



Ohio's Early Childhood
Core Knowledge & Competencies

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Young children are amazing! Inside the vulnerable, wobbly head of the youngest newborn is a stunning amount of sophisticated brain activity! Thanks to modern science, we are just beginning to understand just how perfectly equipped and innately capable children are from the start to learn, to function, to adapt, and to make sense of the world in which they are born.

But modern science has also shown that the amazing capabilities of each child are not enough by themselves to ensure a successful passage into a healthy, happy adulthood. Decades of research have made it abundantly clear – the adults who care for and educate young children will shape:

- children’s understanding of themselves, others and the world around them;
- the pathways of children’s physical, social, cognitive, and emotional development; and
- even the very structure of the young child’s brain!

Parents, of course, are their children’s first and most influential caregivers and teachers. During the course of their early years, however, most of the children in Ohio will also have their development and experiences shaped by at least one early childhood professional – someone dedicated to the well-being of young children, birth to age eight, and their families. In this document, you will discover the breadth and depth of knowledge and skills that are needed to fully foster young children’s inborn capabilities.

Core Knowledge

The Ohio Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals is based on the understanding that there are critical areas of knowledge and skills that are necessary for early childhood professionals to have if young children are to thrive under their care. Core Knowledge strives to clearly communicate the nature of these critical areas of professional practice and be useful to anyone who is interested in the competency of early childhood professionals, whether it be those working or considering work in the field, those families who depend upon early childhood services, or those who make decisions and policies about early childhood professionals.

A Note About Wording

In writing this document, some key decisions were made about language that would be used. Ohio’s Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies was developed by people in a wide variety of disciplines and roles within the early childhood profession and defines and describes what we, as early childhood professionals, know and do and why. It is intended to be a statement from us, the early childhood professional community in Ohio, and it is our sincere desire that each of you who share in this work will see yourself in these pages and feel that you are well-represented here.

Early childhood professional is the term chosen for those whose work is represented in Core Knowledge. It is intended to encompass not only those who have the responsibility for the direct care and education of young children but all those whose primary work responsibilities are related to the well-being of children birth through age eight. These professionals, though they are found in a wide variety of roles and settings, share a common goal of ensuring young children’s healthy development, optimal care, and success and joy in learning.

Professional practice is the term chosen to describe the early childhood professional’s work. It is a phrase intended to include all of the customary activities and responsibilities – the “practices” – of work focused on young children and their families.

Recommended practices is the term chosen to describe professional practices that are generally considered to be the most highly recommended by the field, based on current research and the collective wisdom of expert practitioners at this time. It is understood that, as new evidence arises, the practices that are recommended in the care and education of young children may change.

A glossary can be found in Appendix A that defines many more of the terms used throughout Core Knowledge and within specific content areas. Words that are defined in the glossary are marked with an asterisk*.

What and Why

Core Knowledge and Competencies define what all adults who work with young children need to know, understand and be able to do in order to ensure that children have the best possible environments, experiences and relationships in which to grow and learn. Core Knowledge is based upon all that we currently know about young children’s development, care and learning through research as well as the combined wisdom of leaders in our field.

Having a clearly defined Core Knowledge and Competencies has many benefits:

- Work with young children gains stature as a profession when everyone understands that it requires specialized knowledge, skills and dispositions gained through education and ongoing professional development.
- Core Knowledge represents the scope of professional practice and can provide a well-rounded framework for the preparation of newcomers to the field and the continued professional growth of those already working with young children and their families.
- Lastly, a Core Knowledge document that covers a range from entry level to master level is a helpful tool as individuals assess their own knowledge and skill level and chart a course for their own development.

Guiding Principles

The process of creating Core Knowledge for Ohio’s early childhood community involved the wisdom, creativity, and passion of a committed group of the state’s early childhood professionals. The Ohio Early Care and Education Professional Development Network invited professionals from across the state to join one of six writing teams, a team for each of the six identified Core Knowledge content areas. The resulting teams, each with ten members, represented many roles and settings in which early childhood professionals work. (Please see the Acknowledgements on page 8 for a list of all of the writing team members.)

The writing teams were strongly committed to a set of eight guiding principles. The writing teams labored to create a Core Knowledge and Competencies document that would:

1. identify the key concepts that apply to anyone working with young children;
2. apply to early childhood professionals who work with young children and their families to provide care and/or education in many different settings and roles;
3. represent knowledge and observable skills needed for all levels of professionals, from beginners just entering the field through those at an expert level;
4. apply to the development, care and learning of children from birth through age eight;
5. recognize that children with special needs are included in the population of children that all early childhood professionals serve;
6. be culturally sensitive and respectful;
7. be based on what is currently known, from research and expert wisdom, about young children and the practices that best support them in their development and learning; and
8. be reader-friendly and useful in a variety of ways.

Definitions

Six broad content areas were identified as key categories of specialized knowledge that shape early childhood professional practice. Here we give general definitions of each. They are in no particular order and should be seen as equally important areas of professional knowledge and competency that are interrelated and dynamic.

Child Growth and Development:

Early childhood professionals base their practice on an understanding of all of the ways that children change over time, including expected patterns of development as well as the many ways that individual children can differ.

Family & Community Relations:

Early childhood professionals understand how important it is that they know the family, culture and community context in which each child lives. They also appreciate that developing strong, positive connections to families and community resources benefit children.

Health, Safety and Nutrition:

Early childhood professionals realize the importance of children's physical well-being as a basic and necessary foundation for their growth, development and learning, and they understand the many ways of fostering it.

Child Observation and Assessment:

Early childhood professionals are able to continually improve each child's care and learning experiences because they understand that every child follows a unique path of growth and development; therefore, they will gather and apply information about each child's progress as part of their regular practice.

Professional Development:

Early childhood professionals see themselves as members of a larger professional community and accept the responsibilities that go along with being a positive reflection on the profession and a positive contributor to the profession.

Learning Experiences and Environments:

Early childhood professionals appreciate their role as designer and builder of the world in which each child lives while in an early childhood program. They also understand the interplay between children's experiences, environments and relationships and their well-being, development and learning.

Over-arching Considerations

Some aspects of professional practice cut across all six content areas. In identifying the Core Knowledge and Competencies within each content area, each writing team considered the implications of:

- the inclusion of children with special needs*;
- the differences among children and families that are due to such influences as culture*, family* structure, or religion; and
- the responsibility of the professional for guiding young children's behavior.

Dispositions

Every profession has a set of attitudes, beliefs and perspectives that distinguish its members as a group. Together they are called professional “dispositions.” The early childhood profession, too, has dispositions that are highly valued among its members.

Although dispositions are an important part of professional practice, they are different than professional knowledge and competencies. Dispositions describe how a person sees all aspects of the work of the early childhood profession rather than what is known and done. They are more often absorbed by newcomers and nurtured by seasoned veterans within the professional community than formally taught. Because dispositions apply to all members of the early childhood profession and are evident in every aspect of their work, we’ve chosen to list them separately.

The model early childhood professional is one who:

- delights in and is curious about children and how they grow and learn
 - appreciates and supports the unique and vital role of parents in their children’s lives
 - is eager to learn new knowledge and skills that will support young children’s development and learning
 - models the attitudes and behaviors that she/he values in children
 - values and celebrates the diversity found among children and their families and in the world around them
 - is willing to ask for help, to learn from others, and to accept constructive criticism
 - reflects on the personal beliefs and values that influence her/his own attitudes and practices
 - accepts responsibility for her/his own actions
 - shows respect for children, families, and colleagues by maintaining confidentiality
 - communicates clearly, respectfully and effectively with children and adults
 - responds to challenges and changes with flexibility, perseverance and cooperation
- expresses her/his own emotions in healthy and constructive ways
 - values and nurtures imagination, creativity and play, both in children and in herself/himself
 - demonstrates responsible professional and personal habits in working and interacting with others
 - has a collaborative attitude

Sections

Each of the six content areas has three sections:

Rationale:

This section states the reasons that the content area is crucial in the early childhood professional’s day-to-day practice. The statements identify the effect of professional competency on children and families and are based on current research and standards of practice. A list of the references used in creating each area’s rationale section is provided in Appendix B.

Knowledge Base:

This section defines the concepts and facts that a professional must learn in order to become competent in each area of practice. This knowledge provides the cognitive foundation for the skills and behaviors defined in the competencies section.

Competencies:

This section is the bulk of the Core Knowledge document. In it, specific observable behaviors and skills are identified that describe the range of practice of a capable early childhood professional.

In Appendix C, a list of additional resources is provided for each content area if more information on that topic is desired.

Levels

In order to represent the development of professional practice over time, competencies are given for three levels of professional development. All early childhood professionals would be expected to possess Level 1 competencies. As they continue learning and advancing their knowledge and skills, they would be expected to add the competencies in Level 2 and, eventually, Level 3.

The three levels of Core Knowledge competencies are coordinated with Ohio’s Career Pathways Model for Early Childhood Professionals. The Career Pathways Model provides a systematic way of placing professionals along a continuum of professional achievement based on their formal education, inservice training, experience, and credentials and certifications. Although the Career Pathways Model delineates six levels, Core Knowledge describes competencies at three general levels of development. Here is how the Core Knowledge competencies coordinate with the Career Pathways levels of professional achievement:

Core	Career Pathways
Level 1 ...applies to...	Early Childhood Professional Levels 1 and 2
Level 2 ...applies to...	Early Childhood Professional Levels 3 and 4
Level 3 ...applies to...	Early Childhood Professional Levels 5 and 6

For more information about the Career Pathways Model, please visit the website of the Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association: <http://www.occrra.org>.

Core Knowledge is an important addition to a growing collection of key Ohio documents already in existence that are related to early childhood. The writing teams were committed to creating Core Knowledge that supports, aligns with, and complements these documents. The following section clarifies the similarities and differences between these key documents.

Ohio's Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies

Focus: early childhood (birth – age eight) professionals

Content: professional knowledge and skills

Format: 6 areas of professional practice; 3 levels of competency

Ohio's Infant & Toddler Guidelines

Focus: children birth to 36 months

Content: developmental characteristics

Format: 6 developmental domains; 3 age ranges

Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards

Focus: preschool children

Content: essential skills and concepts for young children to have learned by entry into kindergarten

Format: 4 curricular areas: English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies

Ohio's Standards for the Teaching Profession

Focus: licensed classroom educators, preK-grade 12

Content: professional knowledge and skills

Format: 7 “standards” or aspects of professional practice; 3 levels of performance

Ohio's Early Learning Program Guidelines

Focus: framework for preschool and child care programs

Content: goals & outcomes for early learning programs

Format: 4 sections, each with goals, intended outcomes and indicators

Core Knowledge also aligns with key documents of national organizations in the early childhood profession. In writing Core Knowledge, we believed it was important that we show clear links between Core Knowledge and three important source documents from leading organizations in the field, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Council for Exceptional Children/Division of Early Childhood. The following documents are closely related to Core Knowledge and were used as resources in its development:

- *NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs:* identifies standards for higher education programs that prepare early childhood professionals and states the knowledge and skills that students should have after reaching different levels of educational achievement
- *NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria:* articulates standards of excellence for ten different aspects of early childhood programs
- *DEC Recommended Practices in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education:* identifies recommended practices in seven different aspects of serving children with special needs

A table is provided in Appendix D that shows which Core Knowledge areas link with which standards/recommended practices from these three source documents.

