

Core Body of Knowledge

New York State's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Educators



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INTRODUCTION

The Core Body of Knowledge: New York State's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Educators was written for professionals who work directly with young children (lead teachers, aides, paraprofessionals, itinerant teachers, classroom volunteers when applicable, family child care providers); directors and program administrators; those involved with training organizations; teacher education programs (college professors, field supervisors); those involved with policy and advocacy initiatives (local and state agencies, policymakers, early childhood advocates); those involved with professional development systems, and any others working to elevate this field and improve the quality of early childhood education. It outlines recommended practices for professionals who work with young children. These practices offer a road map for building meaningful relationships with children, families and colleagues, for creating nurturing, stimulating environments, and for developing oneself as a professional in this incredibly important field. The overarching goals and purposes of the *Core Body of Knowledge* are:

- To inform the daily practice of professionals who work directly with young children, and to promote self-reflection and intentional professional development planning;
- To guide program administrators and directors in assessing staff performance, identifying areas for professional development, and creating/reviewing job descriptions;
- To aid training organizations in evaluating and developing professional development opportunities;
- To assist teacher education programs in assessing, coordinating, and designing course content that will fulfill competency needs and facilitate transfer and articulation agreements;
- To support local and state agencies in their quest to develop policy, initiatives, and funding decisions that improve the competency of early childhood professionals;
- To support public and private investments, incentives, and initiatives that encourage and facilitate professional competency.

The *Core Body of Knowledge* is organized in seven **core competency areas**: 1. Child Growth and Development; 2. Family and Community Relationships; 3. Observation and Assessment; 4. Environment and Curriculum; 5. Health, Safety, and Nutrition; 6. Professionalism and Leadership; and 7. Administration and Management. Within each competency area are **core competencies**. Examples of related behaviors and skills help to describe and clarify each core competency.

Peeling back the layers of each core competency would reveal a complex synthesis of factual and conceptual knowledge, dispositions (attitudes, values, beliefs, perspectives), as well as the ability to implement specific strategies and approaches. In order to effectively encourage children’s social and emotional development for example, a professional must possess an understanding of theories of social and emotional development, exhibit particular dispositions like empathy and caring, and be able to implement specific strategies and practices (i.e., those associated with helping children cope with separation). Because of this complexity, the competencies are not organized in terms of level, as was the case in previous editions. Instead, readers are encouraged to consider the competencies as recommended practices, assess their level of competency, and consider how they might build and/or enrich skill and ability toward greater mastery. Early childhood educators advance along a continuum of practice over time, demonstrating these competencies with greater sophistication as they acquire more knowledge and experience, and develop necessary dispositions.

Directors and program administrators are encouraged to reflect on the competencies and consider how policies and practices within their program are aligned with the *Core Body of Knowledge*. The competencies will also help program leaders avoid a “one-size-fits-all approach” to professional development. Factors such as career stage, personal history, and educational background influence staff members’ performance as well as desired career trajectory. Each staff member needs developmentally appropriate and individualized learning. Directors and administrators will want to use the Core Competency Assessment Tool and Professional Development Planning Tool in the back of this book, as a basis for supervisory discussions, performance appraisals, and staff development planning that is responsive to the needs of individual learners.

Higher education faculty will want to use the *Core Body of Knowledge* to inform coursework, including fieldwork and evaluation of student competence. Courses that have already been developed should be aligned to the Core Competency Areas. Early Childhood Education departments might consider the full landscape of their course offerings and identify which areas of the *Core Body of Knowledge* are not addressed. Such a survey might provide useful for future course development. As an assignment, early childhood education students might put together a portfolio that demonstrates their understanding of essential competencies. Further, faculty advisors are encouraged to use the core competencies to guide their observations and discussions with student teachers, using the Professional Development Planning Tool to set achievable, measurable goals with the teachers they support.

Providers of professional development will use the *Core Body of Knowledge* to reflect on their knowledge and skills and to plan for their own professional development as they integrate the competencies into their training outlines and actual presentations. It is essential that professional development providers including coaches, consultants, and mentors use the *Core Body of Knowledge* to assess learning needs and as the foundation for curriculum development and/or individualized work with early childhood professionals.

Professionals who work directly with young children have a variety of ways to use the *Core Body of Knowledge*. Some will use the document as a self-assessment and chart their own career development based on their strengths, interests, and areas of opportunity. Others might choose to consider just one area or competency at a time, with or without the Core Competency Assessment Tool, and reflect on their own knowledge and skills. They can identify areas of strength, as well as what they would like to learn more about, practice, and improve. The content of the *Core Body of Knowledge* might prompt some to form informal study or discussion groups. And all early childhood professionals are encouraged to use the Core Competency Assessment Tool and Professional Development Planning Tool in conjunction with a performance appraisal with their supervisor or in consultation with a mentor, faculty advisor, or coach.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation criteria and the DEC Recommended Practices provided the foundation for these competencies.

CORE BELIEFS

Several core beliefs served as the foundation for the writing of this document and exist at the heart of all seven of the competency areas:

- Children are born ready to learn.
- Every human being is a unique individual, with diverse modes of learning and expression as well as interests and strengths.
- Children are worthy of the same respect as adults.
- Children’s needs for shelter and for physical, intellectual, emotional, and social nourishment must be met for them to grow, develop, and learn to their fullest potential.
- Children have the right to secure, trusting relationships with adults and to safe, nurturing environments.
- Children learn through play.
- Children construct their own knowledge based on their curiosity and driven by their interests. This active construction is facilitated by interaction with adults and other children.
- Children’s learning is active and follows a recurring path: awareness, exploration, inquiry, and application.
- Children learn best when exposed to and engaged in high-quality environments, interactions, and relationships.
- Children learn best when the adults in their life work in partnership with one another.
- All children and their families, regardless of their ethnic origins, value systems, faiths, customs, languages, and compositions, must be equally respected.
- Families and children have the right to support systems that foster their growth and development.
- Teaching and learning are dynamic, integrated, and reciprocal processes.

1 CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT



Solid knowledge of how children grow and develop is the cornerstone of quality early childhood practice. It lays the foundation for designing environments and curriculum, for observing and assessing, and for integrating diverse learners. Professionals working with young children must understand what to expect regarding children's range of abilities so as to be able to plan appropriate sequences of action, adjust teaching strategies, and pose manageable tasks and challenges to extend learning for all children.

In addition to being knowledgeable about the theories that identify general sequences of human development, early care and education professionals must understand the unique value of each individual child as well as the impact of culture and the expectations of families. It is the complexity of these components and how they interact that makes the work of early childhood professionals such a complex and worthy endeavor.

1

CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

CORE COMPETENCIES

The professional working with young children:

- 1.1 Applies the cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation to support children's healthy development.
- 1.2 Encourages children's social and emotional development.
- 1.3 Helps children achieve self-regulation and acquire coping skills.
- 1.4 Supports children's gross, fine, and graphomotor development.
- 1.5 Supports children's cognitive development.
- 1.6 Supports children's language and literacy development.
- 1.7 Encourages and supports English Language Learners.
- 1.8 Facilitates children's play to encourage motor, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development.
- 1.9 Supports children with special needs and their families.

1.1 Applies the cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation to support children's healthy development

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Uses observation and assessment to understand children's strengths and interests and the skills they are working to master
- b Collaborates with families and related professionals to create goals for individual children and for groups of children
- c Plans before implementing activities and interventions
- d Implements opportunities for children to learn and practice skills
- e Evaluates how well the experiences they plan meet children's needs and interests
- f Uses checklists and other assessment tools to track children's development
- g Gathers and labels documentation related to development
- h Engages in communication with families about their child's development
- i When appropriate, identifies children who may benefit from further professional support
- j When necessary, acquires the professional support they need to help children be successful
- k Implements and evaluates the effectiveness of interventions, modifications and accommodations to help children meet developmental and learning goals
- l When appropriate, contributes to writing, reviewing and/or implementing Individual Family Service Plans (IFSP) and Individualized Education Plans (IEP) goals that are aligned with The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children Recommended Practices

1.2 Encourages children's social and emotional development

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Considers temperament and individual differences when interacting with children and planning experiences
- b Creates a climate and daily schedule that encourages trust and social interaction with other children and adults
- c Helps children cope with separation and transitions
- d Uses tone, words, and gestures to let children know they are respected
- e Provides opportunities for children to help, to make choices, and to do things for themselves
- f Recognizes children's effort rather than their accomplishments, intelligence, or fixed characteristics
- g Acknowledges when children exert self-discipline and self-control
- h Finds ways to help children feel successful, identify and pursue passions, and develop a sense of personal identity
- i Uses empathy to help children recognize and acknowledge their emotions
- j Helps children value their ethnic and cultural traditions
- k Encourages children to be responsible, compassionate, inclusive, and appreciate each other's strengths
- l Helps children build on their strengths and work on their challenges
- m Models cooperative work, critical thinking, effective problem-solving, and helps children resolve conflict
- n Encourages cooperative work and play

1.3 Helps children achieve self-regulation and acquire coping skills

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Investigates and provides for children’s sensory preferences
- b** Provides an adequate level of stimulation for children, keeping them interested without overwhelming them
- c** Responds promptly to children’s signals, needs, and energy levels
- d** Reads children’s cues and responds by adjusting expectations and activities
- e** Creates an environment and provides strategies that help children to:
 - Manage strong emotions and calm themselves
 - Focus their attention to remain actively engaged with activities and materials
 - Read the cues of the environment to learn how to respond appropriately
 - Cope with fear, anger, and frustration
 - Use language to communicate their needs
 - Shift their perspective and take on the perspective of others
 - Use problem-solving and conflict resolution strategies

1.4 Supports children’s gross, fine, and graphomotor development

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Provides the appropriate environments, toys, materials, equipment and instruction to encourage a variety and range of motor skills
- b** Helps children master self-help skills like eating, toileting, and dressing
- c** Creates opportunities for children to practice skills that develop coordination, balance, movement, and strength:
 - Locomotor skills: rolling, crawling, walking, running, jumping, hopping, galloping, sliding, skipping, leaping
 - Stability skills: turning, twisting, bending, stretching, reaching, lifting, balancing
 - Object control: throwing, catching, kicking, striking, trapping, dribbling, ball rolling
 - Activities that cross the midline (i.e., easel painting, clapping pattern games)
- d** Leads physical activities at a moderate to vigorous level
- e** Provides opportunities and activities that strengthen hand and finger muscles, as well as coordination
- f** Makes sure that indoor and outdoor environments allow children to move freely
- g** Ensures that children spend time each day in outdoor gross motor play
- h** Supports children in their pursuit of reasonable physical challenges
- i** Provides children with opportunities and materials that foster sensory integration
- j** Adapts physical activities to the skill and developmental level of the children as well as to the environment (i.e., backyard, gym, classroom, living room)

1.5 Supports children's cognitive development

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Analyzes and supports children's symbolic play development
- b Encourages perspective-taking
- c Helps children learn to problem-solve
- d Supports and provides strategies to children that enable them to communicate their understanding in a variety of modalities (speaking, visual art, movement, drama, etc.)
- e Plans experiences based on children's interests and skills and asks open-ended questions that encourage critical and divergent thinking
- f Helps children to make and refine connections
- g Helps children to develop and evaluate theories
- h Encourages children to be enthusiastic and curious about their world and each other's thinking

1.6 Supports children's language

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Creates a print-rich and conversation-rich environment
- b Uses precise, clear language
- c Uses a rich, developmentally appropriate vocabulary
- d Engages in conversations with children on topics that include their experiences and interests
- e Looks for ways in which pre-verbal and non-verbal children initiate communication and responds appropriately using gestures, vocalizations, words, pictures, and/or assistive technologies
- f Helps children extend both verbal and non-verbal conversations
- g Provides a reasonable response time for all children and specific examples of how they expect children to participate
- h Provides numerous, varied opportunities to develop vocabulary including conversations, investigations, field trips, books, etc.
- i Reads aloud to children every day
- j Encourages children to share their opinions and provides strategies that help them to articulate their opinions
- k Validates and supports children's expression using various forms of documentation including video, dictation, photography, audio recording, etc.

