

INTRODUCTION

The Wyoming Children's Action Alliance presents the early care and educational core knowledge areas. This document may be utilized as a guideline in curriculum planning and training, by trainers, instructors, early childhood professionals, and administrators. The competencies may also be used to develop a learning needs assessment, review learning needs, develop education and training curriculum, and develop individual development plans.

Acknowledgments

We would like to acknowledge the Wyoming Professional Development Task Force, made up of individuals and organizations such as: the Wyoming Early Childhood Association (WECA), Wyoming Professional Development Task Force, Wyoming Department of Family Services, STARS Board of Review, Wyoming Children's Action Alliance, Casper College and the University of Wyoming for the more than fifteen years of work put into the research and development of this document. The Task Force had two goals: (1) developing a comprehensive, articulated system of professional development and training for early childhood professionals, (2) having a professional development system recognized and supported throughout Wyoming. The desired outcome of the project was to positively influence children's experiences during their critical early years of life.

The STARS Board of Review took the work of the Task Force and using as references and models documents from Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Oregon and Nevada. The STARS Board of Review met regularly from 2004-2007 to establish content addressing:

1. Core areas of knowledge competencies,
- 2 Standards for approving trainers and training at the three levels (Entry, Journey, and Master).

The STARS Board of Review is composed of representatives from:

- Family child care homes and centers
- Child care centers
- STARS approved trainers
- Head Start
- Child Care Resource and Referral
- Department of Family Services
- Department of Education
- Child Development Services
- Wyoming Children's Action Alliance

Definitions

1. **AAP** - American Academy of Pediatrics
2. **APHA** - American Public Health Association
3. **Analyze** – to resolve (anything complex) into its elements; to separate into the constituent parts, for the purpose of an examination of each separately
4. **Articulate** –seamless movement of students from one system and/or level to the next
5. **Assessment** - a tool designed to evaluate a child’s ability or skill at a given point in time, a child’s aptitudes or future capabilities, or the effectiveness of an early care and education environment
6. **Assistive Technology** - products, devices or equipment, whether acquired commercially, modified or customized, that are used to maintain, increase or improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities
7. **Best Practices** - a management idea which asserts that there is a technique, method, process, activity, incentive or reward that is more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, process, etc.
8. **CACFP** - Child and Adult Care Food Program, federal funding for nutritious food for children in regulated child care settings
9. **Caregiver** – one who cares for other people
10. **Code of Ethics** – states the values to which people in a profession are committed to serve as a guide in everyday professional conduct
11. **Cognitive** –intellectual activity such as thinking, reasoning, or remembering
12. **Communicable disease** – an infectious disease that can be transmitted from one individual to another
13. **Developmentally Appropriate** – what is known about child development and learning – knowledge of age-related human characteristics that permits general predictions within an age range about what activities, materials, interactions, or experiences will be safe, healthy, interesting achievable, and also challenging to children.

14. **Discipline** – a process by which staff assists children to develop inner control necessary to manage their own behavior in a socially approved manner
15. **Disposition** - a habit, a preparation, a state of readiness, or a tendency to act in a specified way
16. **Diversity** – distinct or unlike qualities and characteristics representing an individual or group of people (e.g., a family, ethnic group)
17. **Early Childhood** - the early stage of growth or development birth through age eight
18. **Environment**
 - **Interpersonal** – an environment that is set up to respect how people relate to one another
 - **Physical** – arrangement of structures, objects, and activities that encourages choices, problem solving, and discoveries in the process of learning
 - **Temporal** – an environment that allows enough time to become familiar with the environment and ways the materials can be explored and used
19. **Ethical** – conforming to accepted standards especially professional standards of conduct
20. **HHS** - Health and Human Service
21. **HRSA** - Health Resources and Services Administration
22. **Inclusion/inclusive** – including a child who has special needs in environments and activities with typical developing children
23. **IEP** - Individualized Education Plan, is a written plan and legal document that states a child’s present level of functioning; specific areas that need special services; for children 3 to 21 years of age who have been determined eligible for special education
24. **IFSP** - Individualized Family Service Plan is both a process and a document. The IFSP process consists of the gathering, sharing, and exchange of information between families and staff to enable families to make informed choices about the early intervention services they want for their children ages birth to three years.
25. **Infant** – a child from birth to twelve (12) months of age
26. **MCHB** - Maternal Child Health Bureau

27. **Mentor** – a guide; tutor or coach
28. **NAEYC** – National Association for Education of Young Children
29. **Observation** – an act of acknowledging an occurrence using formal or informal methods
30. **Parents** – person/s who provides and cares for a child
31. **Play** – has essential elements including being: intrinsically motivated, freely chosen, pleasurable, non-literal (elements of make-believe) and actively engaged in by the player
32. **Provider** – anyone who works directly with children
33. **Quality** – degree of excellence
34. **School Age** – children who are enrolled in first grade or higher, or are six (6) years or older
35. **Special Needs** – children who have special educational requirements due to diagnosed learning difficulties, emotional or behavioral problems, or physical disabilities
36. **Specialized Body of Knowledge** – understanding gained by actual experience or training in a special area of work (e.g., CPR, Fire Safety)
37. **Strategic Plan** – document that states where an organization stands, where it wants to go and how it will get there
38. **USDA** – United States Department of Agriculture

HEALTH, SAFETY AND NUTRITION

Core Knowledge

Meeting the health, nutrition and safety needs of children is a very important component of early care and education programs. As a foundation for developmentally appropriate learning experiences, good nutrition, and an attractive selection of healthy foods are essential. Caregivers should provide food that meets the metabolic, growth, and energy needs of each child. Children must be safe from hazards and potential injuries. These include both unintentional injuries (e.g., falls from swings and slides) and intentional injuries (e.g., aggressive acts such as biting and hitting). Finally, children must be protected from infectious diseases, such as measles, meningitis, hepatitis, and gastroenteritis. While it is not possible to prevent the spread of infections such as upper respiratory infections and colds completely, child care settings should minimize the transmission of common infections and the potential for serious infectious diseases. The director/provider can be an active partner with parents and health professionals in primary prevention, early detection, and prompt treatment of illness or disease.

Health, nutrition and safety policies of a facility must comply with government regulations and strive to meet national and safety performance standards to support the health and safety of children and staff in child care (i.e., physical, mental, nutritional, and oral health).