Uses of Core Knowledge

Core Knowledge can be useful to many people in many ways, including:

Audience	Use
Early Childhood Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-assessment; identify knowledge or competencies to acquire• Create a plan for developing as a professional
Program Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarify knowledge and skills required of staff positions• Identify training and staff development needs and staff development plan• Assess current staff to identify gaps and target areas of higher competency in recruiting new staff• Tie level of competency to pay scale
Developers and Providers of Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organize and identify training using Core Knowledge areas and levels• Assess current availability of training across all content areas and all levels of competency• Use as framework for developing comprehensive system of training
Higher Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use framework to facilitate articulation between institutions• Assess current program content to guide course development• Prepare early childhood professionals for roles and settings in addition to classroom settings
State and Local Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop policy, initiatives and funding decisions that will increase the level of competency of early childhood professionals• Identify common goals to improve inter-agency coordination
Early Childhood Advocates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Educate parents, policymakers and general public about the areas of professional practice in early childhood and the need for competent professionals• Reinforce the concept and language of professionalism for the field of early childhood
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess potential or current caregivers and teachers of their children
Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make informed decision about entering the field of early childhood• Appreciate the degree of knowledge and skill required for professional competency in early childhood• Support public and private investments, incentives and initiatives that encourage and facilitate professional competency

The Writing Teams

The task of creating Ohio's Core Knowledge and Competencies was accomplished by a talented, passionate, knowledgeable and committed group of early childhood professionals from a wide variety of disciplines and early childhood settings with a broad range of expertise.

Child Growth & Development

Team Lead: Maggie Summers	Ohio State University Child Care
Team Members: Melody Beach-Sexton Pam Chibucos Debra Filiman-Demyen Don Fuzer Barbara Oehlberg Joyce Porter Carole Schultz Kelly Slade Laurie Zeeff	Ohio Department of Health/BEIS Owens Community College Mahoning County ESC Barberton City Schools Head Start Consultant Community Action Wayne/Medina Lourdes College Action for Children Van Wert County MR/DD
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Health, Safety & Nutrition

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Team Facilitator: Julie Witten	4C

Six writing teams were formed in January, 2006 and by July their tremendous investment of time, thought, and energy had resulted in a resource that will benefit Ohio's early childhood professionals and the children and families they serve in so many ways.

Family & Community Relations

Team Lead: Billie Navojosky	Positive Education Program
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Team Facilitator: Donna Ruhland	Ohio Child Care Resource & Referral Association

Child Observation & Assessment

Team Lead: Peg Conley	Consultant
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Professional Development

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A final word of thanks to our technical writer, Kathy Reschke, ChildWise Resources, for bringing the work of all of the writing teams together into a final cohesive whole.



Child Growth & Development

Rationale

Research indicates that children's growth and development is optimized when early childhood professionals know and apply the fundamental principles of human development. Understanding the significant theories, general concepts, and processes of human growth and development enables the early childhood professional to design care and education that positively impact the current and future life of the child. By integrating current knowledge about children's growth and development into their daily practice, early childhood professionals provide relevant, meaningful interactions and experiences for young children in an emotionally and physically safe, healthy environment. The early childhood professional also recognizes that an understanding of developmental patterns and individual differences, as well as the influences of family and culture, is critical to implementing developmentally appropriate* practices in programs for young children. By demonstrating respect for young children as unique human beings, each child's individual potential may be nurtured and enhanced.



* Definition for this term can be found in the glossary in Appendix A. Each defined term is only marked the first time it is used in this content area.

Knowledge Base

In order for children to thrive in early childhood programs, professionals who provide services to young children and their families must strive to know and understand:

- the principles of child growth and development, including:
 - the interdependence of developmental domains* (social, emotional, cognitive, language, sensory, creative, physical and adaptive)
 - developmental sequences, stages and milestones
 - the varying rates of development in individual children
- that development results from interaction between the child and the child's early relationships and experiences, which include family, language, culture and environment
- how attachment* significantly impacts all areas of development
- the cumulative and delayed effects of early experiences and their potential for both positive and negative effects on child growth and development
- how self-regulation* affects all areas of development and behavior
- that caring, consistent relationships with adults provide external supports that serve as the basis for developing self-regulation
- the importance of effective language and communication between children and adults, and among children, for healthy growth and development
- how children's pro-social behavior* is supported by adults who model positive behavior and view challenging behavior* as a learning opportunity
- appropriate strategies for responding to the differing developmental needs of children, including those with developmental delays
- how play provides the opportunity for young children to grow and develop, incorporating different modes of learning and different ways of representing knowledge and demonstrating skills
- that the early childhood profession has a constantly evolving knowledge base of research and theory that guides appropriate practice.

Competencies - Developmental Process

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Recognizes and respects individual differences in children's growth, development and learning and adjusts practices and expectations for individual children accordingly.
- 1.2 Identifies basic developmental sequences, stages and milestones of young children.
- 1.3 Understands children's developmental levels in relation to age appropriate norms and uses this information to meet the general needs of children showing typical development.
- 1.4 Recognizes and accepts that family*, community* and culture* influence the development of children and adjusts practice and interaction patterns for individual children and/or families accordingly.
- 1.5 Understands that challenging behavior has environmental and developmental causes and uses this information to modify environment, activities and expectations to improve behavioral outcomes.
- 1.6 Understands that children develop skills and abilities and learn best through their natural medium of play and uses this medium to enhance development, behavior and learning outcomes for all children.

Level 2

- 2.1 Applies direct observation and knowledge of children's development as a framework to provide appropriate experiences for children.
- 2.2 Identifies children's differing developmental needs and implements responsive strategies.
- 2.3 Recognizes the need to make referrals for evaluation to determine skills and abilities, based on ongoing observation and assessment, understands the referral process, and becomes an active member of the assessment team as needed.
- 2.4 Articulates current theory, research, and policy on child growth and development as evidenced by the ability to relate personal practices and beliefs to professional standards.

Level 3

- 3.1 Implements intentional strategies to meet the changing needs, interests and abilities of individual children and groups of children.
- 3.2 Analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory, research, and policy on child growth and development to general practice and the development of a personal teaching philosophy.
- 3.3 Analyzes and evaluates practice on an on-going basis and implements changes to enhance children's growth and development.
- 3.4 Provides mentoring support to colleagues to enhance their understanding of child growth and development by sharing knowledge, assisting with colleague growth and developing mutually supportive professional relationships.

Competencies - Nurturing Relationships

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Engages in safe, responsive relationships with each child to provide a sense of security and promote optimal development.
- 1.2 Respects families as the primary teachers of their children by valuing their opinions and nurturing their involvement in the educational process.
- 1.3 Observes and understands attachment and separation* behaviors as evidenced by the ability to respond and assist both child and family members in a supportive and comforting manner.
- 1.4 Models positive, pro-social behavior in all settings including child, family and professional interactions.
- 1.5 Talks with children frequently to develop relationships and promote children's understanding of their world through a variety of approaches including special consideration of children with cultural differences and special needs that might hinder development of this skill.
- 1.6 Communicates respectfully and responsibly with families and colleagues.

Level 2

- 2.1 Establishes nurturing relationships with children that respect individuality in learning style, developmental profile and cultural background.
- 2.2 Provides support and guidance in consistent, non-threatening and positive ways that reinforce children's feelings of confidence and competence.
- 2.3 Models problem-solving skills in the context of children's interactions and play.
- 2.4 Interacts with children in ways that facilitate the development of expressive language and thought in all children, especially those with developmental, language or other issues that may hinder communication.
- 2.5 Provides information to families about the general principles of child growth and development relative to their needs and ensures that this information meets the developmental, language and reading ability levels required for full understanding.

Level 3

- 3.1 Integrates the understanding of the dynamic relationship among aspects of development and learning to shape program planning, teaching roles and strategies.
- 3.2 Collaborates with consultants and families in planning learning experiences for children's individual needs.
- 3.3 Establishes partnerships with families, involving them in all aspects of the program, including advocating for their own children both within the program and in the public sector.

Competencies - Appropriate Environments

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Recognizes the importance of consistency in environments*, expectations and responses to children.
- 1.2 Recognizes and respects the importance of exploration and play in children's growth and development and uses this medium consistently across the day.
- 1.3 Provides a variety of activities and experiences that foster the development of the whole child.
- 1.4 Recognizes and supports appropriate and culturally responsive environments for children by weaving awareness and sensitivity of diversity through total learning experience.

Level 2

- 2.1 Provides consistency in environments, expectations and responses to children as evidenced by the usage of standard best practices at all times.
- 2.2 Enhances and adapts environments and experiences based on the needs of individual children, including children with special developmental, learning and/or emotional needs.
- 2.3 Provides a responsive environment where children initiate and extend their learning through play.

Level 3

- 3.1 Incorporates children's individual, unique and special needs (illness, disability, family stress, etc.) into planning for environments and experiences.
- 3.2 Creates environments with appropriate supports that empower children to communicate, negotiate and problem-solve and directly teaches and/or supports development of these social skills.
- 3.3 Creates environments and experiences that affirm and respect cultural and linguistic diversity by making sure materials, activities and graphics represent all cultures represented within the room and the surrounding community.



Family & Community Relations

Rationale

Families* are diverse in structure and nature. They include people who are related by birth, by marriage, by legal ties, or simply by affection and concern. Children's lives are embedded in their families and communities*; therefore early childhood professionals must value children and families in the context of their culture*, home and community. Research indicates that successful early childhood care and education depends on partnerships with families and communities that are built upon ongoing, interactive communication and a commitment to confidentiality. Children thrive when early childhood professionals utilize knowledge and understanding of family and community characteristics. Children's successful development is supported when early childhood professionals: are aware of community resources*; know how to make collaborative community connections; and build meaningful, reciprocal, respectful relationships that empower* families.

Knowledge Base

In order for children to thrive in early childhood programs, professionals who provide services to young children and their families must strive to know and understand:

- that families are children's primary educators and must be supported in that role
- that families contribute significantly to children's learning and development
- the necessity of developing a collaborative partnership with each family
- strategies to initiate and maintain family involvement
- a variety of communication skills to engage and promote reciprocal interaction
- problem solving skills and conflict resolution strategies to assist families
- the impact of diverse family support systems on children, families and communities
- the unique contribution of culture and community on the family system*
- community resources and services and how to utilize them
- how to make collaborative connections to benefit children and families

* Definition for this term can be found in the glossary in Appendix A. Each defined term is only marked the first time it is used in this content area.



