change and adapt. I hope you can all work towards a personal and professional legacy that makes you proud!

Professional Development (PD):

- [Mission Statement for Your Family Child Care Program \(Virtual, Self-paced\)- DIEEC](#)
- [Developing Your Mission Statement \(Hybrid- Self-paced Professional Learning Experience & Coaching\)- DIEEC](#)

to register for any of these workshops visit: www.dieecpd.org