



# Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base

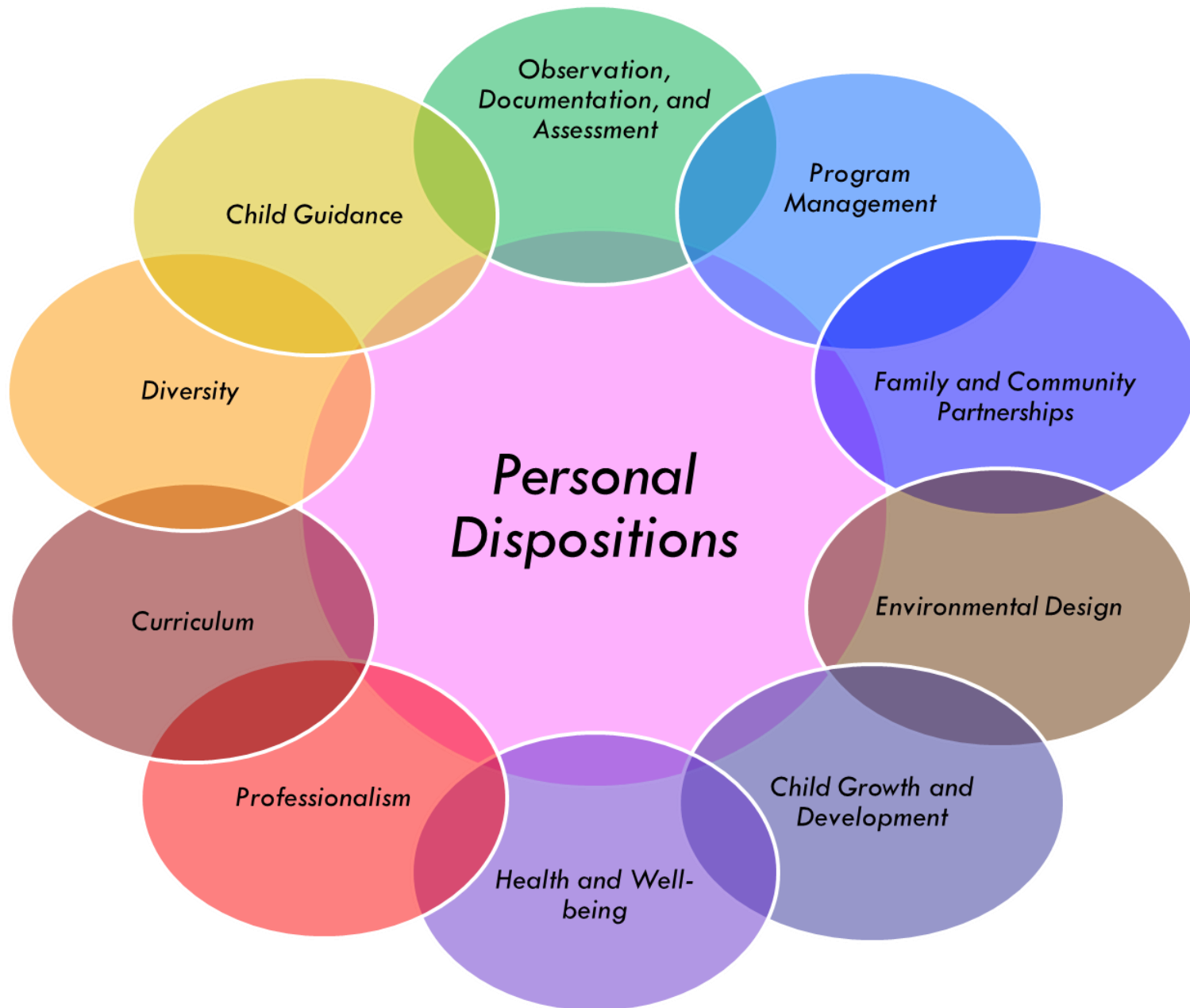
**A guide to professional early care and education practice:**  
what early childhood practitioners need to know, understand, and be able to do



2013



# Knowledge Base Content Areas



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# Introduction

The Montana Early Care and Education Knowledge Base is the foundation of Montana's career development system and was first published in 1997. The Knowledge Base underwent subsequent revisions in 2004 and 2008. The 2013 edition reflects major changes, including:

- An item analysis conducted by the Montana Early Childhood Higher Education Consortium and other Montana early childhood professionals was used to update and revise content areas and core competencies.
- The six standards for early childhood professional preparation established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) are the framework for the content areas. "The standards provide a national vision for all early childhood professionals . . . define an essential common core of knowledge and practice for all training and education programs . . . [and] present a shared vision of excellence for all who work with young children." (NAEYC, 2012)
- Knowledge and competency related to cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and developmental diversity were previously embedded throughout the document and still are. However, now the competencies related to diversity are addressed directly within its own content area.
- The area of Health and Well-being has been substantially enhanced and now includes eleven categories with associated core competencies.
- Specific competencies related to the appropriate and meaningful use of technology in early childhood programs are embedded throughout the content areas.

This document embraces developmentally appropriate practice as explained in *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs: Serving Children from Birth through Age 8* (NAEYC, 2009). While primarily focused on the competencies needed to effectively work with children birth to age 5, competencies often apply to teachers of children through age 8 and older.

In addition to professional preparation standards developed by NAEYC and NAEYC program accreditation, the competencies described in this document align with other professional standards and guidelines for quality early childhood programming, including the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) Accreditation standards, Head Start Performance Standards, Environment Rating Scales (ERS), Program and Business Administration Scales

(PAS/BAS), and Montana's Early Learning Guidelines. For detailed information about what children ages birth to five years old should know, understand, and be able to do across the domains of development, see Montana's Early Learning Guidelines (revised, 2013). Montana's Early Learning Guidelines also include numerous examples of how adults can effectively support young children's growth and learning which are cross-referenced with the content areas and competencies included in this Knowledge Base.

## ■ Important Assumptions

The Knowledge Base is developed around certain overarching assumptions:

- A. The term "knowledge base" refers to the fundamental and evidence-based knowledge, skills, and practices essential for individuals who work with young children and their families. These essentials may also be referred to as core "knowledge," "competencies," "body of knowledge," etc.
- B. The Knowledge Base is not intended to assess at what level any particular individual's skills and abilities "should be," but rather to identify where his/her abilities and skills currently lie. In this manner, it serves as a comprehensive tool for setting goals and targeting ongoing professional development.
- C. The expertise of the adults who work with children and their families are the keys to quality. This is impacted not only by professional development but also by personal attributes or dispositions. While dispositions may seem difficult to measure and are often subjective, they critically impact the practitioner's effectiveness in the early childhood setting. In addition to reflecting upon their knowledge and skills, practitioners need to be able to examine their own personal characteristics. It helps when they understand that dispositions are active, dynamic, and subject to acquisition and growth.
- D. Many roles and settings exist within the early childhood profession. Regardless of the role or setting, effective work with young children requires core competencies that exist independent of program size/type or ages of children served.

# Introduction (continued)

- E. The Knowledge Base allows for differentiating assessment. It is presumed that with increased experience, training, and responsibility, early childhood practitioners move toward more advanced knowledge, skills, and dispositions. However, it is also recognized that regardless of education and experience, practitioners find that their skills, dispositions, and knowledge vary based upon the criteria being assessed. For this reason, the Knowledge Base does not delineate a specific level of competence for any particular group (e.g., aides, teachers, directors).

## ■ Ways to Use the Knowledge Base

### Introduction to the Early Childhood Field

Perusing the Knowledge Base content areas and statements of competency can serve as an introduction to the early childhood field. The wording and organization of the document exposes the early childhood practitioner—no matter what level of ability they have achieved—to language and standards currently recognized and used by the early childhood profession.

### Becoming a Reflective Practitioner

One of the primary purposes of the Knowledge Base is to provide a basis for self-assessment and reflection about current knowledge, skills, and dispositions. Practitioners learn not only from their experiences but perhaps even more from reflecting upon these experiences. Reflection enables the practitioner to act in an intentional, deliberate, thoughtful manner rather than acting solely based on impulse, tradition, or guesswork. Reflective practitioners continually review their actions and beliefs in light of the children and families they serve. They also examine whether their practices align with professional standards and evidence-based approaches.

Practitioners may also reflect upon how they demonstrate each competency. For example, in reflecting upon the competency, “Incorporates families’ desires and goals for children into the program, as appropriate,” practitioners may ask themselves, “What are the desires/goals that the families I work with have for their children?” “How do I know?” “How do I collect this information?” “In what ways am I addressing these?” “Are there additional ways to do this?” “Why is this criteria important?”

### Setting Professional Development Goals

By reflecting upon each content area and statements of competency in re-

lationship to their work, practitioners may determine areas of professional proficiency as well as areas needing further learning and growth. As areas needing improvement are identified during self-assessment, practitioners are encouraged to develop an Individualized Early Childhood Professional Development Plan that includes specific goals, strategies, and timelines (see Appendix B). The Plan helps practitioners engage in a systematic way to continue to learn and grow in the profession. By dating each regular self-assessment, practitioners can evaluate their achievement over time.

### Planning Professional Development Experiences

- The Knowledge Base may be helpful to supervisors of teachers, staff, and students as they plan in-service training and help practitioners set professional goals.
- Professional development sponsors, Professional Development Specialists, trainers, and other instructors may benefit from using the Knowledge Base to guide workshop and course development.
- Professional development sponsors and educational programs may use the Knowledge Base to critique the types of professional development they are currently offering, to determine gaps, and to design further educational opportunities. Montana’s Early Childhood Training Approval System is based upon the Knowledge Base content areas.
- Prospective funders may wish to require those applying for grants to describe evidence of the specific Knowledge Base content areas and competencies addressed and how growth in these areas will be accomplished and measured.

### Other

- The results of Knowledge Base assessment are ideal for stating goals on applications for Professional Development Incentive Awards.
- The Knowledge Base competencies can be used to guide preparation for the Child Development Associate (CDA) assessment application.

**NOTE:** A number of competencies throughout this document include lists of materials or practices flagged by the term “such as.” Think of “such as” as meaning “including but not limited to.” In other words, the lists include examples related to the competency but should not be considered comprehensive or all inclusive.



# **STANDARD 1**

## **PROMOTING CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

Early childhood professionals are grounded in a child development knowledge base. They use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs and of the multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child.

Key elements of Standard 1

- a. Knowing and understanding young children's characteristics and needs
- b. Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning
- c. Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments

NAEYC 2012

### **CONTENT AREAS**

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**A. Health and Well-being**

**Page 16**

**B. Child Growth and Development**

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**C. Environmental Design**

# A. Health and Well-being

The area of **Health and Well-being** includes knowledge and competencies that serve to establish a safe and healthy environment where both children and adults can learn and practice healthy and safe behavior with minimal risk. Health and Well-being is divided into the following categories (Aronson, 2012):

- Prevention of Infection
- Injury Prevention
- Ready for Emergencies
- Health and Nutrition
- Health and Physical Activity
- Mental Health
- Health Education
- Staff Members and Consultants
- Facility Design
- Children with Short-Term or Chronic Health Needs
- Child Maltreatment (Abuse and Neglect)

