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KNOWLEDGE
— & —
COMPETENCIES

for EARLY CHILDHOOD PROFESSIONALS:

NEW JERSEY'S UNIFIED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM



This document represents a collaboration between Professional Impact NJ and The New Jersey Council for Young Children.

Professional Impact NJ grew out of New Jersey Sows the Seeds for Growth. This statewide initiative, started by the New Jersey Child Care Advisory Council (CCAC) and the New Jersey Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NJACCRRRA), established the steps for implementing a system to enhance the preparation and continuing education for all professionals providing care and education to the State’s most vulnerable population—our children. The New Jersey Department of Human Services (DHS) awarded a contract to Kean University, in partnership with NJACCRRRA as a grant partner, to create *Professional Impact NJ*, the first unified professional development system. PINJ promotes and coordinates systems for the educational development of early childhood and primary education, family child care, and afterschool program professionals. PINJ advocates for policies and standards that result in high quality care and education for the children and families of New Jersey.

The Professional Impact NJ staff works collaboratively with a Policy Advisory Board composed of representatives from early childhood and primary education, family child care and afterschool programs, higher education, resource and referral agencies, government, business, and social services agencies. In addition to advisory board members, *Professional Impact NJ* works with more than 100 volunteers from the larger professional community who meet regularly in several working committees: Professional Standards & Articulation, Clearinghouse, Membership, Communications & Marketing, Policy & Emerging Issues, and Legislative. PINJ’s products include the NJ Registry for Childhood Professionals, NJ Registry Career Lattice, NJ Professional Development Provider Approval System, Scholarship and Financial Assistance Programs, NJ Administrators’ Credential, NJ Infant/Toddler Credential, NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals, Technical Assistance Specialist Standards, NJ Mentors’ Network, NJ Coalition of Early Childhood Consultants, Accreditation Facilitation, and the Christian Kjeldsen Leadership Institute.

This document is recommended for all professionals working with children birth through age eight, including afterschool programs, as well as those professionals engaged in the teacher preparation, home visitation, and intervention services as a guide to what professionals should know and be able to do with very young children in multiple settings. The first and second editions of the core

knowledge and competencies for early childhood professionals were developed by PINJ's Professional Standards & Articulation Working Committee. This third edition was developed in a collaboration between the NJ Council for Young Children Workforce Committee and PINJ. This new edition presents skills in observable terms. This edition also aligns the NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies with the state Early Learning and Development Standards, Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS), Child Development Associate (CDA) Competencies, the Head Start Performance Standards, and national and state standards that speak to a wide range of professionals and providers of professional development in the field.

The New Jersey Council for Young Children was created in 2010 by an Executive Order to serve as the Governor's State Advisory Council for Early Childhood Systems as authorized under the Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007. The mission of the Council is to align and improve New Jersey's numerous and complex early childhood programs and initiatives. This will establish a coordinated system of early care and education programs and services for infants, toddlers and young children from pregnancy to age eight. The 25-member Council is in but not of the Department of Education, and represents all state agencies with oversight of programs serving families and children from birth to eight. This includes the Departments of Education, Human Services, Health, Labor and Workforce Development, and Children and Families. Also represented on the Council are Head Start agencies, advocacy groups, child care organizations, school districts, universities, and foundations. The work of the Council is conducted in the following six committees and workgroups: Family and Community Engagement, Data, Communication, Infant-Child and Family Health, Workforce, and the Early Care and Education Standards Workgroup. While the Council's mission is separate from the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant, the Council committees are supporting the grant projects.

Special thanks to the New Jersey Council for Young Children’s Workforce Development Committee, Professional Impact NJ, and the many colleagues that served as reviewers of this document.

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Special thanks also to Florence Nelson, Early Childhood Consultant, for her editing work on this document.

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The Core Knowledge Areas and Competency Levels for adults working with young children birth through age eight and in afterschool programs, hereafter referred to as the ***NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals***, is based on the underlying premises that (a) the developmental and learning needs of young children are qualitatively different from those of older children and (b) all children, including those with special health and development needs, learn best in environments where:

- Adults recognize and understand the need for the development of a relationship that will be inclusive of the child’s family.
- Learning opportunities are meaningful and relevant.
- Children can construct their knowledge of the world through activities and interactions with others.
- Children’s individual needs are reflected, recognized, and addressed in accordance with the culture of the children and their families.
- Health and safety is an integral component of the child care and educational program activities and learning.

The core knowledge and competencies provide a framework of common evidence-based skills that can serve children and families, including programs in centers, homes, and schools. These standards are an integral part of the mission of the NJ Council for Young Children Workforce Development Committee and Professional Impact NJ in building a statewide comprehensive professional development system.

Introduction to the NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies:

This document outlines and demonstrates the behaviors and skills for early childhood professionals who work with young children (lead teachers, assistant teachers, head teachers, supervisors, directors and program administrators; prevention/intervention personnel; those involved in training organizations and teacher preparation programs; and those involved with policy and advocacy initiatives that promote quality). These behaviors, skills, and practices can guide novice and seasoned professionals to build meaningful relationships with children, families, and colleagues. The behaviors, skills, and practices also create learning and teaching environments that promote positive outcomes for children and for professionals charged with the care and development of young children. The overarching goal of this document is to help the early childhood workforce professionals understand and reflect core knowledge and competencies for the field.

This document is intended to help professionals assess their knowledge and understanding of early childhood best practices. These core knowledge and competency levels correspond with the NJ Registry Career Lattice Levels. The document helps professionals identify their areas of strength and areas needing more support or development.

The ***New Jersey Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals*** were developed in January 2001 by Professional Impact NJ and revised in 2009 to align with the NJ Registry for Childhood Professionals' Career Lattice. This third edition was revised and reformatted to:

1. Add the core knowledge area of *'Teaching-Learning Interactions and Approaches'* to highlight developmentally effective approaches, pedagogical strategies, and relationship-based teaching, and learning interactions
2. Add the core knowledge area of *'Serving Diverse Populations'* to highlight skills required to address the diverse needs of the state's children
3. Provide greater prominence to the area of *'Learning Environment'* to address professionals' skills in creating healthy, challenging, supportive, and respectful learning environments

4. Expand the core knowledge area of *'Curriculum'* to include skills required to facilitate learning in all early childhood content areas
5. Integrate professionals' competencies with those of the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant's priorities, the Grow NJ Kids Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) and the state's Early Learning and Development Standards
6. Provide emphasis on leadership in the field, by addressing leadership-related roles and responsibilities in all areas of the framework and additionally highlighting it as an integral part of professionalism
7. Align professionals' competencies to the newly revised 2014 NJ Registry for Childhood Professionals Career Lattice (refer to page 70 in this document).
8. Align the state's early childhood professional's competencies with national standards
9. List professionals' skills and competencies in observable terms with evidence-based language that enables the document to also function as a self-assessment checklist for professionals
10. Adopt a user-friendly layout that appeals to professionals at all levels and providers of education, training, technical assistance, and professional development

Professional Impact NJ's staff and the New Jersey Council for Young Children's Workforce Committee worked collaboratively to revise this document. This current user-friendly edition provides the foundation for *New Jersey's Unified Professional Development System* for early childhood professionals across sectors. Copies of this document can be downloaded from www.pinj.org and <http://www.state.nj.us/education/ece/njcyc/>

The NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies Committee would like to acknowledge Pennsylvania's Department of Public Welfare's Office of Child Development for their publication of *Pennsylvania Keys to Professional Development System, Core Body of Knowledge*, specifically their Knowledge Area 7: Health, Safety, & Nutrition. This document was used as a reference as the 2009 Working Committee developed New Jersey's Health, Safety, Nutrition, and Physical Activities Knowledge Base and Competency Levels.

We would also like to acknowledge the Community College of Vermont and the Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council for their publication of *Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals: The Foundation for Vermont's Unified Professional Development System*, and New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute for their publication of *Core Body of Knowledge: New York State's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Educators*, specifically their health sections which were used as a reference for this document.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge Kansas Enrichment Network, Child Care Aware of Kansas, OPEN Initiative, and Missouri AfterSchool Network whose Core Competencies for Early Childhood and Youth Development Professionals document inspired our document's format and layout.

Alignment to Professional Standards and Guidelines:

Early Childhood training, education, and/or technical assistance aligned to the NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals enables professionals to:

1. Help children meet the learning standards; therefore, this document aligns with the NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards (infants/toddlers), NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards (Preschool), NJ Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines, NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards, NJ Common Core State Standards (K-3 grades), and Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework: Promoting Positive Outcomes in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children 3-5 Years Old.
2. Develop and demonstrate knowledge and skills outlined by professional Early Childhood Education organizations and entities; therefore, this document aligns with the Child Development Associate (CDA), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation: Initial and Advanced Levels, CDC/DEC Early Childhood/Early Intervention Special Education Standards, and ACEI/NCATE Elementary Education Standards.
3. Deliver high quality programs; therefore, this document aligns with Grow NJ Kids: Center and School-Based Standards, NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria, Head Start Program Performance Standards, and National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) Program Accreditation Standards.
4. Develop the required skills and knowledge to earn NJ early childhood education professional credentials and endorsements and advance through the NJ Registry Career Lattice; therefore, this document aligns with NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals, NJ Infant Toddler Credential, NJ Association of Infant Mental Health Endorsement, and NJ Administrators' Credential.

To view the details of the alignment matrix documents go to **www.pinj.org** for the downloadable PDF files.

The NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals

document comprises nine areas in which professionals need to have knowledge and skills to work effectively with young children and their families. The core knowledge areas and competencies are interrelated and together provide the complete picture of the “whole” professional.

The competencies were written with the belief that all early childhood professionals develop skills over time. As individuals become accomplished in one skill, they develop professional goals and plans for skills in the next level. The levels of competency establish a continuum from skills necessary to enter the field to an advanced level of academic preparation and experience. The framework outlined in this document provides professionals with the opportunity to evaluate and chart progress from one level to the next through a combination of training, experience, education, self-reflection, and assessment.

The six levels build on one another; each level of the competencies includes skills gained at lower levels. Professionals, depending on their role, setting, maturity and/or experience, might also find themselves competent in skills at varying levels in the different areas.

Competency Levels are the progressive observable skills required for a professional to work effectively with children, their families and other professionals. There are nine core knowledge areas and six competency levels within each core knowledge area. At different times you may be at different levels within the areas in your professional growth and development. Progression from one competency level to the next is achieved through increasing amounts of professional development, training, and education in the field. It is expected that all individuals working in any environment serving children birth through age eight exhibit competencies at Entry or Experienced Levels minimally.

The NJ Registry Career Lattice is a tool that guides the professional growth and development of individuals working in early childhood, primary education, family child care, and after-school programs. Progression on the NJ Registry Career Lattice is based on on-going professional development including in-service training, community-based trainings, preparation, credentials, and degrees.

Entry Professional

A professional who is **emerging** as an early childhood practitioner. This level includes the knowledge and skills expected of a professional new to the early childhood education field.

Experienced Professional

A professional who is **developing** a repertoire of knowledge and skills based on experience and preliminary training. This level includes competencies at the entry level.

Credentialed Professional

A professional who is **applying** an understanding of training concepts from community-based training or higher education classes. This level includes competencies at the entry and experienced levels.

Degreed Professional

A professional who is **enhancing** knowledge and skills with an associate's degree in early childhood education or related field. This level includes competencies at the entry, experienced, and credentialed levels.

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

License/Endorsement related to Early Childhood

A professional with a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or related field and state certification/endorsement, who is **extending** knowledge and skills and able to lead and mentor others. This level includes competencies at the entry, experienced, credentialed, and degreed levels.

Advanced Degreed Professional

A professional who is **practicing innovation** and **providing leadership** in the field by directing and supervising others, conducting research, and developing materials, policies, and procedures for quality programs that provide positive outcomes for young children and their families. This level includes competencies at all previous levels.

NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies AT-A-GLANCE

The ***NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals*** identify specific knowledge areas that a professional must have and be able to apply when working with children, their families and other professionals. Although presented individually, all areas are intrinsically interrelated and interdependent. The areas of the **Core Knowledge and Competencies** are:

1. Child Growth and Development

- Theories and principles of child development
- Interplay of multiple influences
- Typical and atypical development
- Play
- Developmentally appropriate practices to support development

2. Family and Community Relationships

- Family characteristics and influences
- Respectful and reciprocal relationships with families
- Family involvement
- Community collaboration and relationships

3. Learning Environment and Curriculum

- Physical environment
- Materials and equipment
- Curriculum: Philosophy, framework, and standards
- Social and emotional development
- Visual and performing arts
- Language arts and literacy
- Math and science
- Social studies, family and life skills
- Health, nutrition, and physical education

4. Teaching-Learning Interactions and Approaches

- Responsive relationships
- Adult-child and peer interactions
- Play-based approaches
- Teaching-learning strategies
- Developmentally appropriate guidance

5. Child Assessment

- Principles of observation and assessment of children
- Observation and assessment techniques and tools
- Using child assessment information
- Reporting and sharing assessment information

6. Child Wellness: Health, Safety, and Nutrition

- Indoor and outdoor safety
- Health and safety standards and program practices
- Child abuse and neglect
- Child and adult mental health
- Nutritional needs of children

7. Serving Diverse Populations

- Cultural, social, and linguistic diversity
- English language learners (dual language learners)
- Children with special needs
- Anti-bias practices

8. Professionalism and Leadership

- Professional identity
- Professional standards and guidelines
- Ethical conduct
- Collaborative partnerships
- Professional development
- Reflective practice
- Advocacy

9. Program Organization and Management

- Program mission, goals, and philosophy
- Regulations, policies, and quality standards
- Management of physical, fiscal, and personnel resources
- Communication and organizational climate
- Strategic planning and program evaluation

TARGET AUDIENCES:

How Competencies Can Be Used

The NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals can and should be used as a resource tool to strengthen early care and education practices in New Jersey and to support all efforts leading to high quality early childhood, primary education, family child care and after school programs.

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Program Administrators</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create job classifications • Develop job descriptions • Recruit and hire staff • Evaluate, appraise, and retain staff • Plan professional development • Set and monitor policies • Guide and track career path • Collect and interpret data 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Direct Service Professionals</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter into the early childhood professional development system • Guide career advancement • Conduct a self-evaluation of professional growth within levels • Explore options for professional growth across levels 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Providers and Teachers of Professional Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop course work, trainings/workshops, and conferences • Mentor, advise, and counsel students • Assess competency levels • Disseminate research
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Professional Support Staff</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine professional growth within levels • Develop plans for training provided to directors and caregivers • Support and update information developed as guidance material for directors and caregivers • Guide consultation and resulting recommendations to providers and caregivers 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Regulatory/Policy/Funding Entities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence recommendations provided to enhance quality in regulated child care and education programs • Assess, evaluate, and maintain regulations and policies related to administrative and programmatic issues for the scope of child care and education programs • Serve as a guidance document for funders who support and enhance quality programs for children birth to eight 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Parents and Community Stakeholders</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance to parents for developing an understanding of the scope of child care and early education • Assist parents in making informed choices about child care and early educational opportunities for their children • Garner support from the entire community for quality early care and education programs for all children

Core Knowledge and Competency Area 1: Child Growth and Development

Core Knowledge Base

Early childhood professionals know and apply theoretical perspectives and current research on child development as the foundation of professional practice. This involves understanding and supporting children’s development in multiple and interrelated developmental domains: physical, cognitive, social, emotional, language, and aesthetic. Professionals also understand and respond appropriately to family, culture, society, language, social-economic conditions, technology, media, and other contexts that influence children’s development. Individual developmental variations are expected and valued. Professionals also understand the impact of play, high quality developmentally appropriate programs, and their role in these programs in supporting each child’s growth and development.

Key Competencies

- Theories and principles of child development
- Typical and atypical development
- Developmentally appropriate practices to support development
- Interplay of multiple influences
- Play

If a child is to keep alive an inborn sense of wonder, (s)he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him (her) the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in.

-Rachel Carson



Competency Levels:

Entry Professional

- Identifies basic developmental milestones of child development
- Recognizes that children achieve milestones at their own pace
- Demonstrates awareness that culture can influence children’s development
- Provides opportunities to interact with people, environments, and materials through play
- Knows that there are legal requirements for children with special developmental, learning, and medical needs

Experienced Professional

- Identifies basic physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language developmental milestones of children
- Explains how individual differences in children’s personalities, styles, and paces of learning influence development and learning
- Recognizes that home, family, and sociocultural background experiences influence development and learning

- Explains how children develop skills and abilities in the different domains through play
- Offers developmentally appropriate activities and materials for children based on age, abilities, and individual differences
- Talks with parents informally about their child's development during drop off and pick up times
- Recognizes differences in growth and development that may require special attention

Credentialed Professional

- Describes major child development theories and how they help to understand children's behavior
- Applies knowledge of child development theory to create appropriate expectations for children's behavior and development and meet their physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive needs
- Identifies strengths, needs, and interests of each child and develops strategies to support each child's growth and development
- Explains the effect of environmental factors on children's behavior, including stress from life changes, abuse, neglect, trauma, and elements of the program environment
- Designs and implements play activities that foster development across domains
- Records observations of children that show their abilities across domains
- Shares information about child growth and development and developmentally appropriate practice with families
- Observes and records risk factors, delays, or differences in abilities which may indicate a need for services

Degreed Professional

- Explains the developmental domains of children, how they are interrelated, and how they are different in individual children
- Plans activities and arranges the environment based on knowledge of child development theories and how children best learn
- Plans activities according to children's individual needs and interests and evaluates their effectiveness
- Describes the stages of children's play and sets up the environment and activities to facilitate group and individual play
- Offers materials, activities, and experiences that reflect the home languages and cultures of the children in the program
- Uses observations to help understand each child's current developmental level and identify next steps to help each child acquire needed age appropriate skills
- Talks to parents formally in parent teacher conferences about their child's development and progress
- Consistently follows specific instructions/ requirements for children in the program with special needs

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

- Uses knowledge of child development theory to support children and meet their physical, social, emotional, language, and cognitive needs; designs programs that meet children's needs across developmental domains
- Adapts, modifies, and individualizes environment, experiences, and routines to respond to individual differences in development, learning styles, and interests
- Coaches others to provide materials and activities that affirm and respect cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity

Child Growth and Development

- Uses observation information to make plans for materials, activities, and strategies appropriate to each child's developmental level; Routinely reviews observation information with program colleagues for planning purposes
- Shares observation information and involves families in supporting children's development
- Identifies and responds to signs of child stress from risk factors
- Analyzes current developments in the field (including new research, theory, and best practices), applies to practice, and assists others in applying to practice
- Coaches/mentors others to help them understand typical and atypical development of children
- Utilizes appropriate procedures, resources, and services to assist children with special needs, working together with the family throughout the process

Advanced Degreed Professional

- Articulates, evaluates, and applies current theory, research, and policy on child growth and development to program development
- Teaches major theories, research, and issues relevant to child growth and development
- Conducts research on play and topics relevant to child growth and development and shares findings with the early childhood community
- Develops evidence-based materials, programming, and curriculum to support children's development in all domains
- Collaborates with other professionals to assist in meeting the needs of all children, including children with special needs
- Advocates for policies and practices that are based on knowledge of child development
- Trains, coaches, and mentors future leaders to use knowledge of child development to promote positive child outcomes



Core Knowledge and Competency Area 2:

Family and Community Relationships

Core Knowledge Base

Early childhood professionals understand that families are the primary context for children’s development. They understand the characteristics of families and family systems to identify strengths and ‘protective factors’ to build resilience and social connections. They understand and value culture-sensitive and relationship-building practices in promoting the social and emotional development of infants and young children in families. They support parents in their roles as children’s most influential teachers and use a variety of strategies, including home-visiting to support parent-child interaction, development-centered parenting, and family well-being. They engage families by communicating respectfully, supporting their active participation in children’s learning and connecting them with resources available in the community.

Key Competencies

- Family characteristics and influences
- Respectful and reciprocal relationships with families
- Family involvement
- Community collaboration and



Leaders are not just those individuals with leadership positions. They are educators, administrators, parents, and others whose leadership thinking and actions promote meaningful learning.

-Dr. Julie K. Biddle,
Author of *The Three Rs of Leadership*

Competency Levels:

Entry Professional

- Describes the different family structures in the program
- Maintains confidentiality for individual children and families
- Relates positively to all children and their families
- Communicates with parents to help with children’s routine care and provides information about program activities
- Refers to handbook, schedule, and other information to be prepared for daily activities and expectations

- Recognizes that community resources exist to support healthy child outcomes

Experienced Professional

- Demonstrates understanding that families come in different forms and from diverse cultural backgrounds
- Provides educational experiences that include each child’s language, family and home culture
- Supports each child’s sense of belonging to his/her family and recognizes that professionals can support families in their role(s)

- Explains the legal requirements to recognize and report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, pursuant to the Child Abuse and Neglect Law (see N.J.S.A. 9:6-8.9,8.10,8.13 and 8.14)
- Communicates with families and community members in a manner consistent with program policies, procedures, and philosophy
- Knows location of flyers, brochures, and information about community resources that are available on site
- Provides handbook (policies, procedures, and protocols), a schedule, and other information to help parents adjust to the learning environment

Credentialed Professional

- Gathers information about the child's family and their interests and traditions through questionnaires and tactful conversations
- Identifies personal beliefs, values, and biases



- Provides an environment and activities that reflect all the children's families and their diversity
- Provides parents with written information that explains the policies, philosophy, and teaching approaches of the program
- Demonstrates a welcoming attitude toward all parents/families in the program
- Communicates effectively with families about child's daily needs and activities
- Works cooperatively with families on mutually agreed upon practices
- Conducts home visits and/or works with home visitation program to share research-based information and activities to support children's development
- Talks with and listens to parents to clarify all points of view
- Encourages parents to visit the program and participate in program activities
- Identifies local, state, and national resources that support children and families
- Suggests ways that parents can reinforce learning at home

Degreed Professional

- Demonstrates effective strategies to learn about families' cultures, traditions, and activities
- Encourages parents to share a skill, talent, or appropriate cultural practice with the children
- Designs and implements an environment and curriculum that reflect sensitivity and respect of diversity
- Demonstrates respect for, values the diversity of, and makes visible all family structures, life-styles, and cultural backgrounds of the children and families served

Family and Community Relationships

- Uses communication skills needed to effectively communicate with families with various cultural values
- Respects and tries to understand the parents' views when they differ from the program's goals or policies and attempts to resolve the differences
- Identifies signs of stress and appropriately responds to child's behaviors influenced by family situations
- Shares information with families on child's progress through scheduled and on-demand conferences
- Provides ongoing, relevant information to families about the program, curriculum, child growth, development, and learning
- Provides opportunities for families to socialize and share experiences and information with each other
- Provides families with information about available community resources
- Elicits feedback from families and invites them to make suggestions to improve the program
- Provides ideas for developmentally appropriate activities for parents to use with their children that extend learning into the child's home
- Assists families to formulate appropriate developmental goals for children and steps to reach the goals

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

- Provides an environment that supports all cultures
- Applies effective communication strategies that are respectful, non-biased, and reflective of children's diverse family structures, values, and traditions
- Offers multiple opportunities for parent involvement in the program with flexibility for parents to participate according to their own schedules

- Discusses child's current development, progress, and ways to support emerging developmental needs by sharing observational data and portfolios
- Creates developmentally appropriate home activities for families to use with their children
- Shares information about the importance of play, child development, and research-based best practice resources on promoting positive outcomes for children
- Communicates regularly with family members and colleagues, involving them in discussions and decisions regarding their children, program, and philosophy
- Implements effective conflict resolution techniques with family
- Works closely with individual families to develop a plan to support the child through stressful or crisis situations



Family and Community Relationships

- Utilizes evidence-based practices by partnering, facilitating, and reflecting with families to support child and family well-being
- Provides resources and support to families in making decisions related to their parenting practices and their child's development and learning
- Plans, conducts, and evaluates activities for family involvement
- Offers information and referrals to community resources based on family needs and interests
- Identifies social service, health, and education resources in the community and works with them on behalf of families
- Works with and assists others in developing a family centered philosophy in the program

Advanced Degreed Professional

- Works with and assists others in evaluating their practices in working with families and develops plans for implementing new practices
- Works within the community to bring awareness to the importance of early care and education experiences for children and their families
- Teaches about family systems theories, and effective strategies for communicating effectively with, supporting, and involving families in early childhood programs
- Develops evidence-based materials and curriculum to promote family and community relationships
- Serves as a resource to colleagues, teachers, and staff in connecting families to services in the community

- Trains, coaches, and mentors future practitioners and leaders to deliver services that emphasize culturally sensitive, relationship-based interactions; Trains and mentors others to build family strengths and skills and support positive parenting
- Advocates actively and works for appropriate and needed services for young children and families
- Conducts research on family and community relationships and shares findings with the early childhood community
- Articulates and advocates for public policies that positively impact children and their families



As human beings, our job in life is to help people realize how rare and valuable each one of us really is, that each of us has something that no one else has-or ever will have-something inside that is unique to all time.