1.7 Encourages and supports English Language Learners

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Provides opportunities for children to experience oral and written communication in a language that their family uses and understands
- b Helps children to see that knowing more than one language is an asset
- c Provides meaningful ways for children to develop competence with the English language
- d Supports continued development of the primary language(s)
- e Respects diversity in culture and language as differences rather than deficiencies
- f Respects individual differences in language-learning style
- g Makes adjustments and/or provides the support necessary to help the bilingual/multilingual child succeed:
 - Appropriately uses props, visual aids, and body language
 - Labels objects and materials in English and the child's primary language
 - Uses repetition, pauses, short sentences, and frequent comprehension checks
 - Designates a peer to help the bilingual/ multilingual child find materials and resources
 - Uses role play and cooperative group work to increase communication opportunities
 - Accepts children's best efforts to communicate in the second language
 - Provides descriptions of what the bilingual/multilingual child is doing
 - Allows the bilingual/multilingual child to observe without the pressure to respond

1.8 Facilitates children’s play to encourage motor, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Ensures that children initiate and design their own play
- b Creates an environment that invites children to play (i.e., places relevant props near the dramatic play areas)
- c Responds to children’s needs and interests as they play
- d Exercises caution when joining children’s play so as not to disrupt their process and natural learning experiences
- e Teaches children how to enter a play group, how to invite other children to play, and how to organize play with their peers
- f Teaches children how to be peer models for play
- g Provides support and structure to individual children during unstructured play times
- h Assists children in sharing toys and materials with one another and teaches the appropriate social exchanges for turn-taking
- i Teaches children to plan their play, and positively reinforces them for planning and for following through on their plan
- j When working in the child’s home, engages caregivers to join in the child’s play and to involve siblings and/or other children

1.9 Supports children with special needs and their families

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Applies the principles of family-centered practice
- b Recognizes the signs of possible atypical development and health problems
- c Honors children's and families' rights according to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and other applicable laws
- d Follows through on their roles and responsibilities pertaining to IFSPs and IEPs
- e Applies strategies for modifying and adapting curriculum, materials, instruction, and the environment to meet individual needs
- f Helps families access relevant community supports and resources

2

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS



The composition of the American family has been consistently changing over time, and the State of New York embodies this demographic shift. Professionals working with young children and their families must recognize and respect their cultures, ethnicities, languages, values, faiths, and belief systems, and thus be able to effectively support children's development and learning.

Family, in any form, is the first group a child comes in contact with upon birth. The family sustains the child's growth and development, begins the processes of socialization and self-regulation, and provides the first learning environment.

Professionals working with young children must acknowledge the role families play in every child's life and strive to form respectful partnerships to generate trust and open relationships so that children thrive in settings outside of their own homes.

2 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

CORE COMPETENCIES

The professional working with young children:

- 2.1 Respects families and is responsive to language, culture, family characteristics, needs, concerns, and priorities.
- 2.2 Communicates regularly, respectfully, and effectively with families.
- 2.3 Provides families with opportunities to learn and develop skills to help their children achieve desired outcomes at the program, at home, and in the community.
- 2.4 Shares power with families and involves them in decision-making.
- 2.5 Helps connect families with needed resources and services.
- 2.6 Supports families through transitions within and between programs.

2.1 Respects families and is responsive to language, culture, family characteristics, needs, concerns, and priorities

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Treats families with dignity and respect
- b** Refrains from passing judgment on families that may depart from his or her standards or expectations
- c** Treats parents and family members as individual adults
- d** Works to identify and uphold families' hopes and dreams for their child
- e** Recognizes parents as the primary influence on their children
- f** Considers families or parents as central; the most important decision-makers in a child's life and honors their decision-making style
- g** Works to identify and empower the strengths and competence of the family
- h** Works in partnership with families to identify goals for their child
- i** Works with families in an individualized and flexible manner, including around parents' work schedules
- j** Takes time to learn about families' race, religion, home language, family structure, employment situation, other child care situations, as well as their values and beliefs about childhood, education, and intervention
- k** Responds sensitively to parents' concerns, ways of coping, and child-rearing practices
- l** Respects families' boundaries
- m** Engages in courteous behavior with families (being on-time, keeping appointments, returning communication)
- n** Invites family members to include the people they would like to participate in meetings and activities
- o** Is open to learning and new information about family relationships
- p** Participates in cultural events in the community to better understand the families with whom they work

2.2 Communicates regularly, respectfully, and effectively with families

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Shares and discusses the program’s philosophy about provider/family relationships with families on a regular basis
- b** Is accessible and easy to reach
- c** Communicates clear and complete information in a manner that matches the family’s style, preferred language, level of understanding, and preferred means of communication
- d** Communicates to and about families in a positive way
- e** Communicates regularly with families; to share the accomplishments of the child, to answer questions, and to discuss routines, activities, and progress
- f** Talks with families about their lives, work, parenting, problems, etc.
- g** Follows rules regarding confidentiality
- h** Uses tools like communication journals as well as technology to share information with parents and for parents to share information about how children are doing at home
- i** Uses surveys to elicit information and feedback from families
- j** Listens to families’ questions and responds honestly with accurate information
- k** Solicits information from families about what “works” for them so that they can consider implementing those suggestions in their classroom or program
- l** Uses an interpreter when necessary to ensure clear communication with families
- m** Seeks input and collaboration from fathers as well as from mothers or other caregivers
- n** When appropriate, communicates the possibility of a developmental delay or special need sensitively and confidentially, providing documentation and explanation for the concern, and suggesting next steps and information about resources for assessment

- 2.3 Provides families with opportunities to learn and develop skills to help their children achieve desired outcomes at the program, at home, and in the community

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Takes time with families and encourages them to find their own way to support their child as he or she develops
- b Offers recommendations, strategies, and tools (i.e., libraries, museums, and parks) to families only when requested or welcomed, and matches recommendations with the families' interests and priorities
- c Makes recommendations about strategies to use at home that preserve the parent/caregiver role
- d Works with families to embed teaching and learning opportunities in natural ways throughout the child's day
- e Helps families to implement easy-to-use tools and strategies at home and takes a planned approach to achieving desired outcomes

2.4 Shares responsibility, collaborates with families, and involves them in decision-making

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Values families and welcomes them into the classroom or program setting
- b Works with families as equal partners
- c Collaborates with families to identify children's strengths, interests, and goals
- d Invites families to share special interests or talents with the classroom or program
- e Listens to families' suggestions
- f Invites families on excursions into the community and field trips
- g Gives families choices about communication systems
- h Plans conferences, events, and activities that are based on family interest, and schedules them for times that are convenient for families
- i Encourages families to participate in program decision-making

2.5 Helps connect families with needed resources and services

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Implements creative ways to provide families with support and information (i.e., electronic newsletters, informational meetings, bulletin boards)
- b** Empowers families, helping them to access needed resources such as other professionals, community resources, government services, and community activities
- c** Provides opportunities for family-to-family gatherings and events
- d** Helps families take advantage of parent education and training opportunities in the program and outside of the program
- e** Encourages families to identify informal supports like shared babysitting, phone trees, etc.
- f** When applicable, helps families understand the special education referral and evaluation processes

2.6 Supports families through transitions within and between programs

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Facilitates initial adjustment from home to program
- b Helps children adjust to new schedules and routines
- c Provides information about transitions, including a timeline of activities, whenever applicable
- d Helps families and children prepare for a change
- e When appropriate, arranges family visits to other potential programs
- f Shares information with staff of the new program

3 OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT



Observation and assessment form an ongoing cycle that is the basis for making educational decisions. Both must be done intentionally and provide a rationale for curriculum planning, adjustments, and accommodations. Professionals working with young children must observe constantly and maintain documentation of such observations, which must take place in all spaces, at all times, and over time so as to form the most complete picture possible of a child. Highly effective educators find the best ways to record essential information on the children they serve.

Assessment, the systematic collection of information and the subsequent analysis of a child's growth and development processes, must also take place continually over time and utilize tools that are congruent with what is known about developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive practice.

The cycle of observation and assessment informs curriculum planning and evaluation of educational goals for children and programs.

3 OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

CORE COMPETENCIES

The professional working with young children:

- 3.1 Uses observation and assessment tools to support children's development and learning.
- 3.2 Practices responsible assessment.
- 3.3 Builds positive, productive assessment partnerships with families and colleagues.
- 3.4 Practices responsible reporting of assessment results.
- 3.5 Uses observation and assessment to plan and modify environments, curriculum, and teaching.
- 3.6 Practices responsible formal evaluation and reporting procedures.