# A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

## KEY

1 = Not yet aware

## Novice

2 = Beginning to understand

3 = Beginning to apply

## Skilled

4 = Frequently applies

5 = Consistently applies

## Master

6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize

7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Prevention of Infection</b> <i>It is not possible to totally prevent the spread of infection and illness within child care settings; however, qualified practitioners consistently implement policies and practices that minimize the risk of illness from communicable disease, improve the consequences when illness occurs, and recognize that the meaning or value of medical and health care may vary greatly among families and cultures.</i>								
1. Works with families and staff to prevent and control infection from spreading by following guidelines for recognized avenues of transmission—respiratory tract; intestinal tract; direct contact; germs on surfaces; and blood-borne—using regular and thorough cleaning, hand-washing, sanitizing, and disinfecting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Notifies and reassures families about possible exposure to infectious disease, provides up-to-date health recommendations for the outbreak at hand, and shares relevant precautions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Maintains health and up-to-date immunization records for the children in care with special attention to the recommended schedule for immunizations and health services according to the child’s age and any special conditions while maintaining individual and family confidentiality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Reports illnesses to the proper authorities, when required	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Excludes children and staff members when they are ill, following recommended exclusion guidelines for the disease or infectious agent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Prepares for outbreaks before they occur with up-to-date policies and procedures in place, using alternatives to written communications for some families who experience disability or lack English proficiency, such as word of mouth, or home language when it is the preferred method of receiving information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Understands the benefits of immunization to control vaccine-preventable diseases	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Differentiates treatment and response between infectious diseases that are contagious, such as a cold or flu, and those that are not contagious, such as Lyme disease or cancer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. Maintains diapering area separate from play areas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
10. Understands the impact of proper ventilation, temperature, and humidity on resistance to infectious disease	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. Understands the impact of wellness on staff/child turnover	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Injury Prevention</b> <i>Qualified practitioners maintain environments free from hazards that might cause injury. They provide close supervision for young children who are still developing their physical abilities and risk assessment skills. As children grow and mature, they gradually step back to allow children to practice their risk assessment skills and take responsibility for their own physical safety. When injuries occur, they are suitably prepared to respond.</i>								
12. Employs recommended safety precautions inside the facility, such as clean toys in good repair with no sharp edges; cleaning supplies and other toxic materials in locked cabinet; easily accessible first-aid kit and posted emergency numbers; electrical outlets covered with protective caps; and security gates at top and bottom of stairs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
13. Plans for safety beyond the indoor environment, such as enclosed outside play areas; outdoor equipment in good repair with no sharp edges; soft surfaces under all equipment; and extra adults on field trips	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. Understands the special safety considerations when caring for infants and toddlers, such as laying infants on their backs for sleeping, avoiding the use of infant walkers, using gates for stairways, and vigilant adult supervision when the child is in a high chair or on the changing table	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. Supervises young children using approaches that keep children safe at the same time allowing them to fully explore the environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16. Integrates safety education as a natural component of the curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
17. Conducts frequent hazard checks both inside and outside	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Ready for Emergencies</b> <i>Emergencies come without warning. Qualified practitioners are prepared and ready. They know that an emergency readiness plan provides a foundation for what actions to take in the event of an unanticipated situation.</i>								
18. Develops and knows how to implement an emergency response plan that addresses the developmental needs of the children in the program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
19. Maintains up-to-date preventive health practices, such as pediatric CPR training for the age of children in the program, a first aid kit, and emergency supplies, such as flashlights and non-perishable food items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
20. Knows how and when to call local emergency services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
21. Maintains and regularly practices emergency evacuation procedures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
22. Plans for uncommon events, such as power failures or natural disasters	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
23. Practices recommended safety and security measures, such as screening and handling of persons who pose security risks, and ensures families are aware of all security measures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Health and Nutrition</b> <i>Caring for Our Children, the national health and safety performance standards for child care, requires that facilities, “provide nourishing and attractive food for children according to a written plan developed by a qualified nutritionist/registered dietitian.” Given to parents at enrollment, the plan would include: a) the amount and types of food to meet each child’s metabolic, growth, and energy needs; and b) steps to avoid and respond to choking, food allergies, and tooth decay. Qualified practitioners not only plan snacks and meals carefully but model and teach healthy nutrition within the curriculum.</i>								
24. Implements national nutrition standards and recommendations for young children in group care, such as the USDA guidelines, Recommended Daily Allowances, and other accepted guidelines for nutritional well-being in young children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
25. Implements practices that respond to the national concern about childhood obesity, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Portion control—the appropriate amount of food to meet nutritional needs and curb hunger. If too little food is served, children will be hungry; if too much is served, food is wasted.</li><li>• Good habits—the establishment of good eating habits, modeled and supported by adults and supported by the environment</li><li>• Regular exercise—outdoor play typical for a growing child, such as jumping rope, playing tag, riding tricycles, and climbing playground equipment</li><li>• Nutrition education—learning experiences embedded throughout the curriculum, such as naming/describing the characteristics of foods being eaten, being introduced to new fruits/vegetables, and discussing serving sizes</li></ul>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale								Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master			
26. Supports breastfeeding and/or provides nutritious bottle-feeding and the appropriate introduction of solid foods with respect for each infant’s feeding patterns, family culture, and sanitary practices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
27. Integrates oral health practices throughout routines, activities, and parent education, such as daily tooth brushing, no bottles/sippy cups in cribs, and limiting sugary foods and drinks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
28. Uses appropriate feeding strategies with toddlers that respects their developmental characteristics, such as recognizing signs of readiness for self-feeding, offering food choices to avoid control issues, encouraging recognition of hunger and fullness cues, and avoiding using food as reward or punishment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
29. Responds to the influence of friends, family, and television advertising on the food behaviors of preschool children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
30. Plans for the nutritional needs of the school-aged child and the effects of good nutrition on their growth, activity level, and overall well-being	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
31. Designs nutrition education to model and teach basic nutrition facts and healthy food habits to young children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
32. Practices proper sanitation and safe food practices when purchasing, storing, handling, and cooking food items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
33. Recognizes and takes into consideration the impact of malnutrition, under nutrition, and over nutrition on young children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
34. Plans healthy meals and snacks based on up-to-date research, taking into account children’s ages, preferences, culture, activity level, portion control, and known food allergies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
35. Ensures that drinking water is available to adults and children throughout the day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
36. Knows and uses the guidelines for the subsidized food programs in Montana, such as Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and MT No Kid Hungry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
37. Uses and informs families of community resources, such as public health nurses and nutrition consultants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
38. Implements recommendations and requirements for storing nonfood supplies safely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

## A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
39. Properly cleans and stores equipment, dishes, and utensils used in food preparation and service	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
40. Controls insects and rodents in food preparation and eating areas as well as throughout the program using Montana’s Integrated Pest Management guidelines (ipm.montana.edu)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Health and Physical Activity</b> <i>Children need regular physical activity through play and outdoor activities to stay fit. Good physical activity habits learned early in life can help children become active and healthy adults. Adults who are physically active are less likely to be overweight or to have heart disease, high blood pressure, and other diseases. Adults and children should try to get at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.</i>								
41. Implements state and national standards/recommendations for physical activity for children in group care, such as Montana’s Nutrition and Physical Activity Program to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases (MT NAPA)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
42. Communicates with parents/guardians and primary care providers to adapt nutritional offerings and physical activities to meet children’s unique needs, as indicated and medically appropriate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
43. Provides frequent and regular opportunities for children to play and explore outdoors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
44. Encourages and models healthy physical activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
45. Plans for the benefits as well as the implications of physical activity for young children with asthma and other chronic illnesses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
46. Provides both structured and unstructured physical activities and opportunities for active play throughout each day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Mental Health</b> <i>The early years are crucial for the healthy social-emotional development and mental health of children. Social-emotional skills set the stage for exploration and readiness to learn, and constitute the foundation for all later development. Through interactions with caregivers, adults, and children around them, children’s mental health is fostered or hindered.</i>								
47. Helps children develop the skills and abilities that make them socially and emotionally ready for school, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Developing positive relationships with others (parents, teachers, and peers)</li><li>Building confidence</li><li>Following directions</li><li>Identifying and regulating emotions and behavior</li><li>Thinking of appropriate solutions to social conflicts</li><li>Persisting with tasks</li><li>Engaging in social conversation and cooperative play</li><li>Correctly interpreting others’ behavior and emotions</li><li>Feeling good about self and others</li></ul>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
48. Promotes healthy development and social emotional competence in young children, prevents challenging behaviors, and provides positive behavior supports to improve outcomes for every child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
49. Identifies and addresses existing problems and when necessary, refers children and their families to appropriate services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
50. Uses appropriate tools to assess children’s levels of emotional development and identify any need for services or intervention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
51. Works with professionals to provide mental health services across the continuum of promotion, prevention, and intervention, such as relationship-based mental health practices and early childhood mental health consultation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
52. Provides access to and coordination of services so that families can receive the resources and supports they need immediately rather than relying on future interventions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	



## A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Health Education</b> <i>Preventive health care includes building healthy habits, maintaining a healthy life style, regular medical check-ups, and finding and treating disease as soon as possible. Qualified practitioners actively promote preventive health practices for themselves, for children, for families, and for program staff.</i>								
53. Exhibits understanding and knowledge of the importance of education and modeling in health education for children, staff members, and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
54. Assists young children as individually appropriate in developing decision-making and inter-personal skills that enable them to make lifelong, healthy choices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
55. Teaches, models, and advocates for safe, legal, and ethical use of digital health information and technology	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
56. Frequently assesses children’s health status using appropriate health appraisals, screenings, and assessment services and tools, and makes suitable referrals when indicated	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
57. Tracks and advocates for routine preventive health care and maintaining healthy habits for children, families, and staff, such as daily exercise; proper nutrition; weight control; avoidance of smoking and drug abuse; abstinence from, or moderation of, alcohol use; proper control of diseases or disorders (high blood pressure, diabetes, or high levels of cholesterol in the blood); and screening services to prevent or minimize disease	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
58. Communicates with families about program policies, healthy practices, and community services, such as well-child clinics and child-find screening and evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Staff Members and Consultants</b> <i>Promoting healthy habits and managing health and stress levels of teachers/caregivers in the program helps prevent illness from spreading and increases teacher retention. Many practitioners try to work through stress or illness and yet doing so may in fact be detrimental to their health, as well as the health of the children, families, and co-workers. If a teacher's health is in question, it would be prudent for him or her to remain at home in order to prevent the spread of germs. Parents should be encouraged to do the same with their children who become sick so that the illness does not spread.</i>								
59. Implements policies and practices that minimize the occupational risks of working in early childhood settings, such as infectious disease, back injury, burnout/stress, and environmental exposure to art materials, noise, disinfecting solution, and other chemicals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
60. Keeps up-to-date health records for all adults working in the program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
61. Stays away from the workplace when ill or feeling unwell	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
62. Takes breaks from the workplace on both a daily and yearly basis	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
63. Uses public health services, national standards, and/or a child care health consultant to develop and maintain up-to-date policies and practices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Facility Design</b> <i>Qualified practitioners provide ample space in the program to create more and better activity areas with appropriate equipment and supplies and a variety of options for children. They design the space for ALL of its users. For example, they equip the facility with furnishings and features that increase children’s independence and competence, support and ease the work of caregivers, let parents know that they are welcome, and make the space as convenient as possible to use.</i>								
64. Maintains a healthy and safe facility, both indoors and out, in accordance with—or exceeding—state licensing regulations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
65. Plans for many types of spaces for a variety of uses, such as bathroom/diapering and handwashing (for children and adults), child activities, sleeping, eating, kitchen and food storage, cleaning product storage, children’s possessions, teacher breaks, and large motor activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
66. Chooses toys, equipment, and furnishings that comply with safety standards and, at the same time, are suitable for the ages and stages of children in the program, help children develop a wide variety of skills, and represent the various cultural and ethnic groups within the local community and society in general	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
67. Maintains healthy air quality, proper ventilation, and safe and adequate heating and cooling systems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
68. Considers various aspects of the quality of light for illuminating the environment, such as brightness, glare, reflection, shadow, color rendition (how a color looks when illuminated under a light source), and contrast between light and dark	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
69. Maintains moderate noise levels and creates a quieter environment with carpets, rugs, textile wall hangings, and soft window treatments (like curtains) and by removing or reducing unnecessary and noisy equipment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
70. Provides a soothing, quiet and supervised space conducive to rest and sleep away from noise and concurrent activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
71. Protects children from the dangers of electricity and the risk of electrocution and fire using recommended strategies, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Safety covers over outlets</li><li>Keeping electrical appliances far away from water, particularly in the bathroom</li><li>Keeping electrical cords out of reach of children who are mouthing objects who may chew or bite into them</li><li>Inspecting electrical fixtures and appliances, wiring, and outlets to ensure they pose no fire or shock hazard</li></ul>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
72. Identifies and removes water safety hazards in both the indoor and outdoor environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
73. Establishes and maintains recommended practices for fire safety, burn prevention, and poison control, including fire warning and safety systems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
74. Creates a safe environment free from potential dangers specific to the ages of children in the program by identifying hazards, assessing risks, and taking appropriate corrective action	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
75. Provides a playground environment and outdoor equipment that is safe and free from risk, paying attention to elements, such as safety zones, height of equipment, shock-absorbing surface, getting rid of peeling paint, and adequate fencing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
76. Facilitates safe transportation practices for young children, such as parent permission, adequate supervision, age-appropriate safety seats, and seat belts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
77. Implements current guidelines for safe sleep in early childhood settings, such as placing healthy babies on their backs to sleep through 18 months, providing a firm sleep surface, and avoiding loose bedding or soft objects in the sleep space	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Children with Short-Term or Chronic Health Needs</b> <i>All children will likely have many different health problems during infancy and childhood, but for most children these problems are mild, they come and go, and they do not interfere with their daily life and development. For some children, however, chronic health conditions affect everyday life throughout childhood. A chronic health condition can be defined as a health problem that lasts over three months, affects the child’s normal activities, and requires frequent hospitalizations and/or home health care and/or extensive medical care. Children with chronic illnesses may be ill or well at any given time, but they are always living with their condition. Some examples of chronic conditions include (but are not limited to):</i>  <div><div>• AIDS</div><div>• Asthma (the most common)</div><div>• Cancer</div><div>• Cerebral palsy</div><div>• Congenital heart problems</div><div>• Cystic fibrosis</div><div>• Diabetes</div><div>• Epilepsy</div><div>• Sickle cell anemia</div><div>• Spina bifida</div></div>								
78. Assesses children’s health and reduces the spread of illness by conducting a brief daily health check of each child, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>looking for signs and symptoms of illness</li><li>listening for complaints and/or unusual sounds a child might make when feeling ill</li><li>feeling for changes in skin that might indicate fever or dehydration</li><li>Sniffing for unusual odors associated with underlying disease</li></ul>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
79. Takes responsibility for children who become ill or injured by obtaining appropriate medical attention ranging from providing a separate room where the child can lie down, contacting a family member, administering medication, taking the child to a physician, or calling an ambulance in serious situations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
80. Works with parents and medical specialists to provide healthy, safe, and developmentally appropriate care for children with chronic or short-term health conditions, recognizing that religious and other beliefs may influence a family’s response to prevention and treatment of illness and disease	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
81. Observes Montana’s Medication Administration guidelines when administering medications to children in the program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Acquire parent authorization in writing</li><li>Plainly label medication with the child’s name, date, instructions for administration and storage, and name of person who made recommendation.</li><li>Give medication only in the specified dosage and at the times indicated</li><li>Store medication as directed (often in the refrigerator) and out of reach of children</li><li>Record and report to parents each day exactly what was given to the child, how much, and when</li></ul>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## A. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Child Maltreatment (Abuse and Neglect)</b> <i>According to the American Psychological Association (APA), child care programs can help reduce child maltreatment by providing “supports to high-risk families and by training child care staff in appropriate behavior management strategies and in procedures for detecting and reporting child abuse.”</i>								
82. Recognizes the signs of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse and/or neglect and follows the mandate to document and report suspected maltreatment to designated authorities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
83. Helps families find ways to reduce stress by connecting them to community resources and modeling appropriate adult-child interactions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
84. Collaborates with other local agencies serving children when appropriate to provide support for high-risk families and receive training in appropriate positive child guidance strategies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
85. Uses appropriate strategies to prevent child maltreatment within the child care setting, such as a supervised, probationary period for new employees, low child/adult ratios, and education on positive discipline, shaken baby syndrome, and other forms of inappropriate caregiving	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

