

RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# **Core Competencies for Rhode Island Early Childhood Teachers - DRAFT**

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Rhode Island's Professional Development System for Early Childhood Educators

**Last Updated 7/13/2011**

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# Introduction

## Core Competencies for Rhode Island Early Childhood Teachers - DRAFT

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### Welcome

Welcome to the first published edition of the Core Competencies for Early Childhood Teachers in Rhode Island. These competencies are the result of extensive work of many dedicated individuals across the field of early childhood education and care in this state. The Rhode Island Core Competencies for Early Childhood Teachers articulate the essential skills and knowledge that teachers who work with young children in Rhode Island need to know, understand, and be able to do to promote young children's healthy development and learning. They are designed for many purposes including, but not limited to: supporting teacher's individual professional development efforts, helping program administrators' articulate teacher job expectations and design evaluation processes for staff and guiding higher education and professional development providers on the creation of curricula for college courses and teacher training offered in the community. This publication is designed to be a practical and living document. We hope that you find it useful and that you will contribute to the ongoing refinement of core competencies for early childhood teachers in our state.

### Rationale and Purpose

Research shows that high-quality early childhood education produces substantial long-term educational, social, and economic benefits with the largest benefits for children occurring when teachers are professionally prepared and adequately compensated. Furthermore, the knowledge and skills required of an effective early education teacher has increased as science has revealed more about the capabilities of young children, how they learn best, and the importance of early learning for later school success<sup>1</sup>. Therefore it is essential that a core component of Rhode Island's efforts to build a high quality early learning system is a highly qualified workforce with access to a high quality professional development system.

At the foundation of this system is the knowledge base of theory and research that underlies practice, *often referred to as core competencies*. In the United States, over 30 states have published core competencies as a foundation of their professional development systems. Rhode Island's early education leaders recognize that our workforce must have access to a professional development system designed to build competencies that are linked to child outcomes.

The Rhode Island Core Competencies for Early Childhood Teachers are intended to be used by a variety of stakeholders. They will:

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<sup>1</sup> Better Teachers, Better Preschools: Student Achievement Linked to Teacher Qualifications Issue 2 / Revised December 2004, W. Steven Barnett, National Institute for Early Education Research.

- be used by Rhode Island’s early education leaders as a framework for developing a state-wide professional development system;
- support teacher’s individual professional development efforts
- assist program administrators to articulate teacher job expectations and design evaluation processes;
- guide higher education and professional development providers in the development of curricula and training opportunities, and;
- be used by families to identify quality early education settings for their children.

The following chart outlines possible uses by different user groups:

INTENDED USER	POSSIBLE USES
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help teachers focus on critical areas of professional development and recognize own areas of exceptional skill and expertise.</li> <li>• To help teachers with the creation and implementation of their own personalized professional development plans.</li> </ul>
Trainers, instructors, and higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To assist with the creation of curricula for college courses and professional development opportunities offered in the community.</li> </ul>
Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help program administrators articulate job expectations including performance-based job descriptions and evaluation processes.</li> <li>• To support administrators with hiring staff.</li> <li>• To guide prospective and current staff in their own professional growth.</li> </ul>
Families (consumers of early care and education programming)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help families identify best practices and select high-quality programming for their children.</li> </ul>
State and local agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To serve as an advocacy tool for designing programming and for guiding policy makers.</li> </ul>

## Organization

To navigate the Rhode Island Core Competencies for Early Childhood Teachers, it is helpful to understand how they are organized. Below is an explanation of the career lattice, Bloom’s Taxonomy, and the six domains that were used as organizers in developing the Core Competencies Framework.

### The Teacher Career Lattice

The Teacher Career Lattice specifies the formal education, experience, professional development and professional activities that correspond with a teacher who is at Level, I, II, III, and IV. For the purposes of this document, “teacher” is defined as an individual primarily responsible for planning and implementing the educational program in an early childhood classroom. Early childhood teachers progress from one level to another through a combination of formal study, experience and professional development. Level I corresponds with Rhode Island’s minimal expectations for teachers. The

competencies listed at each level are entry skills for a professional who meets the requirements of that level. The levels are cumulative. For example, someone working at Level IV has achieved the core competencies, though not necessarily the specific credentials identified for Levels I, II and III.

The Teacher Career Lattice is as follows:

<i>Teacher Career Lattice</i>	<b>Level I</b>	<b>Level II</b>	<b>Level III</b>	<b>Level IV</b>
<b>Formal Education</b>	Minimum of 12 credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE)	Minimum of AA in Early Childhood Education (ECE) OR 24 credits in Early Childhood Education (ECE)	Has RI Early Childhood Certification (includes Bachelor's Degree)  OR Bachelor's Degree plus 30 credits in Early Childhood Education (ECE)	Minimum of Master's Degree which includes 24 graduate credits in Early Childhood Education (ECE)
<b>Experience</b>	Minimum of 1 year of relevant experience (includes fieldwork or practicum)	Minimum of 1 year of supervised instructional experience	Minimum of 2 years of supervised instructional experience	Minimum of 3 years of supervised instructional experience
<b>Relevant Professional Development/ Credentials</b>	Minimum of 20 hours/year of professional development in the Core Domains of Learning completed within past two years OR Credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE)	Practitioner portfolio  Minimum of 20 hours/year of professional development in the Core Domains of Learning completed within past two years OR Credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE)	Practitioner portfolio  Minimum of 20 hours/year of professional development in the Core Domains of Learning completed within past two years OR Credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE)	Practitioner portfolio  Minimum of 20 hours/year of professional development in the Core Domains of Learning completed within past two years. OR Credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE)
<b>Professional Activities</b>	Membership in professional organization <u>related to Early Childhood Education (ECE)</u>	Membership in professional organization <u>related to Early Childhood Education (ECE)</u>	Membership in professional organization <u>related to Early Childhood Education (ECE)</u>  Participation in at least one state, regional, or national conference via attendance, planning or presentation  OR Participation in community or state coalition related to early care and education	Additional formal education Participation in at least one state, regional, or national conference via attendance, planning or presentation  OR Participation in community or state coalition related to early care and education  Teacher mentor activities

### **Bloom's Taxonomy**

Like many core competency documents across the country, Rhode Island's core competencies use an interpretation of Bloom's Taxonomy as a guide for how knowledge and skill should deepen over the four levels. As the competencies become more complex across the four levels, the language of those competencies changes to reflect deeper and more critical reflection and practice. Early stages correspond with foundational knowledge and understanding in a particular area while the more advanced stages progress from basic knowledge and understanding to application of that knowledge and eventually to analysis, synthesis and evaluation. At the highest level of competency, professionals are critically reflecting on their knowledge, solving problems, mentoring and advocating for change.