Health

- A. Directors/providers teach children habits that promote good health. These healthy habits are individually, age, and ability appropriate to the child. The habits may include, but are not limited to, hygiene, tooth brushing, toileting, hand washing, resting, eating healthy meals and snacks, and learning to use increasingly difficult self-help skills such as stress management techniques.**
- B. Health records are maintained and accurately record information about a child's health to plan and implement individually appropriate care. Such records include documentation of:**
 - Up-to-date, routine check-up services such as immunizations and screening tests (e.g., cognitive, physical, personal social/emotional, vision, dental, speech/language, developmental).
 - Special health and nutritional needs and management plans for conditions such as allergies, asthma, or other physical, developmental, or behavioral conditions that require more care than usual for the typically developing child.
- C. Infectious diseases are controlled by following current official recommendations about structuring the environment and following practices that reduce the spread of disease.**

HEALTH, SAFETY AND NUTRITION

Core Knowledge

D. Through promotion of preventive health services and the management of acute and chronic illness, the physical well being of children and families is promoted. The need to partner with parents and health professionals is essential to exchange information as appropriate about:

- The children's health and development (medical, physical, mental, nutritional, and oral health).
- Staff health that affects job performance or risk to other individuals.
- Family health issues that pose a risk to children or adults in child care.

Nutrition

A. An understanding of nutrition supports positive growth and development of young children and provides an opportunity for learning. Food provided in an early childhood/school age program should help to meet the child's daily nutritional needs while reflecting individual, cultural and philosophical differences. The director/provider can contribute to overall child development goals by helping the child and family understand the relationship of nutrition to health, the factors that influence food practices, and the variety of ways to provide for nutritional needs by:

- Following current policies and procedures as related to food and nutrition, such as; the USDA Dietary Guidelines, CACFP meal patterns.
- Matching nutritional practices to the child's developmental stage and special dietary needs.
- Modeling and providing healthy and appropriate nutritional behaviors for children.
- Implementing practices that reflect sensitivity to cultural and other family variations in regard to food.

Safety

A. Children's healthy development depends on a safe environment that protects children from the risk of harm and injury. The director/provider shall ensure a safe environment by:

- Actively supervising and interacting with children to ensure safety both indoors and outdoors, and in all other places where children are in care (e.g. field trips, transportation).
- Identifying hazards through routine observations in both indoor and outdoor areas of the facility.
- Developing and implementing emergency policies and procedures.

B. All staff working in early childhood or school age programs must be able to recognize signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and respond as required under law as a mandatory reporter.

**HEALTH, SAFETY AND NUTRITION
Core Knowledge**

<p style="text-align: center;">Level 1 - Entry: <i>ability to define, document, identify, list, and describe</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Level 2 - Journey: <i>ability to apply, demonstrate, incorporate, arrange, and explain</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Level 3 - Master: <i>ability to create, assess, analyze, design, interpret, integrate, and lead</i></p>
<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>	<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>	<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the sources of health and safety standards that apply to the early care and education program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly review health and safety practices for compliance with standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and advocate for healthy and safe childhood programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize health hazards in all parts of program with attention meals (choking, allergies, etc.) and what steps can be taken to prevent dangerous situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use knowledge of health and safety hazards to reduce injury and illness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the environment for health and safety hazards. Make modifications to the environment and practices as appropriate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define recommended practices that reduce the spread of disease. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow infectious disease control practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the current practices for effectiveness and conformity with national health and safety standards for child care. (Caring for Our Children, AAP/APHA/MCHB-HRSA-HHS). Institute corrective actions where needed, including determining the need for outside expertise.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List and demonstrate ways to manage acute and chronic illness in children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine what health information must be shared with families and staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design processes to ensure appropriate exchange of staff and child health information.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND NUTRITION Core Knowledge

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The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:	The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:	The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify, describe and maintain the required licensing elements that should be contained in the health records of children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that appropriate health information is recorded in children’s health records. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a plan for meeting the health care needs of individual children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways to support the emotional growth and health of children and their families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare and encourage families to utilize community health resources when needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the effectiveness of the referrals to community health resources and determine if any further action needs to be taken.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help each child identify and practice essential daily health habits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate individualized developmentally appropriate health activities in the daily curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the effectiveness of the individualized developmentally appropriate health activities in the daily curriculum and modify as appropriate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List the components of the USDA Dietary Guidelines or the CACFP daily meal patterns with age appropriate guidelines, taking into consideration individual, cultural and philosophical differences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate age appropriate nutritional practice using USDA and/or CACFP guidelines to meet the nutritional needs of children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess compliance with USDA and/or CACFP requirements using age appropriate nutritional practice and adjust daily menus as appropriate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways to support family choice in nutritional infant feeding practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply strategies that support family choices for nutritional infant feeding practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Design policies and procedures that support family choices for nutritional infant feeding practices.

HEALTH, SAFETY AND NUTRITION
Core Knowledge

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify safe sanitation practices including food handling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate safe sanitation practices including food handling practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and modify policies procedures and practices on a periodic basis.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List ways that information about healthy bodies, healthy lifestyles and healthy environments can be included in the daily curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate information and practices about healthy bodies, healthy lifestyles and healthy environments in the curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze current research and integrate relevant practices for your program.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe a safe indoor and outdoor environment including equipment and toys to prevent and reduce injuries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange and maintain a safe environment including indoor and outdoor environment including equipment and toys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assesses indoor and outdoor equipment and seeks outside consultation when appropriate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define and perform the basic elements of an emergency preparedness plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the emergency preparedness plan as recommended by the local community emergency personnel team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the program’s emergency preparedness plan to determine relevance, scope, and feasibility and make adjustments as appropriate.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt and implement the policy and procedures of a mandated reporter for child abuse and neglect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate recommendations of experts in the field of child abuse and neglect into the program’s policies and procedures.

ACTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Core Knowledge

Early care and education for children involves planning and implementing learning experiences that promote children's growth in all developmental domains. Children explore their environment and engage in learning as they interact with others and with the materials around them. They play, converse, create, construct, listen to stories, read, write, paint, draw, and begin to make sense of the people and things in their world. It is important that the environment be individually and culturally appropriate and reflects the diversity of the children enrolled. Caregivers develop a curriculum. Curriculum refers to experiences that allow children to acquire and construct skills, concepts, attitudes, and dispositions. Curriculum is developed through observation of the interactions of adults and children to discover children's needs, abilities, and interests, and by carefully selecting learning experiences and materials. Play is an integral part of the curriculum.