# B. Child Growth and Development

The area of **Child Growth and Development** reflects knowledge and understanding of developmental stages, processes, theories, and their implications for competent work with young children and families. Because development occurs holistically, developmental areas are frequently interrelated. For ease of observation and documentation of competency, however, Child Growth and Development is divided into the following categories:

- Cognitive and Brain Development
- Emotional Development
- Language and Literacy Development
- Physical Development
- Play
- Social Development

## B. CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

KEY	<u>Novice</u>	<u>Skilled</u>	<u>Master</u>
1 = Not yet aware	2 = Beginning to understand 3 = Beginning to apply	4 = Frequently applies 5 = Consistently applies	6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize 7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Cognitive and Brain Development</b> <i>The first years of a child's life set the foundation for a lifetime of healthy brain development. Qualified practitioners recognize children's eagerness to learn, foster a love for learning, provide opportunities for children to develop comprehension and thinking skills, and support children as life-long learners. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2002), a positive approach to learning has been shown to be a critical determinant of mastering school skills.</i>								
1. Applies accepted theories of child development and current research to create learning situations that promote children's cognitive skills within family, cultural, and community contexts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Incorporates current knowledge of the process of brain growth and development throughout teaching and caregiving practices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Applies current knowledge of the stages of cognitive development to teaching and caregiving practices (for example, Piaget's theory of cognitive development)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Considers factors that potentially influence cognitive learning and brain development when setting expectations for each child, such as individual capacity, temperament, maltreatment, disability, family, language, culture, and community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Structures cognitive learning experiences (activities, interactions and environments) based on the needs and interests of individual children as well as the group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Responds to the possible implications for cognitive development and learning due to developmental delay or disability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Models appropriate learning behaviors with children and other adults, such as asking open-ended, thought-provoking questions; demonstrating curiosity and a desire to know more; and using technology or other sources to find answers to questions or build conceptual knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Describes the implications of the relationship between genetics and the environment for teaching practice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## B. CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
9. Responds to the impact of important early experiences and environmental influences on behavior, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Attachment (forming and maintaining healthy emotional bonds)</li><li>Self-regulation (thinking before acting)</li><li>Affiliation (joining in and contributing to the group)</li><li>Attunement (thinking of others)</li><li>Tolerance (accepting differences)</li><li>Respect (appreciating the value in self and others)</li></ul>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. Creates intentional and positive early experiences that integrate and strengthen optimal brain development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Emotional Development</b> <i>Supportive environments and positive interactions allow each child to begin to identify who he or she is as a person with individual preferences, strengths, and needs. As children expand their sense of self, learn to identify and express their feelings in positive ways, and practice self-control, they are displaying “emotional competence.”</i>								
11. Applies accepted theories of child development and current research to facilitate learning situations that nurture emotional competence within family, cultural, and community contexts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. Considers the factors that may affect children’s emotional development and competence when setting expectations for each child, such as individual capacity, temperament, child abuse, disability, family, culture and community influences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
13. Engages in genuine and meaningful conversations based on the interests of individual children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. Responds to the possible implications of developmental delay, disability, or giftedness on emotional development and competence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. Models healthy emotional behavior with both adults and children, such as expressing feelings, showing self-control in actions and words, and giving positive and meaningful feedback	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16. Provides or adapts routines, materials, and activities to accommodate each child’s strengths, needs, and interests.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
17. Respects children’s need for personal space by providing time, a place, and support	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	



## B. CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale								Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master			
18. Selects materials and activities that promote positive images of different races, genders, family structures, religions, cultures, traditions, beliefs, and abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
19. Creates ample opportunities for each child to feel unique and special	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<b>Language and Literacy Development</b> <i>Language and literacy are an integral part of development for young children and develop in a sequential manner. A strong foundation in the development of language proficiency is the key to fostering literacy skills. Qualified practitioners provide children with an environment and interactions that are filled with rich language and literacy experiences.</i>									
20. Applies accepted theories of child development and current research to provide learning situations that foster children's language and literacy skills within family, cultural, and community contexts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
21. Incorporates current knowledge of the process of language and literacy development throughout teaching and caregiving practice, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Non-verbal communication</li><li>• Oral language (receptive and expressive skills)</li><li>• Written language (writing and reading skills)</li><li>• Second language acquisition</li></ul>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
22. Considers factors that potentially influence children's language development and learning when setting expectations for each child, such as individual capacity, temperament, maltreatment, developmental delay or disability, family, home language(s), culture, and community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
23. Structures language and literacy learning experiences (activities, interactions, and environments) based on the needs and interests of individual children as well as the group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
24. Models appropriate communication skills with children and other adults, such as using correct verbal and written language, responding appropriately to questions and requests, and supporting dialogue among children and between children and adults	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
25. Models a variety of oral and written language skills and uses appropriate digital media (including assistive technology) that shows children how to organize and express their ideas, make requests, gain information and communicate with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
26. Supports children in developing and maintaining their home or first language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

## B. CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Physical Development</b> <i>Early educators provide for the physical development of children through activities and routines that address the innate physical and sensory needs of children, including movement, rest, fine and gross motor development, health, nutrition, and fitness.</i>								
27. Applies accepted theories of child development and current research to provide learning situations that promote children’s physical skills within family, cultural, and community contexts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
28. Considers factors that potentially influence children’s physical development and learning when setting expectations for each child, such as individual capacity, temperament, maltreatment, chronic illness, disability, family, culture, and community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
29. Promotes physical development and life-long healthy habits by structuring learning experiences based on the needs and interests of individual children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
30. Responds to the possible implications of developmental delay, disability, or giftedness on physical development and learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
31. Models the elements of physical health and skills with children and other adults, such as being active, eating healthy foods, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
32. Creates ample opportunities in activities and routines to support each child’s physical growth and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Play</b> <i>Children learn about the world around them and attempt to make sense of what they see and experience through play. Because play is such a natural and valuable learning tool, qualified practitioners provide a rich and engaging environment for young children to explore that includes a variety of engaging play experiences intentionally designed to deepen children’s understanding of their immediate world and their place in it.</i>								
33. Applies accepted theories of child development and current research to create learning situations that promote children’s play within family, cultural, and community contexts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
34. Incorporates current knowledge about the types and stages of play throughout teaching and caregiving practice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
35. Considers the factors that potentially affect children’s ability to fully engage in various types of play in setting expectations for each child, such as individual capacity, temperament, child abuse, disability, family, culture and community influences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## B. CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale								Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master			
36. Structures play experiences (activities, interactions, and environments) based on the needs and interests of individual children as well as the group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
37. Supports various kinds of play, such as solitary, onlooker, parallel, associative, and cooperative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
38. Provides ample opportunities for play with open-ended materials (water, sand, blocks, puppets) in activities and routines	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
39. Encourages play as a tool for developing thoughts, concepts, and skills that communicate ideas and feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
40. Understands that children process recent and past experiences through play and provides support for expressive play through materials, routines, and relationships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
41. Communicates the value of play to families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
42. Teaches children how to approach and request to join a group of children engaged in play	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
43. Provides opportunities and supports for children to sustain and extend their play, such as sufficient time, materials, and encouragement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
44. Organizes and guides play so that it remains safe and does not perpetuate divisiveness, prejudice, or other harmful outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
45. Engages in children's play in a developmentally appropriate way, such as a play partner for very young children, following their lead more and more as the child's play abilities develop	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
46. Utilizes knowledge regarding a child's abilities and/or disabilities to plan play experiences and strategies designed to enhance the child's development and skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
<b>Social Development</b> <i>Positive relationships with each child and family form the foundation for the development of young children's emerging social skills. When children play and learn in environments that support and actively promote appropriate and nurturing interactions, they develop relationships of trust with adults and other children.</i>									
47. Applies accepted theories of child development and current research to construct learning situations that build children's social skills within family, cultural, and community contexts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

## B. CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
48. Creates ample opportunities in activities and routines to address the social learning needs of young children in developmentally appropriate ways	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
49. Considers the factors that potentially affect children’s social skill development and learning when setting expectations for each child, such as individual capacity, temperament, child abuse, disability, family, cultural, and community influences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
50. Responds to the possible implications of developmental delay, disability, or giftedness on social development and learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
51. Structures social learning experiences based on the strengths, needs, and interests of individual children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
52. Promotes positive relationships, a sense of community, and interdependence among the children in the group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
53. Models appropriate social behavior with children and other adults, such as empathy, problem-solving, and collaboration	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

# C. Environmental Design

The area of **Environmental Design** includes statements of knowledge and competencies that together produce safe, attractive, inviting, and well-organized learning spaces for young children, spaces that effectively promote children's physical, social-emotional, cognitive, and creative development both indoors and outdoors. Environmental Design is divided into these categories:

- Elements of Design
- Materials
- Indoor Environment
- Outdoor Environment
- Schedules and Transitions

## C. ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN

### KEY

1 = Not yet aware

### Novice

2 = Beginning to understand

3 = Beginning to apply

### Skilled

4 = Frequently applies

5 = Consistently applies

### Master

6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize

7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Elements of Design</b> <i>Intentional use of elements that denote softness, texture, color, and lighting creates an environment that is both visually appealing and homelike.</i>								
1. Provides an environment that is aesthetic: beautiful, clutter-free, thoughtfully organized, sensory rich, attention given to details	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Includes comfortable furniture and different types/heights of seating for children and adults	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Reflects the culture, families, interests, abilities, geographic location, race, ethnicity, and interests of children in the program through photos, mirrors, children's work, music, and displays	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Provides a variety of soft elements and different textures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Demonstrates understanding of the effect of appropriate color and lighting on children's comfort and learning in the program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Makes it easy for children to personalize the environment by providing such things as open-ended materials and moveable shelving, and involves children in arranging the environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Materials</b> <i>Children learn best when there is a well organized abundance of materials so that they can freely create and engage in deep learning. Adequate amounts of engaging materials reduce behavior problems and frustrations.</i>								
7. Selects and uses materials that are stimulating and at the same time suitable to children's learning styles, varying developmental levels, special needs, and language/culture	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. When the early childhood program consists entirely of children from the same cultural or ethnic group, the environment reflects the cultural diversity within society at large	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. Provides materials that are appropriate and applicable to a wide range of developmental levels, such as a variety of puzzles with differing numbers of pieces and open-ended materials (materials that can be used in many ways)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## C. ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
10. Teaches children to respect and take care of materials, equipment, and living things both inside and outside the program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. Ensures that materials are readily available and easily accessible for children and adults	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. Provides materials that reflect diversity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Indoor Environment</b> <i>Effective indoor environments illustrate an understanding of the role of the environment in children's learning and encourage children's active involvement, initiative, exploration, responsibility, creativity, and a growing sense of autonomy.</i>								
13. Divides the space into centers or areas for routines and learning with well-established and easily recognizable boundaries	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. Provides a variety of learning areas or centers, such as: areas for dramatic play, block building, manipulative materials, math, science, reading and writing, art, music, and sensory exploration for 3-5 year old children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. Assures that each learning area or center has sufficient materials for a small group of children to engage in meaningful activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16. Groups learning areas or centers according to whether they offer active or quiet play	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
17. Arranges space so that small groups and large groups can comfortably gather	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
18. Understands the link between the arrangement and organization of space and children's behavior, such as long or circular pathways encourage running while short, interrupted walkways encourage movement at a slower pace	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
19. Provides retreat spaces or spaces where children can choose to play alone	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
20. Provides each child with space for personal belongings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
21. Provides uncluttered pathways that allow clear access to a door or fire escape	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
22. Adapts the environment to accommodate children's special needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
23. Displays carefully chosen and attractive arrangements of items on the walls with a focus on children's photos and work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## C. ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
24. Embeds technological tools—laptops, cameras, tablets, and electronic measuring devices—throughout the environment with respect for children’s age, time spent, and educational content and with the focus on active learning not on the tool itself; that is, “mobile technology” not static computer work stations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Outdoor Environment</b> <i>The outdoor environment and other natural settings are integral to children’s active and quiet learning opportunities.</i>								
25. Provides appropriate supervision, developmentally appropriate equipment, safe fall zones and surfaces, and well maintained equipment in the outdoor environment (S.A.F.E.)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
26. Organizes outdoor space into zones separated by different ground surfaces or natural dividers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
27. Arranges a variety of activity areas and activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
28. Creates safe and appropriate play places for children who are not independently mobile	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
29. Offers a range of activities that naturally address children’s differing skill levels, such as loose parts*, balance beams of different widths, various sizes/types of swings, different ways to access a climbing structure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Schedules and Transitions</b> <i>A daily schedule provides consistency and stability and lets children know what is expected. The schedule should be used as a guide rather than as a rigid timetable so that children’s needs and interests can be honored. Transition times, the process of changing from one activity to another, should first be infrequent and second, be well-planned and educational.</i>								
30. Provides a developmentally appropriate schedule for the age group, such as individualized schedules for infants, no required group times for toddlers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
31. Provides a balance between child and adult-initiated activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
32. Provides a balance between large and small group and individual activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
33. Alternates quiet and active activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
34. Provides extended time for play in learning areas or centers (at least one hour)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

\*Loose parts are materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways.