#### **OUR ADAPTATION OF BLOOM'S TAXONOMY**

LEVEL 4: Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation	Can critically reflect on knowledge and application, bringing together the knowledge in new combinations, thinking creatively about the knowledge to solve new problems and work to change policies and practices that are not aligned with best practice.
LEVEL 3: Nuanced Application and Some Analysis	Can apply content knowledge and information in increasingly nuanced ways. Begins to compare, contrast and experiment.
LEVEL 2: Application	Can apply content knowledge and information in the classroom setting.
LEVEL 1: Knowledge and Understanding	Can name, recognize, recall information and understand its content.

### **The Six Domains**

Rhode Island's core competencies for teachers are organized into six domains important to the profession. Each domain has a number of sub-headings. Although the domains are presented individually, all domains are intrinsically interrelated and interdependent. They are worded so they can be measured or demonstrated. These domains include:

**1. Health, Safety, and Wellness**

- a. Knowledge of State and Federal Regulations
- b. Safety and Emergency Procedures
- c. Health
- d. Food and Nutrition

**2. Family Engagement**

- a. Creating Respectful, Reciprocal Relationships with Families
- b. Engaging Families in Their Children’s Development and Learning
- c. Utilizing Community Resources to Support Families

**3. Development and Learning**

- a. Child Development
- b. Influences on Development

**4. Curriculum**

- a. Content
- b. Process
- c. Teaching and Facilitating
- d. Context
- e. Building Meaningful Curriculum

**5. Observation and Assessment**

- a. Knowledge of Early Childhood Assessment
- b. Conducting Developmentally Appropriate Authentic Assessments
- c. Conducting Formal Assessments
- d. Practicing Responsible Assessment
- e. Gathering Assessment Information from Multiple Sources Using a Variety of Methods
- f. Documenting Assessment Information
- g. Using Assessment Information in Curriculum Planning
- h. Communicating Assessment Information

**6. Professionalism**

- a. Foundations: Identifying and Involving Oneself with the Early Care and Education Profession
- b. Ethical Standards and Professional Guidelines
- c. Valuing Diversity
- d. Advocating for Children, Families and the Profession
- e. Commitment to Ongoing Professional Development

Each of the six domains contains several skill levels that range from the skills and knowledge of a beginning practitioner to the more advanced skills and knowledge possessed by a more advanced professional. With these frameworks as organizing devices, the competencies become more complex across the

four levels reflecting what the individual should know and be able to do at each corresponding level. Like the Career Lattice, the core competency levels are also cumulative. In other words, someone working at a Level 4 should have the core competencies identified for Levels 1, 2 and 3.

In addition, the core competencies for Level 3 (generally teachers with a Bachelor's degree) were intentionally aligned with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Program. The NAEYC standards are used by institutes for higher education to design early childhood teacher preparation programs. They are also used to inform requirements for: credentialing early childhood teachers, accreditation of programs, state approval of early childhood teacher education programs and articulation agreements between various professional development programs. Therefore, it is important that Rhode Island's core competencies align appropriately with the NAEYC standards.

## **Background, History and Process**

In 2001-2002 there was a comprehensive, grass-roots effort, with broad representation from all areas of early care and education (ECE) and youth development (YD) that created the June 2003 draft version of Rhode Island's core competencies. In the fall of 2007, a committee was brought together by DHS/Childspan to revise the June 2003 draft in light of changes in the field such as new trends, new regulations, and ongoing development of state initiatives, e.g. Rhode Island Early Learning Standards (RIELS), BrightStars, and new NAEYC DAP guidelines. The committee composition was recommended by DHS and was comprised of representatives from major stakeholders such as RIDE, Higher Education, DCYF, Department of Health, ECE providers including Center-based and Family Child Care, BrightStars, and representatives from the Afterschool and Youth Development field. This group began that work by making several significant design changes including:

- Separating out competencies for center-based, family child care, and school age workforces
- Separating out competencies for teachers, teacher assistants, education coordinators, and administrators
- Shifting the lattice from six levels to four
- Aligning the competencies with Bloom's Taxonomy

With this new framework, the group developed a four level Career Lattice and drafted several domains for center-based teachers including, health, safety and wellness, child development and learning and curriculum. Unfortunately, due to resource constraints, the group needed to stop the work in late 2008. However, in 2010, DHS received CCDBG ARRA funding<sup>2</sup> which it allocated to completing the core competencies. Under RIDE leadership, a new work group was established in May 2010 and was comprised of state agency leaders, professional development providers, higher education, and early care and education providers (see Appendix A for a list of work group members). This team has worked to finish the Teacher competencies and is now seeking public feedback on their work.

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<sup>2</sup> The funding must be used by September 30, 2011

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## **Core Competency Domain 1: Health, Safety, and Wellness**

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Young children's physical and emotional health and safety is vital for fostering competence in all developmental areas. Early Care and Education professionals must understand and be able to ensure children's safety, promote sound health and dental practices and recognize and respond to child abuse and neglect. They must also be competent in preparing for and handling emergencies.

**DOMAIN 1: HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLNESS**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Knowledge of State and Federal Regulations</b>	<p>Understands the purpose of and follows state and federal regulations including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration of medication</li> <li>• Infant and Child CPR and First Aid training</li> <li>• Fire and disaster drills</li> <li>• Abuse and neglect</li> <li>• Communicable disease</li> </ul>	<p>Communicates licensing regulations on safety standards to families.</p>		
<b>Safety and Emergency Procedures</b>	<p>Routinely practices emergency plans and drills (e.g. fire, weather-related and lockdown) including safety procedures for children with disabilities.</p> <p>Understands ratio requirements and alerts appropriate parties when they are not met.</p> <p>Monitors and maintains safety in all areas, both indoors and outdoors, including condition of equipment and materials and the identification of potential hazards.</p> <p>Actively supervises children and teaches age appropriate safety precautions and rules to children to ensure safety both indoors and outdoors.</p> <p>Follows recommended guidelines to prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).</p>		<p>Analyzes learning environments regularly to provide a safer learning environment for children.</p>	<p>Analyzes and critiques established safety procedures and makes recommendations for change, as necessary.</p>

**DOMAIN 1: HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLNESS (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Health</b>	<p>Understands program policies and practices regarding health and individual children's health status.</p> <p>Practices, models, supports and assists children in appropriate hygiene techniques including hand washing, teeth brushing, toileting and diapering practices.</p> <p>Communicates with families about program policies and practices regarding health and individual children's health status.</p> <p>Understands indicators of child maltreatment, follows program policies regarding documentation and notification and performs responsibly as mandated reporter for child abuse and neglect.</p> <p>Understands the signs and symptoms of common childhood illnesses and notifies appropriate program personnel and/or families as appropriate while ensuring the comfort and care of other children.</p> <p>Recognizes and seeks to understand culturally influenced health practices of children.</p> <p>Follows policy and procedures for infection control and universal precautions.</p>			<p>Articulates, analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory, research and policy on children's health.</p> <p>Advocates for program policies and procedures that affect the nutritional welfare of the school community.</p>

