



# DIR 101: INTRODUCTION TO DIR®/ FLOORTIME™ FOR PROFESSIONALS



Lesley University

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Cont Ed Course #: LEDUC 5058;

This course introduces the Developmental, Individual Difference, Relationship-Based model for working with children with developmental delays.

Pioneered by Stanley Greenspan, M.D. and Serena Wieder, PhD, the DIR model places a special emphasis on helping children develop and strengthen the special relationships in their lives. Greenspan and Wieder posited that subtle emotional interactions form the building blocks of all human intelligence and the origins of the highest orders of human capacity: morality, creativity, and even consciousness itself. Because processing difficulties can be at the root of a child's challenges, DIR considers and addresses each child's unique biology and processing capacities. Floortime is a strategic, affect-filled way of interacting with a child that emphasizes strong bonds of relationship and an understanding of each child's unique sensory profile to strengthen developmental capacities.

The DIR/Floortime framework is particularly helpful when working with children with attention, behavioral, communication, regulation and sensory issues, as well as PDD/Autism. In this course, we'll be focusing primarily on children from birth to 5, with applications for older children as well.

*This course is the first of three courses which, when satisfactorily completed, constitute Level B of the DIR Institute's certificate program.*

For more information or to register, please visit our website:

<https://www.astrafoundation.org/courses-for-professionals>.

## Course Objectives

### Students will:

- Be introduced to DIR theory and practice and demonstrate knowledge of basic principles of the model and Floortime practice.
- Discuss current infant research relating to the role of emotion and relationship in development and relate this research to DIR principles and practice.
- Learn about the first six functional developmental levels that a child must master.
- Demonstrate understanding of how sensory system challenges may impede a child's ability to form critical relationships and cognitive skills.
- Understand the importance of collaboration with the child's family in all aspects of intervention and acquire skills to support parent-child interactions.
- Understand the importance of considering the family's culture, language, context, and individual strengths and stressors when developing a program for a child.
- Become aware of the importance of self-reflection and self-awareness when working with children and families.
- Be introduced to strategies for involving children in social interactions with other children.

*The Astra Foundation supports programs and initiatives that help children thrive in their home and educational environments. Since 2001, the Center for Neurodiverse Development has created training opportunities for adults working with children with challenges of relating and communicating, including programs for early intervention professionals, teachers, mental health practitioners, occupational therapists, speech therapists, and others.*

## FACULTY

**Deborah Bauch, M.S., O.T.R./L.** has more than twenty-five years' experience in pediatrics and sensory integration. As the clinical director of the Center for Neurodiverse Development, she conducts classes and workshops for parents and professionals and has presented at local, regional, and national conferences. Deborah is a Training Leader and Expert DIR/Floortime provider for the Interdisciplinary Council on Developmental and Learning Disorders (ICDL). She holds a Certificate in Infant Parent Mental Health and is certified in Sensory Integration. Deborah also consults to schools, works with children and families, and serves as a mentor for professionals. She is the 2008 recipient of the Margaret I. Bauman award for outstanding therapy provider.

**Karen Levine, Ph.D.**, is a Psychologist in private practice, and part time Lecturer on Psychiatry Harvard Medical School. She was the co-founder and co-director of the Autism program at Boston Children's Hospital in the 1990s, and of the Autism Center at Cambridge Health Alliance. With Naomi Chedd, she co-authored 3 books, including *Attacking Anxiety A Step-by-Step Guide to an Engaging Approach to Treating Anxiety and Phobias in Children With Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities* (2015), Jessica Kingsley Pub, UK, describing her play based approach to phobia treatment. She is the recipient of the 2012 Lesley University Autism Hero Award, and the 2010 Federation for Children with Special Needs Founders Award. She is on the clinical board of ICDL and frequent regional/national presenter.

## CREDIT INFORMATION

Lesley University is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Students who fulfill the necessary course requirements may opt to earn Lesley University credit. Students desiring to transfer Lesley credits should check with the receiving institution prior to registering, as credits are accepted at the discretion of the receiving institution. Students may also be able to apply for Massachusetts Early Intervention Competencies. Course tuition for Continuing Education students is \$320 (includes a \$20 ICDL fee), payable to the Astra Foundation. Students who elect to receive Lesley University credit may do so for an additional \$165 per credit (\$495) + a registration fee.