It is our job to encourage each other to discover that uniqueness and to provide ways of developing its expression.

-Fred Rogers



Core Knowledge and Competency Area 3:

Learning Environment and Curriculum

Core Knowledge Base

Early childhood professionals know that safe, healthy, culturally appropriate, well-organized learning environments promote children's learning and development. They use child development theory and research, ongoing assessment, and their knowledge of content, tools, strategies, and resources in academic disciplines to plan an integrated curriculum. Early childhood professionals are familiar with state and national program standards and base their planning on these standards. They select materials and equipment, plan schedules, routines and transitions, and arrange spaces to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment that nurtures all areas of development. Early childhood professionals create universally designed settings, learning environments, and activities for diverse populations, which can accommodate and serve the needs and characteristics of all children and their families. They see curriculum as a key component of the learning environment. Early childhood professionals have the knowledge and skills required to plan, implement, and evaluate a balanced curriculum that supports the program goals and provides opportunities to acquire concepts and skills in all content areas: social and emotional development, visual and performing arts, language and literacy, mathematics and science, social studies, family and life skills, health, safety, nutrition, and physical education.

Key Competencies

- Physical environment
- Curriculum: Philosophy, framework, and standards
- Visual and performing arts
- Math and science
- Health, safety, nutrition, and physical education
- Materials and equipment
- Social and emotional development
- Language arts and literacy
- Social studies, family, and life skills



Competency Levels:

Entry Professional

- Follows prescribed practices related to the organization and management of outdoor and indoor physical environment
- Assists in providing safe and appropriate materials as per program policies
- Participates in carrying out daily routines
- Assists with implementing planned curriculum which includes integrated learning experiences across all learning domains
- Limits media and screen time and uses hands-on activities and interactions

Experienced Professional

- Assists in organizing and implementing indoor and outdoor environments that are safe, comfortable, healthy, respectful, supportive and aesthetically pleasing
- Provides safe, clean, and appropriately challenging materials that foster exploration, play, and problem solving skills
- Explains how appropriate program materials facilitate skill development
- Recognizes the need to match learning experiences to the developmental level of a particular age group
- Explains the importance of planning daily activities for children
- Assists in planning curriculum to support children's learning goals
- Promotes social and emotional development
 - Labels and attends to the basic emotional states expressed by young children
 - Recognizes the need for appropriate expression of all emotions
 - Supports children in playing well with others

- Accepts children's need for autonomy and reacts appropriately
- Promotes creative expression through visual and performing arts
 - Supports children's individual expression in art activities
 - Provides opportunities for children to use art materials every day
 - Uses music, movement, and/or dance activities in the program in some way each day
 - Provides opportunities for children to engage daily in dramatic play
- Promotes language and literacy development
 - Identifies basic language/literacy experiences as essential in the daily routine
 - Talks with children, encourages them to ask questions, and stimulates conversations
 - Responds appropriately to non-verbal communications of infants, toddlers, and children with special needs
 - Responds to children who are learning English and attempts to respond in the child's home language
 - Shares books with children, re-reads favorite stories, and models reading behaviors
 - Follows directions for creating a print-rich environment
 - Makes writing materials available and models their use
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in mathematics and science
 - Identifies basic math and science experiences as essential in the daily routine

An empowered teacher is a reflective decision maker who finds joy in learning and in investigating the teaching/learning process—one who views learning as construction and teaching as a facilitating process to enhance and enrich development.

-Fosnot

- Participates with children exploring a variety of objects, materials, toys, and games to develop an understanding of concepts like number, quantity, patterns, sets, shape and spatial sense, time and sequence
- Discusses objects and events that have been observed indoors and outdoors
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in social studies, family and life skills
 - Talks about jobs people do in the family and community
 - Discusses program roles, jobs, and rules
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in health, safety, nutrition, and physical development
 - Provides opportunities to develop self-help and personal hygiene skills
 - Provides opportunities for children to experience a variety of nutritious food choices
 - Offers activities daily to develop fine- and gross-motor skills
 - Talks with children about the safety reasons behind rules

Credentialed Professional

- With supervision, can organize, assess, and modify the indoor and outdoor physical environment to ensure it is safe, comfortable, healthy, respectful, supportive, and aesthetically pleasing

- Provides materials that are easily accessible, age appropriate, and support skill development in all areas
- Provides and uses materials that demonstrate acceptance of each child's gender, family, race, language, culture, and special needs
- Routinely provides, changes, and rotates learning materials and equipment to provide variety, stimulate new interests, and scaffold emerging skills
- Uses developmentally appropriate curriculum and teaching strategies based on knowledge of child development and learning, strengths, interests, and needs of Individual children and social and cultural context in which children live
- Begins to use the learning goals as outlined in the NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards (infants/toddlers), NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards (Preschool), NJ Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines, NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards, and the NJ Common Core State Standards (K-3 grades), to plan learning environments and experiences
- Promotes social and emotional development
 - Identifies and accurately labels all the emotional states that young children experience

Learning Environment and Curriculum

- Identifies the various ways young children express and communicate emotions, both verbally and nonverbally
- Uses strategies such as: listening, labeling, drawing pictures, role-playing with children, and environment modification for appropriate expression of emotions
- Provides materials and activities to support children's participation in age- and ability-appropriate group activities
- Plans opportunities for children to develop social skills through daily activities and routines
- Offers guidelines for children to use that promote positive social interactions
- Provides a child-centered environment that will encourage autonomy
- Promotes creative expression through visual and performing arts
 - Provides opportunities for open-ended, process-oriented, and independent use of art materials
 - Provides opportunities for children to use art materials independently
 - Participates in singing, instrument play, dance and movement, and dramatic play activities with children
 - Provides time, flexibility, and choice to sustain engagement in the process of creating art
 - Plans for some art, music, dance, and dramatic play experiences
 - Values children's creative art work and displays it
 - Shares children's creative activities with parents
- Promotes language and literacy development
 - Provides concrete experiences and play to facilitate language and literacy development in the daily routine
- Uses developmentally appropriate strategies: open-ended questions, rhymes, songs, games, conversations, print and pictures, read-alouds, storytelling, puppets, expressive art, drawing, dictating, and play with literacy tools
- Respects other languages and supports English language learners (dual language learners)
- Selects appropriate diverse materials (i.e. books, pictures, labels, posters) for the children's environment
- Provides opportunities and materials for children to draw and print
- Understands and communicates the relationship between oral and written language and its impact on literacy
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in mathematics and science
 - Encourages children to ask questions, problem solve, and find answers through active exploration of materials in the environment
 - Facilitates the development of mathematical and scientific thinking through use of manipulatives, tools, blocks, puzzles, sensory, and sequencing activities
 - Provides opportunities for children to explore and play with activities related to important grade-appropriate math and science concepts
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in social studies, family, and life skills
 - Provides meaningful and direct opportunities for children to learn basic concepts and skills about families, characteristics of self and others, and community jobs

- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in health, safety, nutrition, and physical development
 - Uses materials, resources, and activities to help children learn about nutritious food choices
 - Selects physical activities and equipment that promote children's individual cognitive, creative, and language growth as well as motor skills and sensory development
 - Plans a balance of active and quiet time
 - Supports children's wellness through responsive interactions and relationship-based program practice
 - Uses materials, resources and activities to promote child wellness

Degreed Professional

- Organizes, assesses, and modifies the indoor and outdoor physical environment on an ongoing basis to meet the criteria for safety, comfort, support for learning, and aesthetically pleasing learning conditions
- Selects, creates, and uses materials and equipment that foster exploration, play, and problem solving skills
- Uses learning materials and equipment that respect diversity in developmental abilities, family composition, and cultural backgrounds
- Plans developmentally appropriate curriculum and teaching strategies based on knowledge of child development and learning, assessment of children's strengths,





- interests, and needs, and the social and cultural context in which they live
- Plans and provides a balanced curriculum with adult- and child-directed activities, indoor and outdoor experiences, individual, small- and large-group activities, blocks of uninterrupted time for play and structured activities, to support the development of skills, concepts, and learning dispositions
- Articulates how philosophical ideas affect curriculum
- Plans and implements learning activities and experiences to support goals in all content areas as outlined in the NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards (infants/toddlers), NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards (Preschool), NJ Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines, NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards, and the NJ Common Core State Standards (K-3 grades)
- Promotes social and emotional development
 - Demonstrates appropriate interactions when young children display emotions
 - Teaches and implements a wide range of techniques for children to appropriately express and communicate their emotions
 - Recognizes behaviors that may indicate emotional disorder and require additional resources and/or referrals
 - Provides children with many opportunities to participate in age-appropriate cooperative play
 - Implements developmentally appropriate tasks that lead to children's development of autonomy
 - Guides and supports children in identifying others' social cues and developing positive strategies to resolve social conflicts

Learning Environment and Curriculum

- Designs activities within the program that specifically teach responsibility
- Works to create a caring community within the program by encouraging children to treat each other with kindness and respect
- Promotes creative expression through visual and performing arts
 - Provides an art center with a variety of art materials where children can actively engage in open-ended art activities
 - Integrates creative expression throughout the curriculum
 - Provides frequent open-ended opportunities for children to express their creativity through language, music and dance, dramatic play, and art media
 - Evaluates the effectiveness and appropriateness of creative development activities to meet the interests and needs of individual children and makes appropriate adaptations
 - Helps parents understand the importance of creative expression in children's development, including process vs. product
- Promotes language and literacy development
 - Uses opportunities to acquire and extend skills in oral language, vocabulary, comprehension, phonological and phonemic awareness, phonics, alphabetic knowledge, print awareness and concepts, and early writing
 - Uses integrated teaching units, lessons and activities that incorporate language and literacy across the curriculum
- Understands typical and atypical language acquisition skills of children who are learning two or more languages and implements curriculum supports
- Uses resources and materials that support language and literacy
- Immerses children in a print-rich environment including languages represented in the program
- Provides opportunities to explore writing through a variety of means (e.g., dictation, word banks, making books, opportunities for fine motor skill building)
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in mathematics and science
 - Implements activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, problem-solving, and reasoning appropriate to the ages, developmental levels, and learning styles of all children
 - Models use of numbers, mathematical vocabulary, and mathematical thinking to solve daily problems (e.g., counting number of children present, dividing blocks into equal shares, comparing sizes)
 - Models use of hypotheses and testing predictions
 - Engages children in activities that support mathematical, scientific thinking, and inquiry using developmentally appropriate, open-ended, hands on experiences
 - Implements math and science learning experiences using an integrated curriculum approach
 - Provides age-appropriate daily opportunities for children to interact with the natural world
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in social studies, family, and life skills

- Demonstrates wide range of skills for planning and facilitating play-based social studies activities that are appropriate to the child's age and stage, culturally responsive, adapted for children with special needs, and integrated with other curriculum content areas and across domains
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in health, nutrition, physical development, and mental wellness
 - Plans individual and small-group activities and materials that promote the development of gross- and fine-motor skills
 - Provides daily opportunities for large motor play indoors and outdoors
 - Incorporates opportunities to learn about healthy nutrition
 - Supports children's growing self-awareness by providing opportunities for reflection and exploration of feelings
 - Adapts physical activities according to child assessments and children's special needs
 - Designs and implements outdoor activities to extend program learning experiences

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

- Models and helps others develop skills to organize, assess, and modify the indoor and outdoor physical environment to ensure safety, comfort, support for learning, and aesthetically pleasing learning conditions
- Designs materials and equipment that foster exploration, play, and problem solving skills and helps others develop skills for creating appropriate materials

Perhaps the ultimate test of a leader is not what you are able to do in the here and now – but instead what continues to grow long after you're gone.