**DOMAIN 1: HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLNESS (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Health (cont'd)</b>	<p>Knows individual children's allergies and other health needs and monitors compliance with requirements indicated by parents or a medical professional.</p> <p>Establishes an environment where children can sleep without disturbance.</p>			
<b>Food and Nutrition</b>	<p>Understands that the nutritional needs of infants, toddlers and preschoolers are unique to their development.</p> <p>Maintains appropriate communication systems with families regarding eating habits and food intake.</p> <p>Ensures that policies regarding allergies and family food restrictions are followed.</p> <p>Respectfully communicates with families about food restrictions and special needs.</p> <p>Respectfully communicates with families regarding family preferences and cultural influences on food and eating habits.</p> <p>Understands and utilizes developmentally appropriate practices which support healthy eating habits for infant, toddlers and preschoolers.</p> <p>Models healthy eating habits with infant, toddlers and preschoolers.</p>	<p>Provides families with information about nutrition and food appropriate for children.</p>	<p>Observes children during mealtime to learn about individual eating preferences and uses observations to inform menus, meal schedules and communication with families.</p> <p>Recognizes symptoms and behaviors of children that signal possible nutritional need or feeding/eating concerns.</p>	<p>Articulates, analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory, research and policy on nutrition.</p> <p>Advocates for program policies and procedures that affect the health status of the school community.</p>

**DOMAIN 1: HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLNESS (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Food and Nutrition (cont'd)</b>	Recognizes potential health hazards in meals (choking, allergies, etc.) and takes steps to avoid them.  Practices safe food handling, follows general sanitation practices and maintains sanitary environments.			

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## Core Competency Domain 2: Family Engagement

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Early childhood professionals understand the roles that family members and others play in the lives of children and the importance of engaging them in their child's education. They understand that children and youth develop within the context of their family and that there are a myriad of different family structures and dynamics. They also demonstrate respect for the family role as the primary educator and advocate for the child and they know how to build relationships with families.

Early childhood professionals respect and celebrate the diversity of languages, values, customs, attitudes, expectations, and traditions in the family of each child. They nurture the primary relationships between children and those who raise them and there is an awareness of and willingness to try to overcome barriers and address inequities. Language is used that can be understood by all.

Finally, early childhood professionals create meaningful opportunities for families to be actively engaged in their child's education by sharing relevant information about their child's development and learning, and engaging them in the program. They also help families of child with special needs obtain information and advocate for special services and help connect children and their families with community resources.

**DOMAIN 2: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Creating Respectful, Reciprocal Relationships with Families</b>				
<b><i>Family systems</i></b>	<p>Understands the complexity and dynamics of family systems.</p> <p>Respects and supports the varying structures, languages, and cultures of children’s families.</p> <p>Demonstrates respect for the family role as the primary educator, advocate and “expert” on their own child and actively seeks their opinion and input.</p>	<p>Able to identify and respond effectively to emerging family issues.</p> <p>Seeks information from families regarding variations across cultures in terms of family strengths, expectations, values and child-rearing practices.</p> <p>Understands and believes in the capacity of the family to change during children’s growth and development and supports the change process.</p>		
<b><i>Communication</i></b>	<p>Creates opportunities for two way communication to build relationships with families based on mutual trust and understanding.</p> <p>Communicates information about the program in a family-friendly and culturally appropriate way.</p>	<p>Utilizes a range of techniques to communicate effectively with all families, specifically families with linguistic differences.</p> <p>Provides meaningful, effective outreach to families that result in a high level of family engagement.</p>		

**DOMAIN 2: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Creating Respectful, Reciprocal Relationships with Families (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>Professional Relationships</i></b>	Understands the characteristics of positive or appropriate relationships with families.	Demonstrates and maintains positive and appropriate relationships with families.	Assesses relationships with individual families and employs creative strategies to maximize engagement with all families.	Articulates, analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research on developing relationships with families.  Serves as a role model and mentor to others on developing positive relationships with families.
<b>Engaging Families in Their Children's Development and Learning</b>				
<b><i>Sharing Information with Families</i></b>	Shares knowledge of general child development with families.  Communicates with families regarding children's daily activities, developing skills and accomplishments.  Employs regular and ongoing opportunities to exchange information with families pertinent to their child's learning and development.	Utilizes conferences and other strategies to exchange information with families in an ongoing way about their child's development and learning.  Begins to utilize information from families regarding variations across cultures in terms of family strengths, expectations, values and child-rearing practices in their teaching practice.	Consistently incorporates information from families into all aspects of classroom planning.	

**DOMAIN 2: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Engaging Families in Their Children’s Development and Learning (cont’d)</b>				
<b><i>Creating Opportunities for Families to be Actively Engaged in Their Child’s Education</i></b>	<p>Creates and maintains a safe and welcoming environment for families, including providing a quiet space for families to nurse, soothe or comfort a child.</p> <p>Understands that meaningful opportunities for family engagement linked to children’s learning goals, occur both in the classroom and at home.</p>	<p>Supports the parent role by providing relevant information about child development and learning and healthy attachment.</p> <p>Provides opportunities for family engagement both in the classroom and at home that build upon their families’ strengths, skills, talents, interests and availability.</p> <p>Provides opportunities for family engagement both in the classroom and at home tied to established learning goals for children.</p>	<p>Consistently provides opportunities for families to be engaged in their child’s education in a way that reflects cultural and linguistic differences.</p> <p>Evaluates and improves family engagement opportunities on a regular basis to meet the needs of current families.</p> <p>Designs and implements strategies for helping parents maintain attachment to their child.</p>	<p>Applies creative strategies to overcome challenges in engaging families from cultures and languages new to the community.</p> <p>Serves as a role model and mentor to others on involving families in their child’s development and learning.</p>
<b><i>Working with Families of Children With Special Education and Health Needs</i></b>	<p>Helps all families understand that integrating children with special education and health needs benefits all children.</p>	<p>Helps families obtain clear and understandable information about their children’s special education and health needs.</p> <p>Helps families to advocate for special services, when necessary.</p>	<p>Involves and supports families in the development of IEPs, IFSPs and other individualized plans for children.</p>	<p>Collaborates with other service providers to ensure comprehensive services to children and families; serves as an advocate for families when necessary.</p>
<b>Utilizing Community Resources to Support Families</b>				
<b><i>Family Dynamics</i></b>	<p>Understands the relationship between <b>family functioning</b> and positive child outcomes.</p>		<p>Works in partnership with families to assess, plan and respond appropriately to a range of family needs from informational to crisis intervention.</p>	

**DOMAIN 2: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Utilizing Community Resources to Support Families (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>Community Resources</i></b>	Is aware of resources within the program and surrounding community (e.g. early childhood special education, mental health services, health care, adult education, EL instruction, economic assistance, etc.).		Builds partnerships with community organizations and their representatives to mutually serve children and their families.	
<b><i>Connecting Families with Resources</i></b>	Recognizes when families may be in need of support.	Provides families with community resource information.  Accesses community resources to communicate effectively with families from diverse backgrounds.	Facilitates/supports families in making connections to formal and informal community support.	Identifies gaps in services to families and advocates for needed services and resources.