3.1 Uses observation and assessment tools to support children's development and learning

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Assesses children's progress across all developmental areas
- b Uses multiple methods for data-collection (i.e., work samples, anecdotal records, photographs, frequency counts, checklists, videotapes, etc.)
- c Uses multiple sources to assess children (i.e., their conversations, misunderstandings, questions, play, work samples, etc.)
- d Develops and/or uses assessments that are aligned with curriculum or development goals and have clear relevance for daily planning and curriculum development
- e Regularly reflects on whether assessment methods provide necessary information
- f Uses assessments to plan and modify environments, curriculum, and teaching
- g Maintains confidentiality and only shares assessment results with parents' written consent

3.2 Practices responsible assessment

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Assesses children using tools they are fully qualified and trained to use, especially in the case of formal assessment
- b** Reviews and considers information the family has provided about their child, as well as information provided by other programs or teachers, before beginning an assessment
- c** Encourages families to share the concerns, hopes, and developmental goals they have for their child
- d** Ensures that assessment procedures are culturally and linguistically appropriate
- e** Ensures that multiple measures are used to assess children (i.e., observations, curriculum-based assessments, work samples, clinical opinion, etc.)
- f** Accommodates children's physical, temperamental, and sensory differences when choosing assessment materials and procedures
- g** When possible, assesses children during familiar routines with familiar materials, people, and contexts rather than only in controlled situations
- h** Makes sure children are familiar with the assessor(s)
- i** Considers children's strengths and needs across all developmental domains when giving an assessment and interpreting results
- j** Uses assessment tools that are relevant to curriculum or program planning
- k** Informs families about state Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education rules and regulations regarding assessment

3.3 Builds positive, productive assessment partnerships with families and colleagues

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Demonstrates sensitivity to family culture, values, home language, and literacy level when communicating about assessment procedures or results with families
- b Engages families in discussion about the program's philosophy of assessment, the assessment tool or tools being used, and family participation in assessment
- c Before beginning an assessment, asks families about their child's interests, favorite toys, special abilities and needs and uses this information during assessment
- d When relevant, involves families in assessment procedures
- e Provides family members and other involved colleagues with an opportunity to review assessment results before discussing them at conferences or meetings
- f Supports family requests/decisions to bring other individuals to meetings to discuss their child's progress

3.4 Practices responsible reporting of assessment results

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Shares assessment results in a manner that is understandable for families (i.e., uses the family's dominant language, limited jargon, specific information about the child rather than only scores)
- b Is sensitive to differences in processing modes when discussing assessment results with families
- c Reports strengths as well as areas of need
- d Writes narratives and reports that consider the interrelatedness of developmental domains (i.e., a child with a language delay may not be able to express all that he/she may know)
- e Collaborates with families to develop goals and plans based on assessment results
- f Shares and addresses the limitations of assessment
- g Maintains confidentiality and only shares assessment results with parents' written consent

3.5 Uses observation and assessment to plan and modify environments, curriculum, and teaching

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a With families, assesses and adjusts developmental and learning goals to meet the changing needs of the child and family
- b Pays close attention to the level of support a child needs to perform a task and acknowledges even small amounts of progress
- c Conducts ongoing assessments to ensure the environment, curriculum, and approaches to learning meet children's needs
- d Regularly evaluates whether children generalize what they've learned to other contexts and people

3.6 Practices responsible formal evaluation and reporting procedures

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Identifies one team member who will act as a single point of contact for families regarding a child's assessment
- b Plans the time, location, and assessment strategies with families
- c Follows established timelines for initiating and completing assessments, the evaluation process, reporting, and meeting with families
- d When working as part of an assessment team, reviews information about a child's birth and developmental history, as well as information from other sources, before beginning assessment
- e Before creating an IFSP or IEP, requests that families share the concerns, hopes, and developmental goals they have for their children
- f Assesses children's strengths and needs across all developmental domains
- g When applicable, develops IFSP and/or IEP goals with families at the IFSP/IEP meeting rather than having pre-written goals
- h Organizes reports by developmental domains
- i Adheres to New York State legal and procedural requirements and meets DEC Recommended Practice guidelines for responsible assessment

The behaviors and skills listed above are specific to professionals working as part of an assessment team to evaluate children's need for additional support services using formal assessment tools and evaluation procedures. It is expected that these professionals exhibit these behaviors and skills in addition to those listed in Core Competencies 3.1-3.5.

4

ENVIRONMENT AND CURRICULUM



The essence of the work of an early childhood educator lies in the relationship between the educator and child, in combination with learning experiences and nurturing environments. The higher the quality of these relationships and experiences, the better the outcomes for the children. Ensuring quality learning experiences involves careful planning, implementation, and evaluation not only of the content of such experiences, but also of the physical and social settings that surround them.

Environment and curriculum are interdependent parts of a continuum of care and education in early childhood settings. Decisions made in regards to one impact the other. Their foundations lie on the knowledge of children's growth and development as well as on their interests and strengths. Combined, these elements make up what is known as developmentally appropriate and emotionally responsive practice. Furthermore, best practices in early childhood education prepare young children for successful futures as contributing members of society.

In thinking of environment and curriculum, an early education must encompass several aspects. First, both environment and curriculum must be designed *for* the children. Secondly, learning takes place everywhere, so in preparing the environment and planning curriculum professionals must include in their thinking all areas in the early childhood setting – indoors and outdoors. Thirdly, time plays a substantial role in learning and development, and professionals who work with young children must always keep in mind that respecting the child's need to repeat, revisit, and reflect on earlier experiences leads to deeper understandings and consequently richer learning. Lastly, aesthetically pleasing and well-designed surroundings facilitate children's relationships with people and materials, therefore laying the foundations for exploration, interaction, and meaningful connections.

4 ENVIRONMENT AND CURRICULUM

CORE COMPETENCIES

The professional working with young children:

RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

- 4.1 Creates genuine, supportive relationships with children.
- 4.2 Creates an environment that is predictable, promotes interaction and learning, and is responsive to children's needs.
- 4.3 Works to effectively and calmly address challenging behavior.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- 4.4 Creates an environment that values the inclusion of all children.
- 4.5 Fosters a sense of community by encouraging interaction, empathy, connectedness, responsibility, and independence.
- 4.6 Arranges a learning environment that is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, promotes reflection, and extends learning.
- 4.7 Arranges and facilitates the use of the physical space and materials in ways that support healthy development, self-management, and cooperation.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND MEANINGFUL CURRICULUM

- 4.8 Uses approaches to learning that build on children’s natural curiosity, deepen children’s knowledge and awareness, and sustain active engagement with ideas and materials.
- 4.9 Adopts or designs meaningful curriculum for young children.
- 4.10 Makes sound decisions for selecting and using technology and media to enhance teaching and learning.
- 4.11 Plans and implements interventions to help children meet developmental and learning goals.



4.1 Creates genuine, supportive relationships with children**BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS**

- a** Shows genuine interest in children's experiences, ideas, and work
- b** Engages in meaningful and extended conversation with individual children each day
- c** As appropriate, shares information about his or her life outside of the program or classroom with children (i.e., personal stories, interests, hobbies)
- d** Is interested in learning something that is special or important to each child
- e** Is attentive and responsive to children's needs, interests, and verbal and non-verbal cues
- f** Respects children's choices and supports them in the decision-making process
- g** Encourages children's independence
- h** Responds to children with comfort and support, and cultivates closeness and open communication
- i** Regularly engages in self-reflection regarding relationships with the children

4.2 Creates an environment that is predictable, promotes interaction and learning, and is responsive to children's needs

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Designs schedules that are predictable but flexible and reflect children's right to fresh air, physical activity, rest, and nourishment
- b Uses a steady, calm tone when providing direction and redirection to children
- c Develops group rules with children and states the rules in a positive form and not in a negative form ("Walk, please" vs. "No running")
- d Implements classroom rules with consistency
- e Consistently uses predictable signals to gain the attention of the group and regularly models the expected response
- f Uses a variety of strategies to engage children's attention and active participation
- g Engages and maintains children's attention before and during communication (i.e., giving directions, speaking, beginning an activity, requesting information)
- h Speaks slowly, concisely, and clearly when giving directions
- i Makes sure expectations for routines and tasks are clear and purposeful for all children before asking them to follow through
- j Teaches the steps involved in routines and tasks: repeats directions; provides visual support while giving directions; and uses visual and/or verbal prompts to help children follow through when necessary

4.2 Creates an environment that is predictable, promotes interaction and learning, and is responsive to children's needs (continued)

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- k** Observes and guides the whole group during transitions, rather than focusing on individual children or preparing materials
- l** Uses clear visual and auditory cues to support children during transitions
- m** Keeps transitions to a minimum and makes them short, meaningful, and consistent
- n** Uses positive guidance strategies to prevent challenging behavior from reoccurring
- o** Establishes clear, consistent, and realistic boundaries based on developmentally appropriate expectations

4.3 Works to effectively and calmly address challenging behavior

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Considers whether or not his or her expectations of behavior are appropriate for the age and development of the child
- b** Responds to challenging behavior in ways that match the child’s development
- c** Uses a consistent process of reflection and action to address challenging behavior:
 - Gathers information by asking him/herself: “What is going on?” “Where and in which situations does this behavior occur?” “What triggers this behavior?”
 - Considers various possibilities: “What might I try?” “When?” “How?”
 - Self-reflects: “Why is this happening?” “What can I change about my behavior?” “What can I change about the environment?”
 - Assesses tried actions: “Did it work?” If not, “What next?”
- d** Considers other experiences, life circumstances, and whether a child is trying to establish a sense of belonging by exhibiting challenging behavior (i.e., trying to get others to focus on them, hurting others or their things because they feel hurt, etc.) and chooses a response or solution that matches that need
- e** Considers what he or she knows about individual children’s temperament (i.e., activity level, adaptability, persistence) and responds to challenging behavior in ways that match the children’s temperament
- f** Remains calm and respectful toward the child exhibiting challenging behavior
- g** Allows natural consequences to guide children’s behavior as much as possible
- h** When appropriate, applies logical consequences that are related to the challenging behavior and its function, that are respectful to the child, and that are reasonable
- i** Intervenes immediately to stop behavior that affects safety and/or ability to learn, including bullying or rejecting others
- j** Makes sure children understand the connection between behavior and consequence

4.3 Works to effectively and calmly address challenging behavior (continued)

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- k** When a child uses challenging behavior, discusses the behavior with the child in private and in the context of expectations based on respect
- l** Teaches children more effective ways to meet their wants and needs, making the challenging behavior unnecessary
- m** Encourages children to monitor their own behavior
- n** For serious behavior challenges, seeks the assistance of an administrator, psychologist, or behavior specialist to help provide creative and effective interventions
- o** Identifies and describes the challenging behavior as a preliminary step in using a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA)
- p** Uses FBA to determine the “function” of a challenging behavior (the purpose a challenging behavior serves for the child)
- q** Identifies what happens right before (antecedent) and what happens right after (consequence) challenging behavior occurs
- r** Develops a behavior intervention plan
- s** Regularly evaluates behavior intervention plans to make appropriate modifications, accommodations, and interventions as necessary

4.4 Creates an environment that values the inclusion of all children

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Acknowledges and honors the beliefs, values, and traditions of all children
- b Ensures that books, dramatic play props, dolls, musical instruments, kitchen utensils, and other materials reflect the languages and cultures represented in the program, and uses them to counter potential bias and discrimination
- c Makes accommodations and modifications to ensure that all children participate meaningfully in the curriculum. Such supports include, but are not limited to: changing the physical environment, the social environment, and/or time demands; adapting materials; simplifying an activity; organizing for peer support; and using specialized equipment
- d Allows for children's partial participation and participation with support
- e When applicable, works with related professionals as a team to implement the accommodations and modifications recommended on a child's IFSP or IEP

4.5 Fosters a sense of community by encouraging interaction, empathy, connectedness, responsibility, and independence

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Provides children with choices and opportunities for decision-making about activities, plans and behavior
- b Arranges groups of children so that they have a visual connection to one another and can interact
- c Selects toys and materials to promote social interaction
- d Engages children in activities and experiences that encourage social interaction
- e Provides enough toys and materials to maximize play and work times and to minimize conflicts between children
- f Supports children in their efforts to communicate their ideas and feelings with peers and adults in ways that help them feel competent
- g Models for children how to care for their peers and for materials
- h Creates opportunities for children of different races, cultures, languages, and genders to work and play together
- i Provides children with the time, space, and trust to find their own way through conflict
- j Teaches children how to be communicative partners with peers who use augmentative and alternative communication