Competencies - Valuing Families

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Acknowledges families as their children's first and most influential caregivers and teachers. 1.2 Recognizes families' contributions in identifying their children's varied strengths and actively uses this information to construct appropriate programs for individual children. 1.3 Recognizes different parenting styles and their impact on children's learning and development. 1.4 Recognizes the influence that family members have on children's behaviors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Engages in careful, reflective observation of family roles as evidenced by usage of observations in daily planning and environment development. 2.2 Accepts the values of families in a non-judgmental way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Incorporates the families' knowledge of their children in programming. 3.2 Empowers* families to be equal partners in the decision-making process by listening to family opinions, valuing information provided, and attempting to reconcile any differences in opinions between professionals and family members.

Competencies - Positive Family-Professional Relationships

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 Establishes rapport with families through regular communication. 1.2 Maintains and follows rules of confidentiality*. 1.3 Assesses the primary language of the child and family. 1.4 Communicates with families in a sensitive and appropriate manner. 1.5 Knows and understands problem-solving and conflict resolution strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 Provides a family communication system where families can find information on educational materials, daily activities, schedules, etc., through a variety of means and makes this information accessible to all family members regardless of technology, reading and language differences. 2.2 Encourages feedback from parents and incorporates it into practice. 2.3 Works to present communication in the primary language of the parents utilizing various sources and technology. 2.4 Maintains a collaborative relationship with families using a variety of communication tools and communication levels. 2.5 Implements effective problem-solving and/or conflict resolution strategies as needed, using outside supports such as interpreters as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.1 Develops and implements relationship-based practices (such as parent mentors, parents as parent coaches, parents as board members, etc.) that foster respectful/reciprocal interactions with families. 3.2 Evaluates the readability and inclusiveness of communication to families and uses this information to develop appropriate communication strategies for individual families. 3.3 Anticipates and negotiates potential conflicts involving families and educational settings, using outside supports such as interpreters as appropriate.

Competencies - Supporting Family Connections

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p>1.1 Acknowledges the value of family and community partnerships within children’s learning environment.</p> <p>1.2 Identifies the community resources and services* available to support children and families.</p>	<p>2.1 Recognizes the value of families networking with each other and provides support to make such networks possible and accessible to all families.</p> <p>2.2 Connects children and families to community resources and services.</p>	<p>3.1 Establishes partnerships between families, early childhood programs, and communities.</p> <p>3.2 Encourages and plans activities to help families network with each other and provides support to make such networks possible and accessible to all families.</p> <p>3.3 Collaborates with families and communities to identify and research possible solutions for unmet needs.</p> <p>3.4 Assumes a leadership role in working with service providers and families by providing information on best practices, educational research and other pertinent topics in forms most easily accessible and valued by that individual.</p>

Competencies - Community Collaborations

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<p>1.1 Participates on teams for the development of individualized service plans (the Individualized Family Service Plan, or IFSP, for under three years of age; the Individualized Education Plan, or IEP, for over three years of age).</p> <p>1.2 Follows individualized plans developed by service providers and families.</p>	<p>2.1 Collaborates with service providers working with children and families.</p> <p>2.2 Utilizes community resources in learning experiences and uses community sites (fire stations, parks, libraries, etc.) as field trip opportunities and/or brings resources to children, as appropriate.</p> <p>2.3 Supports community activities by being a visible partner in all appropriate activities or initiatives in the surrounding geographic location.</p>	<p>3.1 Participates in outreach activities that support community improvement or advocacy projects (advisory boards, committees, etc.).</p> <p>3.2 Advocates for needed services and resources that the community is lacking.</p> <p>3.3 Educates the community about quality early care and education services by providing reading materials, classroom visitations, public service announcements and general advocacy whenever possible.</p> <p>3.4 Articulates knowledge of current recommended practices in early care and education to families and the community through a variety of means and to a widely divergent audience including family members, local businesses, and civic administration personnel.</p>

Competencies - Impact of Culture, Community and Family Systems

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Recognizes the levels of community including home, center, and neighborhoods.
- 1.2 Recognizes the ever-changing nature of families (i.e., socioeconomic status, culture, religion, and family structure).

Level 2

- 2.1 Modifies curriculum to be culturally sensitive and uses this information across all practices with children and families.
- 2.2 Utilizes families and communities as cultural resources in the learning environment.

Level 3

- 3.1 Critically examines own cultural experience and its impact on engagement with families and communities and removes any barriers or biases that might hinder development of mutually respectful relationships.



Health, Safety & Nutrition

Rationale

Healthy and safe experiences in children's early years lay a necessary foundation for development and growth in all areas. Children are more able to fully develop socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically when their health and nutritional needs are met and when they are safe from physical and emotional harm. When early childhood professionals know, understand and apply recommended practices in health*, safety* and nutrition*, children can thrive. Early childhood professionals, working in partnership with families* and communities*, have a key opportunity and responsibility to provide environments* and experiences for all young children that set them on a pathway toward lifelong health and well-being.

Knowledge Base

In order for children to thrive in early childhood programs, professionals who provide services to young children and their families must strive to know and understand:

- that sound practices in health, safety and nutrition have a lifelong impact
- how to integrate good health, safety and nutrition practices throughout the curriculum*
- that research in the areas of health, safety and nutrition generates theory that informs best practice
- when and how to access reliable and current health, safety and nutrition information and resources
- that early childhood professionals, families, and communities are partners in assuring optimal health, safety and nutrition for children
- benefits and methods of communicating, teaching, and modeling sound health, safety, and nutrition practices to children, parents and families
- national, state and local health, safety and nutrition guidelines and regulations applicable to written program policies and procedures
- the limitations of their own knowledge regarding health, safety and nutrition and when and how to initiate appropriate referrals

Health

- children's need for a healthy environment and how it impacts the growth and development of children birth through eight, including children with special needs*
- the importance of applying a broad definition of health that includes the child and family's physical, mental, social and emotional health in policy and procedure
- that each child has unique health care needs
- that families as the primary caregivers play a central role in child health and developmental services
- that all health curricula* should be designed to motivate and support children to improve health, prevent disease, and avoid risky behaviors
- the role of the early childhood professional in preventing the spread of disease, promoting wellness, and caring for the ill child

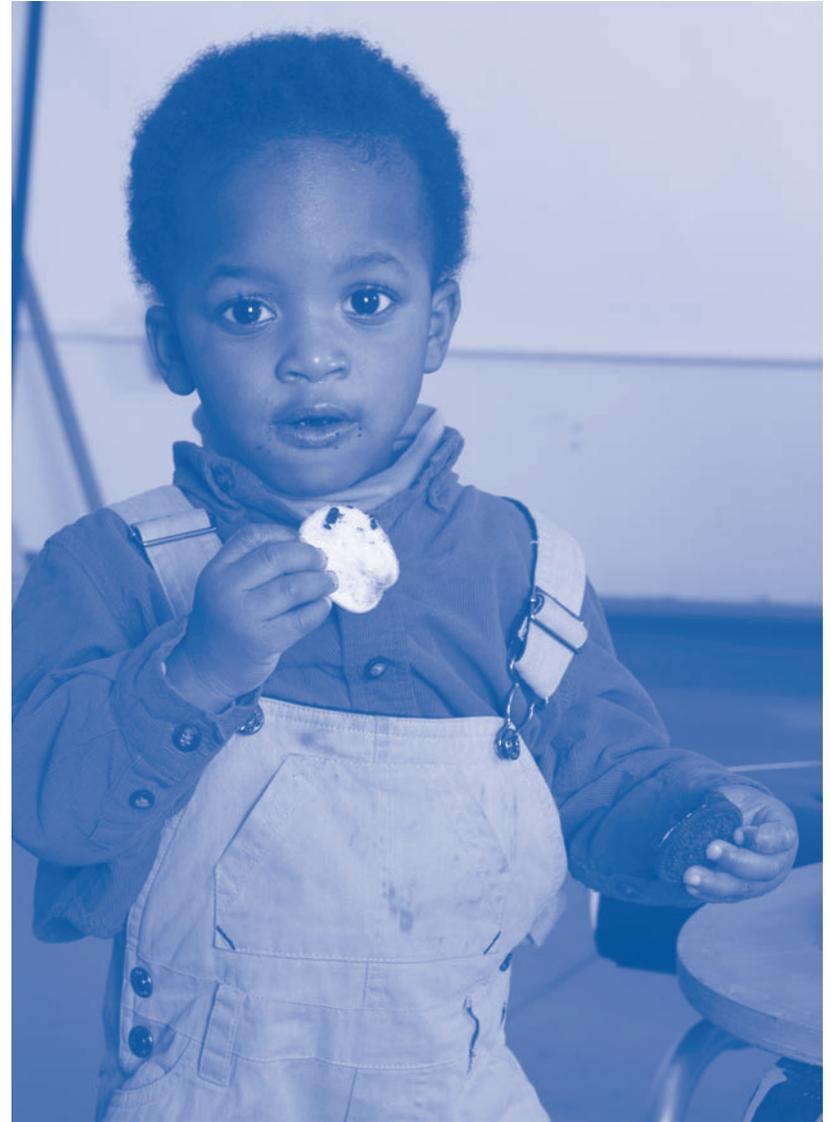
Safety

- children's need for a physically and emotionally safe environment and how it impacts the growth and development of young children, including children with special needs
- that safety risks change with each child's developmental stage
- the importance of active and age-appropriate supervision of children
- that children can and should play an active role in keeping self and others safe
- routine care and maintenance of materials and equipment
- fundamentals of first aid and CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation)
- potential threats to children associated with natural or human initiated disasters or emergencies
- basic emergency procedures and safe practices and regulations

* Definition for this term can be found in the glossary in Appendix A. Each defined term is only marked the first time it is used in this content area.

Nutrition

- children's need for good nutrition and hydration and how it impacts the growth and development of young children, including children with special needs
- that food plays many roles for children: social, emotional and cultural as well as physical development
- how to provide pleasant, relaxed, and developmentally appropriate meal and snack experiences
- typical age progression of feeding, from liquid to semi-solid to solid to table food, appropriate portion sizes for all ages, and children's hunger and fullness cues
- which foods may present hazards for individual children according to their ages, needs and abilities (e.g. choking hazards, allergies, and feeding constraints due to health conditions) and correct procedures for handling food-related emergencies
- safe and sanitary food handling practices



Competencies - Health

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Recognizes the symptoms of common childhood illness.
- 1.2 Maintains clean and sanitized* learning materials and environments.
- 1.3 Practices effective hand washing procedures to reduce the spread of diseases.
- 1.4 Encourages and models good health practices and effective use of hand washing procedures.
- 1.5 Applies effective sanitation procedures during diapering, toileting, cleaning toys, washing dishes and materials.
- 1.6 Practices standard precautions in handling blood or bodily fluids to ensure safety of adults and children.
- 1.7 Explains reasons for health-related rules to children.
- 1.8 Assesses each child's health status daily and objectively documents and responds when necessary.
- 1.9 Holds current and valid training in communicable disease prevention and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- 1.10 Recognizes the signs and symptoms of communicable* disease and responds according to the Ohio Department of Health's Communicable Disease chart.
- 1.11 Follows current medication administration policies and procedures according to local, state or national regulations and documents appropriately.
- 1.12 Provides appropriate care for ill children.