A. A responsive environment and its associated curriculum, within the context of family and culture, are based upon:

- Accepted principles of child development.
- Developmental learning experiences which are based on children's ages, abilities, and interests.
- Fostering children's growth in all areas of development: physical-sensory-motor, social-emotional, and cognitive-intellectual.
- Recognition that children learn through their senses.
- Hands-on, minds-on engaging experiences that enable children to plan and pursue their ideas and interests.
- Use of a wide array of teaching strategies that encourage children to be curious, explore ideas, and try out new activities, and that include asking thought-provoking questions, providing intriguing dramatic-play props, encouraging children to solve everyday problems, and planning activities that invite children to play and work together.
- Adaptation of the physical environment and equipment, the use of "assistive" technology, and the planning of activities to accommodate special needs.

B. Children vary in socio-economic and cultural background, learning style, interests, and developmentally. The importance of an environment that supports play and maximizes the potential for children includes:

- The caregiver's knowledge of the individual child to encourage, support, and extend play and to select materials, topics, and activities.
- A variety of opportunities for exploring and interacting with materials in the learning environment for all children
- A variety of opportunities for actions and interactions between and among children and adults.
- Opportunities that encourage children as decision makers, choice makers, and collaborators.
- Knowledge that children learn many things at the same time (rather than in fragmented content areas).
- Strategies to combine ideas in ways that make the most of every opportunity for learning.

C. Supportive and healthy environments conducive to learning:

ACTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Core Knowledge

- Are physically safe and pleasant.
- Promote feelings of confidence, competence, and self-worth, e.g. the establishment of routines.
- Sustain the joy of learning through social interaction and recognition of group and individual accomplishments.
- Encourage decision-making and choices within social, physical, and cognitive contexts.
- Recognize, reflect and respect cultural diversity in program activities and materials.
- Provide a balance between planned and spontaneous activities, active and restful times, social and private times, receptive and productive activities, individual decisions and group decisions, and helping others and being helped.
- Respond to and build upon children's natural curiosity.
- Allow time for children to fully explore ideas and complete activities.
- Are organized so children can independently find and return toys and materials.

D. Knowledge encompasses the content areas of language, literacy, social emotional development, mathematics, science, health and physical development, creative arts, and independent living skills.

- The content areas define human understanding about the world and inform decisions that guide the development of environment and curriculum.
- The development of content knowledge is dependent on the development of skills that are needed to access and construct knowledge in each area, including the development of critical thinking skills, literacy, and numeracy.
- Enable all children to explore, construct, and create using two and three dimensional materials.

E. Children vary from one another and from adults in the way they acquire knowledge in the content areas.

- Knowledge is best acquired by children through hands-on, real-life experiences, with curriculum areas integrated into projects and activities.
- Knowledge acquisition is supported when parents and caregivers promote connections between the home and child care program.
- Knowledge in the content areas is acquired in a progressive and integrated fashion.
- As concepts and understandings grow, skills for accessing knowledge become increasingly differentiated.
- As children grow, their ability to process information and concepts without having to experience them physically increases.
- Important understandings evolve based on varied and repeated opportunities to deal with experiences that challenge previous understandings.

ACTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Core Knowledge

F. Activities and content need to be selected to help children achieve their individual learning goals and the program's objectives.

Appropriate activities and content include:

- Planning for groups of children of mixed ages and with varying abilities.
- Meaningful learning experiences through which children actively figure out what ideas mean and how the world works.
- Inventive, challenging ways for children to explore topics.
- Safe, interesting materials that invite children's explorations, discoveries, constructions, and creative play experiences.
- Tools with which children can represent and communicate with others about what they are learning (such as art materials, books and writing materials, stories, blocks, technology).
- Intervention strategies and content goals that are spelled out in children's Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and incorporated into daily activities and routines where as many children in the group as possible are involved in the experiences.
- Cooperation with special education staff to support inclusion of children with special needs.

G. Children need to feel valued and respected in the group, and learn social skills for getting along with each other.

- Positive ways to guide children include:
 - Ensuring that each child feels welcome and secure in the group;
 - Carefully planning activities with attention to those that may be difficult or problematic for children;
 - Using praise to encourage child and adult efforts;
 - Encouraging respect for each other;
 - Modeling positive statements and interactions.
- Conflict resolution skills, self-control, and coping skills:
 - Help children get along with each other and solve problems;
 - Offer children good choices that match their abilities to make decisions.
- Using both mixed-age groupings and same-aged groupings enhances the development of peer relationships and social competence.

H. To foster school-age children's competence in community building skills:

- Guide school-age children's participation in service learning activities (e.g., food drive for the animal shelter).
- Encourage the development of leadership skills.
- Encourage the development of ethical behavior.

ACTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe why self directed play is important in children’s learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate how self directed play enhances children’s learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and adapt the environment to enhance the role of self directed play in children’s learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List components of environments and name ways in which they maximize children’s potential to acquire knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange an environment that maximizes children’s potential to acquire knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the environment and integrate strategies that maximize children’s potential to acquire knowledge.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define ways in which physical space and materials influence children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange the physical environment based on children’s ages, abilities, and interests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate environments and activities to determine ways to accommodate individual needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify early childhood content areas with concepts and skills in each (e.g., Wyoming Early Childhood Readiness Standards, and NAEYC Curriculum Standards). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate content knowledge areas in lesson plans and appropriately utilize at the child’s developmental level. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess content knowledge of each individual child and modify lesson plans as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ways in which children acquire knowledge in the content areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange an environment based on how children acquire knowledge in the content areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the environment and its effectiveness in helping children acquire knowledge in the content areas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List opportunities for children to engage in activities that allow them to achieve individual learning goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate activities that allow children to engage in activities that allow them to achieve individual learning goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the appropriateness of activities and content in meeting the individual’s learning goals and program’s objectives.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
Core Knowledge