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

4.6 Arranges a learning environment that is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, promotes reflection, and extends learning

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Maintains a space that is clean, organized, and free of clutter
- b Clearly organizes materials and storage, and labels materials when helpful to children
- c Uses visual cues in the flooring or low-lying furniture to define areas for children: library, quiet corner, art area, etc.
- d Organizes displays that are thoughtfully selected and relevant, and presents them in a visually appealing way
- e Prominently displays work and artifacts that are meaningful to the children, including relevant titles, captions, or dictation
- f Places displays that children use for reference, learning, and reflection at an accessible height

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

4.7 Arranges and facilitates the use of the physical space and materials in ways that support healthy development, self-management, and cooperation

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Elicits children's input about room arrangement and materials
- b Designs the environment so that each child has a space for personal items to ensure his/her sense of belonging and security within the community
- c Ensures that walkways as well as gathering and work spaces have enough room for children to move and interact comfortably
- d Sets clear boundaries in the physical environment that help children know where centers begin and end
- e Separates noisy centers from quieter ones to help children concentrate
- f Places furniture so that various seating arrangements can be used: individual, small group, whole group
- g Includes a space for large muscle activity and movement
- h Designs a space for children to "cool off" or to be alone
- i Intentionally selects materials that foster discovery, inquiry, imagination, and creativity, and that actively support a variety of goals
- j Labels materials (when useful to children) using pictures and words, and places them so that children can access them independently
- k Includes input from families and observes children to identify children's favorite toys/materials in order to encourage engagement and interaction
- l Regularly evaluates the amount/number, relevance, and types of materials available as they relate to children's interests, development, level of stimulation, and curriculum content. Adds or removes materials as necessary
- m Adapts materials to accommodate for children with special needs

4.8 Uses approaches to learning that build on children’s natural curiosity, deepen children’s knowledge and awareness, and sustain active engagement with ideas and materials

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Assesses children’s interests, learning styles, strengths, and challenges and uses that knowledge to meet children’s instructional and social needs
- b Ensures that play is an integral part of the curriculum
- c Encourages child-directed learning, rather than learning that is dependent on adult direction
- d Attends to children’s curiosity and interests to determine how to engage them with new concepts and skills
- e Makes learning visible to children, families, colleagues, and self through documentation
- f Helps children identify and apply prior knowledge
- g Poses problems and asks questions that provoke children’s thinking and curiosity
- h Values and encourages inquiry
- i Helps children learn how to think about a topic, question, or problem, rather than what to think about it
- j Helps children express their ideas
- k Encourages children to use their bodies in dance, drama, costume, music and art
- l Ensures that children have plenty of opportunity to practice emerging skills

- 4.8 Uses approaches to learning that build on children’s natural curiosity, deepen children’s knowledge and awareness, and sustain active engagement with ideas and materials (continued)

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- m** Provides opportunities for children to revisit experiences and materials again and again so they are able to deepen their understanding
- n** Encourages and supports children to extend an activity that they show interest in
- o** Is able to put plans on hold to focus on a meaningful concept or experience that a child might introduce
- p** Adjusts the level of support he or she provides to children depending on their abilities
- q** When necessary, breaks tasks or activities down into smaller parts so that children are able to understand them and carry them out on their own
- r** Uses daily small group experiences, activities, and/or interactive read aloud to support children’s development and learning

4.9 Adopts or designs meaningful curriculum for young children**BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS**

- a** Uses curriculum as a flexible framework for planning how to meet children’s learning and developmental goals
- b** Adopts or develops curriculum based on sound understanding of child development and National Association for the Education of Young Children’s (NAEYC) Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)
- c** Implements curriculum that promotes group interaction, child-directed learning, play, and creative expression
- d** Ensures that the curriculum has clearly defined goals that are relevant to the needs and interests of the children
- e** Plans engaging experiences to help children meet curriculum goals
- f** Uses developmentally appropriate assessment to assess children’s progression toward curriculum goals
- g** Implements curriculum in ways that are responsive to families’ home culture, values, and language
- h** Selects or designs curriculum that integrates dramatic play, block building, literacy, arts, math, science, and social studies
- i** Embeds both indoor and outdoor experiences in the curriculum
- j** Invites families to share their culture with the classroom or program
- k** Plans field trips or excursions into the community or to places that reflect the cultures of the community, classroom, or program
- l** Gives children opportunities to work on integrated projects and investigations that span at least several days in length

4.10 Makes sound decisions for selecting and using technology and media to enhance teaching and learning

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Utilizes technology and media that are clearly linked to a purpose, using them to engage children in thinking, creating, problem solving, designing, inquiring, critiquing, communicating, and making connections, rather than simply to practice skills
- b Selects technology and media tools that promote interaction, communication, and collaboration
- c Considers developmental appropriateness when selecting technology and media learning tools, especially for infants and toddlers
- d Considers developmental appropriateness when selecting assistive technologies, especially for infants and toddlers
- e When making decisions for individual children, first considers the simplest and least intrusive assistive technologies
- f Includes assistive technologies in the assessment process when appropriate
- g Collaborates with families about the use of assistive technologies

4.11 Plans and implements interventions to help children meet developmental and learning goals

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Aligns intervention practices with DEC Recommended Practices
- b Bases modification, accommodation, and intervention on ongoing formal and informal assessment and observation
- c Begins interventions where the child can be successful and build upon current skills
- d Individualizes practices and goals based on the child's current behavior and abilities, the family members' views on what the child needs to learn, the specialists' views on what the child needs to learn, and the demands of the child's current environments
- e In partnership with the family, chooses to provide intervention with skills that will have the greatest impact on the child's life
- f Plans instruction and/or implements interventions to help children meet IFSP/IEP goals
- g Embeds intervention into daily routines and activities
- h Helps children generalize the skills they learn from interventions
- i Lets the child's interests guide the content for intervention
- j When providing intervention outside the child's home, ensures that family members understand how to interact with children to help them meet goals at home or in the community
- k Helps families make home routines predictable and manageable for their child
- l Collects data frequently to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and plan changes

5 HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION



Children’s safety is the first and foremost responsibility of adults who provide care for them. Safety encompasses not only the physical aspect but also the social and the emotional aspects.

Professionals working with young children must be knowledgeable of and meet all requirements dictated by laws and regulations regarding health, safety, and nutrition. These include regular maintenance of the physical environment and all materials and equipment accessible to children; familiarity with signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect and of domestic violence, as well as the course of action to take whenever necessary as mandated reporters; understanding of the importance of good nutrition to support healthy growth and physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development; and recognition of their role as advocates for policies and procedures that ensure the welfare of children and families.

5 HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

CORE COMPETENCIES

The professional working with young children:

ESSENTIAL TRAINING CONTENT

- 5.1 Has current, valid documentation of training in topics essential to children's health, safety, and nutrition.

RECORDKEEPING

- 5.2 Maintains organized, accessible, and up-to-date records related to the health, safety, and nutrition of the children in their care.

HEALTH

- 5.3 Knows and follows proper procedures as outlined by the applicable regulatory agencies.
- 5.4 Takes precautions that protect children's health and maintains a healthy learning environment.
- 5.5 Applies practices that encourage positive health behaviors and support the physical and mental well-being of children and families.

SAFETY

- 5.6 Takes appropriate precautions and follows applicable procedures to ensure a safe learning environment.
- 5.7 Is prepared for emergencies and injuries.
- 5.8 Takes appropriate food safety precautions.

NUTRITION

- 5.9 Creates safe, healthy, and enjoyable feeding and mealtime experiences for children.
- 5.10 Encourages children to adopt good nutritional habits.
- 5.11 Communicates with and provides support to families about children's nutrition and mealtime experiences.

5.1 Has current, valid documentation of training in topics essential to children's health, safety, and nutrition

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Child Abuse Identification and Prevention
- b School Violence Prevention
- c Pediatric First Aid
- d Infant and Child CPR
- e Infection Control and Preventing Infectious Diseases
- f Medication Administration Training
- g Identification and Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome
- h Identification and Prevention of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

RECORDKEEPING

5.2 Maintains organized, accessible, and up-to-date records related to the health, safety, and nutrition of the children in their care

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Maintains the confidentiality of health records to protect each child and family
- b** Makes sure that each child's health record is current
- c** Makes sure that each child's immunization record is current
- d** Has emergency contacts on file for each child and has a system to make sure that contacts are up-to-date
- e** For each child, keeps a record of people who are authorized to pick the child up from the program
- f** Maintains, understands, and keeps in an accessible location, any instructions related to children's special health needs, like allergies, asthma, urinary needs, chronic illness, etc.
- g** Keeps all permission slips authorizing non-emergency health care and giving medications
- h** Maintains, understands, and keeps in an accessible yet secure location, any paperwork related to court orders pertaining to the children in their care
- i** Monitors access to confidential records and limits access to appropriate staff with a legitimate need
- j** Keeps records of all results from screenings and assessments
- k** Maintains records of all injuries and illnesses that occur while the child is in the program
- l** Keeps records of all communication with a child's family or health provider
- m** Keeps record of any outbreak of a communicable disease
- n** Maintains own health and immunization records

HEALTH

5.3 Knows and follows proper procedures as outlined by the applicable regulatory agencies

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Diapering
- b Hand washing
- c Handling blood and other bodily fluids
- d Communicating with families about communicable diseases
- e Administering medication to children
- f Feeding
- g Tooth brushing
- h Managing soiled clothes
- i Protecting children from sun and insects

5.4 Takes precautions that protect children's health and maintains a healthy learning environment

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Provides information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed
- b If children have allergies or other health needs, maintains the environment according to the recommendations of the child's health practitioner, knows how the allergy manifests, and what to do in case of exposure
- c Assures the appropriate implementation of medical and physical care plans
- d Opens windows or uses other forms of ventilation and sanitizing to eliminate odors, rather than sprays or air fresheners
- e Washes and sanitizes children's toys regularly and whenever they have come in contact with bodily fluids
- f Especially in infant and toddler spaces, ensures that the floor surfaces used for play are clean, and uses footwear specifically for indoor use at the program
- g Uses fresh water, suitable for drinking, to fill water tables
- h Ensures that water is drained completely and replaced with fresh water for each new group of children, or that the water table allows for continuous flow and drainage of water
- i Teaches children proper hand washing procedures upon entering the classroom or program and makes sure children wash their hands before and after eating or handling food, after handling pets and other animals, after using the toilet, and after water and outdoor play
- j Makes sure that children are dressed appropriately for the weather. Clothes are dry and layered for warmth when necessary

HEALTH

5.4 Takes precautions that protect children's health and maintains a healthy learning environment (continued)

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- k** Makes sure classroom pets or other visiting animals are in good health
- l** Instructs children on safe, proper handling of pets/visiting animals and supervises children's interactions with them
- m** Does not come to work when they cannot fully participate in the program or if they have a disease that poses a risk to others in the setting

HEALTH**5.5** Applies practices that encourage positive health behaviors and support the physical and mental well-being of children and families**BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS**

