



Our Philosophy:

At Explorers Early Childhood Education, Inc. we believe that education should be as multifaceted as the children we serve. Our blended model avoids the limitations of a single pedagogy, instead weaving together the world's most effective educational traditions to create a holistic, foundational experience.

The Five Roots of the Explorers Educational Model:

- **The Independence of Montessori:** We utilize the "Prepared Environment" and self-correcting materials to foster deep concentration, autonomy, and a sense of order. Children are empowered to follow their own rhythms of discovery.
- **The Inquiry of STEAM:** Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics are not subjects—they are lenses. We encourage children to ask "Why?" and "How?", using trial and error to solve real-world problems.
- **The Expression of Reggio Emilia:** Our classrooms are filled with natural light and "provocations." We view the child as a strong, capable protagonist, and we use the "Hundred Languages of Children"—from clay to coding—to make their thinking visible.
- **The Resilience of Outdoor Education:** Nature is our co-teacher. Whether rain, snow, or shine, we spend significant time in the Colorado landscape, building physical grit, ecological literacy, and a profound respect for the Earth.
- **The Heart of Civic Engagement:** We believe children are citizens of *today*, not just tomorrow. We engage with our local community through service projects, visits to local landmarks, and practicing the democratic process within the classroom.

Toddler Program Lead Teacher

Position Summary

We are seeking a passionate and dedicated **Toddler Program Lead Teacher** to join our team at Explorers. In this role, you will lead a classroom of young learners, fostering a safe, nurturing, and developmentally appropriate environment. You will be responsible for designing and implementing curriculum that aligns with our blended curriculum model and Colorado's Early Learning and Development Guidelines, while mentoring assistant teachers and building strong partnerships with families.

Location: Durango, Colorado

Salary: \$48,000 - \$50,000 annual salary

Essential Duties & Responsibilities

- **Curriculum & Instruction:** Utilize our blended curriculum model to plan and execute daily lesson plans that promote the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development of children (ages 1-3).
- **Classroom Management:** Maintain a high-quality learning environment that meets **Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC)** licensing standards and safety regulations.
- **Observation & Assessment:** Conduct regular developmental assessments (e.g., Teaching Strategies GOLD) and maintain anecdotal records to track child progress.
- **Leadership:** Supervise and mentor assistant teachers and volunteers, providing guidance on best practices and classroom flow.
- **Family Engagement:** Maintain daily communication with families regarding their child's milestones and needs.
- **Safety & Compliance:** Ensure strict adherence to health and safety protocols, including sanitization, emergency preparedness, and mandated reporting.
- **Bilingual Environment:** Maintain a language-rich environment where **Spanish and English** are used interchangeably to support cognitive flexibility and cultural appreciation.

Technical Skills, Knowledge & Abilities

- **Developmental Knowledge:** Deep understanding of child growth and development stages and "Developmentally Appropriate Practice" (DAP).
- **Pedagogical Fluency:** Ability to explain the "why" behind our blended model to parents and stakeholders.
- **Colorado Shines PDIS:** Ability to navigate and maintain professional records within the Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System.
- **Technology Proficiency:** Experience with classroom management software, digital portfolios, and basic office tools (e.g., Email, Google Applications, Brightwheel).
- **Behavioral Guidance:** Skilled in positive redirection and conflict resolution strategies tailored to young children.
- **Risk Management:** Knowledge of safety protocols for off-site excursions and outdoor play.

Qualifications & Experience

- **Education:** High School Diploma (required); Associate's or Bachelor's degree in **Early Childhood Education (ECE)** or a related field (strongly preferred).
- **Credentialing:** Must meet **Colorado Lead Teacher Qualifications** (ECT qualified). This typically includes: Colorado Early Childhood Professional Credential 3.0 (Level 2 or higher).
- **Certifications:** Valid Pediatric CPR/First Aid and Standard Precautions certifications (or willingness to obtain within 30 days).

- **Experience:** 1+ years in a licensed ECE classroom preferred (Montessori, Reggio, or STEAM experience strongly preferred).
- **Clearance:** Must pass a comprehensive background check, including Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprinting.

Compensation & Benefits

- **Competitive Salary:** \$48,000 - \$50,000 per year (depending on education and experience).
- **Health & Wellness:** Monthly **Health Stipend** to assist with medical, dental, or vision premiums.
- **Eligible for Retirement Plan** (upon completion of required service period): Simple IRA program with **employer matching contributions**.
- **Paid Time Off:** Accrued vacation time, sick leave, and paid holidays.
- **Tax Incentives:** Assistance in applying for the **Colorado Early Childhood Educator Income Tax Credit** (up to \$1,700+ annually for qualified levels).
- **Childcare Discount:** Substantial discount for staff children.

Schedule

- **Shift:** Monday – Friday, (e.g., 7:40 AM - 3:00 PM, 8:20 AM – 3:40 PM).
- **Planning Time:** Weekly dedicated out-of-classroom time for lesson planning and administrative tasks.

Ready to lead the next generation of Explorers? Submit your resume and a brief cover letter sharing your personal "teaching philosophy" to durangoexplorers@gmail.com.

Explorers is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for all employees and families.