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ways to foster children's social-emotional competencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies for children to learn and practice appropriate social skills and to feel valued in the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze children's interactions and implement positive guidance strategies to support pro-social behavior.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name components of the environment and identify strategies that support children's competence and self-worth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate the elements in the environment that support children's competence and self-worth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and modify the environmental design to maximize its effectiveness in supporting children's competence and self-worth.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List numerous ways to provide positive guidance and respect for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies to demonstrate positive guidance and respect for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the effectiveness of positive guidance and respect strategies for individual children and modify as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List service learning and leadership opportunities for school-age children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage school-age children in identifying service learning and leadership opportunities. • Facilitate their participation in those identified opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the service learning and leadership opportunities to help school-age children build links within the community.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Core Knowledge

Knowledge of how children grow and learn enables caregivers to select learning experiences that combine all domains (areas) of children's development (e.g., physical-sensory-motor, social-emotional, and cognitive-intellectual). A safe, healthy, challenging learning environment that promotes children's growth is dependent on an understanding of each child's development. This understanding of child development enhances a caregiver's ability to protect, support, and guide children as they mature and learn.

A. Early childhood is the developmental period, birth through age eight, of greatest interdependence among all aspects of human development and learning.

- Warm, caring, consistent relationships with adults are the basis for the development of trusting relationships and are essential for the development of confidence, self-concept, and self-discipline.
- These aspects of human development, although subject to different interpretations by different theorists, generally fall into the domains of physical-sensory-motor, social-emotional, and cognitive-intellectual development.
- As children grow, mature, and gain experience, these aspects of development become more differentiated, although still interdependent.

B. Growth, development, and learning are sequential. Children develop and learn at different rates and in various ways.

- Growth and development for most children are sequential.
- Distinctive characteristics are associated with each developmental domain.
- New abilities and skills build upon those learned earlier.
- Progression may be gradual and occurs over a period of time.
- The amount of time it takes to pass from one stage to the next is unique to the individual child.
- The pattern of growth is dependent upon individual capacities, personal aptitudes, individual learning styles, and life experiences.
- Children's individual progress, needs, and interests are best understood by carefully listening to them and observing their behaviors.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Core Knowledge

C. Play provides the opportunity to grow and learn. Childhood programs promote and sustain complex play by preparing and equipping the environment, providing time for play, and facilitating adult-child and peer interactions. As they play, children practice skills and construct knowledge.

- As children explore the world around them, they develop sensory, perceptual, social, emotional and cognitive understanding and skills through play.
- Children develop both small muscle and large muscle coordination best through play.
- Children develop communication skills as they interact with adults and child playmates. Children communicate their ideas and feelings using words, art, music, and gestures.
- Children develop the ability to think and solve problems as they play.
- Children develop creativity as they pretend to be what they see, try out solutions for problems, and use their imaginations to create new possibilities.

D. Families are the first and most enduring teachers. Childhood programs build upon these early foundations, and in partnership with families, support continued growth, development, and learning.

- Childhood programs respect, support, and provide continuity with each child's family.
- An integrated support system provides continuity with each child's family.
- An integrated support system, provided by nurturing adults, establishes a context for healthy growth, development, and learning.
- Continuity, cooperation, and communication among the nurturing adults in each child's life provides opportunities for responding to special needs and for modifying or compensating for conditions that interfere with growth and development.

E. A positive regard for children by nurturing adults, in an environment of mutual respect among adults and children, is essential to promoting healthy learning and development.

- Such a setting contributes to children's feelings of competence and self-worth, which allows learning to take place.
- Children who feel confident and competent are better able to develop internal controls and self-direction.
- A setting of mutual respect and positive support enables children to interact effectively in a social environment.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Core Knowledge

F. Effective communication among children and adults is essential to healthy development and learning.

- The development of good verbal and nonverbal communication skills is essential to children’s social and cognitive development.
- Children are more likely to develop good communication skills when they are cared for and educated by adults who listen attentively and sensitively respond.
- From birth, a critical element of human interaction is nonverbal communication.

G. The school-age years are a time of many developmental changes, many of which will have long-lasting effects later in life.

- The developmental changes of school-age years include:
 - The development of positive self concept and competence;
 - Perceptions of fairness and justice;
 - Gender role orientations;
 - The formation and growing importance of peer relationships and friendships; and
 - The growing ability to assume increasing responsibility and independence.
- Children develop a sense of competence by having many opportunities to practice new skills to a point of mastery in all domains of development.
- Increased interactions with people outside of the family help children build and shape their sense of self.
- Developmental changes are supported by allowing children to make real choices, initiate activities, and determine for themselves which activities are important.
- Mixed-age groupings and same-age groupings, both support development of school-age children.

Level 1 – Entry: <i>ability to define, document, identify, list, and describe</i>	Level 2 - Journey: <i>ability to apply, demonstrate, incorporate, arrange, and explain</i>	Level 3 -Master: <i>ability to create, assess, analyze, design, interpret, integrate, and lead</i>
The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:	The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:	The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Core Knowledge

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the different domains of child development and how they interrelate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange environments that support children in all developmental domains and incorporate interdependence of all domains in activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and refine the program to ensure attention is given to all integrated developmental domains in the curriculum.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how children develop and learn at different rates and in various ways. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure spaces, daily routines/activities and transitions to meet the various needs, interests and ability levels of each child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and adjust programs according to the individual needs and interests of children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify individual differences that affect children's growth and development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate experiences based on the needs and interests of individual children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate how children's individual capacities, temperament, and life experiences affect development and learning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how play provides opportunities for children to grow and learn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange play environments that foster communication and problem solving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create play opportunities in the early care and education program that provide time for children to practice skills and construct knowledge in all domains.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify why it is important for childhood programs to partner with families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with families to learn more about children's individual abilities, interests, and needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze how the program currently communicates with and supports families, and discuss ways to improve communication.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
Core Knowledge

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<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>	<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>	<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify why a positive regard for children promotes healthy learning and development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange an environment to promote a child’s feelings of competence and self-worth. • Arrange programs schedules and curriculum that are responsive to the needs of individual children and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze how the program supports nurturance and mutual respect among adults and children. • Assess a program’s responsiveness to children’s need for warm, consistent caring relationships with adults. • Assess ways that program schedules and children’s transitions to new classrooms or programs could better support positive caregiver-child attachments. • Assess program’s responsiveness to individual needs of children and families, including provider’s children and families in family settings.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all the adult factors/interactions that affect a child’s development of effective communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively with children in care, parents, staff and other adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze and discuss strategies and skills that employ effective communication practices.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
Core Knowledge