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## Core Competency Domain 3: Development and Learning

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Early childhood professionals recognize that experiences for any child in early care and education, regardless of the child's age, must include consideration of the child's developmental abilities, temperament, needs, and learning styles. Development includes several interrelated areas (physical, cognitive, social/emotional) that influence each other and develop simultaneously. Early care and education professionals recognize that the developmental process typically proceeds in predictable steps and in recognized sequences.

In addition to typical development, professionals must take into account factors that influence the rate and style of development, including each child's unique temperament learning style and interests, environmental influences such as culture and ethnicity, home language, community characteristics, and short and long-term risk factors such as poverty, illness, changes in family structure and ability levels including the influence of disabilities and special needs. They embrace an inclusive philosophy, where all children are individually valued and believe that an inclusive environment benefits children with and without special needs.

**DOMAIN 3: DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Child Development</b>				
<b><i>General Knowledge of Domains, Stages, and Milestones</i></b>	<p>Understands that each child’s development typically proceeds in a predictable and recognizable sequence.</p> <p>Understands that children’s development includes several inter-related domains (physical, cognitive, social/emotional) that influence each other and develop simultaneously.</p> <p>Understands that it is typical for each child to develop differently across developmental domains.</p> <p>Recognizes the major developmental milestones of children.</p>	<p>Uses knowledge of child development in order to provide developmentally appropriate and engaging experiences and interactions.</p> <p>Understands current research regarding the importance of early experiences on the development of the brain.</p>	<p>Consistently applies an understanding of child development in order to provide appropriate and engaging experiences and interactions.</p> <p>Comprehends and applies major child development theories and understands the interrelationships across developmental domains.</p>	<p>Articulates, analyzes, evaluates, and applies current theory and research on child growth and development and applies that knowledge to one’s practice.</p>
<b><i>Fostering Healthy Attachment and Relationships</i></b>	<p>Understands process of attachment as it relates to the growth and development of children.</p>	<p>Uses knowledge of healthy attachment theory to support children’s personal connections with adults and peers and preparation for separation e.g. during changes in staffing patterns and prolonged absences.</p>		<p>Values and advocates for continuity of care within the classroom and program to ensure that children are able to form a relationship with a consistent caregiver.</p>

**DOMAIN 3: DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Influences on Development</b>				
<b><i>Individual Needs and Differences</i></b>	<p>Understands and values that each child has unique characteristics including temperaments, learning styles and interests.</p> <p>Recognizes infants'/toddlers' individual schedules/preferences and uses that knowledge when planning daily routines and interactions.</p>	<p>Understands individual differences in development, temperament, learning styles and interests and applies this information to interact with children in individual ways.</p>	<p>Applies knowledge of individual differences in development, temperament, learning styles and interests to adapt environments and experiences for individual children.</p> <p>Adapts program schedule, routines and experiences to meet needs of all children.</p>	<p>Articulates, analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research pertaining to children's development, temperaments, learning styles and interests and applies that knowledge to one's practice.</p>
<b><i>Environmental Influences</i></b>	<p>Understands that there are multiple environmental influences including home language, culture and ethnicity, home environment, and community characteristics that may affect the pre- and post-natal development and learning of children in both positive and negative ways.</p>	<p>Begins to appropriately integrate knowledge of applicable environmental influences to promote children's development.</p>	<p>Seeks knowledge of environmental influences and utilizes that knowledge to adapt environments and learning experiences for individual children.</p>	<p>Analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research related to environmental influences and applies that knowledge to one's practice.</p>
<b><i>Risk Factors Impacting Children</i></b>	<p>Understands that children's development can be impacted by a myriad of short and long-term risk factors such as poverty, illness, changes in family structure, etc.</p>	<p>Applies knowledge of child development to identify and be responsive to the impact of risk factors on child development.</p>	<p>Identifies appropriate resources and services to address risk factors impacting children and partners with families to make appropriate referrals where needed.</p> <p>Learns and applies strategies to support children in overcoming the impact of risk factors in their lives.</p>	<p>Analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research related to risk factors and applies that knowledge to one's practice.</p>

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4
<b>Influences on Development (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>Identified Special Needs</i></b>	<p>Understands that there is a wide range of identified special needs across all areas of development.</p> <p>Understands that risk factors, developmental delays or disabilities may indicate a need for special services.</p> <p>Understands that there is a process of accessing services for children with special needs.</p> <p>Understands and values that an inclusive environment benefits children with and without special needs.</p> <p>Follows specific requirements for children in their care with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs).</p>	<p>Welcomes children with special needs and employs practices that support an inclusive philosophy.</p> <p>Utilizes the appropriate resources and services for children with special needs.</p> <p>Begins to apply knowledge about individuals with special needs and makes accommodations and adaptations to ensure their inclusion.</p> <p>Collaborates with other significant adults in planning appropriate activities, routines and experiences for individual children with special needs.</p>	<p>Demonstrates knowledge of inclusive philosophy and practices and understands the range of development in young children.</p> <p>Utilizes knowledge about individual children with special needs and consistently makes accommodations and adaptations to ensure their inclusion.</p> <p>Collaborates with team members and contributes to the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) that utilize recommended practices focusing on families' priorities and concerns as well as children's development and interests.</p> <p>Understands and participates in, as appropriate, the process to develop Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs).</p> <p>Collaborates with a multi-disciplinary team to develop and implement strategies for working together to benefit children with special needs.</p>	<p>Applies knowledge of inclusive philosophy to create a classroom community where all children are individually valued.</p> <p>Maintains current knowledge of relevant laws and emerging issues impacting children eligible for Early Intervention and special services.</p>

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## Core Competency Domain 4: Curriculum

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Last Updated 7/13/2011

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Early childhood professionals are able to design, implement and evaluate curriculum that promotes positive development and learning for each and every child through intentional learning experiences. They know and understand that curriculum for early care and education settings have four core components: content domains, process, context and teaching and facilitation. And they consider all four of these areas and their inter-relatedness when building meaningful curriculum.