-Tom Rath & Barry Conchie,
Authors, *Strengths-Based Leadership*





- Models and coaches others about the design and use of materials and equipment that respond to diversity in culture and abilities and articulates to others why this is important
- Assesses the appropriateness of prepared curriculum for specific program use and adapts as needed
- Adheres to the philosophical statement that guides the program's curriculum development and helps others develop a philosophy statement
- Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in all content areas to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with the NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards (infants/toddlers), NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards

- (Preschool), NJ Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines, NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards, and the NJ Common Core State Standards (K-3 grades)
- Promotes social and emotional development
 - Critiques environmental design for developmental appropriateness in supporting the constructive expression of emotions
 - Communicates information to parents, staff, and community members related to interactions and strategies for working with young children to help them express their emotions appropriately
 - Mentors others in developing activities that teach social skills as part of the curriculum
 - Mentors others in creating a caring community within their setting
 - Uses current research about early childhood development to encourage children to practice responsibility, autonomy, and positive social skills
 - Promotes creative expression through visual and performing arts
 - Models the use of age appropriate creative activities that promote children's individual expression
 - Explains how children represent their thoughts, feelings, and ideas through creative outlets
 - Coaches others in creating an environment that encourages creativity and individual expression
 - Explains the value of creative development activities for children and how these activities affect children's development

Learning Environment and Curriculum

- Promotes language and literacy development
 - Skillfully integrates language, literacy, and writing activities across all aspects of the curriculum
 - Applies language and emergent literacy theories and strategies
 - Plans, implements, and evaluates activities for English language learners (dual language learners)
 - Collaborates with specialists, as needed, to address individual language and literacy needs
 - Evaluates and adapts practice to ensure writing opportunities are available for children of all abilities
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in mathematics and science
 - Integrates theory to design and Implement opportunities to support math and science process skills: problem-solving, reasoning, connecting, observing, comparing, classifying, measuring, inferring, predicting, and communicating
 - Demonstrates a wide range of skills for planning and facilitating math and science learning: integrating with other curriculum content areas; using play, natural, informal, teacher-guided experiences; relevant resources; and technology
 - Uses assessment of child's progress to plan curriculum experiences that are matched to individual needs, interests, and ability levels
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in social studies, family, and life skills
 - Skillfully integrates social studies learning across content areas by using appropriate resources including technology and media
 - Models and helps others develop a wide range of skills for planning and facilitating developmentally appropriate play-based social studies activities
- Designs environments that enable all children to access and engage in all learning opportunities, learn from an equitable, flexible, and success-oriented curriculum according to their individual strengths and abilities, and demonstrate their learning in multiple ways (Division for Early Childhood, 2010)
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in health, nutrition, and physical development
 - Skillfully integrates physical development activities across curriculum areas
 - Understands the importance of sensory integration, its impact on children's ability to learn, and identifies sensory integration supports and resources

Advanced Degreed Professional

- Supervises and provides support to others as they organize the indoor and outdoor environment to promote safety, comfort, and aesthetically pleasing learning conditions and implements changes as needed
- Trains, coaches, and mentors future practitioners and leaders to design learning environments for all children
- Provides leadership for planning, implementing, assessing, and continuously improving the selection and use of appropriate materials/equipment that support skill development, foster



- exploration, play, and problem solving skills, and respond to diversity
- Evaluates and revises curriculum models and teaching strategies based on knowledge of child development and learning, strengths, interests, and needs of individual children and the social and cultural context in which children live
- Provides leadership for development and implementation of program philosophy and curriculum using research-based best practices
- Coaches others in curriculum development aligned to the NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards (infants/toddlers), NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards (Preschool), NJ Kindergarten Implementation Guidelines, NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards, and the NJ Common Core State Standards (K-3 grades)
- Reviews current research and reflects on implications for current practice in the field
- Collaborates with other professionals to revise and update professional standards and guidelines
- Promotes social and emotional development
 - Produces and disseminates information for parents, staff, and community members to help them identify the wide range of children’s emotional expressions
 - Advocates for appropriate and accessible services to support healthy emotional development of young children
 - Designs a program that supports children’s development of responsibility, autonomy, and positive social skills

Learning Environment and Curriculum

- Advocates for local, state, and national policies that support early childhood mental health and the development of responsibility, autonomy, and positive social skills
- Promotes creative expression through visual and performing arts
 - Evaluates, analyzes, articulates, and applies current theory and research on promoting creative experiences in early care and youth programs
 - Coaches others to see children as artists through open-ended arts, painting, dance, music, and dramatic play through dialogue, problem solving, and creative expression

- Teaches other professionals about how to support each child's creative development by adapting time, space, and materials to meet the needs and interests of children
- Collaborates with other professionals to integrate best practice regarding creative development into early care and youth programs within the community
- Advocates for the "arts" as valuable aesthetic learning experiences in a child's development
- Promotes language and literacy development
 - Evaluates the effectiveness of language and literacy curriculum to facilitate continuous program improvement



Learning Environment and Curriculum



- Coaches others in developing curricula, environments, resources, and materials for language and literacy development
- Advocates for community support and resources that ensure literacy development based upon current theory and research
- Informs and educates others regarding the importance of writing activities to language development
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in mathematics and science
 - Coaches others in developing curricula, environments, resources, and materials for math and science learning
 - Facilitates continuous improvement for mathematics curriculum goals and activities that are appropriate, culturally responsive, and adapted for children with special needs
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in social studies, family, and life skills
 - Facilitates continuous program improvement for planning and implementing families and communities (social studies) curriculum based on best practices derived from evidence-based research
- Promotes the development of skills and concepts in health, nutrition, and physical development
 - Articulates, evaluates, and applies current theory and research on promoting physical development
 - Coaches others in developing curricula, environments, resources, and materials for health, mental wellness, nutrition, and physical development
 - Advocates for resources, time, and space for physical motor activities and recreation

Core Knowledge and Competency Area 4:

Teaching-Learning Interactions and Approaches

Core Knowledge Base

Early childhood professionals understand the reciprocal nature of teaching and learning. They understand the importance of positive relationships and high-quality interactions in supporting the development of academic skills, positive learning attitudes, and healthy self-esteem in young children. In the context of these relationships they utilize play as a primary mode of learning along with a variety of developmentally appropriate teaching-learning strategies and tools to build age appropriate skills, design engaging environments and experiences, and meet the needs, capabilities, and interests of all children. Professionals also have knowledge of factors that may impact young children’s behaviors. They implement developmentally appropriate guidance techniques and strategies to support children in developing self-regulation, self-concept, and positive interactions with their peers and adults.

Key Competencies

- Responsive relationships
- Teaching-learning strategies
- Play-based approaches
- Developmentally appropriate guidance



Competency Levels:

Entry Professional

- Uses children’s names and interacts responsively with them at their eye level
- Shows interest in children’s ideas and choices
- Provides appropriate supervision
- Understands and supports child-initiated play
- Encourages children to try out new activities
- Demonstrates a beginner level repertoire of teaching behaviors
- Defines the term “guidance”

- Observes and identifies developmentally appropriate and inappropriate guidance approaches with children from infancy through school age
- Uses redirection and positive reinforcement

Experienced Professional

- Monitors children’s relationships; Demonstrates warm, positive, nurturing, and respectful interactions with children
- Provides uninterrupted playtime to encourage exploration
- Identifies ways adults can facilitate play, active manipulation of concrete objects, child choice and decision-making, exploration of the environment, and interaction with others
- Responds appropriately to children’s questions and requests, including the nonverbal cues of infants and toddlers
- Engages in conversations with children that are developmentally appropriate and understood by the children
- Asks open-ended questions and encourages children to ask questions

Teaching-Learning Interactions and Approaches

- Recognizes teachable moments and follows the child's interests
- Establishes and communicates limits for acceptable behavior

Credentialed Professional

- Provides opportunities for children to listen, interact, and communicate with others
- Explains the role of play and exploration in young children's growth, development, and learning in terms of developmental domains, multiple intelligences, and learning styles
- Fosters young children's play and exploration by interacting with them in a positive and responsive manner
- Uses a variety of language strategies during adult-child interactions and facilitates dialogue between and among children
- Demonstrates the use of active listening skills
- Engages children in problem solving and decision-making
- Demonstrates an emerging repertoire of teaching behaviors; uses some of effective Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

teaching strategies (Copple and Bredekamp, 2009)

- Provides engaging learning experiences that follow a logical sequence and allow for choices, selecting appropriate teaching-learning strategies including the use of appropriate technologies
- Applies realistic expectations for each child
- Discusses how guidance approaches affect the child's self-esteem and ability to learn self-regulation
- Explains and practices developmentally appropriate guidance approaches such as effective praise, encouragement, and problem solving
- Addresses the problem behavior or situation, rather than labeling the child
- Communicates with parents regarding areas of concern and develops cooperative strategies to manage the problem

Degreed Professional

- Uses a variety of strategies to build positive relationships such as one-on-one attention, talking about interests, active listening, responding consistently, and smiling



Teaching-Learning Interactions and Approaches

- Uses strategies to provide challenges and practice for the development of executive function and self-regulation skills through routines, play, meaningful social interactions, and reflective exercises
- Promotes positive pro-social relationships among children and facilitates interactions among children to support learning
- Integrates play in the curriculum at all levels of the early childhood program
- Facilitates children's growth and development by interacting with them during play and exploration in a manner that enhances learning and validates the process and purpose of play
- Uses observations of children's play and exploration to design curriculum, individualize instruction, and identify appropriate teaching strategies
- Utilizes engaging conversations and thought provoking questions with adults to facilitate children's learning
- Expands and extends children's understanding and interests by elaborating on children's ideas and responses
- Provides opportunities to encourage problem solving, persistence, and planning skills
- Demonstrates a developed repertoire of teaching behaviors; uses many of the effective DAP teaching strategies well (Copple and Bredekamp, 2009)
- Uses teaching methods and tools that are appropriately matched to the content area
- Applies a variety of research-based strategies that engage children in meaningful ways, including conversations; using environments and routines; incidental and intentional teaching; children's characteristics, needs, and interests; linking children's language and culture to the program; teaching through social interactions; play; addressing children's

- challenging behaviors; using technology; and applying integrative approaches to curriculum
- Selects media and technology tools based on educative purpose and developmental appropriateness, especially for infants and toddlers
- Uses an appropriate balance of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities, small-group, and individual activities, along with large group instruction and activities
- Teaches children problem-solving techniques appropriate for their developmental stage, so they can resolve conflicts on their own
- Involves the children, as appropriate, in decision making about facility/program rules and consequences of behavior
- Models appropriate guidance approaches and mentors others in their practice
- Ensures the use of positive guidance approaches by other staff in the early childhood program

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

- Implements theories and reflective practices that recognize the critical importance of positive and supportive relationships
- Monitors children's interactions and adjusts the program to support all children in listening, interacting, and communicating freely with others
- Ensures that communication between the adults and children is age appropriate, on-going, and responsive to the children's strengths and needs as a group and as individuals
- Supervises curriculum design to ensure emphasis on play, exploration, and social interactions