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<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>	<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>	<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the developmental changes that occur and factors that influence changes during the school-age years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement program activities that meet the needs and interests of school-age children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss and analyze the programming challenges that confront staff who work with school-aged children in the middle years and design a program that meets these challenges.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the value of mixed-age play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate mixed-age play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the effectiveness of mixed-aged play and make appropriate modifications.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Core Knowledge

CHILD ASSESSMENT

Child Assessment is the basic process of finding out what the children individually and as a group, know and can do in relation to their optimum development and to the goals of the program. Child Assessment encompasses those procedures used to obtain valid and reliable information about an individual child's development. It includes information about growth, achievement levels, levels of acquired knowledge, learning styles, interests, experiences, understandings, skills and dispositions. Assessment provides the information needed for appropriate curriculum planning. It will influence decisions about strategies for fostering the development and learning of children in early care and education programs. Developing skills in gathering and evaluating assessment information requires familiarity with various developmental assessment techniques and opportunities to gain experience in assessment procedures. The assessment process should also allocate time for review with the family and others involved with the child.

A. Assessments of children are based on information gathered through a variety of procedures, conducted over a period of time, and appropriate to the developmental age, abilities, and interests of the child.

- Objective observations of the child in a variety of situations use a number of techniques, for example:
 - Running records;
 - Anecdotal records;
 - Time samplings;
 - Event samplings;
 - Developmental observational checklists;
 - Child health records.
- Samples of the child's play that are created and collected over a period of time provide materials to be assessed. These can include:
 - Drawings, paintings, constructions, or other art work;
 - Journals, stories, or other samples of writing;
 - Examples of projects related to the child's interests or play;
 - Photos, videotapes, or other multi-media of the child's projects, the child engaged in activities, or the child interacting with other children and adults in work and play;
 - Audio and/or written records of conversations with the child.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Core Knowledge

- Information about a child's background and experiences can be obtained from the child's family.

These materials can include:

- The child's activities, interests, and behavior;
- The child's development and health records from birth to the present;
- Family background information.
- Pertinent prenatal information.

B. Evaluation of children's progress respects children's abilities and culture, and produces objective, accurate results that are useful to families and teachers.

- Assessment information is confidential.
- Procedures for guaranteeing the confidentiality of information must be developed and implemented.
- Parents need to be involved in the process and must provide consent when consultation with other professionals is sought to address questions about a child's development.
- Assessment information is provided by the caregiver who participates in the development of IFSP and IEP goals and objectives for children with special needs. Participation helps to broaden the caregiver's knowledge base and enhances the ability to use and develop a variety of assessment procedures.

C. Analysis of assessment information is subject to interpretation and requires collaboration among all persons involved with a child. These persons include:

- Parents, foster parents, guardians, and/or family members.
- The adults providing care and education
- Specialists providing medical treatment, special education, physical therapy, counseling, or other resource help.

D. Assessments coupled with periodic reviews of children's progress assist in making decisions about future planning, intervention, referrals, and/or teaching strategies.

- Preschool and school age children can be engaged in self-assessment activities.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Core Knowledge

- Children’s progress and continuing development must be thoughtfully considered and each child’s achievements and any concerns should be discussed with the child’s family.
- These observations and insights are to be used to make decisions about the curriculum and teaching strategies.
- Community resources and agencies are sources of referral for needed support, professional assessment, or general information.

E. Formal testing should only be administered if appropriate and only by a qualified professional trained in the specific instrument.

- Formal, standardized, and/or curriculum-based, family-centered assessment methods are used only when administered by those trained in the specified instrument.
- Permission of the family is obtained before testing, and testing results are always shared with the family.
- When necessary, parents are advised to seek further evaluations.

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The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:	The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:	The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be familiar with various techniques of recording observations of children and list reasons to use each technique. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use various techniques for creating written records of children’s play by selecting and integrating informal assessment strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and interpret observation techniques and assessment instruments and select those most suited to particular children, situations, and goals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the difference between formal and informal assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the appropriate use of formal and informal assessment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and use formal and informal, written and verbal systems to improve family communication and build partnerships for effective child assessment and shared decision making.

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
Core Knowledge

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<p style="text-align: center;">The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● List observation, recording, and assessment techniques that reduce the risk of bias. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select and use observing, recording, and assessment techniques that reduce risk of bias. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate and adjust assessment information to eliminate bias.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify ways to engage children in self-assessment activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Involve children in self assessment activities as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate effectiveness of children’s self assessment activities and modify as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognize an Individual Education Plan (IEP), Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), or care plan for a child with special needs, know its purpose, and implement its plans as directed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Participate as part of a team in the development of an IEP, IFSP, or care plan for children with special needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take a leadership role in a program’s use of child assessment to develop IEPs, IFSPs, or care plans for children with special needs and to improve staff practices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Describe how the need for confidentiality respects family privacy and list ways to maintain confidentiality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Constantly maintain confidentiality and respect family privacy, except for reporting signs of child abuse or neglect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Evaluate and adjust confidentiality policies and practices as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● List community resources and services that can help families with special needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select appropriate community resources and services for referrals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analyze community resources and services for appropriateness to families and modify the list as needed.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Core Knowledge

Children grow and learn continually through their experiences. Through developmentally appropriate guidance, discipline and communication, early childhood and school-age professionals, in partnership with families, support a child's social/emotional growth. Children develop a healthy sense of self and their world through positive, stable, consistent relationships built on trust and mutual respect. Adults provide significant support in assisting children to cope with changes. Children's optimal learning in all areas is enhanced through teaching, promoting and modeling positive relationships in a nurturing environment.

A. The early childhood/school age professional realizes that positive relationships:

- Are built upon mutual trust and respect.
- Utilize, as essential, verbal and non-verbal communication to convey feelings, ideas, knowledge, and to resolve differences.
- Are promoted through consistent, positive strategies.
- In partnership with families, support children's healthy social/emotional development.