Early childhood professionals know the learning standards within each of the eight content domains for early learning including approaches to learning, social and emotional development, language development and communication, literacy, mathematics, science, creativity and physical health and development. They know that each domain has various components that are important to pre-school curriculum as reflected in current literature.

Early childhood professionals also think about how young children learn. They know that a child's development in each domain is sequential and dependent on a child's experiences and they also recognize that each child is unique and learns in a distinctive way. They use their knowledge of 1) the early learning standards, 2) current research, theory and best practice of how children learn and develop, 3) their own knowledge, 4) child assessment information and 5) the unique interests, strengths and needs of the children and families in the program to design, implement and evaluate meaningful challenging curriculum for each child.

Finally, they understand the importance of relationships and high-quality interactions in supporting successful learning and they provide a learning environment that is respectful, supportive, challenging and aesthetically pleasing which will have a positive impact on the whole child.

**DOMAIN 4: CURRICULUM**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Content</b>				
<b><i>Approaches to Learning</i></b>	<p>Understands the various components (scope) of <b>approaches to learning</b> important to infant, toddler and preschool curriculum as reflected in current literature.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>approaches to learning</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler and preschooler experiences.</p> <p>Understands the learning goals and definitions of <b>approaches to learning</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>approaches to learning</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>approaches to learning</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	<p>Articulates, analyzes, and evaluates current theory and research pertaining to <b>approaches to learning</b> to expand and refine expectations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and apply that knowledge to one’s practice.</p>
<b><i>Literacy</i></b>	<p>Understands the various components (scope) of <b>literacy</b> important to infant, toddler and preschool curriculum as reflected in current literature.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>literacy</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler and preschooler experiences.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>literacy</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>literacy</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	<p>Articulates, analyzes, and evaluates current theory and research pertaining to <b>literacy</b> to expand and refine expectations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and apply that knowledge to one’s practice.</p>

**DOMAIN 4: CURRICULUM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Content (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>Literacy (cont'd)</i></b>	Understands the learning goals and definitions of <b>literacy</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.			
<b><i>Mathematics</i></b>	<p>Understands the various components (scope) of <b>mathematics</b> important to infant, toddler and preschool curriculum as reflected in current literature.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>mathematics</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler and preschooler experiences.</p> <p>Understands the learning goals and definitions of <b>mathematics</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>mathematics</b> .	Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>mathematics</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.	Articulates, analyzes, and evaluates current theory and research pertaining to <b>mathematics</b> to expand and refine expectations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and apply that knowledge to one's practice.

**DOMAIN 4: CURRICULUM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Content (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>Social/Emotional Development</i></b>	<p>Understands the various components (scope) of <b>social and emotional development</b> important to infant, toddler and preschool curriculum as reflected in current literature.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>social/emotional development</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler and preschooler experiences.</p> <p>Understands the learning goals and definitions of <b>social/emotional development</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>social and emotional development.</b></p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>social and emotional development</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	<p>Articulates, analyzes, and evaluates current theory and research pertaining to <b>social and emotional development</b> to expand and refine expectations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and apply that knowledge to one's practice.</p>
<b><i>Language Development and Communication</i></b>	<p>Understands the various components (scope) of <b>language development and communication</b> important to infant, toddler and preschool curriculum as reflected in current literature.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>language development and communication.</b></p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>language development and communication</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	<p>Articulates, analyzes, and evaluates current theory and research pertaining to <b>language development and communication</b> to expand and refine expectations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and apply that knowledge to one's practice.</p>

**DOMAIN 4: CURRICULUM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Content (cont'd)</b>				
<i>Language Development and Communication (cont'd)</i>	<p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>language development and communication</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler and preschooler experiences.</p> <p>Understands the learning goals and definitions of <b>language development and communication</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p> <p>Understands that English Language Learners must have opportunities to progress in their home language as they are learning English.</p>	<p>Applies strategies in the classroom so that English Language Learners have opportunities to progress in their home language as they are learning English.</p>	<p>Works with children and their families, using community resources as needed, to maintain the child's home language.</p> <p>Incorporates researched-based individualized instruction designed to promote English language development of English Language Learners.</p>	
<i>Science</i>	<p>Understands the various components (scope) of <b>science</b> important to infant, toddler and preschool curriculum as reflected in current literature.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>science</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler and preschooler experiences.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the area of <b>science</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>science</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	<p>Articulates, analyzes, and evaluates current theory and research pertaining to <b>science</b> to expand and refine expectations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and apply that knowledge to one's practice.</p>

**DOMAIN 4: CURRICULUM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Content (cont'd)</b>				
<b>Science (cont'd)</b>	Understands the learning goals and definitions of <b>science</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.			
<b>Creativity</b>	<p>Understands the various components (scope) of <b>creativity</b> important to infant, toddler and preschool curriculum as reflected in current literature.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>creativity</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler and preschooler experiences.</p> <p>Understands the learning goals and definitions of <b>creativity</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>creativity</b> .	Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>creativity</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.	Articulates, analyzes, and evaluates current theory and research pertaining to <b>creativity</b> to expand and refine expectations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and apply that knowledge to one's practice.

**DOMAIN 4: CURRICULUM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Content (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>Physical Health and Development</i></b>	<p>Understands the various components (scope) of <b>physical health and development</b> important to infant, toddler and preschool curriculum as reflected in current literature.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>physical health and development</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler and preschooler experiences.</p> <p>Understands the learning goals and definitions of <b>physical health and development</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>physical health and development</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>physical health and development</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p>	<p>Articulates, analyzes, and evaluates current theory and research pertaining to <b>physical health and development</b> to expand and refine expectations for infants, toddlers and preschoolers and apply that knowledge to one's practice.</p>
<b>Process</b>				
<b><i>Play</i></b>	<p>Understands that play is an important vehicle for learning in all domains.</p>	<p>Designs a learning environment and plans experiences that maximize play as a vehicle for learning.</p>	<p>Utilizes knowledge of children's interests, learning styles and stages of development to create meaningful play opportunities.</p>	<p>Continually analyzes and revises planned play experiences to deepen children's understanding of concepts.</p>