Level 2

- 2.1 Implements policies and procedures for care of ill children and seeks out additional information and support for all unusual cases or situations where appropriate practices are unclear.
- 2.2 Accesses community health resources and professionals for consultation, emergencies, diagnoses, treatments and more information (including Ohio Child Care Health Consultants).
- 2.3 Assures appropriate implementation of medical and physical care plans.

Level 3

- 3.1 Articulates, analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research on health practices.
- 3.2 Develops, enforces, and evaluates policy and procedures for care of ill children and children with special health care needs.
- 3.3 Designs and implements curriculum activities emphasizing healthy bodies, healthy lifestyles and healthy environments and adapts information as needed for various cultural and religious differences.
- 3.4 Collaborates with health care professionals in the community to ensure that the health needs of children are met.
- 3.5 Advocates for health resources within the community by providing health information to families, articulating best practices and actively promoting continued development of resources and opportunities for families in the surrounding community.
- 3.6 Continuously monitors the effectiveness and safety of medication administration policies and procedures and documents appropriately.
- 3.7 Mentors other early childhood professionals in sound health practices.

Competencies - Safety

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Understands and complies with local, state, and federal emergency preparedness* and program’s general emergency procedures.
- 1.2 Responds to accidents and injuries according to appropriate first aid training while assuring the comfort and care of other children.
- 1.3 Complies with appropriate local, state and national regulations and guidelines for ratios and group sizes.
- 1.4 Chooses and utilizes safe and appropriate learning materials and media.
- 1.5 Recognizes types and stages of bullying*.
- 1.6 Recognizes and protects against hazards in the environment.
- 1.7 Explains reasons for safety precautions to children.
- 1.8 Supervises all activities, indoors and outdoors, to anticipate and prevent dangerous situations and accidents.
- 1.9 Encourages and models simple safety precautions.
- 1.10 Encourages and models the safe use of learning materials and media.
- 1.11 Safely stores and uses hazardous materials, medication, emergency supplies and equipment.
- 1.12 Follows procedures for documentation and reporting of injuries, incidents and suspected abuse.
- 1.13 Releases children only to approved individuals as designated by the parent or guardian.
- 1.14 Holds current and valid training in first aid, CPR, and child abuse prevention and recognition.
- 1.15 Maintains a safe sleep* environment and position based on the child’s age and developmental stage.

Level 2

- 2.1 Engages children in appropriate emergency preparedness activities and ensures the understanding and/or safety of children with special needs who may not fully understand the appropriate procedures.
- 2.2 Regularly practices and appropriately documents emergency and safety procedures such as fire, disaster and tornado drills.
- 2.3 Responds appropriately to bullying and makes every attempt to foster social development and skills that will keep bullying from developing in the first place.
- 2.4 Maintains and promotes safety in the learning environment for all children regardless of developmental level or disability.
- 2.5 Observes and adjusts supervision to meet different ages, abilities, interests, environments and activities.
- 2.6 Educates parents about general child safety using materials appropriate for individual learning styles, culture and reading levels.

Level 3

- 3.1 Articulates, analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research on safety practices.
- 3.2 Develops, trains on and revises, in collaboration with community resources, emergency preparedness procedures.
- 3.3 Develops and provides training for staff and families on a “bully prevention” policy.
- 3.4 Selects, purchases, and provides training on safe, developmentally and culturally appropriate materials and media.
- 3.5 Assumes responsibility for training and policy development regarding safety and hazardous materials and monitors the success of the training and implementation of policies over time.
- 3.6 Assures staff are appropriately trained in documentation and reporting requirements and procedures and monitors the success of the training and implementation of policies over time.
- 3.7 Conducts continuous evaluation of safety practices, environment and data from reports to reduce and prevent safety risks.
- 3.8 Mentors other early childhood professionals in sound safety practices.

Competencies - Nutrition

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Understands and follows diet modifications for children with identified health or cultural issues pertaining to food or feeding.
- 1.2 Creates pleasant, relaxed, safe and developmentally appropriate meals and snacks.
- 1.3 Teaches and models healthy eating habits.
- 1.4 Encourages children to learn and develop self-help skills during meal time and food activities.
- 1.5 Practices safe and sanitary food handling procedures when purchasing, storing, preparing and serving meals and snacks.
- 1.6 Monitors eating habits to ensure a healthy diet including the need for children to eat and drink frequently.
- 1.7 Responds appropriately to hunger and fullness cues.
- 1.8 Recognizes health hazards in meals and snacks (i.e. choking and allergies) and takes steps to prevent dangerous situations.
- 1.9 Follows current policies and procedures as related to food and nutrition such as USDA dietary guidelines and CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) meal patterns.
- 1.10 Ensures that food is not used as punishment and only used as a reward when all other reinforcers are inappropriate or ineffective.
- 1.11 Recognizes and responds to limitations of personal knowledge regarding nutrition and knows when to seek professional guidance.
- 1.12 Communicates with parents regarding menus, child's eating patterns and amounts, mealtime skills and behaviors as appropriate per age and situation.
- 1.13 Accesses current, reliable nutrition and resources and information.

Level 2

- 2.1 Consults with families about children's health or cultural issues that may require modification to diet.
- 2.2 Provides learning experiences that teach children about good nutrition.
- 2.3 Provides opportunities to introduce new tastes, textures and cultural food experiences to children.
- 2.4 Assures appropriate implementation of medical and physical care plans.
- 2.5 Identifies resources within the community that provide nutrition information and screens the information for appropriateness for families with varied cultural and religious guidelines concerning food.

Level 3

- 3.1 Articulates, analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research on nutrition practices.
- 3.2 Participates and provides information on an as needed basis in MFEs*, IEPs*, IFSPs* and transition plans, medical and physical care plan.
- 3.3 Develops and executes family and parent nutrition education and screens the information for appropriateness for families with varied cultural and religious guidelines concerning food.
- 3.4 Provides professional development around nutrition to staff.
- 3.5 Creates opportunities for food related education for staff and parents.
- 3.6 Mentors other early childhood professionals in sound nutrition practices.
- 3.7 Assesses nutrition practices for the purpose of program improvement.
- 3.8 Establishes and implements policies and procedures that foster appropriate nutrition practices.
- 3.9 Advocates and collaborates within the community to promote nutrition and awareness of cultural and religious diversity involving food.



Child Observation & Assessment

Rationale

Observation* and assessment* of children in early childhood programs is integral to a variety of decisions that affect each child and his or her family*. When early childhood professionals know and use methods of observation and assessment that are unbiased with regard to culture* or language, adaptive to individual children's abilities, and sensitive to children's needs, the resulting information is reliable*, valid* and useful. Regular, systematic observation and the use of multiple ways of collecting information aid early childhood professionals in learning more about children's unique qualities, developing appropriate goals and plans, making referrals as appropriate and implementing and evaluating effective curriculum*. Early childhood professionals must know when and how to communicate observation and assessment results to parents and to other professionals so that children's growth and development are supported.



Knowledge Base

In order for children to thrive in early childhood programs, professionals who provide services to young children and their families must strive to know and understand:

- child growth and development, including sequences of typical development
- how children's home language, culture*, strengths, needs, preferences, genetics and physical/social environment influences their performance
- goals, benefits and appropriate uses of selected assessment instruments and methods .
- importance of maintaining confidentiality* of child and family records and assessment information
- availability of community services* and how to access community resources*
- multiple assessment and observation instruments and methods used to determine children's strengths and challenges (i.e. running records, anecdotal information, portfolios, work samples, norm-referenced* instruments, screenings*, etc.)
- the importance of objective, culturally sensitive, non-biased documentation
- the relationship between planning for observation and assessment and curriculum planning and instruction

* Definition for this term can be found in the glossary in Appendix A. Each defined term is only marked the first time it is used in this content area.

Competencies - Foundations and Principles

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Recognizes and accepts the range of children’s development and skills.
- 1.2 Recognizes environmental* factors that place children at risk for developmental concerns.
- 1.3 Lists the reasons for conducting observation and assessment.
- 1.4 Identifies the differences between informal* and formal* assessment.
- 1.5 Recognizes that there is more than one way to gather information about a child.
- 1.6 Identifies the need for confidentiality.
- 1.7 Recognizes that observation and assessment practices are guided by established standards.
- 1.8 Is aware of ethical principles that guide observation and assessment processes.

Level 2

- 2.1 Modifies observations and assessment practices to accommodate* the range of children’s development, skills and learning needs.
- 2.2 Implements the appropriate formal and/or informal observation or assessment technique.
- 2.3 Implements observation and assessment practices that adhere to established standards including those related to confidentiality.
- 2.4 Recognizes how and when to access appropriate community resources and problem solves continued action when appropriate resources and supports cannot easily be obtained.

Level 3

- 3.1 Evaluates results considering the environmental factors and individual differences that will influence children’s performance.
- 3.2 Articulates the characteristics, strengths, limitations, and appropriate uses of formal/informal observation and assessment instruments.

Competencies - Gathering and Documenting

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Recognizes appropriate methods of documenting developmental progress.
- 1.2 Assists in collecting information about developmental progress from multiple sources and using a variety of means.
- 1.3 Maintains confidentiality of observation and assessment information.
- 1.4 Recognizes ways to develop a relationship with a child before observation and assessment procedures are implemented.

Level 2

- 2.1 Organizes information about developmental and educational progress that is collected from multiple, age appropriate sources and uses this information to construct more responsive programs.
- 2.2 Implements appropriate formal and informal methods of documenting developmental progress of individual children.
- 2.3 Incorporates observation and assessment strategies throughout the child’s day within their everyday settings.
- 2.4 Integrates contributions from families and other professionals into formal and informal observation and assessment procedures.

Level 3

- 3.1 Plans diverse observation and assessment strategies that are culturally and linguistically sensitive*, and that meet individual child’s needs.
- 3.2 Evaluates the use of a variety of observation and assessment strategies, both formal and informal, to collect information and adjusts or substitutes when assessments are not appropriate.
- 3.3 Provides guidance in selection, implementation and documentation of assessment methods.

Competencies - Summarizing and Interpreting

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Recognizes the importance of observation and assessment data in curriculum planning for individual children and groups of children.
- 1.2 Recognizes the importance of analyzing and interpreting assessment data in a non-biased way.
- 1.3 Recognizes the importance of maintaining confidentiality of the results of observations and assessments for non-family members.

Level 2

- 2.1 Interprets and analyzes assessment data to identify children’s areas of strengths and those needing improvement and uses this information to develop more responsive and appropriate programs for individual children.
- 2.2 Incorporates results of formal and informal observations and assessments to make decisions that benefit children’s growth, development and learning.
- 2.3 Implements observation and assessment results to plan for individual children and groups of children.
- 2.4 Aligns results of observations and assessments with other parts of the curriculum, including content standards and local, state and federal regulations.

Level 3

- 3.1 Evaluates the multiple factors such as culture, language, environment and learning styles that may influence the observation and assessment data and provides additional supporting information when data from multiple sources is conflicting in nature.
- 3.2 Plans and implements necessary strategies for individual needs of all children.
- 3.3 Provides guidance and support for staff members regarding theories, research, practices and issues relevant to results from observation and assessment.
- 3.4 Works cooperatively and collaboratively with the teaching team, family and other involved specialists regarding assessment results.
- 3.5 When appropriate, refers children to other community resources for further evaluation and remains an active team member and information source.