B. The early childhood/school age professional provides, with intentionality, an environment and activities that:

- Provide consistent schedules, routines and meaningful transitions.
- Promote positive behavior and interactions through the design of the physical space.
- Recognize that dynamics change with the size of the group.
- Contribute to children's feelings of competence and self-worth; which allows learning to take place.

C. The early childhood/school age professional understands how to help children develop independence, self-control, and social skills through a variety of positive strategies. Children need to feel valued and respected in the group, and learn social skills for getting along with each other.

- Children who feel confident and competent are better able to develop internal controls and self-direction.
- Positive ways to guide children include:
 - Ensuring that each child feels welcome and secure in the group;
 - Carefully planning activities with attention to those that may be difficult or problematic for children;
 - Using praise to encourage efforts;
 - Encouraging respect for each other; and
 - Modeling positive statements and interactions.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE

Core Knowledge

- Conflict resolution skills, self-control, and coping skills:
 - Help children get along with each other and solve problems; and
 - Offer children good choices that match their abilities to make decisions.
- Using both mixed-age groupings and same-aged groupings enhances the development of peer relationships and social competence.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interact positively with children using techniques that are responsive, consistent, encouraging and nurturing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentionally plan, provide and model strategies that encourage responsive, consistent and nurturing interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use observation and assessment to individualize and improve interactions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how temperament, personality, strengths, interests, and development influence relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include each individual; accommodating for his/her temperament, personality, strengths, interests, and development to promote positive relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement written policies for effective interactions; accommodating for temperament, personality, strengths, interests, and development to promote positive relationships.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify how physical, social, emotional, cultural, and/or developmental differences impact relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentionally provide environments, strategies and activities that teach acceptance, tolerance and respect for individual differences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make adaptations to meet the needs of individual differences through analysis of program practice, current research and available resources.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE
Core Knowledge

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and describe various developmentally appropriate guidance approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentionally plan, provide and model developmentally appropriate guidance approaches that promote positive behaviors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate, evaluate, and apply current theory and research to create developmentally appropriate guidance policies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify challenging behaviors, their causes and applicable solutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with families regarding areas of concern and develop cooperative strategies for change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop individual guidance plans in collaboration with the family; accessing appropriate professionals as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how the environment (temporal, physical and interpersonal) impacts behavior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and implement a supportive learning environment that promotes positive interactions and behaviors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze and evaluate the existing environment and apply current theory and research about environmental design to make appropriate modifications.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential changes and describe how they impact children and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate positive support for children and families through times of change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement policy and practice that supports the needs of children and families in times of change.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify ways to foster children’s social-emotional competencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies for children to learn and practice appropriate social skills and to feel valued in the group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze children’s interactions and implement positive guidance strategies to support pro-social behavior.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify strategies that support children’s competence and self-worth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate strategies that support children’s competence and self-worth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and modify the strategies to maximize their effectiveness in supporting children’s competence and self-worth.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List numerous ways to provide positive guidance and respect for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies to demonstrate positive guidance and respect for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the effectiveness of positive guidance and respect strategies for individual children and modify as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and describe strategies that promote teamwork, effective communication and trusting respectful interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate strategies that promote teamwork, effective communication and trusting respectful interactions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement and evaluate policies and procedures that promote teamwork, effective communication and trusting respectful interactions.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Core Knowledge

Knowledge and understanding of diverse family structures and influences enable early care and education professionals to positively support and communicate with individual children and families. Societal beliefs and attitudes are transmitted to family members through public and private institutions (educational, religious, and legal), social networks, and the media. Families within distinct cultural groups also transmit the behavior, beliefs, value systems, and living habits of their own members. It is important for caregivers to understand that within each cultural group, there is diversity, strength, and value.

Building respectful reciprocal relationships through a shared understanding with families and cultivating meaningful family and community involvement is critical. This includes implementing culturally sensitive practices, knowing about and connecting families to community resources, and keeping abreast of opportunities for appropriate, positive collaborations with other family and community services.

A. Families are the primary influence for children’s development and learning, and have the primary responsibility for child rearing.

- Family members need to be actively and meaningfully engaged in decision-making, program planning, evaluation, and activities for their children.
- Children develop and learn best when adults who provide early care and education establish positive, respectful relationships with children’s family members.
- Families have the right to make their own decisions.
- A family’s right to privacy is to be respected. The caregiver is responsible for maintaining confidentiality of information concerning children and their families.

B. Children grow, learn, and develop in a variety of family structures and cultures.

- Children’s biological makeup, family, culture, and early experiences shape their development.
- It is important to acknowledge and respect the family and culture of each child.
- Learning is enhanced through understanding similarities and differences in the cultural and/or racial backgrounds of children and their caregivers.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Core Knowledge

C. Children are more likely to succeed with a supportive network.

- Respectful partnerships between caregivers and family members are essential to meet the child's needs.
- Regular communication in the family's primary language helps ensure consistency of expectations and experiences between a child's family and the early childhood program.
- Transitions are often difficult for families and they may need assistance navigating differences between environments.

D. Effective communication with families is characterized by mutual trust and respect for values, attitudes, expectations, and the culture of other individuals and includes:

- Careful listening and responding.
- Awareness of barriers to communication.
- Willingness to try to overcome these barriers by seeking out resources.

E. Many families encounter stress and crisis situations. To help families overcome difficulties:

- Initiate strategies to assist in working with families.
- Provide suitable information and referral options.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
Core Knowledge

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how families are the primary environment for children’s development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate forms of communication that support the family’s role in their child’s development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design ways to support families in their roles in their child’s development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List ways families can be involved in their child’s program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for families to be involved in planning, participating, and evaluating their children’s program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate family input into child related program planning.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the unique aspects in family structure, culture and lifestyles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange opportunities for families to share unique aspects of their family structures, cultures and lifestyles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities for families to share unique aspects of their family structures, cultures and lifestyles.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify resources available to support families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement strategies to connect and engage families with community resources and schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess your role as community leader in working with families, community resources and schools.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define ways to create respectful partnerships with families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate practices that create respectful partnerships with families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze ethical dilemmas in family support, engagement, and partnership. • Evaluate and adjust professional practices to improve family communication and build partnerships.