Teaching-Learning Interactions and Approaches

- Informs families, colleagues, administrators, and community members of the importance of play in children's development focusing on process-oriented learning experiences to facilitate knowledge construction
- Uses effective Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) teaching strategies (Copple and Bredekamp, 2009) skillfully in response to teaching-learning situations to deepen the child's understanding
- Uses strategies to meet the learning needs of all learners by differentiating the content, process, and products of instruction
- Designs enriched programming with daily opportunities to converse and communicate ideas in large and small groups and in a variety of informal and formal activities
- Designs curriculum that incorporates opportunities to develop communication skills for problem solving and resolving conflicts
- Evaluates curriculum, environment, and experiences to promote curiosity, persistence, and creativity
- Analyzes own instructional approaches to support individual children's development and learning
- Uses media and technology tools to support curriculum goals and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and engagement in learning
- Analyzes and integrates sound theoretical perspectives into teaching strategies
- Supports colleagues in integrating research-based instructional strategies through modeling and coaching
- Applies theories of child development to improve positive guidance approaches
- Teaches staff, parents, and community members about positive guidance approaches and the effective use of praise and encouragement

- Uses observations and assessments to individualize and improve child guidance
- Ensures that children of all abilities are guided in positive ways
- Advocates for the use of play, exploration, and social interactions in learning, at the community state and national levels

Advanced Degreed Professional

- Identifies, promotes, models, and uses materials, policies, and practices that support positive and effective interactions among children, families, and other professionals
- Evaluates, applies, and coaches others about theory and current research in peer social interactions in children's learning; adult-child interactions in children's learning; guidance strategies for individual children
- Collaborates with other professionals at the community, state, and national levels to effect policies and mandates related to developmentally appropriate teaching and learning practices
- Teaches families and professionals about age appropriate communication skills in young children
- Leads curriculum design teams to develop coherent and comprehensive units and lessons that are responsive to the needs of diverse learners
- Initiates action research efforts with colleagues to identify, select, and modify instructional strategies and resources that ensure success for each learner
- Continuously researches and applies innovative approaches to expand own repertoire of instructional approaches
- Designs written policies for effective child guidance to be used by others

Core Knowledge and Competency Area 5:

Child Assessment

Core Knowledge Base

Early childhood professionals understand that all domains of children’s development can be assessed through systematic observation. They know how to collect relevant information about children’s development and learning through screening tools, through observation, and through play-based authentic assessments. Early childhood professionals also use observation and authentic assessment ethically to plan appropriate curriculum, determine needed services and interventions, and establish outcomes for individuals and groups of children. Professionals also understand the value of developing partnerships with families and others in developing, implementing, and using child assessments to promote better outcomes for children and families.

Key Competencies

- Principles of observation and assessment of children
- Observation and assessment techniques and tools
- Reporting and sharing assessment information
- Using child assessment information



Competency Levels:

Entry Professional

- Describes noticeable changes in children’s development over time
- Begins to make anecdotal observations
- Participates in recording information for individual children (e.g., diaper changing, feeding schedules, accident reports)

- Assists with the collection of information about each child’s development
- Explains the difference between objective and factual information and a personal opinion
- Maintains confidentiality concerning child observation and assessment information

Experienced Professional

- Explains the purpose and value of documenting observations of children
- Contributes to assessment on individual children by collecting work samples and recording observation notes under the guidance of a supervising teacher/director
- Explains how personal biases and opinions may affect child assessment
- Has informal conversations with parents at drop off and pick up times and shares positive information about what has been observed about their child

Credentialed Professional

- Identifies various ways to get to know each child as an individual, including strengths, needs, interests, family, and life situation
- Follows program procedures for collecting data about each child's development
- Uses a system for collection of children's work samples and observations
- Explains the importance of screening children for health and developmental progress
- Shares detailed notes with families about children's day and their learning
- Participates as a team member in the assessment process, including seeking support and guidance from other professionals, and providing input in the development of Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) as needed

Degreed Professional

- Uses assessment tools that are relevant to curriculum or program planning
- Objectively observes and documents children's activities and interactions with others



- Uses observation on a regular basis to document children's growth and development including social-emotional, physical, cognitive, language, and creative using multiple measures (e.g., running records, anecdotal records, time sampling, checklists, surveys)
- Keeps accurate and up to date records of children's health and developmental screening
- Maintains a collection of work samples and records of varying types of observations for each child (e.g., pictures, written observations, tape recordings)
- Uses assessment information in curriculum planning, designing the environment, working with parents, and individualizing goals for the children

- Works with other professionals in using the results of child observation and assessment to develop plans for children with special needs
- Uses systematic procedures to collect information regarding child's interests and strengths from family members
- Uses a variety of formal and informal ways to share assessment results and implications with family members

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

- Develops and implements a systematic plan for the ongoing assessment of individual children using carefully selected informal and formal tools and techniques
- Selects assessment tools that are aligned with curriculum and developmental goals and are sensitive to the unique cultural and learning needs of each child
- Establishes criteria and follows a systematic process for developing and maintaining child portfolios to provide evidence of children's emerging skills
- Selects and schedules procedures for periodic screening for health and developmental milestones
- Effectively interprets and uses assessment information to monitor children's progress
- Effectively interprets and uses assessment information to plan and adapt curriculum, learning experiences, and environment and effect program improvement
- Ensures that results of assessments are used responsibly and to benefit the child and family

- Works together with parents and other professionals to make decisions concerning referrals for diagnostic/intervention services
- Integrates assessment data from a variety of sources to make decisions and to create Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) and Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs)

Advanced Degreed Professional

- Provides technical support to staff in planning, implementing, and interpreting assessment data and using assessments to modify curriculum, teaching, support services, and interventions as needed
- Teaches others and/or provides technical assistance about major theories, research, and policy issues relevant to observation and assessment
- Consults with others to review assessment tools and methods for validity, reliability, and sensitivity to variables like gender, culture, language, and ethnicity
- Supervises the program's use of assessment data to construct IFSPs and IEPs
- Works in multi-disciplinary teams to ensure that current best practices on child assessment are used in all settings serving young children and their families
- Develops appropriate child assessment tools or evidence-based materials and resources about assessment tools and their use
- Conducts research on child assessment and shares findings with the early childhood community

Core Knowledge and Competency Area 6:

Child Wellness: Health, Safety, Nutrition, and Physical Activities

Core Knowledge Base

Early childhood professionals understand the importance of addressing the health, safety, and nutritional needs of children to their overall development. They provide a safe and healthy learning environment and follow all appropriate guidelines and practices to ensure children’s well-being (physical, social-emotional, nutritional, oral, environmental, and spiritual). They value and work collaboratively with professionals from other disciplines to support the physical and mental health of children and their families.

Key Competencies

- Indoor and outdoor safety
- Health and safety standards and program practices
- Child and adult mental health
- Child abuse and neglect
- Nutritional needs of children



Competency Levels:

Entry Professional

- Obtains infant/child CPR and First Aid certification

- Identifies health, safety, and nutrition standards
- Supervises and interacts with children to ensure their safety both indoors and outdoors
- Identifies potential safety hazards in the program environment
- Describes and participates in health and safety practices based on state regulations and best practice standards
- Participates in emergency preparedness drills
- Practices safe food handling
- Performs hygiene and sanitation procedures including appropriate hand washing and appropriate diapering and toileting procedures
- Recognizes health hazards in meals (i.e., choking, allergies, etc.) and takes steps to prevent situations that could be harmful and can take appropriate action if needed
- Recognizes signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect
- Follows state and federal mandated child abuse and neglect reporting regulations

- Maintains confidentiality of child health records
- Sets limits on screen time and media use to ensure that young children use their minds and bodies in healthy and active ways to maximize learning

Experienced Professional

- Describes and maintains a safe environment, including equipment and toys, to prevent and reduce injuries
- Takes appropriate action when children are injured, including both minor incidents and major accidents
- Conducts daily health checks and monitors children daily for signs of illness and signs of stress, abuse, and neglect
- Follows health and safety practices based on state regulations and best practice standards related to: hand washing, universal precautions, formula preparation, diapering/toileting, toy and environment sanitation, food preparation, food handling and storage, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), first aid/CPR, medical emergencies, medication administration, reporting of illnesses and injuries, management of illnesses and communicable disease, proper disposal of bodily fluids, and staff health and personal hygiene
- Monitors children's eating habits to ensure a healthy diet, which meets age appropriate recommended dietary allowances
- Provides appropriate meals and snacks in a relaxed and social setting
- Supports children's mental wellness through responsive interactions and relationship-based program practices
- Talks about types of foods with children and discusses healthy eating habits both during meals and play or group times

- Teaches and supports good oral hygiene practices for children

Credentialed Professional

- Follows guidelines to ensure the safety of the physical environment
- Regularly performs and documents health and safety practices based on state regulations and best practice standards
- Performs emergency and safety drills, other disaster drills, and checks that safety equipment is in working condition
- Follows program procedures for documenting and communicating signs of illness to families and appropriate staff
- Uses a prescribed medical action plan to address the care of children with special health needs
- Maintains attentive, continuous supervision and correct staff-child ratio both indoors and outdoors
- Maintains indoor and outdoor environments free from potential safety hazards
- Teaches children simple safety rules and practices, enforcing them consistently





- Fulfills staff health requirements by monitoring personal health and staying up to date with immunizations
- Explains the importance of safe and sanitary food storage, preparation, serving, and clean up
- Describes the types of foods required for optimal growth and explains how they impact growth and development
- Plans and provides meals and snacks that meet the nutritional needs and feeding requirements of each child, including those with special dietary needs and children with disabilities
- Considers cultural and ethnic diversity of the children in planning meals and snacks
- Encourages children to learn self-help skills during mealtimes and snacks by incorporating family style meals and snacks
- Uses a variety of practices including individualized, trust-building, reciprocal group- and one-on-one interactions to promote children's mental well-being
- Identifies and responds according to written procedures to screen children for mental health issues

Degreed Professional

- Maintains current infant/child CPR and First Aid Certification

- Actively promotes, performs, and documents health and safety practices based on state regulations and best practice standards
- Conducts periodic assessments of the program and environment for health
- Adapts the indoor and outdoor environments to maximize the safety and independence of children, including children with special needs
- Ensures health and safety precautions are incorporated into daily routines, drills, emergency situations, and safety hazards
- Anticipates potential safety hazards and acts to prevent them, adjusting supervision to accommodate different ages, abilities, activities, and environments
- Implements activities that teach safety practices to children
- Ensures that state and federal mandated child abuse and neglect regulations are followed
- Provides opportunities for children to learn about healthy bodies, food, habits, and environments through planned activities and daily practices
- Implements program practices to address identified behavioral and mental health concerns of an individual child or group of children
- Works with families to support children's mental health issues by sharing information, assisting in accessing resources, and any needed mental health interventions

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

- Ensures the implementation of all health and safety practices based on state regulations and best practice standards, throughout the program

Child Wellness

- Frequently assesses to ensure that the program's health, safety, and nutrition practices are compliant with state and national standards
- Uses health and safety assessments to implement changes as needed
- Mentors others in implementing good health and safety practices within their program
- Provides information to staff and families about safety and injury prevention for children and adults
- Consults with health professionals on health, safety, and nutrition practices and issues relevant to program operation
- Provides parents with information about healthy nutrition habits for children and community based nutrition resources
- Designs and implements curriculum and assists others in designing activities emphasizing healthy bodies, healthy lifestyles, mental wellness, and healthy environments
- Collaborates with mental health professionals to assist in the identification of and intervention in family and staff concerns about child's mental health

Advanced Degreed Professional

- Designs, assesses, and assists others in creating safe and healthy programs and environments
- Plans, implements, and assists others in implementing appropriate emergency policies and procedures
- Teaches others principles of physical and mental health and safety for young children and youth
- Conducts or interprets research on child health, safety, and nutrition issues and shares findings with the early childhood community



- Advocates to develop and implement strategies for improving the environmental safety of programs
- Teaches and communicates major theories, research, and issues related to children's health issues
- Develops evidence-based materials and curriculum to support children's physical and mental health, safety, and nutritional needs
- Acts as a resource and advocate for public education for prevention of child abuse and neglect
- Collaborates with health professionals and public health agencies to ensure current best practices on health and wellness issues are used in all settings serving young children and their families
- Trains, coaches, and mentors future practitioners and leaders to use practices that encourage positive health behaviors, and supports the physical and mental well-being of children and families

Core Knowledge and Competency Area 7:

Serving Diverse Populations

Core Knowledge Base

Professionals understand how varying contexts of development contribute to cultural, social, linguistic, and developmental diversity in early childhood settings. They respect each child’s culture, home language, individual abilities or disabilities, family context, and community and use respectful, culturally responsive communication, and adopt inclusive and anti-bias practices with children, families, staff, and colleagues. They understand the importance of creating learning environments that are sensitive to children’s individual characteristics, values, cultures, languages, abilities, and temperaments. Early childhood professionals support positive self-identity and self-esteem in children. They use practices to ensure that children and families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have equal access to educational services and learning opportunities.