**DOMAIN 4: CURRICULUM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Process (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>Interactions Between Children</i></b>	Understands that peer interactions support learning.	Facilitates developmentally appropriate interactions between children to support learning.	Evaluates interactions between children to identify opportunities to extend children's learning.	Evaluates and applies theory and current research about the importance of peer interactions in children's learning.
<b><i>Interactions with Adults</i></b>	Understands that successful learning utilizes interactions with adults as an effective teaching strategy.	Utilizes engaging conversations with adults and thought provoking questions with adults to facilitate learning.	Evaluates situations in order to identify when to interact with a child to deepen the child's understanding.	Evaluates and applies theory and current research about the importance of adult-child interactions in children's learning.
<b><i>Interactions with Materials</i></b>	Understands that children learn through interaction with materials as they explore, problem-solve and discover.	Facilitates children's learning as they interact with materials to explore, problem-solve and discover.	Evaluates children's learning through their interactions with materials as they explore, problem-solve and discover in order to deepen understanding.	
<b><i>Individual Ways of Knowing and Learning</i></b>	Understands that each child is unique and learns in a distinctive way.	Provides opportunities and experiences to support each child's unique and distinctive way of knowing and learning.	Evaluates learning experiences to ensure opportunities for all kinds of learners.	Analyzes learning experiences through the lens of current theory and research about children's ways of knowing and learning.
<b>Teaching and Facilitating</b>				
<b><i>Repertoire of Instructional Approaches</i></b>	Understands that various instructional approaches should be used to meet individual children's needs.	Applies recommended instructional approaches that support children's learning and development.	Analyzes instructional approaches to support individual children's development and learning.	Continuously researches and applies innovative approaches to expand repertoire of instructional approaches.

**DOMAIN 4: CURRICULUM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Teaching and Facilitating (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>Repertoire of Instructional Approaches (cont'd)</i></b>	<p>Understands that instructional approaches include but are not limited to: modeling, facilitating, scaffolding, and co-constructing.</p> <p>Has a beginning understanding of current theoretical perspectives and research specific to teaching and facilitating.</p> <p>Recognizes that interactions and relationships are a primary instructional strategy for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.</p>	<p>Understands that various instructional approaches should be developmentally appropriate and be tailored to meet individual children's needs.</p> <p>Identifies and applies sound theoretical perspectives that undergird teaching strategies.</p> <p>Appropriately uses technology (such as computers, digital and video cameras, etc.) to support children's learning.</p>	<p>Analyzes and integrates sound theoretical perspectives in teaching strategies.</p>	
<b><i>Positive Relationships and Interactions</i></b>	<p>Understands that positive relationships with children, families and teachers are a foundation for all healthy development and learning.</p>	<p>Promotes positive relationships and respectful and supportive interactions among teachers, families and children.</p> <p>Responds consistently to each child's individual needs.</p>	<p>Analyzes own relationships and interactions and implements strategies to continuously improve relationships.</p>	<p>Models positive relationships and respectful and supportive interactions among children, families, teachers and other professionals.</p>

**DOMAIN 3: CURRICULUM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Context</b>				
<b><i>Environment</i></b>	<p>Understands the impact of indoor and outdoor learning environments on children’s development and learning.</p> <p>Understands that environmental design supports learning in all domains and encourages choice, play and exploration.</p> <p>Creates a learning environment that encourages children’s autonomy and exploration.</p>	<p>Applies knowledge about children’s learning and development to create healthy, respectful, supportive and challenging learning environments.</p>	<p>Assesses and adjusts environments based on knowledge of children’s learning goals.</p>	<p>Articulates, analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research on learning environments and various teaching approaches.</p> <p>Advocates for access to appropriate learning environments.</p>
<b><i>Materials</i></b>	<p>Utilizes materials that demonstrate acceptance of all children’s gender, family, race, culture and special needs.</p> <p>Chooses toys and materials that children find interesting and have multiples of favorites.</p>	<p>Utilizes knowledge of child development and individual children to select materials.</p>	<p>Provides open-ended materials that encourage problem solving and creativity and challenge children to construct knowledge in each domain outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards and/or Infant/Toddler guidelines identified by the state.</p> <p>Adapts and modifies materials for children with special needs.</p>	

**DOMAIN 3: CURRICULUM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Context (cont'd)</b>				
<b>Materials (cont'd)</b>			Intentionally selects materials that reflect children's interests, learning styles and stages of development.	
<b>Daily Schedule</b>	<p>Establishes and follows a daily schedule which includes substantial blocks of time for uninterrupted play.</p> <p>Supports children's understanding of the daily schedule through predictable and consistent daily routines.</p> <p>Maintains a daily schedule that provides balance between active and quiet, child-directed and teacher-directed, individual and group and indoor and outdoor activities.</p>	<p>Maintains a daily schedule that is flexible and responsive to the needs and interests of the group and the individuals within the group.</p> <p>Includes planning for transitions.</p>		
<b>Building Meaningful Curriculum</b>				
<b>Integrating the Four Components</b>	Understands the importance of including content, process, teaching and facilitation, context and the inter-relatedness of the eight domains when planning curriculum.	Plans curriculum that integrates the eight content domains, knowledge of process, strategies for teaching and facilitation and appropriate context.	Reflects on planned curriculum and analyzes effectiveness by looking closely at content, process, teaching and facilitation and context and ensuring the integration of the eight domains.	Consistently plans, implements and analyzes an integrated curriculum and shares knowledge with others.

**DOMAIN 3: CURRICULUM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Building Meaningful Curriculum (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>Incorporating Meaningful Information</i></b>	Understands the importance of incorporating family, culture and community factors when planning curriculum.	Incorporates family, culture and community factors into curriculum planning.	Consistently, with family input, incorporates family, culture and community factors into curriculum planning.	Analyzes the effectiveness of curriculum through the lens of family, culture and community factors.
<b><i>Utilizing Assessment Information</i></b> (*see the <i>Observation and Assessment Domain on page 35 for more detail</i> )	Understands the important of utilizing child assessment information when planning curriculum.	Utilizes child assessment information to inform curriculum planning.	Constructs curriculum experiences that are appropriately challenging for individual children and support critical thinking.	Utilizes child assessment information to analyze the effectiveness of curriculum planning.
<b><i>Utilizing Curriculum Resources</i></b>	Understands the need to evaluate the quality of curriculum resources including books, website resources and commercially prepared curricula.	Applies knowledge of quality curriculum to identify high quality resources including books, website resources and commercially prepared curricula.	Analyzes and evaluates a variety of curriculum resources and ensures that the resources used contribute to the development of an effective classroom environment.	Participates in the selection of and advocates for high quality, developmentally appropriate curriculum resources.

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## Core Competency Domain 5: Observation and Assessment

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Observation and assessment are a critical component of an effective program that supports children's development and learning. Effective observation and assessment helps early care and education (ECE) professionals to plan and adapt the environment and curriculum to meet group and individual needs.

It is important that ECE professionals have a strong knowledge of early childhood assessment and are able to effectively plan for and conduct developmentally appropriate authentic assessments (e.g. ongoing, natural settings, meaningful activities). It is also important that professionals understand the role of formal/standardized screening and assessment in evaluating the development and learning needs of young children and are able to support their effective use.