Competencies - Sharing and Reporting

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Recognizes the importance of confidentiality in reporting child observation and assessment results.
- 1.2 Identifies appropriate reporting methods for child observation and assessment results.

Level 2

- 2.1 Explains the purpose and benefits of ongoing observation and assessment to staff and families being sensitive to the differences in opinion and the emotions that such assessment may produce in family members.
- 2.2 Uses strength-based* language to communicate results in written and oral formats.
- 2.3 Communicates results to families in an appropriate, objective*, understandable and supportive manner.
- 2.4 Communicates results with appropriate staff and administrators.
- 2.5 Plans with families for communicating results to other involved professionals.

Level 3

- 3.1 Develops reports to be shared with families, appropriate staff, administrators, and other involved professionals or agencies using the communication avenues appropriate for each individual to ensure full understanding.
- 3.2 Facilitates the sharing and reporting of observation and assessment results used to determine the next steps for an individual child in collaboration with families and other professionals or agencies that may be involved.



Professional Development

Rationale

Research supports that early childhood professionals play a critical role in the well-being and development of every child in their care. The interactions and environments* that early childhood professionals provide for children lay the foundation for learning and success in school and life. When early childhood professionals are equipped with specialized education and training, and continue to learn and develop as professionals, they are better able to provide care and education that supports every aspect of children's growth and learning. Each early childhood professional is a member of a larger community* of professional practice. When each professional adopts the responsibilities of the profession regarding ethical behavior, advocacy* for young children and families*, and effective communication of the importance of high quality early childhood programs, not only do young children and their families benefit but the profession as a whole is elevated.



Knowledge Base

In order for children to thrive in early childhood programs, professionals who provide services to young children and their families must strive to know and understand:

- that professional preparation and training is the foundation for knowing how to create experiences and interactions that help children reach their potential
- the importance of effectively communicating research, theory, and professional guidelines as the basis for practice
- how to make decisions about program planning based on the most current recommended practices, professional standards*, and research available
- the value of continually seeking to increase one's own knowledge and skill by reflecting on, analyzing and evaluating one's own professional practices
- how to seek out and take advantage of opportunities to develop personally and professionally
- the ethical responsibilities and practices of the early childhood professional community and their impact on children, families, co-workers, and the community
- how to advocate for effective services and legislation for children and families and develop collaborative partnerships within the community
- the value of professional relationships and the value of each professional's contribution in building the larger community of early childhood practice

* Definition for this term can be found in the glossary in Appendix A. Each defined term is only marked the first time it is used in this content area.

Competencies - Professionalism* in Practice

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Communicates effectively using appropriate oral and written language skills.
- 1.2 Recognizes and respects individual differences among children, families, colleagues and in the community.
- 1.3 Demonstrates professional work habits including confidentiality, respect for all people, dependability, time management, independence and teamwork.
- 1.4 Enjoys working with children and models a positive attitude.
- 1.5 Presents oneself as a professional in physical appearance and use of language.
- 1.6 Shows positive respect and regard for variation in cultures including family strengths, expectations, values and child rearing practices.
- 1.7 Manages the demands of personal and professional commitments and seeks support or assistance as needed.

Level 2

- 2.1 Routinely creates effective written communication such as curriculum plans, parent communication, anecdotal/observation notes, etc.
- 2.2 Provides materials and experiences within settings to support an understanding of individual differences.
- 2.3 Adopts and maintains professional behavior and attitudes.
- 2.4 Interacts in a professional manner that reflects the value of self and respect for others.
- 2.5 Understands that communication includes speaking, signing, listening, reading, writing, body language, personal appearance and the use of adaptive devices.
- 2.6 Includes family values and strengths in setting goals for individual children and for the program and problem-solves solutions when family values conflict directly with appropriate education (i.e. family not believing in special education services).
- 2.7 Recognizes the impact of stress and develops strategies to renew oneself and maintain professional performance.

Level 3

- 3.1 Prepares and presents ideas, a philosophy and advocacy of early childhood education in a formal written format to the wider community adjusting the message to the interests and understanding of the target audience (i.e. business owners, other educators, medical personnel, etc.)
- 3.2 Seeks out knowledge of the cultures and populations within the community and integrates it into his or her professional practice.
- 3.3 Guides others in developing and maintaining professional work habits.
- 3.4 Routinely engages in reflection on teaching practices and the behaviors of children and uses the additional information to improve both personal practice and general advocacy or support in the wider community.
- 3.5 Actively models and promotes a professional image for the early care and education field in a variety of settings.
- 3.6 Explains and models to families and other professionals communication with young children that is respectful, positive, supportive and age-appropriate.
- 3.7 Articulates and guides others in developing a positive regard and respect for all children and families.
- 3.8 Provides guidance to others who exhibit signs of stress and assists with the location of resources and additional support as appropriate.

Competencies - Continuous & Reflective Professional Development*

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Pursues ongoing, intentional learning through professional development planning.
- 1.2 Meets minimum regulatory requirements for professional development.
- 1.3 Questions own practices, seeks input from supervisors and colleagues and integrates feedback into professional development planning.
- 1.4 Utilizes professional resources and seeks information if the appropriate resource cannot easily be located.
- 1.5 Seeks out knowledge to improve practice through a variety of means (i.e. conferences, reading material, professional organizations, etc.)
- 1.6 Is aware of state and national standards that promote quality early child care and education (ODE, NAEYC, Ohio Infant Toddler Guidelines).
- 1.7 Participates in opportunities for professional growth and development at the local, state and national level and through a variety of means (i.e. conferences, reading material, professional organizations, etc.)
- 1.8 Engages and values supportive working relationships that include mentoring* opportunities.

Level 2

- 2.1 Develops personal goals based on reflections of current practice articulated into a professional development plan.
- 2.2 Works toward credential, degrees and/or program accreditation and seeks out and utilizes supports (both monetary and professional) to allow progress to improved practice to continue.
- 2.3 Uses local, state & national professional resources to evaluate & improve practices (ODE, NAEYC, Ohio Infant Toddler Guidelines).
- 2.4 Explores current trends & research based practices in early care & education through a variety of means (i.e. conferences, reading material, professional organizations, etc.)
- 2.5 Applies quality standards and participates in evaluation of program related to quality standards.
- 2.6 Is actively involved in professional organizations.
- 2.7 Demonstrates interest in adults' as well as children's development as a means to improving both interaction with families as well as colleagues.

Level 3

- 3.1 Facilitates professional development opportunities for others based on reflective approaches and adult learning styles.
- 3.2 Develops and presents professional resources* to improve practices for a variety of audiences including colleagues, community members and families.
- 3.3 Evaluates & applies current research & trends presented in professional resources and shares information with other colleagues, community members or families as appropriate.
- 3.4 Engages in the development and implementation of quality standards at the local, state and/or national level.
- 3.5 Serves in a leadership capacity in professional organizations or groups through direct service, professional organization membership, advocacy and other professional activities that will further the development of appropriate practices across settings.
- 3.6 Serves as a catalyst for change by enlisting others to support new teachers and colleagues such as mentors and coaches.

Competencies - Leadership* and Advocacy*

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Follows all legal and regulatory mandates.
- 1.2 Recognizes the family's right to make decisions about their child care and education.
- 1.3 Contributes to staff discussions and decision making based on current knowledge of child development.
- 1.4 Engages and values mentoring opportunities with both colleagues and families.
- 1.5 Recognizes oneself as a decision maker within early care and education setting.
- 1.6 Identifies early care and education as a profession and is fully aware and can articulate this value to the general community.
- 1.7 Understands that local, state and national legislation and public policy affect young children and families.

Level 2

- 2.1 Participates in planning and evaluating the program utilizing recognized tools.
- 2.2 Creates and develops relationships with the family to ensure the family's ability to make decisions about their child care and education and provides support and additional resources when the family is unwilling or unable to make appropriate decisions concerning their child's education.
- 2.3 Acquires and shares additional knowledge and competencies through participation in staff development.
- 2.4 Serves as a mentor and resource for less experienced staff by providing guidance, resources and support as appropriate.
- 2.5 Participates in leadership activities with staff, family and colleagues.
- 2.6 Discusses the significance of the early years and the value of early care and education programs with families and others in the community.
- 2.7 Uses experiences and knowledge to inform and influence others about needs of all young children, families and the profession.

Level 3

- 3.1 Analyzes and evaluates practice on an ongoing basis and implements changes that will strengthen the quality and the effectiveness of the work.
- 3.2 Educates parents on advocacy measures that are in the best interest of the child, family and community and provides support and additional resources when the family is unwilling or unable to fully advocate for their child's well-being.
- 3.3 Collaborates with colleagues and others to improve programs and practices for young children and their families and communities.
- 3.4 Serves as a mentor to others in the field by providing guidance, resources, support and encouragement of continued professional education as appropriate.
- 3.5 Assumes early childhood leadership role in the community, and in state and national professional organizations.
- 3.6 Advocates for recognition of early care and education as a profession, including the economic impact.
- 3.7 Advocates for services and legislation for all young children, families and the profession.

Competencies - Ethical Standards & Professional Guidelines

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Shows awareness of, has read, and practices the ethical responsibilities in the code of ethical conduct* promoted by the professional association most closely associated with his or her professional role.
- 1.2 Can explain the reason for the code of ethics OR recognizes the core values* that underlie the code of ethics.
- 1.3 Can identify the difference between a code of ethics and personal values.
- 1.4 Recognizes and acts on primary responsibility to value early childhood and avoid participating in any practices that are disrespectful, exploitative or potentially harmful to children.
- 1.5 Discusses the importance of collaboration* and respect among all adults who work in early childhood settings, including confidentiality.
- 1.6 Describes the responsibility of the profession to provide high quality early childhood programs for the community.

Level 2

- 2.1 Practices and promotes the ethical responsibilities in the applicable code of ethical conduct.
- 2.2 Recognizes potentially unethical practices and seeks to apply ethical code as a tool and problem-solves appropriate actions to take when the code of ethics has been transgressed.
- 2.3 Identifies ethical dilemmas* and solves the identified problem and/or seeks additional assistance as appropriate.
- 2.4 Promotes and informs others of the need to support emotional, social, physical and intellectual development for every child.
- 2.5 Describes the roles and responsibilities of supervisors, staff, families and volunteers including respectful communication and implements these best practices as needed.
- 2.6 Promotes policies and practices that provide for well being of all children and their families.

Level 3

- 3.1 Consistently models and informs others of standards and principles set forth in the code of ethics.
- 3.2 Integrates the ethical code into practice and policies and explains to others how the ethical code can be used to solve everyday ethical dilemmas including the appropriate local supports and resources that can be accessed as needed.
- 3.3 Analyzes ethical dilemmas and determines appropriate course of action.
- 3.4 Accesses community resources and professional services that respect personal dignity and the diversity of children and families.
- 3.5 Creates opportunities for respectful dialogue with multiple perspectives cultural diversity and differences in developmental understanding of child development and best practices.
- 3.6 Informs others about research and current knowledge related to impact of high quality programs for all young children and families.