- a** Posts routines and reminders such as emergency plans, hand washing techniques, diapering instructions, etc.
- b** Collects a developmental health history from families for each child that covers topics like physical health, self-care skills, and social relationships
- c** Establishes good health routines including tooth brushing, serving only healthy foods, and hand washing
- d** Makes drinking water available to children throughout the day
- e** Provides children with at least 120 minutes of gross motor activity (for children attending a full day program) each day through both structured and unstructured play
- f** Gives children opportunities to play outside every day
- g** When children cannot play outside because of weather or air quality conditions, arranges for indoor gross motor activities
- h** Maintains a quiet, calm atmosphere during rest time for children each day
- i** Ensures that children under 2 years have no screen time (TV, computers, DVDs, etc.) and that children 2-5 years have no more than 30 minutes once a week of high quality, education or movement-focused, commercial free programming, and never during meal or nap times
- j** Conducts daily checks of children's health and emotional well-being
- k** Models acceptance, helps children understand similarities and differences among people, and how to interact with all kinds of people

HEALTH

5.5 Applies practices that encourage positive health behaviors and support the physical and mental well-being of children and families (continued)

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- l** Recognizes the importance of a child's secure home base, and facilitates families' access to applicable resources for consultation about nutrition, emergencies, diagnoses, treatments and other information
- m** Creates a psychologically safe environment for all children and families
- n** Explains reasons for health-related rules to children
- o** Communicates with families each day about how their child ate, drank, slept, behaved, and voided, particularly in infant/toddler settings
- p** Creates a mutually respectful environment, and encourages families to ask questions and express concerns

SAFETY

5.6 Takes appropriate precautions and follows applicable procedures to ensure a safe learning environment

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Makes sure the physical environment (space, materials and equipment) is safe and is checked on a regular basis and follows all safety regulations as outlined by applicable regulatory agencies or programs
- b** Keeps pathways and play areas clear and free from tripping hazards
- c** Positions oneself to see all children. Counts heads throughout the day and frequently scans the room to make sure all children are present and safe
- d** Supervises infants and toddlers at all times by sight and sound
- e** Closely monitors transitions between the classroom and other areas (i.e., the playground) and checks frequently on children who are out of sight (i.e., in the bathroom, visiting the nurse's office, etc.)
- f** Ensures safe sleeping:
 - Checks the sides of cribs to be sure they are locked
 - When children are sleeping, uses direct visual and auditory monitoring, rather than relying on sound monitors
 - If working with infants, makes sure that they are placed to sleep on their backs, on a firm surface made for infant sleep that meets U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission
 - If working with infants younger than eight months of age, makes sure that cribs are free of loose blankets, stuffed toys, pillows and other objects
 - Takes all other precautions outlined by applicable New York State or New York City regulations to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

5.6 Takes appropriate precautions and follows applicable procedures to ensure a safe learning environment (continued)

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- g** Protects children from getting burned by hot liquids, foods, or tools (i.e., hot plate, oven, boiling water, etc.)
- h** Uses child-appropriate methods like dramatics and story-telling to teach children:
 - What to do in an emergency and where to get help
 - Pedestrian safety rules
 - Fire safety
 - Basic water safety rules
 - Stranger safety
 - Poison prevention
- i** When age-appropriate, involves children in creating and enforcing safety rules. Checks to make sure children understand the rules and expectations
- j** Pays extra attention to safety during field trips and neighborhood excursions
- k** Follows procedures for safe dropping off and picking up of children from the program
- l** When working in the child's home, helps families to monitor their environments for safety risks

5.7 Is prepared for emergencies and injuries

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Updates emergency contact lists regularly
- b Knows where to go if the building is evacuated
- c Posts emergency telephone numbers beside each telephone
- d Is trained in pediatric first aid, including CPR and handling a choking episode
- e Is aware of and follows emergency procedures
- f Fills out an injury report within 24 hours when a child in their care becomes injured, gives the family a copy and keeps the original in the central record of injury logs
- g Maintains a complete first aid kit
- h Carries a mobile phone when visiting parks, playgrounds and for other field trips and excursions
- i Is aware of and follows procedures for interacting with persons who pose security risks

5.8 Takes appropriate food safety precautions**BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS**

- a** Adheres to all food storage, preparation and handling requirements (including those for breast milk) as outlined by the applicable regulatory agencies and programs
- b** Maintains a list of children with food allergies and dietary restrictions, and consults this list when planning meals, menus or cooking projects
- c** Does not serve foods that can be a choking hazard (i.e., pretzels, hot dogs sliced into rounds, raw carrots, etc.)
- d** Cuts food into small pieces appropriate for each child's age and ability to chew
- e** Makes sure that children sit or are held to be fed. Does not allow children to eat lying down, in cribs, or while walking, running, or riding in vehicles. Does not use bottle props

5.9 Creates safe, healthy, and enjoyable feeding and mealtime experiences for children

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Accommodates and incorporates children's cultural and religious dietary restrictions
- b Provides time, support and opportunities for simple food preparation, self-serving, and self-feeding
- c Provides regular times for meals and snacks each day (more than two, but no longer than three hours apart)
- d Provides a balanced variety of nutritious foods that children can eat easily, and that align with recommendations from the New York State Child and Adult Care Food Program (NYS CACFP) for the ages of the children in their care
- e Encourages children to try a wide variety of foods, but does not force children to eat or place food items on their plate
- f Presents all components of the meal simultaneously, including fruit and drink
- g Is responsive to children's food preferences and respects each child's order of consumption
- h Makes sure children sit at a comfortable height in relation to the tabletop. Children's feet should touch the floor or a foot rest
- i Uses plates and utensils appropriate for children's size and skills
- j Sits and engages in conversation with children during snack and mealtimes
- k Provides enough time for children to enjoy a relaxed meal, does not leave children at the table for too long, and makes transitional activities available for children who have finished before others
- l Does not use food as punishment or as a reward

5.10 Encourages children to adopt good nutritional habits**BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS**

- a** Models healthy eating habits
- b** Encourages children to drink water throughout the day
- c** Does not offer fruit juice beyond the 4 oz., 100% juice regulated portion and no juice is offered to infants under 12 months, unless specified by the child's health care provider
- d** Feeds children or encourages children to eat when they are hungry
- e** Encourages self-regulation by helping children recognize fullness cues and responding appropriately
- f** Provides opportunities for children to experience new tastes, textures, and cultural foods
- g** Engages children in discussion about foods that help them grow and stay healthy, and how to choose snacks and meals wisely
- h** Guides children to investigate the sources of the foods they eat

5.11 Communicates with and provides support to families about children's nutrition and mealtime experiences

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Works with each family to understand the nutritional needs of their child and to make sure that the food provided at the program meets those needs
- b** Shares the program's menu with families
- c** Supports a mother's decision to breastfeed and accommodates breastfeeding mothers, including storing milk and providing space
- d** Provides families of infants and toddlers with a log of the types of foods and the quantities eaten each day (if applicable)

6 PROFESSIONALISM AND LEADERSHIP



Professionalism in the early care and education field requires a commitment to providing the highest possible quality services to children and their families, to life-long personal and professional growth and learning, and to ethical conduct. These are the basis for making educated decisions and being able to reflect on and adjust planning and practice.

Professionalism involves collaboration and embracing responsibility. It involves having the curiosity and drive to search for information in order to gain an understanding of pertinent issues, especially those pertaining to the education of children. It also involves the ability to advocate for children and for high-quality early care and education.

Leadership denotes not only holding formal positions of authority, but also possessing the qualities of vision, skill, and initiative that provide inspiration and a sense of security to others. Leadership is often evident in individuals regardless of their title. Professionals who exhibit such qualities and utilize them to facilitate the growth and development of others are leaders and carry the ensuing responsibilities of actively helping to shape the profession. Early childhood education relies on excellence in leadership. Providing vision, expressing high expectations, and demonstrating mutual respect for all parties are hallmarks of great leadership.

6 PROFESSIONALISM AND LEADERSHIP

CORE COMPETENCIES

The professional working with young children:

- 6.1 Uses and follows all relevant ethical standards and professional guidelines.
- 6.2 Develops the dispositions necessary to effectively support young children and their families.
- 6.3 Displays professionalism in practice.
- 6.4 Exhibits commitment to ongoing growth and learning.
- 6.5 Exhibits classroom and program leadership skills.
- 6.6 Advocates for appropriate practices within the early childhood field.

6.1 Uses and follows all relevant ethical standards and professional guidelines

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Meets or exceeds the education and experience requirements needed for their position (teachers, caregivers and administrators), as applicable
- b Adheres to relevant New York State and New York City regulatory licensing, certification and training requirements, as well as the requirements of funders (if applicable)
- c Obeys laws related to child abuse, the rights of children with disabilities, and school attendance
- d Recognizes potentially unethical practices and resolves ethical dilemmas utilizing the NAEYC's Code of Ethical Conduct guidelines. Visit http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ethical_conduct for more information.
- e Upholds standards of confidentiality, sensitivity and respect for children, families and colleagues
- f Uses relevant professional standards and guidelines to plan and implement experiences for young children and families
- g Refers to NAEYC position statements to make thoughtful choices about their early childhood settings
- h Maintains a developmentally and culturally appropriate environment and curriculum based on basic principles and theories of child growth and development
- i Counters any teaching practices, curriculum approaches or materials that are inappropriate with regard to race, sexual orientation, family structure, gender, culture or religion
- j Responsibly serves as part of an interdisciplinary team, including participation in IFSP/IEP meetings, according to DEC Recommended Practices

6.2 Develops the dispositions to effectively support young children and their families

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Develops and exhibits an attitude of inquiry
- b Reflects on their ability to meet the needs of the children in their charge
- c Recognizes that a love of children is necessary, but is not sufficient, to work effectively with children and families
- d Models a positive attitude
- e Recognizes and respects individual differences and viewpoints among children, families, colleagues, and the community
- f Is open to change and takes calculated risks
- g Is willing to admit what they don't know
- h Turns mistakes into learning opportunities
- i Asks for help
- j Sees him/herself as part of a professional community
- k Is open to mentoring relationships and collaborative dialogue
- l Values multiple perspectives and participates in open, collaborative discussion to generate ideas and solve problems

6.3 Displays professionalism in practice

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a** Maintains a presentable, professional appearance with respect to:
 - Hygiene
 - Fingernails
 - Clothing
 - Jewelry
 - Shoes
- b** Chooses to work in settings that are aligned with his/her beliefs around children, families and learning
- c** Aligns his/her practice to their personal philosophy of education
- d** Maintains a balance between personal and professional commitments
- e** Demonstrates an awareness that his/her personal behaviors and actions within the work setting, reflect on the setting
- f** Maintains professional boundaries in relationships with staff, children and families
- g** Develops strategies to maintain his/her healthy physical, mental, and emotional abilities, so as to provide an optimal environment for all
- h** Recognizes when his/her abilities do not meet the needs of the children in their care and takes appropriate action

6.4 Exhibits commitment to ongoing growth and learning

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Develops and constantly refines a personal philosophy of education
- b Reflects on current practice, investigates ways to improve, and maintains an individualized professional development plan
- c Seeks out knowledge of the cultures and populations within the community and integrates it into his/her practice
- d Exhibits awareness that certain behaviors and types of communication among unfamiliar cultures can lead to misinterpretation and misunderstanding
- e Integrates his/her knowledge of current issues, professional values and standards, and research findings to make and justify decisions related to early education
- f Engages in classroom-based research
- g Maintains an ongoing professional development record
- h Uses technology to access current research and best practices, and to communicate with peers
- i Participates in collaborative learning communities and shares new learning with colleagues
- j Attends professional meetings/conferences and joins professional groups, (i.e., NAEYC and its local affiliates, the Association for Childhood Education International, etc.)