## C. ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
35. Schedules outdoor time at least once a day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
36. Provides a consistent daily schedule with flexibility to adjust as indicated by children’s interests, needs, and teachable moments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
37. Minimizes the number and need for transitions across the day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
38. Plans transitions to limit waiting time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
39. Uses transitions as learning opportunities, such as releasing children from a circle time activity by clothing color	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
40. Provides advance notice that a transition is coming	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
41. Assures that transition time is not rushed and children are properly supported in moving to the next activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## **STANDARD 2**

### **BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**

Early childhood professionals understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children's families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children's families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families and involve all families in their children's development and learning.

Key elements of Standard 2

- a. Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics
- b. Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships
- c. Involving families and communities in young children's development and learning

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### **CONTENT AREAS**

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**D. Family and Community Partnerships**

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**E. Program Management**

# D. Family and Community Partnerships

The area of Family and Community Partnerships includes knowledge and skills that build collaborative relationships with families and utilize community resources to maximize support and services for each child and family. It is recognized that the term “family” means many things to many people. In *Home, School, and Community Relations* (2013) by Carol Gestwicki, the author describes, “families one might meet within any classroom or community: single-father families and single-mother families, who may be never married, widowed, or divorced; blended families from second marriages that bring together children from unrelated backgrounds; unmarried couples with children; gay and lesbian parents; adoptive families; grandparents functioning as parents in the absence of the intermediate generation; foster families; and families of mixed racial heritage - either biological or adoptive.”

Family and Community Partnerships is divided into these categories:

- Program Environment
- Family Partnerships
- Teaching and Learning
- Community Partnerships

## D. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

### KEY

1 = Not yet aware

### Novice

2 = Beginning to understand

3 = Beginning to apply

### Skilled

4 = Frequently applies

5 = Consistently applies

### Master

6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize

7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Program Environment</b>								
<i>Intentional and systematic collaboration with families is mutually beneficial to everyone involved. When the process is reciprocal, both practitioners and family members are better able to support children’s optimal growth and development.</i>								
1. Provides ongoing, relevant information to each family about the program, curriculum, child growth and development, and specifics about their child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Encourages involvement of families in all aspects of the program and values all levels of involvement – at home, in the program, in family events, and in decision-making	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Considers and includes all members of a child’s family when making decisions and choices about the child - mothers, fathers, grandparents, other caregivers, and non-custodial parents	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Respects variations across cultures in terms of family structure, language, strengths, expectations, values, ways to communicate, and child-rearing practices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Collects and analyzes information to find new solutions to challenges to working with families as part of ongoing monitoring in order to continuously improve services	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Family Partnerships</b>								
<i>When interactions with families are designed to engage parents as equal partners in learning about their child and enhance parent-child relationships, it acknowledges and supports parents’ role as the first and lifelong teachers of their children.</i>								
6. Establishes frequent contact with families through a variety of communication strategies to collaborate, build trust, understanding, and mutual respect, using communication in the home language of the child or family, when possible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Exhibits an understanding of the effects of family stress on the behavior of young children and takes appropriate steps to inform and support families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Seeks out ways to communicate and partner with hard-to-reach parents, such as parents who are incarcerated, non-custodial, military, traveling, hospitalized, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## D. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Teaching and Learning</b> <i>Children learn best when practitioners customize curriculum and learning experiences based on the strengths, interests, and needs of individual children and families.</i>								
9. Incorporates families’ desires and goals for children into the program, as appropriate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. Works together with families to help children overcome behavioral challenges	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. Involves families and community members in contributing to the learning environment, such as sharing talents, skills, interests, cultural experiences, and field trips	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. Actively seeks out and uses community resources to enhance the curriculum and interactions with children and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
13. Actively seeks out resources and information on the impact of special needs on families and children, the characteristics of specific disabilities, and how to best accommodate learning and development for individual children with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. Articulates the rationale for developmentally appropriate programs for children and the need for community support for such programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. Supports family experiences with community resources that enrich children’s learning and development, such as libraries, museums, parks, etc.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Community Partnerships</b> <i>Working relationships with community resources help practitioners build professional and accessible networks that not only support them in their work with children and families but make it possible for them to link families to relevant resources when needed.</i>								
16. Maintains a collaborative relationship with relevant community and social support systems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
17. Demonstrates awareness of community resources and actively assists families in seeking them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
18. Understands the professional responsibility to make referrals when necessary and appropriate, such as when parents request information that requires additional expertise or children’s development appears delayed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## D. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
19. Seeks out and obtains relevant information on the topic of family and community partnerships as part of continued professional development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
20. Supports children who live in stressful or violent family environments and connects children and families to appropriate resources when needed	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
21. Supports families with pertinent information and assistance when a child transitions to and from the program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

# E. Program Management

The area of **Program Management** includes knowledge and skills related to the nuts and bolts of assuring effective program operation while juggling child, parent, and staff needs within the context of the community. Further, effective Program Management also entails following regulations, keeping records, and program improvement. Program Management is divided into the following categories:

- Human Resources and Personnel Development
- Fiscal Management
- Program Operations
- Program Development and Planning
- Nutrition and Food Service
- Family and Community Partnerships

## E. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

### KEY

1 = Not yet aware

### Novice

2 = Beginning to understand

3 = Beginning to apply

### Skilled

4 = Frequently applies

5 = Consistently applies

### Master

6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize

7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Human Resources and Personnel Development</b>								
<i>Human resources are literally the people who staff and operate an organization. Whether or not they are active resources depends on their knowledge, skills, and motivation.</i>								
1. Provides leadership for development and implementation of a mission and vision statement for the program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Utilizes effective practices to recruit, hire, and retain qualified staff, such as written job descriptions, annual performance reviews, and consequent professional development plans	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Maintains and distributes an employee handbook that includes program policies and procedures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Orients new staff, substitutes, and volunteers to routines and to the abilities and special needs of each child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Communicates effectively with co-workers to foster trust and cooperation and encourages team-work among staff to promote feelings of support and competence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Seeks to improve compensation for staff based upon education and specialized training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Maintains up-to-date knowledge about publicly funded professional development opportunities for staff, such as incentives and certifications	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Arranges for appropriate supervision, training, coaching, and mentoring to reduce turnover and provide continuity of care for children and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Fiscal Management</b>								
<i>Fiscal management is more involved than just managing money. Cornell University's online course on fiscal management gives a practical introduction to the following topics: a) mastering the time value of money; b) making capital investment decisions; c) understanding financial statements; and d) using analysis to evaluate financial performance.</i>								
9. Balances revenue and expenses using a budget process	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. Analyzes expenses to maximize profits and efficiency while maintaining a quality program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	



## E. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale								Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master			
11. Plans for equipment maintenance, facility updates, and capital improvements costs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
12. Utilizes recordkeeping and accounting practices to assess fiscal status, inform decision-making, and prepare for taxes and audits	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Program Operations									
Sound business practices foster positive working environments for staff, ensure the long-term operation of the program, create plentiful opportunities for family involvement, and contribute to a positive learning environment for children.									
13. Maintains up-to-date knowledge and fully complies with federal and/or state child care regulations and provides timely and accurate documentation for all requirements	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
14. Remains current and aware of regulations supporting children with special needs and their families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
15. Identifies, reports, and meets the needs of abused and/or neglected children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
16. Develops and conducts regular updates to both the employee and parent handbooks that outline policies and procedures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
17. Creates staffing patterns and schedules to assure required ratios and supervision of children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
18. Communicates regularly with staff through staff meetings and/or other effective methods	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
19. Maintains safe and healthy indoor and outdoor environments for staff, children, and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
20. Conducts regular emergency drills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
21. Utilizes current technology to benefit and enhance program operations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
22. Provides computer with Internet connection to staff (and perhaps as a resource for families)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Program Development and Planning									
Qualified practitioners have a sound understanding of young children's growth and development and recognize that the basis of a developmentally appropriate program is a match between planning and identified strengths, needs, and interests of the children.									
23. Continually shapes the program to meet children's needs, providing opportunities for children to take ownership in the program - share ideas and make decisions - when age-appropriate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
24. Makes or obtains materials and equipment appropriate to the developmental needs of children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

## E. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
25. Implements and modifies activities to be responsive to individual children’s culture, special needs, health, and development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
26. Participates in ongoing program evaluation and program improvement efforts that involve staff and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
27. Seeks current information about state quality improvement initiatives and incentives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
28. Observes and assesses children on an ongoing basis as the foundation for planning learning experiences and activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
29. Learns key words in children’s language to better communicate during assessments whenever children speak languages or dialects other than standard English	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
30. Maintains up-to-date records concerning the growth, health, behavior, and progress of each child in the group	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
31. Implements procedures for smooth transitions from one group to another within the program and to a new setting or school	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Nutrition and Food Service</b> <i>Child care programs may provide food service for children in many different ways. Some facilities have licensed kitchens where all foods are prepared. In some programs, children bring snacks and/or lunch from home. Many programs prepare meals and snacks onsite using Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. School-age programs may have meals and snacks provided from the school cafeteria. No matter how meals and snacks are provided, the availability of a variety of clean, safe, nourishing foods is essential for children during a period of rapid growth and development. Child care nutrition and food service standards address age-appropriate foods and feeding techniques. Larger facilities may employ professional nutrition staff to assure compliance with nutrition and food service guidelines and implement the required written nutrition plan, including accommodation of children with special health care needs.</i>								
32. Develops a food service operation that: a) includes proper facilities, equipment, personnel, and food supplies; b) meets or exceeds applicable Montana food service standards; and c) maintains records of all menus and food production, as required	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
33. Meets state, county, or tribal requirements for public food service operations, when applicable, such as business permits/licenses, food safety inspections, and environmental health regulations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
34. Meets Montana state and tribal environmental standards for food service operations, food acquisition, and food safety	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## E. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
35. Supports staff training for managing food service and implementing their duties and responsibilities properly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Family and Community Partnerships</b> <i>Trusting and collaborative relationships with families allows parents and staff to learn from one another and supports families in pursuing lifelong goals. Community partnerships and collaborative relationships provide continuity and offer opportunities to improve services for children and families.</i>								
36. Uses families' values, beliefs, cultural practices, and perspectives about childrearing to strive for consistency between home and child care setting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
37. Establishes liaisons with community resources and social services to support the needs of individual children and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
38. Distributes a parent handbook to all families as part of the enrollment process and orientation to the program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
39. Communicates child assessment results to families to demonstrate learning/developmental progress and make referrals to community agencies and specialists for support when necessary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
40. Seeks opportunities to build good relations within the community by participating in community events and organizations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## **STANDARD 3**

### **OBSERVING, DOCUMENTING, AND ASSESSING TO SUPPORT YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

Early childhood professionals understand that child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment are central to the practice of all early childhood professionals. They know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence the development of every child.

Key elements of Standard 3

- a. Understanding the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment
- b. Knowing about and using observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches
- c. Understanding and practicing responsible assessment to promote positive outcomes for each child
- d. Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and with professional colleagues

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## **CONTENT AREA**

**Page 39      F. Observation, Documentation, and Assessment**

# F. Observation, Documentation, and Assessment

The area of **Observation, Documentation and Assessment** includes understanding a) the how and why of systematic observation of children and b) the importance of accurate, meaningful documentation. The competencies in this area center on using informal, authentic, and formal assessment techniques as tools for 1) curriculum planning, 2) goal setting for individual children, and 3) preparation of the learning environment to enhance growth and learning, all in partnership with parents and other professionals. Observation, Documentation, and Assessment includes the following categories:

- Observation and Assessment Process
- Behavioral Assessment
- Observation and Assessment Tools
- Documentation and Communication

## F. OBSERVATION, DOCUMENTATION, AND ASSESSMENT

KEY	<u>Novice</u>	<u>Skilled</u>	<u>Master</u>
1 = Not yet aware	2 = Beginning to understand 3 = Beginning to apply	4 = Frequently applies 5 = Consistently applies	6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize 7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Observation and Assessment Process</b> <i>Qualified practitioners are knowledgeable about specific methods of assessment. They are aware of potential cultural bias in formal assessment and work with others to ensure accuracy. They demonstrate knowledge of the specific assessments and observations appropriate for the young children in the program, including assessments from other professionals.</i>								
1. Describes the goals, benefits, and purposes for observation, documentation, and assessment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Ensures that observations of children are useful and documented accurately and objectively	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Effectively utilizes an array of assessment tools and a variety of observation processes in natural settings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Asks for, values, and uses information from parents and family members about their observations of and goals for their child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Exhibits understanding and knowledge of cultural and language influences, other environmental factors, and varying learning styles on assessment practices and results	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Involves the family and, as appropriate, multi-disciplinary team members in assessing the child's development, behavior, strengths, needs, and goal setting for the child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Utilizes the team approach, which involves all interested parties, to obtain and share information regarding a child, within the parameters of confidentiality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Utilizes ongoing assessment as a systematic approach to continuous program improvement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. Implements a repeated cycle of observation, authentic assessment, individualization, data collection and evaluation that leads to the development or adjustment of a developmentally appropriate plan for each child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## F. OBSERVATION, DOCUMENTATION, AND ASSESSMENT (cont.)