Learning Environments & Experiences

Rationale

Early childhood professionals are the “architects” of the world that each child experiences while in an early childhood program, shaping their physical surroundings, the activities that they engage in, and their social interactions. When early childhood professionals create physical spaces that reflect children’s developmental needs and abilities, then they are providing important support and guidance for children’s development, behavior and learning. Early childhood professionals facilitate the active learning of young children by planning developmentally appropriate* experiences: experiences that are age appropriate, individually appropriate, and appropriate for the social and cultural* contexts in which children live. Active learning for young children is best fulfilled in play where they tend to show higher levels of language, creativity, curiosity, problem-solving, empathy, cooperation, and increased attention spans. Children’s relational environment is enhanced when early childhood professionals are attuned to emotional and social “atmosphere” and facilitate positive interactions between adults and children and among children.

Knowledge Base

In order for children to thrive in early childhood programs, professionals who provide services to young children and their families must strive to know and understand:

General

- the principles of developmentally appropriate practice
- how children learn and how the learning process changes from birth through age eight
- the developmental progression of young children’s play and strategies for supporting various types of play
- that continuous reflection on the effectiveness of the environment and experiences is needed in order to adapt to children’s changing needs

Interactions and Relationships

- their critical role in facilitating and guiding interpersonal relationships (peer to peer, adult to child, and adult to adult)
- the importance of respecting, valuing and accepting each child and treating every child with dignity at all times
- the importance of creating a bias-free, warm and caring emotional climate
- the importance of bringing each child’s culture and language into the shared culture of the group
- the benefits and methods of modeling and encouraging behaviors that contribute to a supportive, inclusive sense of community

Physical Environments

- the relationship between the physical environment and young children’s behavior and learning
- how to plan and prepare a learning environment that nurtures children’s initiative, encourages active exploration of materials, and supports engagement with activities and interaction with others
- how to choose materials and equipment and arrange physical spaces based on children’s developmental needs
- how to maintain a safe and positive environment through careful supervision and anticipation and avoidance of problems before they occur

Learning Experiences

- how to embed learning in everyday routines and activities
- the principles of integrating curriculum* across all developmental domains*
- that children learn best through play and concrete experiences that are tied to familiar aspects of their world
- strategies to foster language development and early literacy throughout early childhood
- strategies to create an intellectually engaging environment that fosters curiosity, thinking and problem solving

* Definition for this term can be found in the glossary in Appendix A. Each defined term is only marked the first time it is used in this content area.

Competencies - Interactions and Relationships

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Assumes primary responsibility for specific children in the group while remaining aware of momentary needs or emergencies that may arise outside of their individual assignments.
- 1.2 Interacts positively with children in responsive, consistent ways.
- 1.3 Treats all children with fairness, respect and understanding.
- 1.4 Recognizes that his or her relationships with co-workers, families and others impacts children.
- 1.5 Bases expectations for behavior on age and developmental level of children.
- 1.6 Demonstrates awareness that challenging behaviors* can have a variety of causes.
- 1.7 Prevents challenging behavior by providing consistent and predictable routines and responds to challenging behavior with positive guidance techniques.
- 1.8 Speaks to children with calm, respectful tones.
- 1.9 Engages in reciprocal interactions* with children to form safe, nurturing relationships.
- 1.10 Engages in many one-on-one, face-to-face interactions with children in a calm pleasant manner to foster secure attachments.
- 1.11 Recognizes a child's social and emotional needs.
- 1.12 Shows individual attention to each child within the group using the interaction approaches most appropriate for that individual child.
- 1.13 Listens to children attentively to gain understanding and responds quickly to their needs.
- 1.14 Conveys respect for diversity among children and families as evidenced by attempts to accommodate beliefs, needs and differences noted among children.
- 1.15 Encourages and supports children's efforts, ideas, accomplishments and interests.

Level 2

- 2.1 Interacts with children using encouraging and nurturing words and actions.
- 2.2 Adapts to and includes each child, individually accommodating for his/her temperament, personality, strengths, interests and development.
- 2.3 Seeks to identify causes of challenging behaviors and uses guidance approaches that promote positive behaviors, problem solving and self-control.
- 2.4 Provides activities and environments that promote appropriate behaviors and teaches behaviors and social skills as needed.
- 2.5 Uses behavior guidance strategies that involve children in creating rules and resolving conflicts.
- 2.6 Encourages positive social interactions and provides opportunities for children to learn from each other.
- 2.7 Adapts interactions to respond to each child's unique personality, temperament, mood, ability and culture.
- 2.8 Engages in responsive interactions with children, following their lead scaffolding interactions where needed.
- 2.9 Assists children in identifying and expressing their feelings in culturally and socially acceptable ways using whatever communication mode is readily available and possible for that child's unique developmental needs.
- 2.10 Uses a variety of positive direct and indirect guidance methods and avoids negative methods.
- 2.11 Solicits information from parents regarding effective strategies to support children.
- 2.12 Plans and provides opportunities for children to communicate, form friendships, and to interact with each other respectfully.
- 2.13 Guides children in resolving conflicts through communication, negotiation and problem solving using a variety of means and supports including visual cues, songs, play-based interventions and other appropriate strategies.

Level 3

- 3.1 Assumes responsibility for the needs of all the children present.
- 3.2 Moderates interactions with each child based on that child's specific characteristics, strengths, interests and needs.
- 3.3 Articulates, analyzes, evaluates and applies current theory and research on relationships and supportive interaction.
- 3.4 Establishes written policies for effective child guidance for both typically developing children and those with disabilities.
- 3.5 Articulates and demonstrates realistic expectations for children's attention spans, interests, social abilities, and physical needs when planning group experiences and teaches increased "groupness" and other social skills as appropriate.
- 3.6 Develops and implements written policies for effective social/emotional interactions.
- 3.7 Applies theory and current research to create a community* that fosters social and emotional development.
- 3.8 Addresses challenging behavior with an open mind, rather than labeling the child yet can still recognize when behavior reaches the level of concern and can seek additional support or resources as appropriate.
- 3.9 Recognizes and responds to individual behavioral problems related to developmental or emotional stress.
- 3.10 Relates guidance practices to knowledge of children's personalities, levels of development and different learning needs.
- 3.11 Shares information on guidance techniques with families using sensitivity, respect and awareness of diversity.

Competencies - Physical Environments

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Recognizes when a child's behavior is being affected by characteristics of his or her surroundings and adjusts expectations or mitigates the effects of these influences.
- 1.2 Provides adequate space for routine care and play that supports the age and interests of the children.
- 1.3 Ensures that equipment and materials are clean, safe and free from hazards.
- 1.4 Ensures that physical aspects of the room, such as temperature, noise level, and lighting, are comfortable for children.
- 1.5 Uses equipment that is appropriate for the size of the children.
- 1.6 Understands state rules and regulations specific to children's environments, both indoors and outdoors.
- 1.7 Selects and makes accessible developmentally appropriate materials that are rotated frequently.
- 1.8 Recognizes that individual space is needed for children to keep their individual belongings.
- 1.9 Labels children's organizers (such as bins, shelving units etc.) with pictures and words to foster children's literacy skills, thinking skills, and independence and to provide organization to their world.

Level 2

- 2.1 Articulates how changes in the environment may affect the behavior of children and makes adaptations to the environment when necessary.
- 2.2 Provides a balance of spaces for activities that are active and quiet, child-directed and teacher-directed, individual and group, and indoor and outdoor.
- 2.3 Uses equipment to help define activity areas and routine areas as well as additional picture or color cues as needed.
- 2.4 Recognizes that bright colors and multiple patterns and other sensory inputs can over-stimulate children, and in some cases under-stimulate them, and can adjust as needed.
- 2.5 Uses real world/real life materials relevant to children's experiences and interests.

Level 3

- 3.1 Continuously observes and evaluates how space is affecting the behavior of children and the management of the classroom and adjusts the environment as needed.
- 3.2 Articulates, analyzes, evaluates, and applies current theory and research on design of the environment in order to support individual and group growth.
- 3.3 Evaluates the learning environment, teaching strategies and materials to maximize the learning potential for individual children.
- 3.4 Uses a continuing process of assessment to guide modification to the environment, teaching strategies and expectations.
- 3.5 Establishes multiple lighting sources (natural, full spectrum and incandescent).
- 3.6 Demonstrates that colors and patterns and other sensory inputs can affect stimulation levels for children of various ages and learning needs by over or understimulating them and can adjust as needed.
- 3.7 Integrates a variety of surfaces for indoor and outdoor use.

Competencies - Learning Experiences

Knowledge in this area of professional practice is demonstrated when the early childhood professional:

Level 1

- 1.1 Develops and implements a daily schedule and routine, as appropriate.
- 1.2 Recognizes that learning occurs through play and is able to develop and enhance play in children lacking this skill.
- 1.3 Chooses and/or implements a curriculum* that includes all of the learning domains and incorporates knowledge of individual children and their interests.
- 1.4 Supports and encourages children's participation in a variety of activities and in differing degrees of participation dependent on their comfort levels and or special learning needs.
- 1.5 Frequently engages children in verbal word play and uses this play to develop language skills in children showing difficulty in this developmental area.
- 1.6 Communicates with parents, using sensitivity and respect, about children's activities, accomplishments, and developmental milestones.

Level 2

- 2.1 Evaluates a daily schedule and routine and makes the schedule clearly available to children using the most appropriate cues for their age and developmental level (i.e. pictures, etc.)
- 2.2 Plans and implements curriculum and instructional practices based on knowledge of individual children's needs, interests and abilities as determined by assessment information.
- 2.3 Incorporates developmentally and individually appropriate materials, activities and strategies in an integrated curriculum*.
- 2.4 Engages children in adult/child interactions by using open-ended questions or other language expansion activities appropriate for their individual learning needs.
- 2.5 Allows for peer play among all age groups and develops and supports play interactions as necessary.
- 2.6 Encourages parent input in planning and participating in activities in both the school setting and through activities sent to the child's home.
- 2.7 Uses child's home language in daily activities.
- 2.8 Emphasizes the process of creating instead of the end product.
- 2.9 Incorporates active play in all activities and routines throughout the day, regardless of children's age and adjusts activity levels for children who easily become over-stimulated or lack voluntary or controlled physical movement.
- 2.10 Develops activities that enhance learning through play.
- 2.11 Supports the development of play skills if lack of this ability is hindering play-based learning interactions within the child's environment.