6.5 Exhibits classroom and program leadership skills

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Contributes to a work culture that is inspiring and empowers initiative
- b Incorporates into practice, the knowledge of the difference between learning styles of adults and children
- c Understands curriculum and can effectively explain it to a variety of audiences
- d Articulates educational vision, mission, and goals
- e Participates in the creation and regular review of program vision, mission, and goals
- f Builds networks and teams which provide a broad base of support and facilitate professional growth
- g Exhibits the oral and written skills required to communicate effectively with children, families, and colleagues
- h Works to develop trust among children, families, and colleagues
- i Builds supportive relationships with student teachers and teacher interns, providing them with meaningful feedback, sharing teaching responsibilities, and modeling best practices
- j Intentionally serves as a mentor and resource for others in the field

6.6 Advocates for appropriate practices within the early childhood field

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Stays informed about current issues and exercises the right to make decisions within early care and education
- b Uses experiences and knowledge to inform and influence others about the needs of all young children, families, and the profession
- c Advocates for services and legislation for all young children and families, and the profession
- d Assumes an early childhood leadership role in the community
- e Contributes to the advocacy efforts of professional organizations (i.e., committee membership, journal submissions, financial contributions, etc.)

7 ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT



Although there are technical differences between the terms *administration and management*, both encompass tasks that are essential to the functionality of an organization of any size. Professionals in early care and education who have been entrusted with an administrative role must keep track of several layers of performance and accountability. Traditionally, most of those in administrative roles in this field have been drafted from the ranks of teachers and direct providers of early care and education, and find themselves in the position of having to seek further knowledge in business-related areas. Therefore, continuing professional development becomes paramount.

Administrators must be proficient in and knowledge of accepted business practices, legal and regulatory requirements, financial management, marketing, and record-keeping. Administrators should also have the ability to develop and implement program policies, communication strategies, and management plans. Articulating clear vision, philosophy, and mission for the program they administer is essential.

Strong and effective leaders listen well, make decisions, accept and delegate responsibility, build meaningful and respectful partnerships; plan, implement, maintain and evaluate systems; advocate for children, families and staff, and inspire others to do their best work.

7 ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

CORE COMPETENCIES

The professional working with young children:

- 7.1 Creates, implements, and revises management policies and procedures.
- 7.2 Maintains systems that adhere to all New York State and local regulatory requirements, as well as best practices related to health, safety and nutrition.
- 7.3 Maintains effective personnel policies and procedures and effective systems for staff recruitment, development, management, and evaluation.
- 7.4 Applies sound financial planning and management to the program's operation.
- 7.5 Implements policies that promote partnerships with families and allows the program to be responsive to families' preferences and styles.

7.1 Creates, implements, and revises management policies and procedures

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Maintains defined roles and responsibilities for governing boards and parent advisory committees
- b Uses strategic planning to ensure the long-term success and effectiveness of the program
- c Has written policies and procedures that demonstrate how the program prepares for, orients and welcomes new families, and supports family involvement in all aspects of the program
- d Has written policies and procedures to attract and retain a qualified, well-trained staff
- e Ensures that the curriculum is developmentally appropriate and aligned with recent research and knowledge of best practices
- f Maintains a system for individualized, ongoing child assessment and documentation that is related to planning programs, services, referrals, and facilitating transitions to other services and programs
- g Makes sure that the program follows a written plan for assessment that addresses the purposes, procedures and uses of assessment results and adheres to assessment timelines
- h Organizes and staffs the program to minimize the number of transitions experienced by an individual child during the day and program year
- i Uses technology effectively to manage the program
- j Implements effective publicity and marketing strategies to share information about the program with prospective families and the community

7.2 Maintains systems that adhere to all New York State and local regulatory requirements, as well as best practices related to health, safety and nutrition

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Has written policies and procedures that outline what health and safety information is to be collected from each family, and ensures that it is updated at least quarterly
- b Maintains files with health and safety information for each family in a central location within the program
- c Explains confidentiality requirements regarding health and safety information to staff
- d Ensures that children have received routine screenings and immunizations according to the recommended schedules issued by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control, and the Academy of Family Practice
- e Follows relevant regulations pertaining to the administration of medicine to children and special medical procedures needed by enrolled children
- f Maintains plans that have been approved by a health official regarding inclusion of staff or children that are ill (i.e., what types of illnesses require exclusion)
- g Provides space, supervision and comfort for ill children waiting to be picked up from the program
- h Provides information verbally and in writing to families about any communicable disease to which their child might have been exposed. Information should include: signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that families should implement at home
- i Maintains procedures to reduce occupational hazards (i.e., back strain, falls) and exposure to infectious diseases
- j Provides staff with resources and referrals to support their well-being (i.e., stress-management, treatment for depression, wellness, etc.)
- k Has written policies that require children have outdoor gross motor play each day, arranging indoor gross motor activities when outside play is not possible

7.2 Maintains systems that adhere to all New York State and local regulatory requirements, as well as best practices related to health, safety and nutrition (continued)

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- l Arranges for the use of assistive technology to improve services for children with special needs
- m Maintains written procedures that address all aspects of arrival, departure, and transportation of children
- n Provides for adequate supervision and monitoring of children throughout the day
- o Has written policies and procedures for reporting child abuse and neglect that comply with federal, state, and local laws
- p Has written policies and procedures to be followed if a staff member is accused of abuse or neglect of a child in the program that protect both the rights of the accused staff person and the children in the program
- q Makes sure that staff can provide proof of current training in required health and safety topics, including but not limited to; CPR training, prevention and reporting of child abuse and maltreatment, preventing infectious diseases
- r Maintains current, written procedures for preparing for and handling major medical emergencies involving children and adult staff that are consistent with applicable regulatory agency requirements
- s Has written policies and procedures to protect children and adults from environmental hazards (i.e., asbestos, lead, air pollution, etc.) in accordance with requirements outlined by applicable regulatory agencies
- t Maintains written and posted disaster preparedness and emergency evacuation procedures
- u Makes sure that staff prepare, serve, and store food in line with U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP) guidelines, as well as the requirements outlined by applicable regulatory agencies
- v Ensures that a registered dietitian or pediatric public health nutritionist evaluates the menus for nutritional content at least two times a year, unless the program participates in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's CACFP
- w Posts menus and provides copies to families
- x Ensures that drinking water is clean and sanitary

7.3 Maintains effective personnel policies and procedures and effective systems for staff recruitment, development, management, and evaluation

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Provides an orientation for new staff members that covers the program's philosophy, expectations for ethical conduct, health, safety and emergency procedures, accepted classroom management techniques, regulatory requirements, etc.
- b Hires enough staff and maintains an up-to-date substitute list to ensure proper staff-child ratios at all times
- c Ensures that all staff members meet minimum qualifications and training requirements
- d Has clearly written job descriptions and staff responsibilities
- e Provides the supervisory support necessary for staff to maintain ethical standards and recommended practices
- f Considers the skills and dispositions of individuals when organizing teaching/professional teams to best meet the needs of the children
- g Maintains the consistent assignment of teachers/caregivers to individual children or groups of children
- h Ensures that all staff members are adequately trained to work with children and families of diverse backgrounds, languages, and abilities
- i Expects that staff observe, document and assess children's progress across all developmental domains
- j Shares the program's policies regarding the purposes and appropriate uses for formal assessment, and communicates expectations of confidentiality

7.3 Maintains effective personnel policies and procedures and effective systems for staff recruitment, development, management, and evaluation (continued)

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- k** Arranges for teaching teams to review assessment results and documentation, discuss child progress, and to plan curriculum on a regular (at least a weekly) basis
- l** Ensures that interdisciplinary teams work in alignment with DEC Recommended Practices for Interdisciplinary Models
- m** Provides staff with access to the Internet for locating information and resources
- n** Uses observation, reflection and assessment tools to assess her/himself in the role of administrator, and evaluate staff performance

74 Applies sound financial planning and management to the program's operation

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Implements fiscal policies and procedures that are consistent with the program's vision, mission, and goals
- b Prepares budgets at least once annually
- c Maintains fiscal records (i.e., balance sheets, banking reconciliation, etc.)
- d Maintains a system to review and adjust budgets at least on a quarterly basis
- e Actively works to generate and manage the resources needed to run a high quality early childhood program

7.5 Implements policies that promote partnerships with families and allow the program to be responsive to families' preferences and styles

BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

- a Maintains a physical environment that is accessible to all children and families
- b Uses information from families to adapt the program structure or curriculum
- c Ensures that the program communicates parents' rights in a format and language that is most comfortable for families
- d Provides families with a variety of choices for participating in the program (i.e., volunteer opportunities, advisory groups, helping with repairs, etc.)
- e Implements procedures that allow families to visit at any time during the program day
- f Sponsors activities that meet the parenting needs of the program's families
- g Considers families' schedules and availability when planning events; offering evening and weekend options and providing child care so that families are able to participate
- h Makes available a current list of resources for families
- i Provides families with updates on children's progress on a regular (at least quarterly) basis
- j Makes sure that professionals can regularly speak privately with families
- k Helps families manage their child's transition between groups, teachers, classrooms, and programs
- l Provides opportunities for families to meet together to work on projects or provide support for each other
- m Provides families with choices to use technology to access information or communicate with the program and other families
- n Supports breastfeeding by accepting, storing and feeding children's breast milk, coordinating feedings with the infant's mother, and providing a comfortable place for mothers to nurse (if applicable)

ASSESSMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING TOOL

Use the *Core Body of Knowledge* along with this assessment tool to evaluate your skills and to identify areas of strength and areas of opportunity in your work with children and families. Then, develop goals for your work and plan your professional development. Administrators can also use this tool to conduct performance appraisals and to encourage staff members' commitment to ongoing professional growth and learning.

Instructions:

Work through one competency area at a time. You may want to complete the assessment over the course of a few days. You may also choose to focus on just one specific competency or competency area. *Note to Administrators: When using the Core Body of Knowledge to conduct a performance appraisal, request that the staff member conduct a self-assessment as well. Together, discuss the results of the staff member's self-assessment and your performance appraisal. Use the results to select goals and to plan for professional development.*

1) ASSESS

Carefully read through the related behaviors and skills for each core competency. Use the assessment tool to note whether that competency is an area of strength, an area of steady progress, or an area of opportunity. If you are not sure what is meant by a particular competency, indicate that it is an area of opportunity. It is expected that even after many years as an early childhood educator, one would still have much more to learn. Take notes or keep track of your thoughts, as needed. You can use the Summary Page to keep track of your results as you complete each section.