Key Competencies

- Cultural, social, and linguistic diversity
- English language learners (dual language learners)
- Children with special needs
- Anti-bias practices



Competency Levels:

Entry Professional

- Accepts diversity in culture and language as differences rather than deficiencies
- Assists with practices that reflect the cultural contexts and experiences of the children
- Provides opportunities for children to use/hear their home languages in the program (e.g., CDs and invited home language storytellers)
- Knows that there are legal requirements for children with special developmental, learning, and medical needs
- Understands that each child has a unique learning style and preferences

Experienced Professional

- Demonstrates understanding that individuals from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds have their own beliefs and values
- Provides appropriate supports to children with special needs and those with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs)
- Communicates with families to understand cultural and linguistic backgrounds and experiences
- Places photos, pictures, and other materials in the learning environment that reflect the cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and individual diversity of children and families
- Explains the importance of providing a learning environment that is welcoming for all families
- Uses each child's home language for communication and instruction at least once every day, via speaking and/or recordings
- Follows legal requirements concerning the care and education of young children with disabilities or other special needs

- Assists in providing accommodations and adaptations needed for children with special needs to access, participate, and learn in the program's activities and routines

Credentialed Professional

- Articulates the assets diversity brings into the early learning environment
- Reflects on own biases regarding serving diverse children and families
- Identifies and uses pictures, photos, books, recordings, food, and other materials that reflect the diversity of children and families
- Interacts with children in ways that reflect knowledge of the children, their families, and their social, linguistic, and cultural contexts
- Uses practices that support the development of children's home language
- Assists children in understanding spoken language in English by using pictures, familiar objects, body language, and physical cues
- Assists children with special needs to use assistive technology
- Follows program policies and practices designed to create a sense of belonging and to support full participation by children and adults with disabilities or other special needs
- Follows policies and practices that promote inclusion of diverse children and families in the program



Degreed Professional

- Assists in developing policies and practices that promote inclusion of diverse children and families in the program
 - Uses information about children and families as well as the diversity in gender, culture, abilities, and language to adapt the program environment, curriculum, and teaching methods
 - Adapts curriculum and program to provide children with disabilities the opportunity to develop strengths and compensate for their learning differences
 - Identifies individual children's needs through screenings and monitoring
 - Facilitates access to appropriate early intervention services and supports
- Recognizes that learning challenges may include language delays, motor skills, behavioral issues, or problems with vision or hearing
 - Invites family members to plan and carry out group or program activities that reflect their home and culture
 - Uses strategies to support both home language and English language development, including labeling objects and materials in both languages, bilingual or multilingual picture schedules, book read-alouds in each language
 - Provides children varied opportunities and materials to build their understanding of diversity in culture, family structure, ability, language, age, and gender in non-stereotypical ways
 - Uses developmentally appropriate strategies to support English language learners (dual language learners) including scaffolding, focusing on children's interests, and encouraging peer support
 - Provides instructional support for young children with disabilities who are English language learners (dual language learners) to assist them in learning English and in continuing to develop skills through the use of their home language
 - Follows guidance from service providers and families to support children with special needs within Early Intervention Plans (EIPs) and Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) through the use of easily adaptable materials, strategies, and techniques
 - Uses a variety of strategies to assist children with challenging behaviors through individualized intensive interventions including positive behavior supports
 - Knows how to access specialized supports for occupational, behavioral, physical, and speech therapies

- Administers a variety of screening measures to identify possible developmental delays

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

- Uses principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) to design program practices, curriculum, and environments for all children and families in the program
- Creates list of resources that offer developmentally and culturally appropriate recommendations for the visual representation of diversity in early childhood settings
- Promotes the use of materials that reflect the cultures of children and families and assesses the visual representation of diversity in the program
- Plans and implements anti-bias curriculum by using a range of strategies including differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, real world experiences, and critical literacy activities and by creating a program culture of respect, dialogue, and acceptance
- Encourages families, colleagues, and community members to use children's home languages
- Uses a range of strategies to support young English language learners (dual language learners) and communicates with families about strategies to support the development of the home language and English language
- Uses and adapts specific instructional strategies that are effective for English language learners (dual language learners) when teaching English to children with disabilities
- Works with families and other adults to identify and provide appropriate assistive technology and other accommodations needed to support the full participation of all children in the program's learning experiences

- Collaborates with families and service providers to plan and implement activities and services that support children with special needs within Early Intervention Plans (EIPs) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs)

Advanced Degreed Professional

- Teaches, coaches, and mentors future practitioners and leaders to incorporate children's cultural and linguistic diversity in programs
- Models respectful, responsive, and evidence-based practices that support the learning and well-being of all children
- Develops and implements evidence-based professional development that provides professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to implement best practices to support children with special needs
- Facilitates conversations among early childhood educators about how to create programs that reflect the culture and languages of the families and children served
- Facilitates discussions with families and family advocates, early childhood educators, and other community leaders about the development and implementation of evidence-based strategies to support young English language learners (dual-language learners) in a variety of early education settings
- Advocates for inclusion of diverse children and families in early childhood programs
- Makes program modifications through program policies and involvement in interdisciplinary teams

Core Knowledge and Competency Area 8: Professionalism and Leadership

Core Knowledge Base

Early childhood professionals know about the history, values, knowledge base, and mission of the field. They conduct themselves as representatives of the early childhood profession. They understand that a research-based body of core knowledge and competencies serves as a foundation for the profession and use the core knowledge and competencies in their work with children, families, colleagues, and the community. Early childhood teachers must know and use ethical guidelines such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment and other professional standards. They demonstrate a commitment to ongoing professional development and learning. They reflect upon and improve their practice by utilizing a wide variety of professional development resources to improve their practice and participate in coaching, mentoring, and other collaborative learning experiences. As individuals committed to improving the lives of young children and their families, early childhood professionals serve as effective and informed advocates for policies and practices that promote best outcomes for children and families.

Key Competencies

- Professional identity
- Collaborative partnerships
- Reflective practice
- Professional standards and guidelines
- Ethical conduct
- Professional development
- Advocacy



Competency Levels:

Entry Professional

- Enjoys working with young children
- Exhibits good hygiene and an appropriate appearance
- Understands job responsibilities and follows program schedules
- Follows licensing standards and regulations

Professionalism and Leadership

- Knows about program goals and philosophy
- Is aware of and complies with program policies about professional conduct
- Recognizes and agrees with the *NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals*

Experienced Professional

- Demonstrates a positive attitude toward her/his role in working with children
- Acts responsibly and ethically in cooperation with others involved in the care and education of children
- Is aware of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment for early education and care and its main topics
- Completes training hours as required by licensing or program
- Is aware of professional organizations and resources related to early care and education
- Seeks input from supervisors and colleagues about own practices
- Recognizes symptoms of compassion fatigue, burnout, and work-related stress and seeks assistance when appropriate
- Begins to develop a personal educational philosophy
- Identifies professional strengths using the *NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals*

Credentialed Professional

- Follows program policies, regulations, licensing standards, and laws
- Recognizes professional work habits including confidentiality, respect for all people, dependability, time management, independence, and teamwork



- Communicates and works cooperatively with co-teacher or other team members
- Identifies and becomes a member of a professional organization
- Explains the importance of following the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment
- Articulates a personal philosophy of early childhood
- Demonstrates oral and written skills required to communicate effectively with children, families, and colleagues
- Creates a professional resource file/portfolio with information helpful to children and families
- Knows about resources to assist in developing an individual professional development plan (e.g., community agencies, NAEYC state and local affiliates, professional journals, higher education institutions, NJ Registry for Childhood Professionals, local Child Care Resource & Referral)
- Understands that the profession has a research-based core of knowledge as its foundation
- Uses the *NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals* to assess professional skills and abilities, set goals for professional development, and advance on the NJ Registry Career Lattice



- Understands that the profession has a research-based core of knowledge as its foundation
- Develops a personal professional development plan in collaboration with a supervisor
- Participates in professional development and self-reflection and is receptive to changing practices
- Seeks out professional relationships to enhance professional growth (e.g., identifies a mentor)
- Talks to families, professionals, and others in the community about the importance of positive early experiences for children

Degreed Professional

- Maintains high quality standards by ensuring compliance with all program standards (e.g., quality rating systems, accreditation requirements)
- Integrates knowledge of child development and best practices to develop and reflect on personal philosophy of early childhood education

- Integrates the NAEYC Code of Ethics and *NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals* into daily practice
- Demonstrates knowledge of the early childhood profession, including organizations and publications
- Maintains active membership in one or more professional organizations and attends professional meetings/conferences
- Routinely reflects on teaching practices to develop personal goals for improving practice
- Creates and implements a plan for personal and professional development
- Maintains an ongoing professional development record
- Respects individual differences and multiple perspectives and participates in open, collaborative discussion to solve problems
- Creates and manages appropriate professional and personal boundaries with children, families, co-workers, and service providers
- Engages in appropriate self-care and nurturing practices to monitor and maintain his/her healthy physical, mental, and emotional abilities
- Communicates effectively, both orally and in writing about issues affecting early care and education programs

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

- Models and helps others develop ways to establish and maintain high quality program standards
- Models and promotes the use of current research, professional resources, and professional organizations to enhance professional development and improve practice

- Applies strategies to prevent and address work-related stress
- Collaborates with other professionals to develop and evaluate program policies and procedures
- Serves as mentor, coach, and resource for less experienced staff
- Networks with colleagues to enhance professionalism and leadership in the field
- Integrates professional development plans with training and education opportunities
- Analyzes ethical dilemmas and identifies appropriate course of action using the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment
- Advocates about ethical issues related to children and families that directly impact local, state, and federal policies
- Models and coaches others about aligning practices to the *NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals*
- Understands the Developmental Stages of Teachers (Katz, 1995) and uses them when mentoring, coaching, or supervising professionals and suggesting activities for professional development
- Advocates for high quality programs and services for families and children at local, state, and national levels

Advanced Degreed Professional

- Advocates for and assumes leadership for developing, implementing, and evaluating practices that support high quality programs and services for families and children at local, state, and national levels
- Actively participates in groups or organizations engaged in research, policymaking and/or leadership
- Trains, coaches, and mentors future practitioners and leaders to connect

- knowledge of theory and concepts to practice
- Advocates on issues related to the early childhood profession, including organizational climate, appropriate compensation, professional preparation, and systems building initiatives
- Provides leadership in professional networks and organizations to develop, implement, and disseminate policies and best practices
- Observes staff, colleagues, students, and mentees and provides constructive feedback to help determine areas for improvement and to set goals for improvement
- Develops curriculum and materials for professional development
- Evaluates effectiveness of training and education
- Understands and applies adult learning theories, principles, and strategies to teach, coach, and mentor practitioners at all levels about early childhood content and practices
- Disseminates knowledge about best practices in the field through presentations, conferences, and writing for professional publications
- Actively participates in the advocacy efforts of professional organizations (e.g., committee membership, journal submissions, financial contributions)
- Serves on professional boards and committees



Core Knowledge and Competency Area 9:

Program Organization and Management

Core Knowledge Base

Early childhood professionals understand that effective policies, procedures, and systems designed and managed in accordance with the program's mission, goals, and philosophy, help ensure a high quality learning environment. This includes understanding the local, state, and national regulations that govern program operation and adopting management principles, responsibilities, and ethics that effectively use the program's physical, fiscal, and personnel resources. Early childhood professionals understand the role of program policies and procedures in creating a supportive organizational climate essential for establishing and maintaining employee satisfaction and retention. They know that program evaluation and strategic planning engage all stakeholders in collaborative and circular processes of setting, evaluating, and modifying program goals and activities to promote best outcomes for children and families.