Level 3

- 3.1 Establishes extended learning opportunities beyond the curriculum using additional resources and materials.
- 3.2 Implements strategies to support the children's role in planning curriculum based on the interests, skill levels and potential of each child.
- 3.3 Articulates, analyzes, evaluates, and applies current theory and research on design of curriculum in order to support individual and group growth.
- 3.4 Plans, implements and uses a variety of open-ended materials*, activities and strategies in an integrated curriculum*.
- 3.5 Evaluates the learning environment, teaching strategies and materials to maximize the learning potential for individual children.
- 3.6 Uses a continuing process of assessment to guide modification of the curriculum and environment.
- 3.7 Integrates various language strategies through visual, written, verbal, graphic organizers*, etc.
- 3.8 Identifies and communicates the skills fostered in various learning areas and activities to other adults, including parents.
- 3.9 Articulates the importance of play in a child's development and provides strategies and techniques that will assist families and other colleagues in developing play in children lacking this skill.
- 3.10 Links curriculum to program philosophy.
- 3.11 Articulates the major theories of children's development and learning and applies these theories to diverse settings.

Although many of these words may have other definitions, for the purposes of this listing the definition is given that best fits the meaning of the word or phrase when used in this document.

Accommodation – Making or becoming suitable; adjusting to circumstances by using the range over which such adjustment is possible.

Advocacy - Long-range thinking that establishes unified, collaborative actions to make effective, lasting and targeted change in the field of endeavor.

Assessment – The process of gathering information through the use of multiple tools and resources for the purpose of making decisions.

Attachment - The process of affection, bonding and connectedness between an infant and significant care providers or parents that builds a sense of trust and security within the child and profoundly affects all areas of development.

Bloodborne pathogens - Pathogenic microorganisms that are present in human blood and can cause disease in humans. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B virus (HBV) and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Bullying - Physical or psychological intimidation that occurs repeatedly over time and creates an ongoing pattern of harassment and abuse.

Challenging behavior - Actions or responses that: indicate the child is not exercising self-regulation or is stressed, afraid and insecure; interfere with children’s learning, development and success at play; are harmful to the child, other children or adults; and/or put a child at risk for later social problems or school failure.

Children with special needs – Children with disabilities, developmental delays, or chronic health or behavioral needs that have been identified through a formal assessment process.

Code of Ethics - Defines the core values of the field and provides guidance for what professionals should do when they encounter conflicting obligations or responsibilities in their work.

Collaborative - All members of a group working toward a common goal.

Communicable - A condition that can be spread or transmitted from one individual to another.

Community – The town, city or population group where an early childhood program is located; may also refer to a group of people who share a common culture, language, purpose, etc. (Ex. “early childhood community,” “classroom community”).

Community resources – Assets and resources available to children and families within a particular community, especially those that can help a family cope with a difficult situation or meet a specific need.

Confidentiality – Ensuring that information is accessible only to those authorized to have access. This includes any information, whether oral, written, or computerized, that is directly applicable to an individual requesting or receiving services from an agency. These include handwritten notes, tapes, films, disks, etc. as well as oral communication based on such information.

Continuous Professional Development - On-going self assessment of professional performance; the establishment of goals to maintain career standards and participate in advocacy actions; and the execution of a plan to make improvements.

Core Values - Critical attitudes and beliefs that shape one’s philosophy and guide one’s behavior, especially when dealing with work-related ethical issues.

Culturally Sensitive - The ability to work sensitively and respectfully with children and their families, honoring the diversity of their cultures, spoken languages, and racial and ethnic groups.

Culture – All of the socially transmitted behavior patterns, values, beliefs and knowledge that are typical of a population or community of people at a given time.

Curriculum - Planned, sequenced program of study and daily structured activity based on what is age appropriate, skill levels of children, and what is deemed important by the standards of Ohio.

Developmental domains – Term used by professionals to describe areas or categories of skills and concepts that children develop or learn over time. Domains typically include the following areas of development: social, emotional, cognitive, language and literacy, physical (large motor, fine motor, perceptual/sensory), and creative.

Appendix A: Glossary

Developmentally appropriate – Programs, activities, and environments that are designed on the basis of: knowledge of how children develop and learn; knowledge of the strengths, needs, and interests of individual children; and knowledge of the social and cultural contexts in which children live.

Diversity - The variance among family structures, functions, characteristics, and interests.

Early Intervention - Comprehensive educational programs for young children who are at risk or who have been identified as having a disability.

Emergency preparedness - All activities designed or undertaken to minimize the effects of a hazard upon people, to deal with the immediate emergency conditions that would be caused by the hazard, and to repair or restore vital utilities or facilities destroyed or damaged by the hazard.

Empowering - The establishment of a model whereby all families can assert an active role in the care and education of their children.

Environment – All of the physical surroundings and social and cultural conditions that physically and/or emotionally affect children and their ability to learn, grow, develop and survive.

Ethical Dilemma - A moral conflict that involves determining appropriate conduct when an individual faces conflicting professional values and responsibilities.

Family – A social unit of two or more people who share goals and values, have long-term commitments, and often but not always live in the same household. A family may include children and adults living in the home, adults who are responsible for the long-term care and well-being of the child, a child’s legal guardian, and/or parents who may not live in the same household as the child.

Family Systems Theory - A framework that emphasizes the notion that everything that happens to any family member affects all other family members.

Formal (observation/assessment) - Following accepted rules and standards for use of forms, structure and arrangement of outcomes.

Graphic Organizers - A pictorial way to organize information and thoughts for understanding, remembering, or writing about.

Health - A state of wellness; complete physical, mental, social, and emotional well-being. The quality of one element affects the state of the others.

Hydration - The taking in of water.

IEP - Individualized Education Plan.

IFSP - Individualized Family Service Plan.

Inclusion - An educational practice whereby programs enroll both typically developing children and children with identified disabilities.

Informal (observation/assessment) – Assessment that does not use standardized or required forms or procedures or not officially recognized or approved as regular means of gathering information.

Integrated curriculum - Developing model lessons that include cross-curricular activities and assessments.

Leadership - Ability to understand, achieve and maintain institutional quality, as well as to build, manage and sustain organizational culture.

Mentor - A knowledgeable and experienced individual who provides guidance to beginning and experienced professionals to develop skills and reflection of practice. Various strategies of the mentor may include observation and feedback, demonstration of skills, conferencing, and resource provider.

MFE - Under IDEA, children must undergo a multi-factored evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services. An MFE consists of an evaluation, conducted by a multidisciplinary team, of more than one area of a child’s functioning so that no single procedure is the sole criterion for determining a child’s eligibility for a free appropriate educational program under the law. Children must be evaluated in all areas of suspected disability.

Norm-Referenced – A measure in which an individual child’s performance is compared with that of a normative group, usually others of the same age.

Nutrition - The study of food and how it is used in the body.

Objective - Uninfluenced by emotions or personal biases.

Observation - Gathering information through one or more of the five senses for the basic purpose of determining a child’s individual needs and learning style.

Open-ended materials - Materials that can be used in multiple ways and allow for children's construction, concrete solving of problems, imagination and creativity.

Professional Resources - Education, information, materials, support services, and advocacy for early childhood stakeholders including, providers, teachers, trainers, and those working with families.

Professionalism - Decisions and actions, based on knowledge of early childhood theories, research and practice that shape one's career in the field.

Pro-social behavior - Caring behaviors toward others and concern over the distress of someone else.

Quality Standards - Principles that provide a set of guidelines to ensure the optimum level of regulations and practice in the field of early childhood.

Reciprocal interaction - An interaction with a child in which both adult and child are actively contributing, listening, and responding to one another.

Reflective Professional Development - On-going thinking about one's role, personal actions, or effects on others, (e.g., children, staff, families, or colleagues) that lead to improvement and meaningful change.

Reliability - Consistency of test scores over time and between testers: the extent to which it is possible to generalize from one test result conducted by one person to test results conducted at different times or by different observers.

Safe sleep - A sleep environment that reduces the risks associated with Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Safety - Security and freedom from danger.

Sanitize - Cleaned or sterilized.

Screening - A brief procedure to determine whether a child requires further and more comprehensive evaluation.

Self-regulation - Child's ability to gain control of bodily functions, manage powerful emotions and maintain focus and attention.

Sensitivity - Positive responsiveness to the attitudes, feelings, and circumstances of others.

Separation - The process of a young child's sensory interpretation of noticing a prime care giver or parent's leaving or is out of sight, causing the child to experience anxiety and insecurity.

Special health care needs - Children with special health care needs are those who have, or are at risk for, chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional conditions and who also require health and related services of a type or amount not usually required by typically developing children.

Standards - Agreed upon expectations for young children, programs and teachers. Varying terms are used to describe standards: early learning standards are expectations about learning and development of young children; program standards are expectations for the characteristics and quality of schools, child care centers or other education settings for children; and content standards represent what students - including adult students - should know and be able to do within a particular discipline, such as math, science, language, or the arts.

Strength-based - The ability to recognize and utilize existing abilities and competencies in children in order to refrain from a negative focus.

Valid - Extent to which a test measures what its authors claim it measures; appropriateness of the inferences that can be made on test results.

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Appendix D: Linkages with Primary Sources

Ohio’s Core Knowledge and Competencies is closely linked to three important source documents from leading early childhood professional organizations:

1. *NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria* (2005). The National Association for the Education of Young Children.
2. *Preparing Early Childhood Professionals: NAEYC’s Standards for Initial Licensure, Advanced, and Associate Degree Programs*, (2003). M. Hyson (ed.), The National Association for the Education of Young Children.

3. *DEC Recommended Practices: A Comprehensive Guide for Practical Application in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education*, (2005). S Sandall, M. L. Hemmeter, B. J. Smith, & M. E. McLean; Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children.

Many of the knowledge and competency areas in Core Knowledge are related to specific standards, criteria or recommended practices in these three documents. In order to allow for easy cross-referencing, the following table links each content area in Core Knowledge with the relevant content in each of the other documents.