2) REFLECT

Use the reflection questions to consider your strengths and areas of opportunity.

**Take notes as needed as you work through the assessment tool.*

3) PLAN

Use the Professional Development Planning tool to select goals, plan for needed resources or professional development, and establish a timeframe for meeting the goals.

Area of Strength

- Consistently implements almost all behaviors/skills
- Is able to help others understand and implement the related behaviors/skills

Steady Progress

- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but inconsistently
- Implements many, but not all of the related behaviors and skills

Area of Opportunity

- Never/rarely exhibits the related behaviors/skills
- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but only with guidance
- Feels uncertain or has misunderstandings about the related behaviors/skills

1. CHILD GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Core Competencies	Assessment			Notes
	Area of Strength	Steady Progress	Area of Opportunity	
1.1 Applies the cycle of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation to support children’s healthy development.				
1.2 Encourages children’s social and emotional development.				
1.3 Helps children achieve self-regulation and acquire coping skills.				
1.4 Supports children’s gross, fine, and graphomotor development.				
1.5 Supports children’s cognitive development.				
1.6 Supports children’s language and literacy development.				
1.7 Encourages and supports English Language Learners.				
1.8 Facilitates children’s play to encourage motor, cognitive, language, social, and emotional development.				
1.9 Supports children with special needs and their families.				

2. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Core Competencies	Assessment			Notes
	Area of Strength	Steady Progress	Area of Opportunity	
2.1 Respects families and is responsive to language, culture, family characteristics, needs, concerns, and priorities.				
2.2 Communicates regularly, respectfully, and effectively with families.				
2.3 Provides families with opportunities to learn and develop skills to help their children achieve desired outcomes at the program, at home, and in the community.				
2.4 Shares power with families and involves them in decision-making.				
2.5 Helps connect families with needed resources and services.				
2.6 Supports families through transitions between programs.				

Area of Strength

- Consistently implements almost all behaviors/skills
- Is able to help others understand and implement the related behaviors/skills

Steady Progress

- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but inconsistently
- Implements many, but not all of the related behaviors and skills

Area of Opportunity

- Never/rarely exhibits the related behaviors/skills
- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but only with guidance
- Feels uncertain or has misunderstandings about the related behaviors/skills

3. OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

Core Competencies	Assessment			Notes
	Area of Strength	Steady Progress	Area of Opportunity	
3.1 Uses observation and assessment tools to support children’s development and learning.				
3.2 Practices responsible assessment.				
3.3 Builds positive, productive assessment partnerships with families and colleagues.				
3.4 Practices responsible reporting of assessment results.				
3.5 Uses observation and assessment to plan and modify environments, curriculum, and teaching.				
3.6 Practices responsible formal evaluation and reporting procedures.				

Area of Strength

- Consistently implements almost all behaviors/skills
- Is able to help others understand and implement the related behaviors/skills

Steady Progress

- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but inconsistently
- Implements many, but not all of the related behaviors and skills

Area of Opportunity

- Never/rarely exhibits the related behaviors/skills
- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but only with guidance
- Feels uncertain or has misunderstandings about the related behaviors/skills

4. ENVIRONMENT AND CURRICULUM

Core Competencies	Assessment			Notes
	Area of Strength	Steady Progress	Area of Opportunity	
4.1 Creates genuine, supportive relationships with children.				
4.2 Creates an environment that is predictable, promotes interaction and learning, and is responsive to children’s needs.				
4.3 Works effectively and calmly to address challenging behavior.				
4.4. Creates an environment that values the inclusion of all children.				
4.5 Fosters a sense of community by encouraging interaction, empathy, connectedness, responsibility, and independence.				

Area of Strength

- Consistently implements almost all behaviors/skills
- Is able to help others understand and implement the related behaviors/skills

Steady Progress

- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but inconsistently
- Implements many, but not all of the related behaviors and skills

Area of Opportunity

- Never/rarely exhibits the related behaviors/skills
- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but only with guidance
- Feels uncertain or has misunderstandings about the related behaviors/skills

4. ENVIRONMENT AND CURRICULUM (CONTINUED)

Core Competencies	Assessment			Notes
	Area of Strength	Steady Progress	Area of Opportunity	
4.6 Arranges a learning environment that is well organized, aesthetically pleasing, promotes reflection, and extends learning.				
4.7 Arranges and facilitates the use of the physical space and materials in ways that support healthy development, self-management, and cooperation.				
4.8 Uses approaches to learning that build on children’s natural curiosity, deepen children’s knowledge and awareness, and sustain active engagement with ideas and materials.				
4.9 Adopts or designs meaningful curriculum for young children.				
4.10 Makes sound decisions for selecting and using technology and media to enhance teaching and learning.				
4.11 Plans and implements interventions to help children meet developmental and learning goals.				

Area of Strength

- Consistently implements almost all behaviors/skills
- Is able to help others understand and implement the related behaviors/skills

Steady Progress

- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but inconsistently
- Implements many, but not all of the related behaviors and skills

Area of Opportunity

- Never/rarely exhibits the related behaviors/skills
- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but only with guidance
- Feels uncertain or has misunderstandings about the related behaviors/skills

5. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION

Core Competencies	Assessment			Notes
	Area of Strength	Steady Progress	Area of Opportunity	
5.1 Has current, valid documentation of training in topics essential to children’s health, safety, and nutrition.				
5.2 Maintains organized, accessible, and up-to-date records related to the health, safety, and nutrition of the children in their care.				
5.3 Is aware of and follows proper procedures as outlined by the applicable regulatory agencies.				
5.4 Takes precautions that protect children’s health and maintains a healthy learning environment.				
5.5 Applies practices that encourage positive health behaviors and support the physical and mental well-being of children and families.				
5.6 Takes appropriate precautions and follows applicable procedures to ensure a safe learning environment.				

Area of Strength

- Consistently implements almost all behaviors/skills
- Is able to help others understand and implement the related behaviors/skills

Steady Progress

- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but inconsistently
- Implements many, but not all of the related behaviors and skills

Area of Opportunity

- Never/rarely exhibits the related behaviors/skills
- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but only with guidance
- Feels uncertain or has misunderstandings about the related behaviors/skills

5. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND NUTRITION (CONTINUED)

Core Competencies	Assessment			Notes
	Area of Strength	Steady Progress	Area of Opportunity	
5.7 Is prepared for emergencies and injuries.				
5.8 Takes appropriate food safety precautions.				
5.9 Creates safe, healthy, and enjoyable feeding and mealtime experiences for children.				
5.10 Encourages children to adopt good nutritional habits.				
5.11 Communicates with and provides support to families about children's nutrition and mealtime experiences.				

Area of Strength

- Consistently implements almost all behaviors/skills
- Is able to help others understand and implement the related behaviors/skills

Steady Progress

- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but inconsistently
- Implements many, but not all of the related behaviors and skills

Area of Opportunity

- Never/rarely exhibits the related behaviors/skills
- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but only with guidance
- Feels uncertain or has misunderstandings about the related behaviors/skills

6. PROFESSIONALISM AND LEADERSHIP

Core Competencies	Assessment			Notes
	Area of Strength	Steady Progress	Area of Opportunity	
6.1 Uses and follows all relevant ethical standards and professional guidelines.				
6.2 Develops the dispositions to effectively support young children and their families.				
6.3 Displays professionalism in practice.				
6.4 Exhibits commitment to ongoing growth and learning.				
6.5 Exhibits classroom and program leadership skills.				
6.6 Advocates for appropriate practices within the early childhood field.				

Area of Strength

- Consistently implements almost all behaviors/skills
- Is able to help others understand and implement the related behaviors/skills

Steady Progress

- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but inconsistently
- Implements many, but not all of the related behaviors and skills

Area of Opportunity

- Never/rarely exhibits the related behaviors/skills
- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but only with guidance
- Feels uncertain or has misunderstandings about the related behaviors/skills

7. ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

Core Competencies	Assessment			Notes
	Area of Strength	Steady Progress	Area of Opportunity	
7.1 Creates, implements, and revises management policies and procedures.				
7.2 Maintains systems that adhere to all New York State and local regulatory requirements, as well as best practices related to health, safety, and nutrition.				
7.3 Maintains effective personnel policies and procedures and effective systems for staff recruitment, development, management, and evaluation.				
7.4 Applies sound financial planning and management to the program's operation.				
7.5 Implements policies that promote partnerships with families and allows the program to be responsive to families' preferences and styles.				

Area of Strength

- Consistently implements almost all behaviors/skills
- Is able to help others understand and implement the related behaviors/skills

Steady Progress

- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but inconsistently
- Implements many, but not all of the related behaviors and skills

Area of Opportunity

- Never/rarely exhibits the related behaviors/skills
- Implements the related behaviors/skills, but only with guidance
- Feels uncertain or has misunderstandings about the related behaviors/skills

Core Competencies	Area of Strength	Steady Progress	Area of Opportunity
1. Child Growth and Development	<i>Ex.) 1.2, 1.5</i>	<i>Ex.) 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.8</i>	<i>Ex.) 1.7, 1.9</i>
2. Family and Community Relationships			
3. Observation and Assessment			
4. Environment and Curriculum			
5. Health, Safety, and Nutrition			
6. Professionalism and Leadership			
7. Administration and Management			

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Review the Summary Page and consider your assessment results. Which of the competencies are particular strengths for you? What has contributed to your effectiveness in these areas?

2. How do you plan to further develop your strengths or exhibit leadership in these areas?

3. What are your areas of opportunity? Prioritize them in order of importance to you.

4. Select the first priority. Why is this priority important to you and your work with children and families?

5. Develop two goals related to this priority. Use the related behaviors and skills listed in the *Core Body of Knowledge* to help you.

For example, if your top priority is to better support English Language Learners (ELLs) (1.7), you might have the following goals:

1) To provide ELLs with opportunities to read and/or hear the language that their family uses at home, in the classroom or program (1.7a).

2) To provide supports to ELLs to help them experience success in the classroom program. Specifically, I want to learn how to use props and visual aids, as well as role-play to help support ELLs in my classroom (1.7g)

Priority	Core Competency
_____	_____
Goal #1	Goal #2
_____	_____
_____	_____

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING TOOL

Priority _____

Core Competency _____

	Goal #1 _____	Goal #2 _____
<p>Actions What will I do to meet the goal?</p>		
<p>Resources Do I need any materials or physical resources to help me meet this goal? If so, what are they?</p>		
<p>Professional Development Content Do I need any professional development to help me meet this goal? If so, in what content or topic area?</p>		
<p>Professional Development Format What format/s of professional development would be most effective in helping me meet this goal (i.e., workshop, credit-bearing course, teacher-research, study group with colleagues, coaching, etc.)?</p>		
<p>Finding Professional Development How do I find the professional development that I need?</p>		
<p>Additional Support What type of support might I need in my classroom or program in order to help me implement my new skills or apply my new knowledge?</p>		
<p>Performance Indicators How will I know if I am making progress? How will my practice change?</p>		

Glossary

AAC: Augmentative and Alternative Communication. All forms of communication other than oral speech that may be used to express thoughts, needs, wants, and ideas.