Early childhood professionals know how to practice responsible assessment and ensure that information is used to support children rather than exclude. They recognize the need to gather assessment information from multiple sources using a variety of methods when seeking to describe what children know and are able to do and they know how to effectively document the information they gather. Finally, they know how to share child assessment information with families and other professionals in an appropriate and confidential manner.

**DOMAIN 5: OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Knowledge of Early Childhood Assessment.</b>	<p>Understands that assessment is ethically grounded and guided by sound professional standards.</p> <p>Understands that assessment information should be used to inform curriculum planning, monitor a child’s growth and development, share information with families and others and identify children that might benefit from special services.</p> <p>Understands that assessment is ongoing and should be integrated into daily curriculum.</p> <p>Understands the importance of observation, documentation and other appropriate assessment tools and strategies in early care and education programs.</p>	<p>Understands that observation, documentation and other appropriate assessment tools and strategies are used to guide individualized instructional planning.</p> <p>Has a working knowledge of assessment methods that fall on a continuum between authentic and standardized.</p> <p>Aligns assessment with the learning goals of the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards.</p>	<p>Understands the purposes and appropriateness of various developmental screening and assessment procedures and instruments.</p> <p>Analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of various assessment methodologies and makes appropriate choices for various populations and situations.</p> <p>Demonstrates awareness of the laws, regulations and identification process for children with disabilities.</p>	<p>Critically analyzes assessment tools and strategies used for determining children’s learning goals for validity and reliability.</p> <p>Keeps abreast of changes in the assessment field.</p>

**DOMAIN 5: OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Conducting Developmentally Appropriate Authentic Assessments (ongoing, natural settings, meaningful activities)</b>	<p>Understands the importance of gathering information about the child over time, in natural settings, while children are engaged in meaningful activities.</p> <p>Identifies opportunities within the classroom environment to collect assessment information.</p>	<p>Begins to gather information about the child over time, in natural settings, while children are engaged in meaningful activities.</p> <p>Implements ongoing assessment in settings typical for the child e.g. home, class or center.</p> <p>Observes family members with children to understand the nature of relationships, developmental strengths, and capacities for change.</p>	<p>Develops and implements a comprehensive authentic assessment plan that integrates developmentally appropriate assessment into daily practice.</p>	<p>Analyzes the effectiveness of authentic assessment practices and utilizes that information to refine one's assessment plan.</p>
<b>Conducting Formal Assessments (if used in classrooms)</b>	<p>Understands that some formal/standardized screening and assessment is important in evaluating the development and learning needs of young children.</p>	<p>Understands that standardized assessments must be used for purposes for which they are intended and only administered by trained individuals.</p> <p>With supervision, utilizes selected formal/standardized screening and assessment tools and strategies in the evaluation process.</p>	<p>Independently utilizes selected formal /standardized screening and assessment tools and strategies in the evaluation process with fidelity.</p> <p>Considers how formal/standardized assessments are integrated into the overall classroom assessment plan and implements them as appropriate.</p>	<p>Selects, evaluates and interprets information from developmental screening and standardized assessment instruments used in the assessment of children.</p>

**DOMAIN 5: OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Practicing Responsible Assessment</b>	Understands the difference between subjective and objective observations.	Utilizes assessment information to support children rather than exclude.  Understands that language and culture can influence the assessment process and results.  Identifies environmental factors that influence assessment process and results such as length of assessment, time of day, environmental distractions, etc.	Implements responsible assessment processes that reduce and/or eliminate negative influences on the assessment process and results.  Evaluates current practice to determine if assessment practices are effective and adequate.  Designs methods for improving assessment practices based upon a review of information collected.	Ensures that consideration is given to cultural/linguistic and environmental influences during the planning, selecting, adapting, modifying and implementing of all assessment procedures.  Analyzes current research and best practices related to the assessment of young children.  Evaluates and modifies assessment tools and strategies to ensure validity and reliability.  Advocates for developmentally appropriate responsible assessment tools and strategies.
<b>Gathers Assessment Information from Multiple Sources Using a Variety of Methods</b>	Understands that assessment information comes from a variety of sources (families, other teachers, specialists).  Understands the benefits of using a variety of assessment strategies (observation, interview, work samples, standardized tests)	Incorporates assessment information from a variety of sources (families, other teachers, specialists, peers, child care) when seeking to describe what children know and are able to do.  Begins to apply a variety of assessment strategies to gather meaningful and objective information about each child's development	Seeks assessment information from a variety of sources.  Consistently collects assessment information which reliably illustrates children's interests and learning styles	Analyzes the effectiveness of assessment strategies to gather meaningful and objective information and refines one's assessment plan

**DOMAIN 5: OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Gathers Assessment Information from Multiple Sources Using a Variety of Methods (cont'd)</b>	Identifies opportunities to collect multiple sources of information for children in their classroom.	<p>Begins to collect assessment information from multiple sources which objectively illustrates what children know and are able to do in relation to learning goals.</p> <p>Begins to collect assessment information from multiple sources which objectively illustrate children's interests and learning styles.</p>	<p>Consistently collects assessment information which reliably illustrates what children know and are able to do in relation to learning goals.</p> <p>Consistently utilizes a variety of assessment strategies to gather meaningful and objective information about each child's development.</p>	
<b>Documenting Assessment Information</b>	Understands the importance of documenting assessment information.	Begins to create assessment documentation which is linked to learning goals; is objective and specific; and includes enough detail to give a third party a complete understanding of the assessment event.	Consistently creates assessment documentation which is linked to learning goals; is objective and specific; and includes enough detail to give a third party a complete understanding of the assessment event.	Analyzes the effectiveness of practices used to document assessment information and utilizes that information to refine one's assessment plan.
<b>Using Assessment Information in Curriculum Planning (including for use in planned interventions and referral for special services)</b>	Understands and values the link between curriculum and assessment.	Utilizes observation and assessment results to plan developmentally appropriate curriculum.	<p>Utilizes assessment information from a variety of sources to develop curriculum for individuals, small groups and large groups of children.</p> <p>Is able to aggregate and analyze assessment data.</p> <p>Develops multi-level learning opportunities in response to assessment information to meet the needs of children at different places on the development continuum.</p>	Continuously evaluates the assessment system to determine its effectiveness in informing curriculum and adapts as needed.