Key Competencies

- Program mission, goals, and philosophy
- Communication and organizational climate
- Management of physical, fiscal, and personnel resources
- Regulations, policies, and quality standards
- Strategic planning and program evaluation



Competency Levels:

Entry Professional

- Adheres to work schedule and maintains attendance
- Indicates where program license or certificate can be viewed
- Describes the program's organizational structure
- Follows staffing and program schedules
- Demonstrates awareness of regulations that

apply to specific program/facility

- States the program's mission, goals, and philosophy
- Attends staff meetings and supervisory conferences, and reads memos and notices
- Reviews and accepts personnel policies that describe the terms of employment; seeks clarification or assistance for any performance expectations or terms of employment as necessary

Experienced Professional

- Explains the program's mission, goals and philosophy
- Knows and complies with program policies and licensing requirements
- Follows staffing schedule and works with others to meet legal ratios and children's needs
- Shows care in the use and maintenance of materials
- Completes and maintains designated records
- Assists as requested regarding use of available resources
- Follows established lines of communication and the written personnel policies
- Shares program responsibilities and acts as a part of a professional child care and educational team

Credentialed Professional

- Follows policies and procedures designed to comply with regulations
- Follows established lines of communication in accordance with program policies
- Communicates essential information to co-workers, families, and others to maintain continuity of care in accordance with program policies
- Uses available resources effectively to ensure that the program meets the needs of children and families
- Assists in procuring supplies and materials as needed in accordance with prescribed procedures
- Demonstrates awareness of the resources (financial, human, material) needed to offer a high-quality program
- Explains the relationship between the program philosophy and daily practice



- Begins to set up and maintain daily record keeping of information required pursuant to Chapter 122 Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers and Chapter 126 Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Registration
- Participates in professional development activities that lead to increased compensation

Degreed Professional

- Complies with all legal and regulatory mandates related to daily practice
- Uses effective communication and interpersonal skills with children, families, adults, and community
- Maintains confidentiality at all times
- Implements policies, procedures, and practices required by state laws and regulatory agencies that promote a safe and healthy learning environment for children and staff, including emergency procedures
- Participates in action plans for program improvement relative to job responsibilities and as requested by supervisor
- Participates in strategic planning and goal setting for the program
- Shows awareness of NAEYC program accreditation standards and Grow NJ Kids Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS)

- Conducts and maintains the inventory of supplies, materials, and equipment, and monitors own resource expenditures
- Maintains a collegial work environment, two-way communication, team building, and collaboration
- Collaborates as a team member in establishing policies and procedures for the program
- Identifies and uses existing and new resources effectively

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

- Demonstrates collaborative behavior and teamwork in regularly scheduled meetings and consultations with co-workers
- Models and provides feedback to less experienced staff to develop ways to establish and maintain high quality program standards and program compliance
- Develops action plans in accordance with all federal, state, and local regulatory agencies
- Designs and implements safe, healthy, and inclusive learning environments which comply with all legal and regulatory mandates and are consistent with professional guidelines and best practice
- Allocates resources (personnel, budget, grants, community) that contribute to goal setting and program planning
- Demonstrates effective administrative skills related to the daily operation of an educational program
- Helps others acquire skills for monitoring resource expenditure
- Participates in program evaluation by reviewing and interpreting assessment data
- Assists in using assessment data to develop action plans for areas in need of quality improvement, based on NAEYC program accreditation standards and Grow NJ Kids QRIS

- Supervises and participates in evaluation of staff, and encourages other professionals to engage in continuous professional development
- Articulates the importance of compensation for skilled professional services, and encourages others to participate in professional development activities that lead to increased compensation
- Models and helps others contribute to positive organizational climate

Advanced Degreed Professional

- With input from stakeholders, provides leadership for developing mission statement, program goals, and philosophy
- Develops program practices and procedures responsive to federal, state, and local laws and regulations
- Develops and implements a program marketing plan as needed
- Develops recommendations regarding financial and legal resources in the community that support families, children, and program effectiveness
- Advocates for public policies that promote quality early education
- Analyzes internal and public policies and makes appropriate and timely recommendations for improvement
- Applies the fundamentals of program organization and management principles in designing and managing program policies
- Develops written personnel policies that are consistent with the program's mission, goals, philosophy, current laws, and evidence-based best practices
- Develops and provides staff members with a manual or notebook of standard operating procedures that clearly details responsibilities and policies

Program Organization and Management

- Develops, monitors, and reviews budget plans designed to facilitate programmatic goals
- Initiates activities to secure resources (e.g., gifts, grants, in-kind contributions, volunteer time), including collaboration with community organizations
- Supports and conducts research in program organization and management
- Offers professional development to help programs meet NAEYC program accreditation standards and Grow NJ Kids QRIS
- Oversees the planning, implementation, assessment, and continuous improvement of the program mission, goals, and philosophy
- Utilizes data from program evaluations and involves stakeholders to revise procedures and plan new program goals
- Creates and implements, with the staff, a plan for evaluating staff performance and developing goals and professional development targets
- Provides leadership for designing a program environment that fosters employee satisfaction, including appropriate pay scale with performance incentives, appraisal system, employee recognition, professional development, and a collegial organizational climate
- Advocates on behalf of early education and care professionals for adequate compensation for skilled professional services



New Jersey Registry for Childhood Professionals tracks the professional growth and development of individuals working in early childhood, primary education, family child care, and after-school programs by maintaining confidential records for each individual who participates in the system. Individuals are approved at one of the six Competency Levels of the NJ Registry Career Lattice. The NJ Registry recognizes an individual's education and achievements through the issuance of a certificate which includes his/her level on the NJ Registry Career Lattice. Compiled data from the NJ Registry can give a valuable picture of NJ's early childhood, primary education, family child care, and afterschool workforce. The NJ Registry also issues Head Teacher, Teacher, Group Teacher, and School-age (Afterschool) Program Supervisor approvals recognized by the Department of Human Services, Office of Licensing. These approvals meet the requirements set forth in the *NJ's Chapter 122 Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers* and *Manual of Requirements for Family Child Care Registration*.

New Jersey Instructor Approval System is designed for instructors/trainers in early childhood and other professionals who bring a wide array of experience and skill to professional preparation experiences of practitioners in the field. Depending on their NJ Registry level, trainers are approved at one of five Instructor Levels: Content Specialist, Apprentice Instructor, Associate Instructor, Instructor, or Master Instructor (See page 71). This system allows approved instructors to list and align the courses with core knowledge areas they teach in the Directory of Instructional Resources, an on-line database of training. The NJ Instructor Approval System can also assist practitioners in locating approved instructors who provide professional development/training.

New Jersey Administrators' Credential is a voluntary credential program that validates the competencies required to administer high-quality early care and education programs. This credential is designed for administrators and provides an incentive to obtain professional preparation offering a sound knowledge base for leadership in Early Child Care and Education. The New Jersey Administrators' Credential is consistent with the drive toward excellence in early childhood education in New Jersey and nationwide. The credential is accessible through credit-bearing and continuing education tracks.

New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential In partnership with the Coalition of Infant/Toddler Educators (CITE) of New Jersey, Professional Impact NJ is charged with the operational responsibility for implementation of the Infant/Toddler Credential. This credential educates infant/toddler practitioners in center-based care and family child care programs. The credential is valid for four (4) years and can be renewed. The Credential can be earned in the following ways:

- 15 college credits related to Key Indicators
- 120 approved non-credit training hours + 6 credits
- Infant/Toddler CDA + 6 credits
- BA/BS in child development, human development or related field + 6 credits
- Additional requirements include a portfolio, letters of recommendation, a personal essay and statement of commitment, and advisor feedback on observation and field experience.

Active Listening: Involves interactions with a child to provide him with proof that you understand what he is talking about.

Anecdotal Record: A written summary of teacher observations of children as they work and play in the classroom or on the playground.

Anti-bias Curriculum: An approach to integrating diversity throughout the curriculum that was developed by Louise Derman-Sparks. The program provides general principles that allow teachers and caregivers to create an appropriate curriculum for their classrooms.

Assessment: The process of collecting information about children’s development, learning, health, behavior, academic process, and need for special services in order to plan and implement curriculum and instruction.

Atypical Development: Any aspect of a child’s physical or psychological makeup that is different from what is generally accepted as typical to early childhood development.

Authentic Assessment: Evaluation of the actual learning and instructional activities in which children are involved.

Behavior Modification: Based on the theoretical perspectives of behaviorism, the three basic techniques of positive reinforcement, punishment, and ignoring are used as guidance and discipline strategies with children.

Child Care Centers: Programs located in buildings either designed for, or remodeled to be used with, young children. Large numbers of children are typically enrolled in these programs, with several teachers hired to work with different groups of children.

Coaching: A relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized knowledge and skills, and experience in adult learning, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s). Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal-setting and achievement for an individual or group.

Consultation: A collaborative problem-solving process between an external consultant with specific expertise and adult learning knowledge and skills and an individual or group from one program or organization. Consultation facilitates the assessment and resolution of a specific concern with a program-, organization-, staff-, child-, or family-related issue, or addresses a specific topic.

Curriculum: All the experiences children have while in school.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP): Teaching based on how children grow and develop.

Early Childhood Professional: The preferred title for anyone who works with young children in any capacity. The designation reflects the growing belief of the early childhood profession that people who work with children at any level are professionals and are such are worthy of the respect, remuneration and responsibilities that go with being a professional.

Early Intervention: Providing services to children and families as early in the child’s life as possible to prevent or help with a special need.

Emergent Literacy: The idea that learning to read and write has much in common with oral language development. Young children have the knowledge of emergent literacy skills prior to acquiring them while they are in the process of hearing, using, and pretending to read and write using lines, random letters, invented spelling, and initiating read-aloud.

English Language Learners: Describes both young children who are learning two or more languages simultaneously and children who are introduced to a second language sometime between the ages of eighteen months and three years. Other frequently used terms are dual language learners (DLL), limited English proficient (LEP), and English learners (EL) and children who speak a language other than English (LOTE).

Early Childhood Workforce: Includes those working with young children (infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children in centers, homes, and schools) and their families or on their behalf (in agencies, organizations, institutions of higher education, etc.) with a primary mission of supporting children’s development and learning.

Early Childhood Professional Development: A continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work. These opportunities lead to improvements in knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of early education professionals. Professional development encompasses education, training, and technical assistance.

Family Child Care: Early childhood programs that operate out of the caretaker’s home and enroll only a small number of children.

Grow NJ Kids: New Jersey’s Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). It is a system designed to create a universal standard of quality for all early care and education programs (Head Start, child care, public preschool, etc.) throughout New Jersey. Grow NJ Kids utilizes a strength-based approach to provide support to early care and education programs to make continuous improvements on the quality of care they provide.

Head Start: A federally funded program begun in 1964 that provides quality comprehensive care to low-income children who are 3 to 5 years of age. In addition to the more traditional curriculum, Head Start provides resources and assistance with medical, dental, nutritional, and mental health needs.

Inclusion: Early childhood inclusion embodies the values, policies, and practices that support the right of every infant and young child and his/her family, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society. The desired results of inclusive experiences for children with and without disabilities and their families include a sense of belonging and membership, positive social relationships and friendships, and development and learning to reach their full potential. Key features of inclusion include access, participation, and supports (NAEYC, 2009).

Individualized Education Plan (IEP): A document that is mandated for every student with a disability (ages 3-21) by Public Law 94-142. The IEP is the blueprint for the services a child receives and must be developed each year. It describes the child’s current level of functioning, and includes short-and-long-term goals and objectives. All IEPs must be approved by parents.

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP): A plan created for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families, specifying the services they will receive to help them reach their goals.

Individual Professional Development Plans: Documents that provide a framework connecting various professional development experiences to each other and to the common core knowledge and professional standards for early education professionals. Individual professional development plans are designed to build an early childhood professional's capacities and to ensure that individuals remain current regarding knowledge and practices in the field.

Infancy: A child's first year of life.

Infant Mental Health: State of emotional and social competence of young children.