Accommodations: Alterations in the environment, curriculum format, or equipment to allow an individual with a disability to gain access to content and/or complete assigned tasks; changes to the way that individual is expected to learn or to how he or she is assessed.

Advocacy: Active support for a cause or idea.

Appropriate: Suitable for a particular purpose. In early childhood settings, it refers to practices that are respectful and inclusive of all individuals.

Articulate: Express an idea with clarity and coherence.

Attitude: A value- and belief-laden predisposition to behavior; the manner in which an individual views something.

CACFP: Child & Adult Care Food Program. A program administered by the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) that provides nutritious meals and snacks to children attending child care programs, eligible afterschool programs, or who are residing in shelters, and to adults who receive care in nonresidential adult day care programs.

Classroom-based research: A systematic way for early childhood educators to examine child development and learning in order to inform and improve their practice. Includes the collection of documentation of student work and learning as data, various data analysis strategies, and the sharing of findings.

Colleague: Every professional who works or volunteers within a particular setting, regardless of position, role, or responsibility in the setting.

Communication: The exchange of information between individuals through a common system of signs, symbols, or behaviors.

Connection: Link between concepts, ideas, or thoughts.

Content area: Field of study; subject area. The collection of facts, concepts, and ideas related to a specific branch of knowledge such as mathematics, science, social studies, etc.

Critical thinking: The mental process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to reach an answer or conclusion.

Curriculum: The entire range of experiences provided in an educational setting, including content, goals, philosophical underpinnings, teaching strategies, and assessment practices.

Plural: **Curricula**

DEC: The Division for Early Childhood. An international membership organization for those who work with or on behalf of young children with disabilities and other special needs, with the mission of promoting policies and advancing evidence-based practices to support the optimal development of young children with special needs.
<http://www.dec-sped.org>

Development: Systematic processes of physical and mental adaptation to new environments and expectations, based on growth patterns and changing abilities.

Divergent thinking: Creative thinking that may follow many lines of thought and tends to generate new and original solutions to problems.

Documentation: The provision and use of evidence for statements, decisions, conclusions, or opinions. In education, it refers to qualitative as well as quantitative data collected in order to make learning visible and assess children’s development and learning.

Domain: Each aspect of an individual’s growth and development- cognitive, social, emotional, communication and language, and sensorimotor.

ELL: English Language Learner.

Environment: Everything that makes up the atmosphere or background in which individuals live or work. Learning environment encompasses the physical, the emotional, and the social aspects of a particular environment where people learn.

Ethical dilemma: A moral conflict that involves determining appropriate conduct when an individual faces conflicting professional values and responsibilities. www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PSETH05.pdf

Evidence-based practice: Educational practices or interventions that are backed by strong evidence of their effectiveness as demonstrated by scientifically-based research.

Family-centered: Related to practices which recognize families as equal partners and collaborators in young children’s early care and education.

FBA: Functional Behavior Assessment. The use of observation and recording of behavior to evaluate circumstances that may trigger and reinforce problem behavior.

Graphomotor: Relating to or affecting the muscular movements used or required in writing.

Growth: Natural physiological processes of maturation over time.

IEP: Individualized Education Program. Written individualized plans for children with disabilities aged 3 and older as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

IFSP: Individualized Family Services Plan. Written individualized plans for children with disabilities from birth to age 3 as required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

Logical consequences: Actions or responses that are implemented following a child's inappropriate behavior that serve to discourage the child from engaging in the behavior again. Logical consequences should be presented to children as a choice and should be logically linked to the current activity and the resulting action, and are an alternative to punishment strategies like reprimands and scolding.

Mission: Pre-established purpose.

Modifications: Changes to what is being taught to or expected from a child.

NAEYC: National Association for the Education of Young Children. The leading membership organization for those working with or on behalf of children from birth through age 8.

Narrative: A detailed account of events or experiences, whether oral or written.

Natural consequences: Outcomes that happen as a direct result of behavior; they are imposed by the environment, society, or a person who is not in the position of authority.

Need: The lack of something basic.

Partial participation: A principle according to which every special-needs individual has the right to participate in all experiences provided in a setting to the extent permitted by his or her abilities.

Print-rich: Quality of an environment where writing is present in appropriate ways (such as books and other sources of reading materials; labeled centers and storage bins; useful and meaningful signs children can follow independently), where all necessary supplies for writing are available and accessible to children, and where adults model writing and reading with a purpose.

QSNY: QUALITYstarsNY. New York State’s voluntary quality rating and improvement system that is designed to increase quality in early learning settings including child care centers, schools, and family child care homes.

Scaffolding: The provision of sufficient support to promote learning when concepts and skills are being first introduced. A practice where the more skillful individual creates a safe learning environment and gradually withdraws direct support as the learner progresses along the learning continuum.

Support: Help or assist; the help or assistance offered by a team or network of people, family, or colleagues.

Team: Any group of individuals working together towards a particular purpose.

Vision: Overarching goal; the foreseen image of what a program, center, classroom, or group wants to achieve and what it stands for.

Alignment with Related Standards

CORE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCY AREA	NAEYC TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM STANDARDS	NAEYC EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM STANDARDS AND CRITERIA	DEC RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	CDA Functional Areas
1 Child Growth and Development	(1) Promoting child development and learning	(1) Relationships (2) Curriculum (3) Teaching (4) Assessment of Child Progress (5) Health	Child Focused Practices	(4) Physical (5) Cognitive (6) Communicative (7) Creative (8) Self (9) Social
2 Family and Community Relationships	(2) Building Family and Community Relationships (4) Using developmentally appropriate approaches to connect with children and families	(1) Relationships (7) Families (8) Community Relationships	Child Focused Practices Technology Applications	(11) Families
3 Observation and Assessment	(3) Observing, documenting and assessing	(4) Assessment of Child Progress	Family-based practices Assessment	
4 Environment and Curriculum	(4) Using developmentally appropriate approaches to connect with children and families (5) Using content knowledge to build meaningful curriculum	(1) Relationships (2) Curriculum (9) Physical Environment	Assessment	(3) Learning Environment (4) Physical (5) Cognitive (6) Communicative (7) Creative (8) Self (9) Social (10) Guidance
5 Health, Safety, and Nutrition	(1) Promoting child development and learning	(5) Health (9) Physical Environment	Child Focused Practices	(1) Safe (2) Healthy
6 Professionalism	(6) Becoming a professional	(6) Teachers (10) Leadership and Management	Interdisciplinary Models Policies, Procedures and Systems Change	(13) Professionalism
7 Administration and Management		(10) Leadership and Management	Interdisciplinary Models Policies, Procedures and Systems Change	(12) Program Management

Alignment with Related Standards

CORE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCY AREA	NYS TEACHING STANDARDS	OCFS TRAINING PRIORITY AREAS
<p>1 Child Growth and Development</p>	<p>Standard I: Knowledge of Students and Student Learning – I.1, Standard II: Knowledge of Content and Instructional Planning – II.4 Standard III: Instructional Practice – III.5 Standard IV: Learning Environment – IV.2 Standard V: Assessment for Student Learning – V.1, V.2</p>	<p>(1) Principles of childhood development, including the appropriate supervision of children, meeting the needs of children enrolled in the program with physical or emotional challenges and behavior management and discipline</p>
<p>2 Family and Community Relationships</p>	<p>Standard I: Knowledge of Students and Student Learning – I.4, I.5 Standard VI: Professional Responsibilities and Collaboration – VI.3</p>	
<p>3 Observation and Assessment</p>	<p>Standard I: Knowledge of Students and Student Learning – I.6 Standard II: Knowledge of Content and Instructional Planning – II.2, II.3, II.4, II.5 Standard III: Instructional Practice – III.1, III.2, III.5, III.6 Standard IV: Learning Environment – IV.1 Standard V: Assessment for Student Learning – V.1, V.2, V.3, V.4, V.5</p>	
<p>4 Environment and Curriculum</p>	<p>Standard I: Knowledge of Students and Student Learning – I.1, I.2, I.3, I.5, I.6 Standard II: Knowledge of Content and Instructional Planning – II.1, II.2, II.3, II.4, II.5, II.6 Standard III: Instructional Practice – III.1, III.3, III.4 Standard IV: Learning Environment – IV.1, IV.2, IV.3, IV.4 Standard V: Assessment for Student Learning – V.5</p>	<p>(1) Principles of childhood development, including the appropriate supervision of children, meeting the needs of children enrolled in the program with physical or emotional challenges and behavior management and discipline</p>

Alignment with Related Standards

CORE BODY OF KNOWLEDGE COMPETENCY AREA	NYS TEACHING STANDARDS	OCFS TRAINING PRIORITY AREAS
<p>5 Health, Safety, and Nutrition</p>	<p>Standard IV: Learning Environment – IV.4</p> <p>Standard VI: Professional Responsibilities and Collaboration – VI.4, VI.5</p>	<p>(1) Principles of childhood development, including the appropriate supervision of children, meeting the needs of children enrolled in the program with physical or emotional challenges and behavior management and discipline</p> <p>(2) Nutrition and health needs of children</p> <p>(4) Safety and security procedures, including communication between parents and staff</p> <p>(7) Statues and regulations pertaining to child day care</p> <p>(8) Statues and regulations pertaining to child abuse and maltreatment</p> <p>(9) Education and information on the identification, diagnosis, and prevention of shaken baby syndrome</p>
<p>6 Professionalism</p>	<p>Standard VI: Professional Responsibilities and Collaboration – VI.1, VI.2, VI.3, VI.5</p> <p>Standard VII: Professional Growth – VII.1, VII.2, VII.3, VII.4</p>	<p>(6) Child abuse and maltreatment identification and prevention</p> <p>(7) Statues and regulations pertaining to child day care</p> <p>(8) Statues and regulations pertaining to child abuse and maltreatment</p>
<p>7 Administration and Management</p>	<p>Standard VI: Professional Responsibilities and Collaboration – VI.2, VI.4</p>	<p>(3) Child day care program development</p> <p>(5) Business record maintenance and management</p> <p>(7) Statues and regulations pertaining to child day care</p> <p>(8) Statues and regulations pertaining to child abuse and maltreatment</p>

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History

The first edition of the *Core Body of Knowledge* was titled, *The New York State Early Care and Education Core Body of Knowledge Framework*, and was published in 1997. Writing for the original document was led by the Consistent Standards Committee of the Career Development Initiative (CDI). The writers revised and published the second edition in 2001. In 2009, the NYC Early Childhood Professional Development Institute (PDI) reformatted the second edition, in response to a need to code each competency to enable users to reference and align professional development more accurately to city and state requirements. The need for a more thorough revision became apparent in 2010 as PDI embarked on its system building work and sought to include a comprehensive set of competencies as a major component of a professional development system. The need to align the New York State Office of Children and Family Services training priorities and future professional development opportunities led to integration of the revision of the *Core Body of Knowledge* into the work plan of the New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council Work Force Development Work Group.

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