

[, November 04, 2013]

ECCDC IMPLEMENTING RULES AND REGULATIONS OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10410 OTHERWISE KNOWN AS "THE EARLY YEARS ACT OF 2013"

Pursuant to Section 14 of Republic Act No. 10410, entitled "An Act Recognizing the Age from Zero (0) to Eight (8) as the First Crucial Stage of Educational Development and Strengthening the Early Childhood Care and Development System, Appropriating Funds Therefor And For Other Purposes," otherwise known as the "Early Years Act of 2013", the following Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) are hereby promulgated to implement the provisions of the Act.

RULE I: Title, Policy and Purpose

Section 1.1. Title. – This IRR shall be known and cited as the "Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 10410 otherwise known as *The Early Years Act of 2013*."

Section 1.2. Statement of Policy. – It is hereby declared a policy of the State to promote the rights of children to survival, human development, and special protection with full recognition of the nature of childhood as well as the need to provide developmentally appropriate experiences to address their needs; and to support parents/families in their roles as primary caregivers and as their children's first teachers. Further, the State hereby recognizes the age from zero (0) to eight (8) years as the first crucial stage of educational and human development of which the age from zero (0) to four (4) years shall be the responsibility of the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Council. Therefore, the responsibility to help develop children in the formative years between ages five (5) to eight (8) years shall be with the Department of Education (DepED).

The State shall institutionalize a National System for Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) that is comprehensive, integrative and sustainable, that involves multi-sectoral and inter-agency collaboration at the national and local levels among government; among service providers, parents/families and communities, and among the public and private sectors, nongovernment organizations; professional associations, and academic institutions.

The System shall promote the inclusion of children with special needs, provide for reasonable accommodation and accessible environments for children with disabilities and advocate respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, including the use of Filipino Sign Language as the visual language of the deaf community. It shall be anchored on complementary strategies for ECCD that include service delivery for children from age zero (0) to four (4) years, educating parents/families and caregivers, encouraging the active involvement of parents/families and communities in ECCD programs, raising awareness about the important efforts that improve the quality of life for young children and families.

Section 1.3. Purpose. – This IRR shall provide the concerned national government agencies, local government units, other public institutions, nongovernment organizations, people’s organizations and private institutions with adequate guidelines for the implementation of a comprehensive national policy institutionalizing the National Early Childhood Care and Development System to ensure that the basic needs of young children for health and sanitation, nutrition, early education, child protection, social services development and human development are substantially met.

Section 1.4. Definitions. – The following terms are defined as follows:

- (a) **Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Program** – refers to the various services of health and sanitation, nutrition, early education, child protection, social services development and human development that may be conducted as center-based programs or home-based programs by various ECCD Service Providers.
- (b) **Center-based programs** – refer to programs such as the day care service established under Republic Act No. 6972, otherwise known as the “Barangay- Level Total Development and Protection of Children Act”, and hereinafter referred to as the child development service, community or church-based early childhood education programs initiated by nongovernment organizations or people's organizations, workplace-related child care and education programs, child-minding centers, health centers and stations.
- (c) **Home-based programs** - refer to programs which utilize parents as the primary service providers for ECCD such as the neighborhood-based play groups, family child care programs, parent education and home visiting programs.
- (d) **ECCD Service Providers** – refer to the various professionals, paraprofessionals and volunteer caregivers who are directly responsible for the care and education of young children from age zero (0) to four (4) years through the various centers and home-based programs. They shall include, but are not limited to, day care workers hereinafter referred to as child development workers, child development teachers, parents, teacher-aides, rural health midwives, social workers, community health workers, barangay nutrition scholars, parent effectiveness service volunteers, and family day care providers.
- (e) **ECCD Curriculum** – refers to the developmentally appropriate educational objectives and practices, programs of activities, organized learning experiences, recommended learning materials and appropriate assessment for children from age zero (0) to four (4) that are implemented by service providers through center and home-based programs. It shall consist of national program goals and guidelines, instructional objectives, and content outlines that are age-appropriate, individually-appropriate and culturally relevant.
- (f) **Parent Education** – refers to the various formal and alternative means of providing parents with information, skills, and support systems to assist them in their roles as their children’s primary caregivers and educators. These include public and private parent education programs linked to center, home and media-based child care and education programs.