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Observation and Assessment Tools</b> <i>The qualified practitioner demonstrates proficiency in the use of authentic assessment tools and observation methods to support the developmental needs of young children and their families. They use results of assessments in planning, implementing, and evaluating the program and child outcomes.</i>								
10. Uses observation on a regular basis to document children’s growth and development in all areas - social, emotional, physical, cognitive, language, and creative to learn about each child	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. Utilizes developmental screening tools as the first step in an evaluation and intervention process intended to help professionals identify those children who may be at risk and in need of further evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. Ties assessments to curriculum goals and objectives in order to learn how each child is progressing toward meeting individualized goals and objectives	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
13. Uses assessment information - conferring with parents - to plan curriculum, design the environment, and individualize goals for young children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Behavioral Assessment</b> <i>Qualified practitioners demonstrate proficiency in observing and recording behavior and recognize behavior as a form of communication. They are able to summarize and analyze behavioral assessment information and collaborate in the planning and implementation of interventions and services aimed at increasing appropriate and desirable behavioral skills.</i>								
14. Uses assessment as a strategy to understand children’s strengths and identify areas needing adult assistance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. Discusses assessment results with families in a clear, meaningful, and supportive way on a regular basis, understanding families are partners in their child’s growth and development.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16. Provides families with developmental information using the child’s strengths as the core of the dialogue	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## F. OBSERVATION, DOCUMENTATION, AND ASSESSMENT (cont.)

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Documentation and Communication</b> <i>Qualified practitioners demonstrate effective skills in documentation and communication of assessment information and observations to others. They maintain ethical and legal standards of confidentiality.</i>								
17. Maintains appropriate records of children’s development and behavior in ways that do not compromise children’s psychological safety or feelings of self-esteem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
18. Utilizes authentic assessment, such as a systematic collection of representative work by children, such as: artwork, dictated or written stories, writing samples, photographs, videos, recordings, to document children’s development in the context of reliable, established developmentally appropriate assessment criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
19. Utilizes data collection and analysis as tools to help <b>staff</b> understand a child’s progress and explore new ideas for supporting children’s learning and development in the program and at home	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
20. Utilizes data collection and analysis as tools to help <b>parents</b> understand a child’s progress and explore new ideas for supporting children’s learning and development in the program and at home	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	



## **STANDARD 4**

### **USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES**

Early childhood professionals understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise and its details vary depending on children's ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. They know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child's development and learning.

Key elements of Standard 4

- a. Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their
- b. work with young children
- c. Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education
- d. Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching/learning approaches
- e. Reflecting on their own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child

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### **CONTENT AREAS**

**Page 44**      **G. Child Guidance**  
**Page 48**      **H. Diversity**

# G. Child Guidance

The area of Child Guidance includes the knowledge and skills necessary to promote developmentally appropriate behavior and to employ a variety of positive guidance strategies that foster self-regulation, respect for others, and meet the needs of individual children as well as the group. Child Guidance includes the following categories:

- Foundations
- Environment
- Positive Guidance Strategies
- Parent and Community Partnerships

## G. CHILD GUIDANCE

### KEY

1 = Not yet aware

### Novice

2 = Beginning to understand

3 = Beginning to apply

### Skilled

4 = Frequently applies

5 = Consistently applies

### Master

6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize

7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Foundations</b> <i>Positive child guidance is the approach to behavior that comes closest to the core of a growing understanding about children's learning and development. The child guidance approach embraces teachers as professionals, not technicians; builds from positive teacher-child relations; reduces the need for inappropriate or mistaken behavior; takes a solution orientation; includes liberation teaching; and involves parent-teacher partnerships. As defined in the writings of Dan and Julie Gartrell, "liberation teaching" involves the acceptance, support, and empowerment of children who might be singled out negatively from the group for physical, cultural, or behavioral reasons.</i>								
1. Articulates and defends a philosophy of positive guidance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Implements a positive guidance model throughout the program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Understands and regularly reflects upon the effect of his or her own behaviors and beliefs in setting the program climate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Demonstrates respect for diverse values, culture, language, individual temperament, and learning styles, and examines these in relationship to one's own guidance practices and beliefs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Understands the multiple underlying causes of children's challenging behaviors and their communicative value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Understands the importance of developing a supportive relationship with each child as the foundation for child guidance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Uses a variety of evidence-based positive guidance techniques with an emphasis on facilitating children's development of self-regulation and respect for others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Uses effective, individualized positive guidance strategies to help children gain self-control	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. Promotes acceptance of each child by the group and nurtures pro-social interactions among children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. Uses multiple strategies, including observation and interview, to gather information about children with challenging behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## G. CHILD GUIDANCE (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
11. Bases expectations of behavior on knowledge of child development as well as knowledge of individual children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Environment</b> <i>Using their working knowledge of child growth and development, the qualified practitioner models the kind of social skills they want to see; plans how to use the indoor and outdoor environments to help children learn sharing and cooperation skills; adapts daily activities, (including transitions) to be more responsive to the children; and questions whether the expectations of the children in their care is realistic.</i>								
12. Develops a program atmosphere of mutual trust, respect, cooperation, and community which fosters each individual's self-esteem and sense of belonging	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
13. Implements scheduling, transitions, activities, and play area arrangements that encourage and support appropriate behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. Creates an engaging learning environment to prevent challenging behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. Intervenes to provide support for a child when necessary, such as rearranging the environment, adding materials, adjusting the schedule, providing support during transitions, offering additional encouragement, or providing adaptive technologies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Positive Guidance Strategies</b> <i>Guidance strategies are based on key elements: what to expect from children in an early childhood setting, how to assess their behavior, how to redirect behavior, and how to get children involved in controlling their own actions.</i>								
16. Involves young children in the formation of group guidelines for acceptable and appropriate behavior as soon as children are developmentally able	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
17. Teaches children appropriate individual and group expectations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
18. Uses meaningful encouragement more than praise to support children's self- awareness, self- concept, and the development of intrinsic (internal) motivation for appropriate behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
19. Modifies situations in anticipation of problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
20. Encourages feelings of empathy and respect for others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## G. CHILD GUIDANCE (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
21. Provides encouragement and guidance with children primarily in close proximity to the child and one-on-one	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
22. Recognizes signs of stress, anxiety, or strong emotions and acts to help the child use calming techniques and prevent over-stimulation or escalation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
23. Accepts children’s feelings, provides acceptable outlets for children to express them, and teaches children how to communicate their feelings in appropriate ways	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
24. Ensures that children are not shamed and helps children save face and preserve their dignity in guidance encounters	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
25. Uses a variety of different guidance strategies, such as natural and logical consequences, choice, active listening, and problem-solving	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Parent and Community Partnerships								
Parent-teacher collaboration is a hallmark of successful early childhood education at all levels of child guidance.								
26. Maintains regular communication with families and arranges accommodations for family members who require communication assistance to ensure full participation in their child’s education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
27. Engages parents in the guidance system, including the problem-solving process	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
28. Provides observations and information about individual children with parent consent, as a member of the child’s support team, to generate behavioral goals or action plan	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

# H. Diversity

Diversity encompasses the wide range of children's developmental ages and stages as well as families' traditions, attitudes, language(s), and beliefs. The area of Diversity describes knowledge and skills that are essential to fully embrace and celebrate these qualities and to embed them in daily practice to support children's optimal development and learning. Diversity is divided into these categories:

- General Knowledge and Dispositions
- Child Development and Learning
- Families
- Assessment
- Collaboration

NOTE: The source for direct quotes in this section is the 1995 NAEYC Position Statement, *Responding to Linguistic and Cultural Diversity: Recommendations for Effective Early Childhood Education*. In 2009 NAEYC created a two page *Where We Stand* document on responding to linguistic and cultural diversity.

## H. DIVERSITY

KEY	<u>Novice</u>	<u>Skilled</u>	<u>Master</u>
1 = Not yet aware	2 = Beginning to understand 3 = Beginning to apply	4 = Frequently applies 5 = Consistently applies	6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize 7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>General Knowledge and Dispositions</b> <i>Early childhood practitioners are expected to provide learning experiences that not only reflect the mainstream culture but also reflect the languages, cultures, and traditions of individual families and children in the program. These types of experiences build self-worth and identity while simultaneously providing opportunities to teach children to be tolerant, respectful, and accepting of differences.</i>								
1. Articulates personal beliefs about one’s cultural traditions, attitudes, language(s), and philosophies, and about disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Reflects upon disability, race, class, gender, power, and privilege as they relate to working with young children and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Responds to the important role of language and culture for children and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Advocates for coordinated early intervention/special education services for children and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Describes legal factors and precedents related to the inclusion of cultural, linguistic, and developmental diversity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Describes various ways in which mainstream culture impacts current research and practice in early childhood education	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Identifies the programs and specialists available in the community as resources for inclusion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Child Development and Learning</b> <i>“For young children to develop and learn optimally, the early childhood professional must be prepared to meet their diverse developmental, cultural, linguistic, and educational needs.”</i>								
8. Uses knowledge of each child’s culture and ability (strengths, interests, and needs) to promote development and learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. Implements effective approaches (curriculum, strategies, and resources) to promote the development and learning of culturally diverse children, such as differentiated instruction and integrating children’s culture into the curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## H. DIVERSITY (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
10. Uses effective approaches such as: curriculum, strategies, and resources to promote the development and learning of children with developmental delays and disabilities, such as differentiated instruction and individualized intervention	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. Builds positive relationships with families and children that promote cross-cultural understanding and appropriate developmental expectations among children, families, and professionals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. Assists culturally, linguistically, and developmentally diverse children and families with transitions between early childhood programs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Families								
“For the optimal development and learning of all children, educators must <b>accept</b> the legitimacy of children’s home language, <b>respect</b> (hold in high regard) and <b>value</b> (esteem, appreciate) the home culture, and <b>promote</b> and <b>encourage</b> the active involvement and support of all families, including extended and nontraditional family units.”								
13. Respectfully obtains and utilizes knowledge of families’ cultural and developmental preferences, practices, and goals	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. Provides families who are culturally and linguistically diverse with support, resources, and information that is responsive to their needs within the local community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. Provides families of young children with disabilities with support, resources and information that are responsive to their needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16. Advocates for the importance of helping children to honor, preserve, and celebrate their home languages and cultures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	



## H. DIVERSITY (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Assessment</b>								
<i>Assessments that consider diversity in language, culture, and/or ability are most likely to provide an authentic evaluation of young children’s growth and development.</i>								
17. Utilizes non-discriminatory assessment practices and instruments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
18. Uses respectful and responsive strategies to gather information from culturally and linguistically diverse families and from families of young children with disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
19. Provides accessible written and verbal feedback to families regarding observed strengths, interventions, and examples of the child’s development and learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Collaboration</b>								
<i>“The challenge for early childhood educators is to become more knowledgeable about how to relate to children and families whose linguistic or cultural background is different from their own.”</i>								
20. Collaborates effectively with others who have expertise and knowledge regarding developmental delay/disability, English Language Learners and/or culturally and linguistically diverse children and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
21. Uses community resources and supports for culturally and linguistically diverse families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
22. Uses community resources and supports for children with disabilities and their families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
23. Engages and supports the participation of community partners who are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically diverse	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## **STANDARD 5**

### **USING CONTENT KNOWLEDGE TO BUILD MEANINGFUL CURRICULUM**

Early childhood professionals use their knowledge of academic disciplines to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every young child. Early educators understand the importance of developmental domains and academic (or content) disciplines in early childhood curriculum. They know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas, including academic subjects, and can identify resources to deepen their understanding. Early childhood professionals use their own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

#### **Key elements of Standard 5**

- a. Understanding content knowledge and resources in academic disciplines: language and literacy; the arts (music, creative movement, dance, drama, visual arts), mathematics, science, physical activity, physical education, health and safety; and social studies.
- b. Knowing and using the central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of content areas or academic disciplines
- c. Using their own knowledge, appropriate early learning standards, and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate developmentally meaningful and challenging curriculum for each child.

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## **CONTENT AREA**

**Page 53      I. Curriculum**

# I. Curriculum

The area of **Curriculum** encompasses knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice that supports physical, social-emotional, cognitive, and creative development. Competencies in this area include the ability to provide: a) a balance of adult and child-directed activities; b) indoor and outdoor experiences; c) individual, small, and large group activities; d) blocks of uninterrupted time for children to engage in self-chosen activities; and e) meaningful and relevant interaction with a variety of materials, children, and adults. Curriculum includes these categories:

- Foundations
- Language and Literacy
- Science
- Mathematics
- The Arts (Art, Dramatic and Role Play, Music, Dance/Creative Movement)
- Social Studies
- Physical Development and Well-being

# I. CURRICULUM

\*For more specific information regarding early childhood curriculum, please see Montana's Early Learning Guidelines. Available at [www.mtecp.org](http://www.mtecp.org).