**DOMAIN 5: OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Using Assessment Information in Curriculum Planning (including for use in planned interventions and referral for special services) (cont'd)</b>			<p>Utilizes assessment information to establish objectives for children.</p> <p>Analyzes assessment information to determine whether further evaluation by other professionals is warranted.</p>	
<b>Communicating Assessment Information to Others (families, other professionals)</b>	<p>Understands that child assessment information is confidential and the sharing of this information is governed by program policy.</p> <p>Understands the purpose and value of sharing child assessment information with families and other professionals.</p>	<p>Explains the importance of collecting, using and sharing assessment information with families.</p> <p>Determines when child assessment information should be shared with other professionals to enhance services to children.</p>	<p>Continually improves strategies for the communication of assessment information to meet the needs of families with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.</p> <p>Exchanges complete and unbiased assessment information about a child's strengths and needs in a supportive manner with families.</p>	Serves as a mentor to other professionals in developing skills for effectively communicating child assessment information.

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## Core Competency Domain 6: Professionalism

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Early childhood professionals identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They understand that there is a context within which their profession originates. That context is the history and a research-based core base of knowledge that serve as a foundation for the profession. This knowledge must be used in all aspects of professional involvement with children, families and colleagues.

There are also certain expectations for behavior. Early childhood professionals must know and use ethical guidelines such as the NAEYC Code of Ethics and other professional standards related to early childhood as they implement strategies in a program and work closely with children, families, colleagues and the community. They value the diversity of culture, language, gender, ability, age, thought and programs that can be found in all aspects of our society.

Early childhood professionals show a commitment to ongoing professional development and learning by engaging in and utilizing a wide variety of professional development resources to improve their practice. This includes participating in collaborative learning experiences and being supported or mentored by others in the field. As professionals advance in their careers, they begin to share their knowledge in the greater community and mentor others in their professional growth.

Finally, every professional must be able to advocate on behalf of children, families and the profession.

**DOMAIN 6: PROFESSIONALISM**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Foundations: Identifying and Involving Oneself with the Early Care and Education Profession</b>	<p>Has beginning knowledge of the historical context of the early care and education profession.</p> <p>Understands that the profession has a research-based core of knowledge as its foundation.</p> <p>Understands that there is a connection between the core base of knowledge, regulations and program and professional standards.</p> <p>Understands that early childhood practice is impacted by emerging research, current issues and advances in the field.</p>	<p>Consistently seeks new information on research, current issues and advances in the early care and education profession.</p> <p>Accesses resources and participates in activities offered by professional organizations.</p>	<p>Applies information from related fields such as health, mental health, etc. to develop a holistic approach to early care and education.</p> <p>Articulates a personal philosophy of early care and education based on core knowledge.</p> <p>Maintains active membership in one or more professional organizations.</p>	<p>Critically analyzes and addresses issues and challenges within the early care and education field through research, policymaking and/or leadership.</p>
<b>Ethical Standards and Professional Guidelines</b>	<p>Identifies and values ethical and professional guidelines established by the early care and education profession.</p> <p>Is aware of and complies with program policies that pertain to professional conduct.</p>	<p>Utilizes professional code of ethics in making professional decisions.</p> <p>Establishes and maintains appropriate professional boundaries.</p>	<p>Identifies potential conflicts of interest and ethical dilemmas and proactively seeks support in resolving emerging ethical issues.</p> <p>Demonstrates understanding of the ethical and professional guidelines established by the early care and education profession and references those when solving dilemmas in working with infants/toddlers and their families.</p>	<p>Serves as a role model and promotes compliance with ethical standards in the workplace.</p>

**DOMAIN 6: PROFESSIONALISM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Ethical Standards and Professional Guidelines (cont'd)</b>	<p>Knows and obeys relevant laws such as those pertaining to child abuse, the rights of children with disabilities and school attendance.</p> <p>Recognizes potentially unethical practices.</p> <p>Protects the privacy and confidentiality of family information.</p>			
<b>Valuing Diversity</b>	<p>Is aware of and respects differences in children, family, colleagues, lifestyles, languages, perspectives and cultural backgrounds.</p> <p>Views diversity as an asset to the classroom and program.</p> <p>Understands how culture influences child-rearing practices and how that in turn can affect growth and development.</p>	<p>Incorporates differences in children, family, colleagues, lifestyles, languages, perspectives and cultural backgrounds into planning curriculum.</p> <p>Utilizes teaching strategies that are responsive to differences in the needs of children and families.</p>	<p>Collaborates with families, colleagues and community members to promote diversity.</p> <p>Supports children in identifying and challenging bias.</p>	<p>Mentors others in understanding issues related to diversity and cultural competence.</p>

**DOMAIN 6: PROFESSIONALISM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Advocating for Children, Families and the Profession</b>	<p>Has knowledge of resources available to support children, families and professionals.</p> <p>Understands the impact that certain environmental and social factors have on children and families.</p> <p>Advocates for individual children through processes established by the program.</p> <p>Discusses child development (birth to 8) and the value of early care and education programs with families.</p>	<p>Understands and begins to communicate the relationship between the program philosophy and the daily curriculum with others.</p> <p>Understands that national, state and local legislation and public policy affects children, families, programs and the early care and education profession.</p>	<p>Clearly articulates the relationship between program philosophy, daily curriculum, early learning standards and child outcomes.</p> <p>Maintains an awareness of legislative changes that affect children, families and the ECE field.</p>	<p>Advocates for children, families and the profession in the greater community.</p> <p>Nurtures and supports the development of advocacy skills with colleagues.</p>
<b>Commitment to Ongoing Professional Development</b>	<p>Understands the importance of ongoing professional development.</p> <p>Utilizes a variety of professional resources and relationships to improve practice.</p> <p>Develops and carries out a personal professional development plan in collaboration with a supervisor.</p>	<p>Utilizes reflections to modify and improve work with children, families and colleagues.</p> <p>Develops and carries out a professional development plan with increasing autonomy.</p> <p>Engages in continuous collaborative learning to inform practice.</p> <p>Identifies professional and personal goals in working with children and families.</p>	<p>Shares knowledge with the school community.</p> <p>Routinely engages in reflection of teaching practices and the behavior of children and revises practice as necessary.</p> <p>Initiates and advocates for own professional development activities.</p> <p>Utilizes aggregate child assessment data to identify ongoing professional development goals.</p>	<p>Shares knowledge in the greater community as a component of one professional development.</p> <p>Mentors others in their professional growth.</p>

**DOMAIN 6: PROFESSIONALISM (cont'd)**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b>	<b>LEVEL 3</b>	<b>LEVEL 4</b>
<b>Commitment to Ongoing Professional Development (cont'd)</b>	<p>Utilizes constructive feedback to improve performance.</p> <p>Values reflection as a tool for professional development and begins to reflect on own performance.</p> <p>Seeks out professional development opportunities that are specific to the unique needs of children in the program.</p>			

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## APPENDIX A: 2010 Work Group Members

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