RULE II: The National Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) System Framework

Section 2.1. *Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) System.* – The ECCD System refers to the full range of health, nutrition, early education and social services development programs that provide for the basic holistic needs of young children from age zero (0) to four (4) years; and to promote their optimum growth and development.

Section 2.2. *Objectives.* – The National ECCD System shall be strengthened to pursue the following objectives:

- (a) To achieve improved infant and child survival rates by ensuring that adequate health and nutrition programs are accessible to young children and their parents, from the prenatal period throughout the early childhood years;
- (b) To enhance the physical-motor, socio-emotional, cognitive, language, psychological and spiritual development of young children;
- (c) To facilitate a smooth transition from care and education provided at home to community or school-based setting and to kindergarten;
- (d) To ensure that young children are adequately prepared for the formal learning system that begins at kindergarten;
- (e) To establish an efficient system for early identification, prevention, referral and intervention for the wide range of children with special needs from age (0) to four (4) years;
- (f) To upgrade and update the capabilities of service providers and their supervisors to comply with quality standards for various ECCD programs;
- (g) To reinforce the role of parents and other caregivers as the primary care givers and educators of their children especially from age zero (0) to four (4);
- (h) To enhance and sustain the efforts of communities to promote ECCD programs and ensure special support is provided for poor, disadvantaged and linguistic minority communities;
- (i) To improve the quality standards of public and private ECCD programs through, but not limited to, a registration and credential system for ECCD service providers and facilities;
- (j) To ensure that the education of persons, and in particular children, who are blind, deaf or deafblind, are conducted in the most appropriate languages, modes and means of communication for the individual and in environments which maximize academic and social development; and
- (k) To employ teachers, including teachers with disabilities, who are qualified in sign language and/or braille, and to train professionals and staff who work at all levels of education.

Section 2.3. *System Framework.* – The National ECCD System Framework shall be consistent with the principle that children, including children with special needs, have basic holistic needs and must be provided quality ECCD programs to promote their optimum growth and development. The System empowers parents/families, communities and institutions to maximize their participation and support to ECCD programs.

The comprehensive, integrative and sustainable attributes of the System shall be realized through the convergence of health and sanitation, nutrition, early education, child protection, social services development and human development in all ECCD programs. This shall be made possible through the various system components that comprise a supporting and responsive ECCD growth learning environment for children. A participatory and direct-action approach to delivery of accessible, affordable services that are supportive of the socio-economic and cultural environment shall be adopted where parents/ families, communities and organizations are equal partners of government.

Section 2.4. System Components. – The National ECCD System shall include the following four (4) components:

- (a) ECCD Curriculum;
- (b) Parent Education and Involvement, Advocacy and Mobilization of Communities;
- (c) Human Resource Development Program, and
- (d) ECCD Management.

The ECCD System shall ensure that the National ECCD Program is implemented in accordance with quality standards for accreditation and for this purpose there shall be established a National ECCD Monitoring and Evaluation Framework.

Section 2.5. The ECCD Curriculum. – The ECCD Curriculum component of the National ECCD System shall focus on children's holistic development and take into account age, individual and socio-cultural appropriateness. It shall promote the delivery of complementary and integrative services for health, nutrition, early childhood education, sanitation, cultural activities, among others. It shall use the child's first language as the medium of instruction.

Section 2.6. Parents/Families Education and Involvement, Advocacy and Mobilization of Communities. – The Parents/Families Education and Involvement, Advocacy and Mobilization of Communities component of the National ECCD System shall harness and develop parents/families' strengths as providers of ECCD programs at home, as active partners of other stakeholders, as advocates for community concerns that affect children, and as pillars of support for local and national ECCD programs through community organization efforts.

Section 2.7. The Human Resource Development Program. – The Human Resource Development Programs component of the National ECCD System shall refer to the mechanisms for the systematic professionalization of ECCD service providers, through enrolment in educational programs in site-based or distance education modes, through pre-service or in-service training including continuing education programs, whereby a registration and credential system shall be developed in the ECCD System.

Section 2.8. ECCD Management. – The ECCD Management component of the National ECCD System shall consist of a continuing process of planning, implementation, supervision, financial management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting to persons concerned and encourages the active involvement of and build the capabilities of service providers, parents and local government officials to sustain the program.