Core Knowledge Content Area	1. NAEYC Accreditation Criteria	2. NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards	3. DEC Recommended Practices
<i>Child Growth & Development</i>	1.A Building positive relationships between teachers and families 2.A Curriculum: essential characteristics 7.A Knowing and understanding the program’s families	1a. Knowing and understanding young children’s characteristics and needs 1b. Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning 1c. Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive and challenging learning environments	Adults design environments to promote children’s safety, active engagement, learning, participation, and membership (C1-11) Adults use ongoing data to individualize and adapt practices to meet each child’s changing needs (C12-16) Adults use systematic procedures within and across environments, activities, and routines to promote children’s learning and participation (C17-27) Families and professionals share responsibility and work collaboratively (F1-5) Practices are strengths- and assets-based (C15-17)

Appendix D: Linkages with Primary Sources

Core Knowledge Content Area	1. NAEYC Accreditation Criteria	2. NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards	3. DEC Recommended Practices
<p><i>Family & Community Relations</i></p>	<p>1.A. Building Positive Relationships among Teachers and Families</p> <p>1.E. Addressing Challenging Behaviors</p> <p>4.A. Creating an Assessment Plan</p> <p>4.B. Using Appropriate Assessment Methods</p> <p>4.E. Communicating with Families and Involving Families in the Assessment Process (4.E.01)</p> <p>6.A. Preparation, Knowledge, and Skills of Teaching Staff</p> <p>7.A. Knowing and Understanding the Program's Families</p> <p>7.B. Sharing Information Between Staff and Families</p> <p>7.C. Nurturing Families as Advocates for Their Children</p> <p>8.A. Linking with the Community</p> <p>8.B. Accessing Community Resources</p> <p>8.C. Acting as a Citizen in the Neighborhood and Early Childhood Community</p> <p>10.B. Management Policies and Procedures</p>	<p>2a. Knowing about and understanding family and community characteristics</p> <p>2b. Supporting and empowering families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships</p> <p>2c. Involving families and communities in their children's development and learning</p> <p>4a. Connecting with Children and Families</p>	<p>Professionals and families collaborate in planning and implementing assessment (A1-12)</p> <p>Assessment is individualized and appropriate for the child and family (A13-20)</p> <p>Professionals meet legal and procedural requirements and meet Recommended Practice guidelines (A37-46)</p> <p>Adults design environments to promote children's safety, active engagement, learning, participation, and membership (C1-11)</p> <p>Adults use ongoing data to individualize and adapt practices to meet each child's changing needs (C12-16)</p> <p>Adults use systematic procedures within and across environments, activities, and routines to promote children's learning and participation (C17-25)</p> <p>Families and professionals share responsibility and work collaboratively (F1-5)</p> <p>Practices strengthen family functioning (F6-10)</p> <p>Practices are strengths- and assets- based (F11-14)</p> <p>Teams including family members make decisions and work together (I1-6)</p> <p>Professionals cross disciplinary boundaries (I7-8)</p> <p>Intervention is focused on function, not services (I9-16)</p> <p>Regular caregivers and regular routines provide the most appropriate opportunities for children's learning and receiving most other interventions (I17-19)</p> <p>Families and professionals shape policy at the national, state, and local levels (PS1-4)</p>

Core Knowledge Content Area	1. NAEYC Accreditation Criteria	2. NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards	3. DEC Recommended Practices
<p><i>Health, Safety & Nutrition</i></p>	<p>1.A. Building positive relationships among teachers and families</p> <p>1.B. Building positive relationships between teachers and children</p> <p>2.K. Curriculum content area for cognitive development: health and safety</p> <p>3.C. Supervising children</p> <p>5.A Promoting and protecting children’s health and controlling infectious disease</p> <p>5.B. Ensuring children’s nutritional well-being</p> <p>5.C. Maintaining a healthful environment</p> <p>9.A. Indoor and outdoor equipment, materials and furnishings</p> <p>9.C. Building and physical design</p> <p>9.D. Environmental health</p> <p>10.B. Management policies and procedures</p> <p>10.D. Health, nutrition and safety policies and procedures</p> <p>10.F. Program evaluation, accountability and continuous improvement</p>	<p>1a. Knowing and understanding young children’s characteristics and needs</p> <p>1b. Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning</p> <p>2a. Knowing about and understanding family and community characteristics</p> <p>2b. Supporting and empowering families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships</p> <p>2c. Involving families and communities in their children’s development and learning</p> <p>3b. Knowing about and using observation, documentation and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches</p> <p>3d. Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and other professionals</p> <p>4d. Using own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum to promote positive outcomes</p> <p>5b. Knowing about and upholding ethical standards and other professional guidelines</p> <p>5c. Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice</p> <p>5d. Integrating knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education</p> <p>5e. Engaging in informed advocacy for children and the profession</p>	<p>Professionals and families collaborate in planning and implementing assessment (A1-12)</p> <p>Assessment is individualized and appropriate for the child and family (A13-20)</p> <p>Assessment provides useful information for intervention (A21-29)</p> <p>Professionals share information in respectful and useful ways (A30-36)</p> <p>Professionals meet legal and procedural requirements and meet Recommended Practice Guidelines (A37-46)</p> <p>Adults design environments to promote children’s safety, active engagement, learning, participation, and membership (C1-11)</p> <p>Adults use ongoing data to individualize and adapt practices to meet each children’s changing needs (C12-16)</p> <p>Families and professionals share responsibility and work collaboratively (F1-5)</p> <p>Practices strengthen family functioning (F6-10)</p> <p>Practices individualized and flexible (F11-14)</p> <p>Teams including family members make decisions and work together (I1-16)</p> <p>Families and professionals shape policy at the national, state and local levels (PS1-4)</p> <p>Program policies and administration promote family participation in decision-making (PS12-18)</p>

Core Knowledge Content Area	1. NAEYC Accreditation Criteria	2. NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards	3. DEC Recommended Practices
<p><i>Child Observation & Assessment:</i></p> <p><i>Principles/Foundation</i></p>	4.A Creating and Assessment Plan	3a. Understanding the goals, benefits and uses of assessment 3b. Knowing about and using observation, documentation and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches 3c. Understanding and practicing responsible assessment	Assessment is individualized and appropriate for the child and family (A13-20) Professionals share information in respectful and useful ways (A30-36) Professionals meet legal and procedural requirements and meet DEC Recommended Practices guidelines (A37-46)
<p><i>Gathering/Documentation</i></p>	4.B Using Appropriate Assessment Methods 4.E Communicating with Families and Involving Families in the Assessment Process	3b. Knowing about and using observation, documentation and other appropriate assessment tools and approaches 3c. Understanding and practicing responsible assessment	Professionals and families collaborate in planning and implementing assessment (A1-12) Assessment is individualized and appropriate for the child and family (A13-20)
<p><i>Summary and Uses (Results and Interpretation)</i></p>	4.C Identifying Children’s Interests and Needs and Describing Children’s Progress 4.D Adapting Curriculum, Individualizing Teaching, and Informing Program Development	3a. Understanding the goals, benefits and uses of assessment 3d. Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and other professionals	Assessment provides useful information for intervention (A21-29) Professionals meet legal and procedural requirements and meet DEC Recommended Practices guidelines (A37-46)
<p><i>Sharing and Reporting Methods</i></p>	4.C Identifying Children’s Interests and Needs and describing Children’s Progress 4.E Communicating with Families and Involving Families in the Assessment Process 7.B Sharing Information Between Staff and Families 8.A Linking with the Community	3a. Understanding the goals, benefits and uses of assessment 3c. Understanding and practicing responsible assessment 3d. Knowing about assessment partnerships with families and other professionals	Assessment provides useful information for intervention (A21-29) Professionals share information in respectful and useful ways (A30-36) Professionals meets legal and procedural requirements and meet DEC Recommended Practices guidelines (A37-46)

Core Knowledge Content Area	1. NAEYC Accreditation Criteria	2. NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards	3. DEC Recommended Practices
<p><i>Professional Development</i></p>	<p>6a. Preparation, knowledge and skills of teaching staff</p> <p>6b. Teacher's dispositions and professional commitment</p>	<p>5a Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood field</p> <p>5b Knowing about upholding ethical standards and other professional guidelines</p> <p>5c Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice</p> <p>5d Integrating knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education</p> <p>5e Engaging in informed advocacy for children and the profession</p>	<p>Field experiences are systematically designed and supervised (PP29 – 39)</p> <p>Faculty and other personnel trainers are qualified and well-prepared for their role in personnel preparation (PP40 – 55)</p> <p>Professional development (inservice) activities are systematically designed and implemented (PP56 – 66)</p>
<p><i>Learning Environments & Experiences:</i></p> <p><i>Interactions & Relationships</i></p>	<p>1A. Building positive relationships among teachers and families</p> <p>1B. Building positive relationships between teachers and children</p> <p>1C. Helping children make friends</p> <p>1D. Creating a predictable, consistent, and harmonious classroom</p> <p>1E. Addressing challenging behaviors</p> <p>2B. Social-emotional development</p> <p>3B. Creating caring communities for learning</p>	<p>1a. Knowing and understanding young children's characteristics and needs</p> <p>1b. Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning</p> <p>1c. Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments</p> <p>4a. Knowing, understanding, and using positive relationships and supportive interactions</p>	<p>Adults design environments to promote children's safety, active engagement, learning, participation, and membership (C1-11)</p> <p>Adults use ongoing data to individualize and adapt practices to meet each child's changing needs (C12-16)</p> <p>Adults use systematic procedures within and across environments, activities, and routines to promote children's learning and participation (C17-27)</p> <p>Assessment provides useful information for intervention (A21-29)</p>

Core Knowledge Content Area	1. NAEYC Accreditation Criteria	2. NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards	3. DEC Recommended Practices
<p><i>Learning Environments & Experiences:</i></p> <p><i>Physical Environments</i></p>	<p>2.A. Curriculum: essential characteristics</p> <p>2.C. Physical development</p> <p>2E-L. Curriculum content area for cognitive development</p> <p>3A. Designing enriched learning environments</p> <p>3D. Using time, grouping and routines to achieve learning goals</p> <p>3E. Responding to children’s interests and needs</p> <p>5C. Maintaining a healthful environment</p> <p>9.A: Physical Environment: Indoor and Outdoor Equipment, Materials, and Furnishings</p> <p>9.B: Physical Environment: Outdoor Environmental Design</p> <p>9.C: Physical Environment: Building and Physical Design</p>	<p>1a. Knowing and understanding young children’s characteristics and needs</p> <p>1b. Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning</p> <p>1c. Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments</p> <p>4b. Knowing, understanding, and using effective approaches, strategies, and tools for early education</p> <p>4d. Using own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum to promote positive outcomes</p>	<p>Adults design environments to promote children’s safety, active engagement, learning, participation, and membership (C1-11)</p> <p>Adults use ongoing data to individualize and adapt practices to meet each child’s changing needs (C12-16)</p> <p>Adults use systematic procedures within and across environments, activities, and routines to promote children’s learning and participation (C17-27)</p> <p>Assessment provides useful information for intervention (A21-29)</p>

Core Knowledge Content Area	1. NAEYC Accreditation Criteria	2. NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards	3. DEC Recommended Practices
<p><i>Learning Environments & Experiences:</i></p> <p><i>Learning Experiences</i></p>	<p>2.A. Curriculum: essential characteristics</p> <p>2B-D. Areas of development</p> <p>2E-L. Curriculum content area for cognitive development</p> <p>3A. Designing enriched learning environments</p> <p>3D. Using time, grouping and routines to achieve learning goals</p> <p>3E. Responding to children’s interests and needs</p> <p>3F. Making learning meaningful for all children</p> <p>3G. Using instruction to deepen children’s understanding and build their skills and knowledge</p>	<p>1a. Knowing and understanding young children’s characteristics and needs</p> <p>1b. Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on development and learning</p> <p>1c. Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments</p> <p>4b. Knowing, understanding, and using effective approaches, strategies, and tools for early education</p> <p>4c. Knowing and understanding the importance, central concepts, inquiry tools, and structures of content areas or academic disciplines</p> <p>4d. Using own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum to promote positive outcomes</p>	<p>Adults design environments to promote children’s safety, active engagement, learning, participation, and membership (C1-11)</p> <p>Adults use ongoing data to individualize and adapt practices to meet each child’s changing needs (C12-16)</p> <p>Adults use systematic procedures within and across environments, activities, and routines to promote children’s learning and participation (C17-27)</p> <p>Assessment provides useful information for intervention (A21-29)</p>

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Career resources for early childhood & afterschool professionals