KEY	<u>Novice</u>	<u>Skilled</u>	<u>Master</u>
1 = Not yet aware	2 = Beginning to understand 3 = Beginning to apply	4 = Frequently applies 5 = Consistently applies	6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize 7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Foundations</b> <i>The core knowledge and skills found in the curriculum area include features that are common across all content areas.</i>								
1. Creates a curriculum that assures a secure base for young children to explore and tackle challenging problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Includes blocks of uninterrupted time (at least one hour) for children to persist in self-chosen activities both indoors and out	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Offers individual, small, and large group activities, allowing a balance of self-directed and guided learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Utilizes a thematic curriculum or a project approach based upon children's emerging interests	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. Emphasizes developmentally appropriate methods, such as uninterrupted play, open-ended questioning, group discussion, hands-on/kinesthetic activities, problem-solving, cooperative learning, and inquiry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Provides experiences/activities and interacts with children in ways that allow children to construct their own knowledge	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Uses individual children's interests, language, family culture, abilities, and goals to plan appropriate learning experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Provides toys, equipment, and play materials reflective of individual children's interests in all areas of the curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. Adapts curriculum to meet the needs of each child, including embedding goals and objectives for children with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. Provides and uses materials and experiences in all areas of the curriculum reflective of the child's culture and the community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. Demonstrates knowledge of children's developmental continuum of learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

# I. CURRICULUM (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale								Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master			
12. Accommodates children’s individual learning styles and preferences across curriculum areas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
13. Considers how children’s learning is influenced by culture, disability, ability, motivation, social and emotional factors, socioeconomic status, adult support, and environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
14. Demonstrates awareness of common resources specific to each curriculum area and knows how and when to use these resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
15. Provides both planned and spontaneous experiences that are developmentally appropriate, meaningful, and challenging for young children, including children with developmental delays or disabilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
16. Provides experiences that help children become able to manage or regulate their expression of emotions, and over time, to cope with frustration and manage impulses effectively	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Language and Literacy									
17. Demonstrates basic knowledge of literacy foundations and progression of literacy skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
18. Demonstrates knowledge of standards and Early Learning Guidelines in literacy and uses these in planning learning experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
19. Models the enjoyment of reading and writing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
20. Expands and extends children’s language by asking open-ended questions, providing additional information, and exposing children to rich vocabulary and language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
21. Engages in two-way conversations with children (has a sense of when to be quiet and let children lead the dialog)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
22. Establishes literacy area(s)/center(s) - reading, writing, listening - that are accessible to children throughout the day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
23. Uses information from pre- and post-assessment in planning for and reflecting upon children’s language and literacy learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
24. Provides a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and experiences that support children in developing appreciation of books and reads a variety of high quality books to children daily	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

# I. CURRICULUM (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
25. Provides a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and experiences that support children in developing print concepts and conventions, phonological awareness, and knowledge of the alphabet	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
26. Provides a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and experiences that support children's receptive and expressive language skills, such as fingerplays, storytelling, felt boards, textless books, and props, such as tape recorders, telephones, and microphones	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
27. Provides a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and experiences that support children's early writing skills, such as drawing, copying, invented spelling, using word banks, creating books, experience charts, writing in journals, and recording dictated stories	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
28. Encourages children to use language, reading, and writing to strengthen their cultural identities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
29. Supports English Language Learners in their home languages while also assisting them to learn a new language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Science								
30. Demonstrates basic knowledge of scientific phenomena and uses this knowledge to take advantage of teachable moments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
31. Demonstrates knowledge of standards and Early Learning Guidelines in science and uses them in planning science experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
32. Models the use of scientific thinking, the enjoyment of science, and rich scientific language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
33. Understands the progression of concept development and scientific thinking in young children including children's common scientific misconceptions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
34. Uses information from pre-assessment and post-assessment in planning for and reflecting upon children's learning in the area of science	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
35. Ties science experiences into "big ideas or concepts," such as living versus non-living things, life cycles, organisms, habitat, and the interdependence of all living things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
36. Provides daily access to science and discovery areas or centers based upon children's interests, that are added to over time, and changed when children's interest changes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

# I. CURRICULUM (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
37. Assists children in the scientific process and provides opportunities for children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Make careful observations of objects, organisms, and events and use a variety of simple tools to extend their observations, such as a hand lens, measuring tools, eye droppers, balance scales, pulleys and ropes, incline planes, magnifying glasses, and magnets</li><li>Engage in simple investigations, such as making predictions, developing questions, gathering and interpreting data, recognizing simple patterns, and drawing conclusions</li><li>Record and document observations, explanations, and ideas through multiple forms of representation</li><li>Work collaboratively with others, share and discuss ideas, and listen to various perspectives</li></ul>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
38. Engages children in in-depth science-based activities that meet the following criteria: allow for direct exploration of phenomena and materials, are drawn from the children’s environment, emphasize important scientific concepts, allow exploration from multiple perspectives, and are developmentally appropriate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
39. Over the course of time includes in-depth life science, physical science, and earth and space explorations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Mathematics								
40. Demonstrates an understanding of the developmental progression of math skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
41. Demonstrates knowledge of standards and Early Learning Guidelines in math and uses these in planning math experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
42. Models the use of mathematics, the enjoyment of the subject, and uses rich mathematical language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
43. Provides daily access to a math area or center or integrates math materials into another area or center and integrates mathematical concepts/materials across learning areas or centers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
44. Uses curriculum and teaching practices that strengthen children’s problem-solving and reasoning skills	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
45. Intentionally introduces mathematical concepts, methods, and language through a range of developmentally appropriate experiences and teaching strategies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

# I. CURRICULUM (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
46. Uses information from pre - and post - assessments in planning for and reflecting up-on children's mathematical learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
47. Develops a coherent curriculum plan for mathematics that includes activities and ex-periences related to numbers and operations, measurement, geometry, algebra, and data analysis	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
48. Reflects upon and assesses the effectiveness of the math curriculum and makes chang-es based upon this information	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>The Arts</b> <i>Qualified practitioners recognize the educational and cultural importance of including the Arts in the early childhood curriculum: a) art, b) dramatic and role play, c) music, and d) dance and creative movement.</i>								
<b>a) Art</b>								
49. Understands and values the concept of “process vs. product” in children's art experi-ences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
50. Demonstrates an understanding of children’s development of art skills, aesthetics, and art appreciation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
51. Demonstrates knowledge of standards and Early Learning Guidelines in art and uses these in planning math experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
52. Uses information from pre-assessment and post-assessment in planning for and re-reflecting upon children’s artistic development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
53. Models the enjoyment of art	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
54. Establishes an art area or center that is accessible to children throughout the day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
55. Provides children with a variety of art media	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
56. Encourages children to participate in both two and three dimensional art activities, such as drawing, printing, sculpture, painting, modeling, weaving, puppetry, and collage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
57. Encourages child-directed versus teacher-directed projects and projects that develop over time	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	



# I. CURRICULUM (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
58. Exposes children to aesthetic criteria, such as line, color, shape, volume or mass, design, pattern, space, balance, and texture	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
59. Exposes children to works of art and appreciation of art work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
b) Dramatic and Role Play								
60. Demonstrates an understanding of the developmental progression of play skills in young children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
61. Demonstrates knowledge of standards and Early Learning Guidelines in relationship to dramatic play and uses these in planning play experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
62. Models and engages children in finger plays, flannel board stories, other storytelling, and puppetry	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
63. Establishes an evolving and dynamic, yet relevant, dramatic play area that includes familiar and authentic items as well as items related to children’s current play interests	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
64. Encourages and provides resources and support for child-initiated play	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
65. Includes rich stimuli for dramatic play through literature, field trips, and real life experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
66. Allows engagement in dramatic play across centers or play areas and throughout the day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
67. Extends play by providing props, encouraging children to develop their own props and scenarios, questioning, encouraging close observation of various roles, verbal affirmations, suggestions, such as additional props or situations, switching roles, observations of those in different roles, and discussions about roles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
c) Music								
68. Models the enjoyment of music and uses music terminology and notation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
69. Uses knowledge of standards and Early Learning Guidelines in music to plan music experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
70. Establishes a well-stocked music area or center	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

# I. CURRICULUM (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale								Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master			
71. Integrates music and singing purposefully throughout the day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
72. Plans experiences and activities that expose children to a variety of musical genres, such as: folk, classical, ethnic and pop and authentic musical instruments, both homemade and manufactured, including instruments from other cultures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
73. Uses information from pre-assessment and post-assessment in planning for and reflecting upon children's musical learning	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
74. Plans daily experiences and activities that expose children to singing, playing instruments, listening to music, creating music, and moving to music	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
75. Promotes awareness of music elements and music appreciation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
d) Dance/Creative Movement									
76. Models the joy of movement, such as: dancing, hopping, jumping and leaping and uses movement vocabulary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
77. Demonstrates knowledge of standards and Early Learning Guidelines in dance and movement and uses these in planning learning experiences	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
78. Establishes an area with space and props that encourage movement, such as scarves, ribbons, balls, music, and mirrors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
79. Includes rich stimuli for movement, such as recorded music, props, observations, modeling, and discussions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
80. Implements daily movement opportunities (both teacher-initiated and child-initiated activities)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Social Studies									
81. Provides a pro-social environment in which each child may develop self-awareness, interpersonal relationship skills, and self-esteem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
82. Integrates concepts of family, community, and culture into all areas of the program to optimally support each child's growing sense of self	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
83. Helps children to understand the concept of family and its numerous definitions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

# I. CURRICULUM (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale								Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master			
84. Helps children learn about the role of work in our society and types of jobs in the community	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
85. Helps children learn concepts of personal and group responsibility by taking care of each other and the indoor and outdoor environments	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
86. Helps children to understand the concept of fairness and justice	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
87. Models, encourages, and teaches skills that assist children in working cooperatively with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
88. Models, encourages, and teaches respect for others including those who differ in gender, ethnicity, ability and/or ideas	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
89. Assists children in recognizing similarities and differences between themselves and others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
90. Plans experiences and activities that allow children to understand the characteristics of the place where they live	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
91. Plans experiences and activities that allow children to experience a sense of location, such as directions and maps	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
92. Helps children begin to understand the concepts and different characteristics of “needs” and “wants”	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
Physical Development and Well-being									
93. Encourages healthy habits in eating, exercise, and hygiene	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
94. Plans daily structured indoor or outdoor physical activities for toddlers and pre-schoolers; daily recommendation is at least 30 minutes for toddlers and 60 minutes for preschoolers (may be broken into smaller segments of time)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
95. Assures that <b>structured</b> activities are enjoyable and that they maximize participation of each child, such as no elimination or competitive games/activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
96. Provides daily opportunities for at least 60 minutes of <b>unstructured</b> physical activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
97. Provides activities and an environment that encourages/invites children to move around freely throughout the day rather than spending time sitting	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		

# I. CURRICULUM (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice		Skilled		Master		
98. Uses information from pre-assessment and post-assessment in reflecting upon and planning for children's physical development and learning about health and well-being	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
99. Provides developmentally appropriate activities/experiences to help children develop competence in movement, such as balancing, walking, running, jumping, galloping, hopping, and skipping	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
100. Provides developmentally appropriate activities that assist children in object manipulation, such as throwing, catching, carrying, kicking, striking, using riding toys	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
101. Plans daily outdoor play experiences that expose children to a variety of gross motor equipment, such as tricycles, parachutes, balls, beanbags, climbing equipment, and obstacle courses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
102. Provides developmentally appropriate fine motor activities and experiences that allow children to develop hand strength, hand and finger dexterity, and eye-hand coordination	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
103. Provides a range of objects for children to manipulate, such as blocks, books, writing, drawing, and art materials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
104. Makes adaptations to help children meet physical goals yet support culturally sensitive practices	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## **STANDARD 6**

### **BEING A PROFESSIONAL**

Early childhood professionals identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.

Key elements of Standard 6

- a. Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood field
- b. Knowing about and upholding ethical standards and other early childhood professional guidelines
- c. Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice
- d. Integrating knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education
- e. Engaging in informed advocacy for young children and the early childhood profession

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### **CONTENT AREAS**

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**J. Professionalism**

**Page 68**

**K. Personal Dispositions**

# J. Professionalism

The area of **Professionalism** in early childhood includes a common core of skills and dispositions that improve the quality of services and interactions for children, families, and professionals. These core competencies include making a commitment to the early childhood profession by 1) advocating for quality programs and services while 2) adhering to the professional code of ethical conduct and 3) staying current in the field of early childhood education and child development. Professionalism is not the end result, but rather a state of being, and through continual effort – a process of becoming. Professionalism is divided into these categories:

- Foundations
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- Ethics
- Lifelong Learning
- Self-assessment
- Advocacy

# J. PROFESSIONALISM

## KEY

1 = Not yet aware

## Novice

2 = Beginning to understand

3 = Beginning to apply

## Skilled

4 = Frequently applies

5 = Consistently applies

## Master

6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize

7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Foundations</b> <i>Professionalism is a broad category that includes both professional and personal capability, ranging from being on time for work to acting with integrity as a general state of being. It is reflected in both attitude and action.</i>								
1. Displays professional work habits, such as stability, responsibility, dependability, time management skills, independence, collaboration skills, and accountability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Collaborates with professionals from other disciplines that provide related services for young children and their families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. Demonstrates knowledge of federal and state regulations regarding early childhood settings including relevant licensing information and the inclusion of children with special needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Demonstrates the professional dispositions of conduct, such as respect, compassion, curiosity, dedication, honesty, and fairness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Developmentally Appropriate Practice</b> <i>Developmentally appropriate practice is “an approach to teaching grounded both in the research on how young children develop and learn and in what is known about effective early education. Its framework is designed to promote young children’s optimal learning and development.” (NAEYC, 2009)</i>								
5. Articulates - and defends with facts and current research - a personal philosophy of early care and education that includes active learning, developmentally appropriate practices and assessment, and inclusionary approaches	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Models acceptance and appreciation for linguistic, cultural, and developmental diversity; recognizes stereotypes, stereotypical images, or bias; and corrects misconceptions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. Accesses and collaborates with multiple resources to meet developmental needs of young children and their families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## J. PROFESSIONALISM (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Ethics</b> <i>Individuals who work with young children and families face many daily decisions that have moral and ethical implications. Resolving ethical dilemmas effectively, maintaining confidentiality, and avoiding conflicts of interest are integral to becoming a professional.</i>								
8. Maintains confidentiality regarding sensitive information about children and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. Articulates and adheres to the professional Code of Ethical Conduct (see Appendix A—NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. Acknowledges situations that may present a conflict of interest and collaborates with colleagues, families, and other professionals to preserve professional integrity and avoid involvement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. Ensures that written, verbal, and digital communication with families, community members, or other professionals is professional and adheres to the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Lifelong Learning</b> <i>Lifelong learning is the voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge throughout the life span. It enhances both professional and personal development and increases desirability and employability.</i>								
12. Develops and implements a professional development plan with measurable goals and objectives based upon assessment, such as self-assessment, coaching recommendations, and peer/administrator observations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
13. Connects with online early childhood social networks and regularly explores national organization web sites	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. Stays current in the early childhood field by reading and studying professional materials, such as books, articles, journals, and research reports	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
15. Actively participates in local and national early childhood organizations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16. Participates in ongoing professional development, such as training events, mentoring opportunities, coaching sessions, and other educational opportunities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	