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS
Core Knowledge

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the value of the family’s primary language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a plan with the family to support the use of their primary language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate the family’s primary language plan into the program for their child.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways that similarities and differences among families, children and staff enhance learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan children’s experience and arrange environments in cooperation with families to reflect diversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and modify the program to ensure it reflects diversity, in cooperation with families.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how to regularly communicate formally and informally with families through listening, speaking, and written communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve families in the development of an evaluation tool that assesses communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In cooperation with families, evaluate, modify, and plan communication methods to ensure respect of family needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the ethical and legal reasons to respect family privacy and confidentiality issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate knowledge of rules and regulations regarding privacy and confidentiality issues by incorporating them into program policies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze program practices and policies to make modifications as needed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give examples of ways to support families making transitions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an individual transition approach for each child’s family 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In cooperation with families annually evaluate the effectiveness of the child’s transition(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List some stressors and crises that effect families and children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research various family stressors and crises to facilitate appropriate referrals, responses, and program adaptations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In cooperation with families assess appropriateness of procedures for responses to stressors and crises and modify as necessary.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Core Knowledge

Knowledge of how organizations develop and grow and building professional relationships with families, staff, and a broader professional network enables caregivers to select and implement administrative practices that maintain and support strong early childhood and school-age programs. A strong program adheres to applicable rules and regulations, strives for continuous quality improvement, and applies strategic planning concepts to the decision-making process. The knowledgeable, competent caregiver possesses and helps staff and others gain the foundation necessary to protect, support, and guide children as they mature and learn. Operation within applicable laws requires knowledge of and ability to interpret legal codes, knowing when legal counsel is necessary, and being able to recognize and access knowledgeable counsel.

A. Areas of law that generally apply to early childhood and school-age programs include the following:

- Applicable national and state regulatory codes (including education, Head Start, and child care regulations).
- Confidentiality and custody issues.
- Child abuse and neglect.
- Anti-discrimination laws.
- Labor laws.
- Contracts and liability.
- Inclusive practices and legal responsibilities.
- Tax Codes and accounting practices.
- Relevant portions of public health codes (e.g. management, exclusion, and notification regarding communicable disease: monitoring of staff and child compliance with preventive health services requirements for screening and immunization).

B. There is a wide variation in early childhood/school-age program structures. Directors and providers take responsibility for compliance with laws, sustaining the program's philosophy, managing budgets, striving toward the goals of the program, and refining goals as necessary.

- Program fees and policies must carefully balance the financial needs of the program, express the philosophy of the program, support the program's goals, and respond to the early childhood or school-age needs of the community.
- Salary schedules, working conditions and employee benefit policies should reward both experience and education in order to sustain and improve service delivery.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Core Knowledge

- Effective program directors have the ability to carefully observe, listen to, motivate, and challenge a wide variety of individuals who are directly and indirectly involved with their program.
- Building a stable business with qualified, positive staff is essential to high quality services and requires effective staff hiring, supervision, evaluation, growth, development, retention and/or termination.

C. Directors/providers work to develop strategic plans that consider various aspects of program financing, including access to grants and other funding sources.

- Tuition alone is rarely adequate income to meet the expenses of good quality service delivery in early childhood and school-age programs. Most programs must raise funds from additional sources and must consider varied forms of outside fundraising.
- Reducing turnover in enrollment and raising tuition to fair market rates requires low/no cost, high impact marketing strategies.
- Decisions about fee schedules and payment policies (infant through school-age, part-time and full-time, payment for days absent, etc.) have significant impact on the program's income and quality.
- Decisions about staffing and enrollment patterns (group sizes, adult/child ratios, mixed-age groupings, group combinations during low enrollment periods, etc.) have significant impact on both the program's income and quality.
- Decisions about investment of limited funds on facility, equipment, materials, staff, and consultants have significant impact on both the program's budget and the quality of service to children and families.
- Effective budget planning, accounting, and monitoring are necessary to keep early childhood and school-age programs financially solvent.
- Knowledge of available financial resources and grant writing assists in supplementing the program's budget and implementing the program's strategically planned improvements.

D. Leaders of early childhood and school-age programs develop their own knowledge of child and family needs and collaborate with community organizations, schools, colleagues, resources, and specialists who can provide support.

- Early childhood and school-age programs are primary community contacts for families and can help them access expertise and resources including but not limited to health and social services through referrals.
- Directors/providers recommend that children have routine preventive health and dental services.
- Directors/providers ensure children meet health requirements.
- Early childhood and school-age programs ensure that staff completes health requirements.
- Supporting child and family transitions as children grow requires positive relationships between programs.

**PROGRAM MANAGEMENT
Core Knowledge**

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<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>	<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>	<p>The adult providing early childhood and school-age care will be able to:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify applicable required state and local regulatory codes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate required state and local regulatory codes into the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually evaluate program compliance and develop strategic quality improvement plans based upon the state or local regulatory code. Recognize regulatory code as a necessary baseline rather than end goal.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the components of a program philosophy statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a philosophy statement which includes goals, objectives, mission statement and child development approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the effectiveness of the goals, objectives, mission statement and child development approaches to the needs of children, families and the community. Make revisions based on evaluation results.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the components of a financial recordkeeping system for revenue and expenses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a one-year operating budget including a statement of income and expenditures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and revise the program’s operating budget and make projections based on long term financial goals (2-5 years)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe and write required policies for services to children and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand written policies to enhance services to children and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess the program’s policies using input from families, staff and community partners, making revisions as determined from assessment results.

**PROGRAM MANAGEMENT
Core Knowledge**

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the relationship between a program's philosophy, practices and finances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate how implementation of specific program policies impact finances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement program policies that support the program's goals and financial needs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify employment laws/requirements and multiple strategies for recruiting, hiring, training (orientation and in-service) and retaining staff/volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and apply hiring practices, staff/volunteer policies, conduct staff/volunteer performance review, and motivate and maintain staff/volunteer morale. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate, analyze, evaluate and apply current theory, research and policy on personnel management.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the components of program evaluation including the types, purpose, tools and available resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct an annual program evaluation that includes families, staff, community partners, other professionals/experts as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret the results of the program evaluation, prepare and implement a strategic plan based on the interpretation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the components of a business plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a business plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate, through program assessment, the effectiveness of the business plan and make necessary adjustments.