## J. PROFESSIONALISM (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Self-Assessment</b> <i>Early childhood practitioners practice self-assessment when they regularly look at themselves in order to assess practices and policies that are important to effectively teaching and nurturing young children.</i>								
17. Continually reflects upon one’s daily practice with children and families and systematically works toward improvement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
18. Records ongoing self-reflection in writing and discusses considerations and improvements regularly with professional colleagues	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
19. Strengthens personal dispositions, knowledge, and skills through self-evaluation and planned professional development	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
20. Uses both formal and informal self-assessment as part of ongoing self-evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Advocacy</b> <i>Advocacy skills prepare practitioners to successfully advocate for public policies that benefit young children and their families, building support among audiences, such as the general public, elected officials, the media, and key opinion leaders.</i>								
21. Advocates for quality programs and services for young children and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
22. Demonstrates current knowledge and understanding of active controversies and issues in the field of early childhood education, such as compensation parity, professional status, burnout, and turnover	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
23. Takes advantage of opportunities to advocate for change and improvement in early childhood practice and in the profession	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
24. Engages in early childhood legislative processes and organized advocacy efforts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

# K. Personal Dispositions

Many educators feel that effectiveness as a teacher stems from a combination of knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics (Katz, 1993). The area of **Personal Dispositions** reflects intrinsic characteristics that are important for being responsive and effective in working with young children, families, and community partners. Disposition affects how knowledge and skills are likely to be used. Dispositions often appear innate but can be developed. Personal Dispositions is organized in these categories (Colker, 2008):

- Authenticity
- Creativity
- Flexibility
- Love of Learning
- Passion
- Patience
- Perseverance
- Pragmatism (Practicality)
- Respect
- Sense of Humor
- Willingness to Take Risks

## K. PERSONAL DISPOSITIONS

### KEY

1 = Not yet aware

### Novice

2 = Beginning to understand

3 = Beginning to apply

### Skilled

4 = Frequently applies

5 = Consistently applies

### Master

6 = Uses knowledge to modify, evaluate, synthesize

7 = Fosters growth, exercises leadership, advocates

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Authenticity</b> <i>Authenticity could be referred to as “self-awareness.” Being authentic means knowing who you are and what you stand for. It is what gives practitioners integrity and conviction. Young children are shrewd judges of character; they know whether a teacher is authentic, and they respond accordingly.</i>								
1. Possesses self-awareness, reflects upon own values and beliefs and thinks about how they influence and guide decisions, expectations, and behavior	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. Articulates own feelings and needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Creativity</b> <i>It takes creativity to deal well with change and unexpected situations, and it is critical when resources are limited. It takes creativity to teach children from diverse backgrounds who might not approach education in the same way. It takes creativity to teach children with differing learning styles who think and learn in different ways. And most of all, it takes creativity to make learning fun. Creativity is a hallmark of an effective early childhood teacher.</i>								
3. Demonstrates imagination and creativity during teaching and caregiving activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. Exhibits imagination and creativity in overcoming challenges and resolving problems	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Flexibility</b> <i>Any job in early childhood education demands the ability to deal well with change and unexpected turns. Whether it’s raining outside and outdoor play has to be cancelled or the operating budget has been drastically reduced, practitioners need to be able to switch gears at a moment’s notice and find an alternative that works.</i>								
5. Exhibits the ability to be flexible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Adapts to different situations with respect for each child’s communication style, temperament, behavior patterns, state of mind, and the environment	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## K. PERSONAL DISPOSITIONS (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale				Notes/Comments			
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Love of Learning</b> <i>To inspire children with a love of learning, teachers themselves ought to exhibit this characteristic. Teachers who are lifelong learners send children the message that learning is an important part of life. Being an effective teacher involves seeking out knowledge about recent research on teaching. Lifelong learners regard both teaching and learning as dynamic processes.</i>								
7. Considers new ideas and continually refines practice as a result	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. Demonstrates a love of learning in both actions and words	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Passion</b> <i>Being an early childhood educator is not always easy. There may be physical and financial challenges, for example. But when practitioners feel that what they are doing makes a difference, that sense of accomplishment can both sustain and motivate them.</i>								
9. Feels that what one is doing makes a difference	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. Displays enthusiasm and interest in children and their activities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Patience</b> <i>There is a need for patience both when dealing with “the system” and when working with children and families. Not every child learns quickly. Some behaviors can challenge even the most effective teacher. Children need reminder after reminder. Good teachers have a long fuse for exasperation, frustration, and anger. They regard all such challenges as exactly that - challenges. Effective teaching requires patience.</i>								
11. Exhibits patience with children, families, and co-workers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. Shows patience when working with the requirements of the early childhood system and other systems of support	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Perseverance</b> <i>Perseverance may also be described as “dedication” or “tenacity.” Whatever term used, it is the willingness to fight for one’s beliefs, whether related to children’s needs or education issues. Teachers have to be willing to be long-term advocates for improving the lives of children and their families.</i>								
13. Demonstrates ability to persevere and reflect upon challenging situations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
14. Displays continuing energy and perseverance on behalf of children and families	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

## K. PERSONAL DISPOSITIONS (continued)

Competency	Rating Scale							Notes/Comments
	Not yet	Novice	Skilled	Master				
<b>Pragmatism (Practicality)</b> <i>Pragmatism or practicality is the flip side of perseverance and willingness to take risks. Pragmatists are willing to compromise. They know which battles are winnable and when to apply their resources in support of children. Effective teachers understand that by temporarily settling for small wins, they are still making progress toward their goals.</i>								
15. Conveys a spirit of cooperation and collaboration	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
16. Willing to compromise to make progress toward a higher goal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Respect</b> <i>This characteristic could be described as an “appreciation of diversity.” It involves not only respecting children and families of all backgrounds, but also maintaining the belief that everyone’s life is enhanced by exposure to people of different backgrounds who speak a variety of languages. Children’s self-concepts flourish in an environment of respect. Good teachers create this environment naturally.</i>								
17. Understands and respects diversity, including socio-economic, cultural, race, ethnic, gender, sexual or affection preference, physical, mental, language, religious, and emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
18. Practices respectful, caring communication interpersonal interactions with children and adults	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
19. Shows sensitivity to the feelings and needs of children, families, and co-workers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Sense of Humor</b> <i>Learning should be fun; nothing conveys this message more than a room that is filled with spontaneous laughter. John Varga, a Head Start site supervisor, summarizes the importance of this characteristic in teaching: “All children ask is that we love them and respect them and be willing to laugh when it’s funny . . . even when the joke’s on us.”</i>								
20. Employs an appropriate sense of humor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
21. Takes advantage of opportunities to promote fun and laughter	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
<b>Willingness to Take Risks</b> <i>Effective teachers are willing to try new strategies and activities and take risks that benefit children as well as for personal learning and growth. Without this disposition, teachers tend to stay with their own way of doing things and resist using what they learn in professional development experiences.</i>								
22. Tries new strategies and activities that benefit children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
23. Fosters own growth and development by stepping out of one’s “comfort zone”	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

# APPENDICES

## Appendix A

NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct

## Appendix B

Individualized Professional Development Plan

## Appendix C

Supplemental Resources

# **Appendix A**

## **NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct**

# NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct

*Excerpted from the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct, 2011. For a complete copy, contact NAEYC at 1-800-424-2460 or [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).*

## ***Section I: Ethical responsibilities to children***

Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the human life cycle. Our paramount responsibility is to provide care and education in settings that are safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive for each child. We are committed to supporting children's development and learning; respecting individual differences; and helping children learn to live, play, and work cooperatively. We are also committed to promoting children's self-awareness, competence, self-worth, resiliency, and physical well-being.

### **Ideals**

- To be familiar with the knowledge base of early childhood care and education and to stay informed through continuing education and training.
- To base program practices upon current knowledge and research in the field of early childhood education, child development, and related disciplines, as well as on particular knowledge of each child.
- To recognize and respect the unique qualities, abilities, and potential of each child.
- To appreciate the vulnerability of children and their dependence on adults.
- To create and maintain safe and healthy settings that foster children's social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development and that respect their dignity and their contributions.
- To use assessment instruments and strategies that are appropriate for the children to be assessed, that are used only for the purposes for which they were designed, and that have the potential to benefit children.
- To use assessment information to understand and support children's development and learning, to support instruction, and to identify children who may need additional services.
- To support the right of each child to play and learn in an inclusive environment that meets the needs of children with and without disabilities.
- To advocate for and ensure that all children, including those with special needs, have access to the support services needed to be successful.
- To ensure that each child's culture, language, ethnicity, and family structure are recognized and valued in the program.
- To provide all children with experiences in a language that they know, as well as support children in maintaining the use of their home language and in learning English.
- To work with families to provide a safe and smooth transition as children and families move from one program to the next.



## ***Section II: Ethical responsibilities to families***

Families\* are of primary importance in children's development. Because the family and the early childhood practitioner have a common interest in the child's wellbeing, we acknowledge a primary responsibility to bring about communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the home and early childhood program in ways that enhance the child's development.

### **Ideals**

- To be familiar with the knowledge base related to working effectively with families and to stay informed through continuing education and training.
- To develop relationships of mutual trust and create partnerships with the families we serve.
- To welcome all family members and encourage them to participate in the program, including involvement in shared decision making.
- To listen to families, acknowledge and build upon their strengths and competencies, and learn from families as we support them in their task of nurturing children.
- To respect the dignity and preferences of each family and to make an effort to learn about its structure, culture, language, customs, and beliefs to ensure a culturally consistent environment for all children and families.
- To acknowledge families' childrearing values and their right to make decisions for their children.
- To share information about each child's education and development with families and to help them understand and appreciate the current knowledge base of the early childhood profession.
- To help family members enhance their understanding of their children, as staff are enhancing their understanding of each child through communications with families, and support family members in the continuing development of their skills as parents.
- To foster families' efforts to build support networks and, when needed, participate in building networks for families by providing them with opportunities to interact with program staff, other families, community resources, and professional services.

\*The term family may include those adults, besides parents, with the responsibility of being involved in educating, nurturing, and advocating for the child.

### ***Section III: Ethical responsibilities to colleagues***

In a caring, cooperative workplace, human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are developed and sustained. Based upon our core values, our primary responsibility to colleagues is to establish and maintain settings and relationships that support productive work and meet professional needs. The same ideals that apply to children also apply as we interact with adults in the workplace.

#### **A—Responsibilities to co-workers**

##### **Ideals**

- To establish and maintain relationships of respect, trust, confidentiality, collaboration, and cooperation with co-workers.
- To share resources with co-workers, collaborating to ensure that the best possible early childhood care and education program is provided.
- To support co-workers in meeting their professional needs and in their professional development.
- To accord co-workers due recognition of professional achievement.

#### **B—Responsibilities to employers**

##### **Ideals**

- To assist the program in providing the highest quality of service.
- To do nothing that diminishes the reputation of the program in which we work unless it is violating laws and regulations designed to protect children or is violating the provisions of this Code.

Note: Section III includes responsibilities to co-workers and to employers. See the “Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Early Childhood Program Administrators” for responsibilities to personnel (employees in the original 2005 Code revision), online at [www.naeyc.org/ files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05\\_supp.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05_supp.pdf).

## **Section IV: Ethical responsibilities to community and society**

Early childhood programs operate within the context of their immediate community made up of families and other institutions concerned with children's welfare. Our responsibilities to the community are to provide programs that meet the diverse needs of families, to cooperate with agencies and professions that share the responsibility for children, to assist families in gaining access to those agencies and allied professionals, and to assist in the development of community programs that are needed but not currently available. As individuals, we acknowledge our responsibility to provide the best possible programs of care and education for children and to conduct ourselves with honesty and integrity. Because of our specialized expertise in early childhood development and education and because the larger society shares responsibility for the welfare and protection of young children, we acknowledge a collective obligation to advocate for the best interests of children within early childhood programs and in the larger community and to serve as a voice for young children everywhere. The ideals and principles in this section are presented to distinguish between those that pertain to the work of the individual early childhood educator and those that more typically are engaged in collectively on behalf of the best interests of children—with the understanding that individual early childhood educators have a shared responsibility for addressing the ideals and principles that are identified as “collective.”

### **Ideal (Individual)**

- To provide the community with high-quality early childhood care and education programs and services.

### **Ideals (Collective)**

- To promote cooperation among professionals and agencies and interdisciplinary collaboration among professions concerned with addressing issues in the health, education, and well-being of young children, their families, and their early childhood educators.
- To work through education, research, and advocacy toward an environmentally safe world in which all children receive health care, food, and shelter; are nurtured; and live free from violence in their home and their communities.
- To work through education, research, and advocacy toward a society in which all young children have access to high-quality early care and education programs.
- To work to ensure that appropriate assessment systems, which include multiple sources of information, are used for purposes that benefit children.
- To promote knowledge and understanding of young children and their needs. To work toward greater societal acknowledgment of children's rights and greater social acceptance of responsibility for the well-being of all children.
- To support policies and laws that promote the well-being of children and families, and to work to change those that impair their well-being. To participate in developing policies and laws that are needed, and to cooperate with families and other individuals and groups in these efforts.
- To further the professional development of the field of early childhood care and education and to strengthen its commitment to realizing its core values as reflected in this Code.

## **Appendix B**

# Individualized Professional Development Plan

# INDIVIDUALIZED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

After you complete the Montana Early Child Care and Education Knowledge Base, reflect upon your work with young children and families. Consider skills you want to improve, learn more about, or understand more thoroughly within each content area. Use this plan to formulate specific goals for participating in professional development with target completion dates. Take into consideration your level of competency as well as your current interests.

## INSTRUCTIONS

In column one, list the Content Area and Competency you have targeted. In columns two and three, identify the resources, technical assistance, and training events currently available to provide professional development related to the competency targeted for growth. In column 4, indicate the projected date of completion; and in column 5, make a check mark when you have completed the plan.

Target Content Area/Competency	Resources and Technical Assistance Available	Relevant Training Events Available	Date	✓
G/9—Child Guidance/Promotes acceptance of each child by the group and nurtures pro-social interactions among children	<a href="http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu">http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu</a> <a href="http://www.challengingbehavior.org">www.challengingbehavior.org</a> <a href="http://www.ccplus.org">www.ccplus.org</a> —Inclusion Tip Sheet #28	CSEFEL Pyramid Modules	6/30	✓

# INDIVIDUALIZED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Target Content Area/Competency	Resources and Technical Assistance Available	Relevant Training Events Available	Date	✓

# **Appendix C**

## **Supplemental Resources**

# Supplemental Resources

There are literally thousands of professional resources available to help you improve or update your knowledge and skills in any of the content areas of the Montana Knowledge Base. The following list of agencies, web sites, and publications may be helpful in your initial search for further information and professional development opportunities. Contact the Professional Development Specialist(s) at your area Child Care Resource and Referral Agency or the Montana Early Childhood Project at 1.800.213.6310 for additional recommendations.

## Montana Resources

### **Child Care plus+: The Center on Inclusion in Early Childhood**

**[www.ccplus.org](http://www.ccplus.org)**

The Child Care plus+ mission is to share knowledge, foster skills, and encourage attitudes that promote inclusion as a core component of excellence in early childhood.

### **Early Childhood Project (ECP)**

**[www.mtecp.org](http://www.mtecp.org)**

The ECP is dedicated to improving and enhancing the quality and availability of services to young children and families by providing an integrated professional development system to build a knowledgeable, competent, and stable early childhood workforce.

### **Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)**

**[www.montanachildcare.org](http://www.montanachildcare.org)**

CCR&R programs are located strategically in eleven districts around Montana. They provide technical assistance, training, and coaching to early childhood programs and serve as a local resource for early childhood practitioners and parents. Each agency has its own web site.

### **Early Childhood Services Bureau (ECSB)**

**[www.bestbeginnings.mt.gov](http://www.bestbeginnings.mt.gov)**

The mission of the ECSB is to improve the quality, affordability, and accessibility of child care in Montana, with focused efforts on coordinated systems to best meet the needs of young children, their families, and professionals who work on behalf of young children and families. ECSB programs include Child Care Scholarships (assistance to low-income families), Quality Improvement (start-up, expansion, and training), Child and Adult Care Food Program, Head Start Collaboration, and School Readiness.

### **Montana Association for the Education of Young Children (MtAEYC)**

**[www.mtaeyc.org](http://www.mtaeyc.org)**

MtAEYC is a collaborative professional organization intent on impacting local, state, and national issues affecting children, families, and early care and education.

### **Montana Head Start Association (MHSA)**

**[www.headstartmt.org](http://www.headstartmt.org)**

The MHSA brings together families, staff, directors, and friends of all Head Start and Early Head Start to provide leadership, education, information, and advocacy on behalf of young children, pregnant women, and families throughout Montana.

### **Office of Public Instruction**

**[www.opi.mt.gov](http://www.opi.mt.gov)**

The OPI administers public education from Kindergarten through Grade 12 for Montana's children. The OPI is committed to equal opportunity and non-discriminatory access to all of their programs and services.



# Supplemental Resources (continued)

## Montana Resources (continued)

### Parents, Let's Unite for Kids (PLUK)

[www.pluk.org](http://www.pluk.org)

PLUK is a private, nonprofit organization formed in 1984 by parents of children with disabilities and chronic illnesses in the state of Montana for the purpose of information, support, training and assistance to aid their children at home, school and as adults.

## National Resources

### Administration for Children and Families (ACF)

[www.acf.hhs.gov](http://www.acf.hhs.gov)

The ACF is a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The ACF promotes the economic and social well-being of families, children, individuals, and communities across the nation. The Offices of Child Care and Head Start information can be found on this web site.

### American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)

[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

The AAP is an organization of 60,000 pediatricians committed to the attainment of optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults.

### Center for Early Literacy Learning (CELL)

[www.earlyliteracylearning.org](http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org)

CELL promotes the adoption and sustained use of evidence-based early literacy practices.

### Child Care and Early Education Research Connections

[www.childcareresearch.org](http://www.childcareresearch.org)

Research Connections offers a comprehensive, up-to-date, and easy-to-use collection of more than 20,000 resources from the many disciplines related to child care and early education.

### Child Trends

[www.childtrends.org](http://www.childtrends.org)

Child Trends is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center that studies children at all stages of development.

### Children's Defense Fund (CDF)

[www.childrensdefense.org](http://www.childrensdefense.org)

The mission of the CDF is to ensure every child a Healthy Start, a Head Start, a Fair Start, a Safe Start, and a Moral Start in life and successful passage to adulthood with the help of caring families and communities.

### Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)

[www.csefel.vanderbilt.edu](http://www.csefel.vanderbilt.edu)

CSEFEL is a national resource center that disseminates research and evidence-based practices to promote the social emotional development and school readiness of young children birth to age 5 through use of the Pyramid Model.

# Supplemental Resources (continued)

## National Resources (continued)

### Division of Early Childhood (DEC)

[www.dec-sped.org](http://www.dec-sped.org)

This organization promotes policies and advancement of evidence-based practices to support the optimal development of children with special needs.

### National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)

[www.nafcc.org](http://www.nafcc.org)

NAFCC administers the accreditation program for family and group child care.

### National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

[www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

NAEYC is the world's largest organization working on behalf of young children with nearly 80,000 members, a national network of more than 300 state and local Affiliates, and a growing global alliance of like-minded organizations.

### National Association for Sport and Physical Education

[www.aahperd.org/naspe](http://www.aahperd.org/naspe)

NASPE's mission: enhance knowledge, improve professional practice, and increase support for high-quality physical education, sport, and physical activity programs including Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children from Birth to Age 5, 2nd edition, (2009).

### National Center for Cultural Competence

[www.nccc.georgetown.edu](http://www.nccc.georgetown.edu)

NCCC mission: increase the capacity of health care and mental health care programs to design, implement, and evaluate culturally and linguistically competent service delivery systems to address growing diversity, persistent disparities, and promote health and mental health equity. Note the "Self-Assessment Checklist for Personnel Providing Services and Supports In Early Intervention and Early Childhood Settings."

### National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY)

[www.nichcy.org](http://www.nichcy.org)

NICHCY serves the nation as a central source of information on disabilities in infants, toddlers, children, and youth. Here, you'll also find easy-to-read information on IDEA, the law authorizing early intervention services and special education. State Resource Sheets help you connect with the disability agencies and organizations in your state.

### National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC)

[www.nectac.org](http://www.nectac.org)

NECTAC's mission: strengthen service systems to ensure that children with disabilities (birth through five) and their families receive and benefit from high quality, culturally appropriate, and family-centered supports and services.

### National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education

[www.nrckids.org](http://www.nrckids.org)

NRC provides health and safety resources for parents, child care providers, consultants, regulators, and others. working with child care and early education settings.

# Supplemental Resources (continued)

## National Resources (continued)

### Public Broadcasting Service (PBS)

[www.pbs.org](http://www.pbs.org)

PBS offers resources and programs for kids, parents, and teachers, including information on activities and lesson plans for children.

### Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI)

[www.challengingbehavior.org](http://www.challengingbehavior.org)

TACSEI takes the research that shows which practices improve the social-emotional outcomes for young children with, or at risk for, delays or disabilities and creates FREE products and resources to help decision-makers, caregivers, and service providers apply these best practices.

### The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (PITC)

[www.pitc.org](http://www.pitc.org)

The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers seeks to ensure that America's infants get a safe, healthy, emotionally secure, and intellectually rich start in life.

### Zero to Three: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families

[www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

One of the nation's leading resources for parents and teachers on the first three years of life.

## Additional Resources

**American Academy Of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. 2011. *Caring for our children: National health and safety performance standards; Guidelines for early care and education programs. 3rd edition.* Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; Washington, DC: American Public Health Association.**

Also available at <http://nrckids.org>.

**Aronson, S. (Editor). (2012). *Healthy Young Children: A Manual for Programs, 5th Edition.* Washington, D.C.: NAEYC.**

This manual aligns with and contains content adapted with permission from *Caring for Our Children*, 3rd edition. References to the scientific evidence supporting the performance standards and guidelines contained in *Caring for Our Children* appear at the end of each of its chapters.

**Bee, H., Boyd, D, and Hartman, S (Ed). (2007). *The Developing Child, 11th Edition.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.**

This book is a best-selling topical child development book known for its personal, conversational writing style; balanced coverage of both theory and application; and strong emphasis on culture.

# Supplemental Resources (continued)

## Additional Resources (continued)

**Bullard, J. (2010).** *Creating Environments for Learning: Birth to Age Eight*. Columbus, OH: Merrill Publishing.

This textbook “combines ‘the basics’ or foundational information about how to arrange an environment with an exploration of the characteristics and abundant examples of centers rich with materials and possibilities.”

**Chang, Hedy N. (2006).** *Are We Supporting Diversity? A Tool for Reflection and Dialogue*. Work/Family Directions, Inc. and California Tomorrow. The Pathways to Cultural Competence Program Checklist is adapted from this resource. Available at [www.mtaeyc.org](http://www.mtaeyc.org).

**Colker, L.J. (March 2008).** *Twelve Characteristics of Effective Early Childhood Teachers*. NAEYC Beyond the Journal, YC on the Web.

This article summarizes an attempt to identify some of the key characteristics early childhood teachers need to excel in their job. Reflecting on their practice, 43 early childhood educators identified characteristics they believe are integral to effective teaching.

**Copple, C. and Bredekamp, S. (Editors). (2009).** *Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood programs: Serving children from birth through age 8, Third Edition*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC.

DAP has been an essential resource for the early child care field. Fully revised and expanded, the 2009 version comes with a supplementary CD containing readings on key topics, plus video examples showing developmentally appropriate practice in action.

**Harms, T., Clifford, R., and Cryer, D.** *Environment Rating Scales*. New York: Teachers College Press.

The scales are designed to assess various interactions that go on in a classroom between staff and children, staff, parents, and other adults, among the children themselves, and the interactions children have with the many materials and activities in the environment, as well as those features, such as space, schedule and materials that support these interactions. The various scales are available at <http://ers.fpg.unc.edu/>

- \* **ECERS-R** (2005) - The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised: A thorough revision of the ECERS, designed to assess group programs for preschool-kindergarten aged children, from 2 through 5 years of age.
- \* **ITERS-R** (2006) - The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised: A thorough revision of the ITERS, designed to assess group programs for children from birth to 2 ½ years of age.
- \* **FCCERS-R** (2007) - The Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale-Revised: A thorough revision of the FCCERS, designed to assess family child care programs conducted in a provider's home.
- \* **SACERS** (1995) - The School-Age Care Environment Rating Scale: Designed to assess before and after school group care programs for school-age children, 5 to 12 years of age. Includes supplementary items for programs enrolling children with disabilities.

## Supplemental Resources (continued)

**Lutton, A. (Editor). (2012). *Advancing the early childhood profession: NAEYC standards and guidelines for early childhood professional development*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC**

This volume organizes current NAEYC position statements that describe the core professional preparation standards and Code of Ethical conduct and presents them alongside NAEYC documents that support states as they build professional development systems.

**Talon, T.N. and Jorde Bloom, P. (2009). *Business Administration Scale for Family Child Care (BAS)*. NY: Teachers College Press.**

The BAS is a reliable and easy-to-administer tool for measuring the overall quality of business and professional practices in family child care settings. The BAS reflects the growing professional consensus that the quality of family child care is determined by more than a provider's nurturing heart and caring interactions with children.

**Talon, T.N. and Jorde Bloom, P. (2011). *Program Administration Scale (PAS): Measuring Early Childhood Leadership and Management, Second Edition*. NY: Teachers College Press.**

The PAS is designed to reliably measure and improve the leadership and management practices of center-based programs—the only instrument of its kind to focus exclusively on organization-wide administrative issues.

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*Competence is possessing skill and knowledge that allows us to do something successfully. It also describes the ability to apply prior experience to new situations with good effect. Our competency usually increases over time as we acquire more information and ability through inquiry, observation, and participation.*

*When we feel competent, we can greet new environments with calm and confidence. Our competency helps those around us feel more comfortable and secure and it inspires them to seek knowledge and skill in their own domain.*

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