PROFESSIONALISM

Core Knowledge

Professionalism involves seeking personal and professional growth opportunities, making decisions, and basing program planning and practice on the best standards and information available. Professionals are familiar with the standards, research and information about best practice that are available through a variety of sources such as professional associations, scholarly publications, educational institutions and government regulations. Professionals go beyond taking the responsibility for maintaining safe, healthy, and nurturing learning environments by ensuring compliance with legal and regulatory safeguards and by advocating for and implementing quality programs.

Collaborating and networking with colleagues and other professionals enhances understanding and application of, standards, theory, best practices and the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. Professionals provide leadership and mentoring to colleagues/programs that are essential for continued quality development in early childhood programs.

A. Professionals demonstrate competence in a specialized body of knowledge and skills and they:

- Articulate a philosophy and rationale for their work that is responsive to the children and families served, the staff employed, owner or sponsoring agency, and the community.
- Maintain a practice of self reflection and improvement.
- Mentor and support other early childhood/ school age professionals.

B. Professionals demonstrate commitment to personal growth and they:

- Take opportunities to learn and be open to new ideas.
- Continually strive to perform at a higher level.
- Make every effort to maintain their social, emotional and physical health.

C. Professionals in early care and education programs are aware of and committed to the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

D. Professionals in early care and education programs serve as advocates for children and their families, work to improve the quality of programs and services for children and families, and enhance the status and working conditions of the early childhood profession.

E. Professionals in early care and education programs take the lead to establish optimal learning environments for children. This may require organizational leadership, understanding of various supervisory, learning and management styles.

F. Recognizing and reporting child abuse and neglect is mandated by law; caregivers must be aware of and follow the requirements of a mandated reporter.

PROFESSIONALISM
Core Knowledge

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define characteristics of what it means to be a professional and engage in professional development activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather and analyze professional experiences for the purpose of preparing a professional development plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and implement professional development plan which promotes a higher level of professionalism.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the basic components of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and act as role model. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct in a leadership role.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the benefits of partnerships and collaborations with families, colleagues, and community programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work collaboratively with others to build and support partnerships with families, colleagues, and community programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively engage in activities on a state, and federal level that identify and support partnerships and collaborations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and describe benefits of membership in professional associations/organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in formal or informal professional associations/organizations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take on a leadership role in formal or informal professional associations/organizations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define advocacy and why it is important. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in advocacy activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and develop strategies to collectively advocate for children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify available state and national resources that establish regulatory and professional standards for quality programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access current professional information through professional reading, training, conferences, and networking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use regulatory and professional standards to evaluate programs and develop quality improvement plans.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt and implement the policy and procedures of a mandated reporter for child abuse and neglect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate recommendations of experts in the field of child abuse and neglect into the program's policies and procedures.

UNIQUENESS AND CULTURAL AWARENESS

Core Knowledge

People are diverse. The development of attitudes preferences and prejudice among children depends greatly on the information they receive from people who surround them, and their environment. It is important to foster awareness, respect, and valuing of individuals and families.

Uniqueness and cultural competence encompasses knowledge of similarities and differences in areas such as: race, gender, ability, age, language, family, culture, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and/or religion. Recognize that all children are different and benefit when they learn to view all differences as assets not deficits that need to be erased or overcome.

Respect for diversity can be promoted by infusing anti-bias awareness and practices throughout all programs and learning environments.

- A. In care and education environments, routines, and curricula reflect the lives, cultures, and languages of families, children, staff, and the community.**
- Parents and other family and community members are essential resources for diverse learning.
 - Personal values, attitudes, beliefs and biases can impact interactions with children and adults.
 - Creating a safe and sensitive environment that respects and values the children, families and staff is essential.
- B. All programs have children and adults who come from families or communities exhibiting a variety of backgrounds, values and beliefs.**
- This can be promoted by attending to differences in family strengths, structure, lifestyle, expectations, values, religions, customs, traditions, child rearing practices, and language.
- C. Children are diverse with regard to different rates of development, individual strengths, special needs, temperaments, languages, and learning styles.**
- Children are children first regardless of abilities or disabilities.
 - Awareness of, knowledge about and sensitivity to children with special needs are key to providing high quality care and education for all children.
 - Children with special needs can be supported by making changes to the program, materials and environment
 - Clear and understandable information about abilities, disabilities, services, and rights supports the professional, the parents, and the child.

UNIQUENESS AND CULTURAL AWARENESS
Core Knowledge

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define and identify personal values attitudes beliefs and biases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the impact of personal values attitudes beliefs and biases on children and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect and design strategies to eliminate bias in programs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define activities and elements of environments that reflect a diverse community and society. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange environments and plan and implement activities that reflect a diverse community and society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the program and how it incorporates diversity to promote optimal child development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the elements of an anti-bias curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and implement an anti-bias curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and update current anti-bias curriculum based on latest research and methods.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify ways in which bias can occur in assessment and select appropriate assessment methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize unbiased assessment methods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critically examine and evaluate the assessment methods used, making necessary adjustments.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define special needs in relation to ages and stages of human growth and development birth through age eight. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt interactions, environment and curriculum to support individual needs of children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the effectiveness of and modify strategies in supporting individual needs of children.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe the key components of a multidisciplinary team approach and components of an IEP and an IFSP. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively participate in the multidisciplinary team meeting. Provide input as appropriate and support parents in the process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate the effectiveness of multidisciplinary plan and recommend modifications to the team.

UNIQUENESS AND CULTURAL AWARENESS
Core Knowledge

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe daily activities in which all children can participate which may include adaptation to materials, environment and program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate specific program, material, and environmental adaptations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the effectiveness of modifications to environment, materials and program and adapt as necessary.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify laws and regulations regarding services to children with special needs and family’s legal rights to services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate applicable laws, rights and regulations into program policies and procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with applicable current laws, rights and regulations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify multiple strategies for sharing difficult discussions with family members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement policies and procedures for communicating and collaborating with families of children with special needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze the effectiveness of policies and procedures for communicating and collaborating with families of children with special needs and make necessary modifications.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify available special resources that assist in meeting the specific needs of children and families. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide parents with referrals that could include but not be limited to special resource contacts, materials, and support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with parents to assess the effectiveness of the special resources.