Integrated Curriculum: A curriculum in which one subject area is used to teach another.

In-service or Ongoing Training: Professional development activities in which early childhood professionals engage to enhance their skills and remain current regarding knowledge and practice in the field. Pre-service training refers to training received before beginning employment in an early childhood professional role, such as through college courses. In-service or ongoing training refers to training events delivered to professionals employed in early childhood professional roles. In-service training may be required to continue serving in a role. (See also: Training)

Language: Either oral or hand-signed communication between humans.

Learning: Acquisition of knowledge, behaviors, skills, and attitudes.

Learning Style: The way a child is affected by his or her environment, emotions, sociological needs, physical characteristics, and psychological inclinations as he or she works to master new or difficult information or skills.

Mentoring: A relationship-based process between colleagues in similar professional roles, with a more experienced individual with adult learning knowledge and skills, the mentor, providing guidance and example to the less-experienced protégé or mentee. Mentoring is intended to increase an individual's personal or professional capacities, resulting in greater professional effectiveness.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): The largest professional association specifically organized to meet the needs of early childhood teachers and caregivers. Members receive the journal *Young Children* and are invited to participate in local, state, and national professional meetings to enhance their knowledge and skills as educators.

Parent/Family Involvement: Process of helping parents and family members use their abilities to benefit themselves, their children, and the early childhood program.

Performance Standards: Specific examples of what students should know and do to demonstrate that they have mastered the knowledge and skills stated in the content standards.

Phonemic Awareness: A developing awareness in children that oral language consists of sounds, syllables, and words.

Play Experience: Open-ended learning opportunities where children select interesting materials and use them in their own unique ways. Play materials usually do not require demonstration by the teacher.

Portfolio: An important assessment tool used by teachers and caregivers to compile and organize information about individual children. It includes materials such as examples of children's work, assessments, and observations made by teachers and caregivers. A purposeful compilation of children's work samples, products, and teacher observations collected over time.

Professional Standards for Teachers: Standards are core knowledge, understanding, and methods used across multiple settings and in multiple roles that progress from a theoretical knowledge base to more complex understanding to the application of knowledge in professional practice (NAEYC, 2009). *The NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals* provides the basis for professional standards for teachers in NJ.

QRIS: Refer to Grown NJ Kids

Readiness: Being ready to learn; possessing the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for learning and for success in school.

Reflective Practice: Professionals employ a reflective practice cycle to improve their work: they think about what and how they will teach before they teach, think about their teaching as they teach, and think about what and how they taught after they teach.

Scaffolding: Assistance or support of some kind from a teacher, parent, caregiver, or peer to help children complete tasks they cannot complete independently. Introducing new learning built on skills already acquired.

Sensory Integration: More than one sense working together to understand a message and to translate the message into appropriate action.

Standards: Statements of what pre K-12 students should know and be able to do.

Supervising: The process of monitoring and regulating activities, responsibilities and tasks of employees or volunteers that provide services to children and families.

Technical Assistance: The provision of targeted and customized supports by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients. A key component of technical assistance is a reflective practice that helps professionals to translate the theories and information learned through education and/or training into best practices. Technical assistance uses relationship-based methodology with a combination of information and resource dissemination, referrals, coaching, mentoring, consultation, and professional development advising, peer-to-peer, as well as other forms of supports.

Temperament: The individual's psychological make-up or personality traits. A child's emotional reaction within his/her environment and or relationships.

Theory: A statement of principles and ideas which attempt to explain events and how things happen.

Training: A learning experience, or series of experiences, specific to an area of inquiry and a related set of skills or dispositions, delivered by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills. A planned sequence of training sessions comprises a training program. This can occur one time or in a series through various delivery systems such as face-to-face, distance learning, technology-based, or a hybrid combining these methods.

Universal Design for learning: A set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn. UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone—not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs.

Attachment: An emotional bond that occurs between two people and is essential to healthy relationship building. The work of John Bowlby suggests that this bonding begins at birth and is well under way by about 6 months of age. Establishing at least one significant attachment bond during the first two years of life is considered critical to healthy social and emotional development.

Behavior Guidance: A process by which teachers help all children learn to control and direct their behavior and become independent and self-reliant.

Cognitive Theory: Jean Piaget’s proposition that children develop intelligence through direct experiences with the physical world. In this sense, learning is an internal (mental) process involving children’s adapting new knowledge to what they already know.

Concrete Operations: The third stage of operational or logical thought, often referred to as the “hands-on” period of cognitive development because the ability to reason is based on tangible objects and real experiences.

Constructive Process: The continuous mental process of restructuring cognitive schemes or mental images as a result of development and experience, which results in cognitive growth.

Curriculum Alignment: The process of matching curriculum to standards and to tests that measure student achievement.

Developmental Screening: A short assessment administered by a trained adult to identify children who may have a disability or learning problem.

Expressive Language: A preschooler’s developing ability to speak fluently and particularly with teacher and peers the ability to express oneself in the language of the school, and ability to communicate needs and ideas.

Learning Centers: Areas of the classroom specifically set up to promote student-centered, hands-on, active learning. Learning centers are built and organized around student interests, themes, and academic subjects. Teachers plan for how children will use the centers, the materials the centers will contain, and the learning outcomes for each center.

Multicultural Awareness: Appreciation for and understanding of people’s culture, socioeconomic status, and gender. Multicultural education refers to the “sharing of cultures” to assist children with recognizing differences, as well as similarities among people. Allowing children to explore varying cultures creating opportunities for them to see that even when people have different customs and traditions, they often share some common traits, too. The early childhood programs that are culturally sensitive will build the self-confidence of its children by integrating the cultures of all the children into learning experiences (ChildCare Education Institute, 2008).

Multicultural Infusion: Permeating the curriculum with multicultural education to influence the way young children and teachers think about diversity issues.

Multiple Intelligences: Howard Gardner’s concept that people are “smart” in many ways: those intelligences include linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, and existentialist.

Philosophy of Education: Set of beliefs about how children develop and learn and what and how they should be taught.

Pre-Service Training: Professional development in which an individual engages prior to beginning a position. Pre-service training may be required for early childhood professionals to serve in a role. Professionals engaged in initial training should work alongside or under the supervision of a qualified coworker until such training is completed.

Professional Career Advisement: Sometimes referred to as career or professional development counseling, professional career advising is a one-to-one process through which an advisor offers information, guidance, and advice to an individual about professional growth, career options, and pathways to obtain or meet required qualifications.

Progressive Movement: An education effort often attributed to John Dewey which began in the 1920s and questioned the traditional methods and content of American schooling. Progressive education emphasized active learning and the importance of social interactions and learning.

Prompt: Help given to assist a child in engaging in specific skills. Prompts can be verbal, gestural, modeled, or physical assistance.

Receptive Language: Skills that toddlers and preschoolers develop in the area of attending to and comprehending speech, such as listening to the teacher and following directions.

School-Based Child Care: Child care provided in the public and private school settings. These programs are housed primarily in elementary schools, but some high schools have a child care option for teen parents.

Social Constructive Approach: A theory that says children construct or build their behavior as a result of learning from experience and from making decisions that lead to responsible behavior.

Standardized Tests: Carefully developed exams created by professional designers in an attempt to accurately measure a child’s performance compared to other children or in relation to some standard or objective.

Toddlerhood: The period of a child’s life between one and three years of age.

Zone of Proximal Development: A concept developed by Lev Vygotsky. It can be defined as the gap between the child’s independent performance of a task and that which he can perform with the help of a more skilled peer or adult. Children who are functioning in their zone are being challenged and growing with the assistance of others at a maximum rate.

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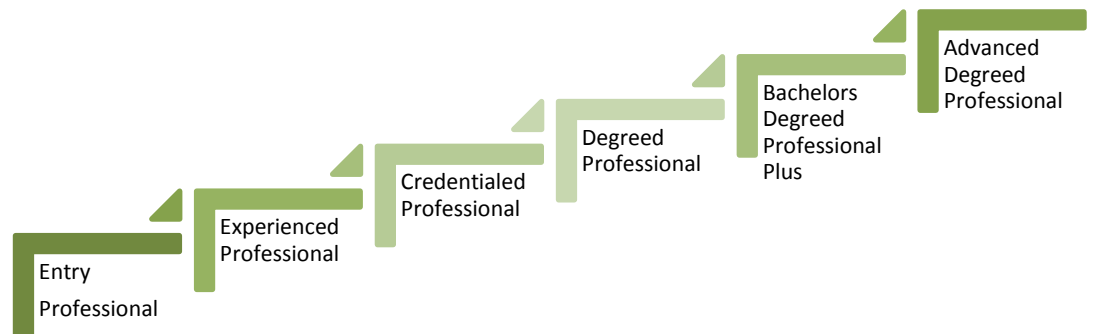
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NJ Registry Career Lattice Levels and Requirements 2014

A Career Lattice for Members of the Early Childhood Workforce

(as of 12/10/14)



Membership Renewal

NJ Registry members will renew membership **every three years** as follows:

- Instructional Staff (including Directors, Head Teachers, Group Teachers, and PINJ-Approved Instructors): 60 hours (20 hours per year for directors and teaching staff in programs licensed by NJ Office of Licensing)
- Assistant Teachers and Non-Instructional Staff: 30 hours (10 hours per year for assistant teachers in programs licensed by NJ Office of Licensing)
- NJ Registered Family Child Care Providers (must submit copy of registration certificate): 20 hours (6-7 hours per year recommended)

Advanced Degreed Professional

Early Childhood or related Masters, EdD or PhD

Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus

License/Endorsement related to Early Childhood Bachelors **PLUS**: P-3, Nursery, N-K, K-5, K-6, Elementary School Teacher (with transcript verification), or K-8 DOE Teacher Certification; Social Work; **OR** proposed NJ Infant Mental Health Endorsement

Degreed Professional

Associates or Bachelors in Early Childhood, Child Development, Human Services or related fields; **OR** NJ OOL Director approval letter/certificate; **OR** NJOOL Head Teacher approval; **OR** NJ OOL Group Teacher approval with child-related Associates or Bachelors degree; **OR** Associates or Bachelors degree plus NJ Infant/Toddler Credential or NJ Administrators' Credential; **OR** Bachelors degree with Healthy Families/Parents as Teachers/Nurse-Family Partnership home visitor 30-hour certificate; **OR** Bachelors degree with Clinical Social Work (CSW) Credential (National Association of Social Workers)

Credentialed Professional

CDA; CCP; NJ Infant/Toddler Credential; NJ Administrators' Credential; NJ Family Development Credential; US DOL Child Development Specialist; NJ OOL Group Teacher approval; Healthy Families (PCA America)/Parents as Teachers (Parents as Teachers National Center)/Nurse-Family Partnership (Nurse-Family Partnership National Service Office) home visitor 30-hour certificate

Experienced Professional

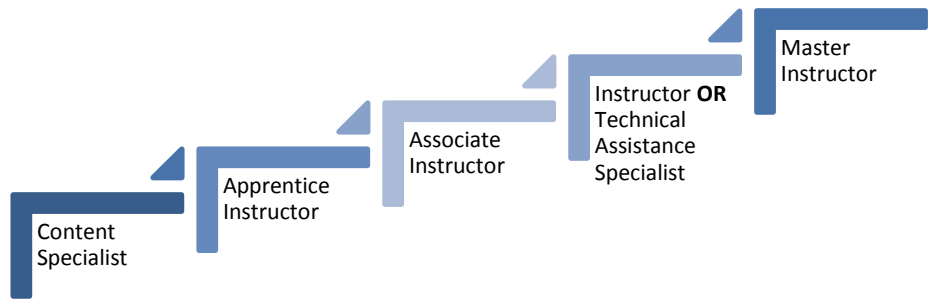
Forty-eight (48) hours of professional development taken in the last three (3) years, composed of six (6) hours of professional development in at least eight (8) of ten (10) NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals Areas/Sub-Areas: Family and Community Relationships; Child Growth and Development; Environment; Child Assessment; Curriculum; Interactions and Approaches; Diversity; Health, Safety, Nutrition and Physical Activities; Developing as a Professional; and Early Childhood Leadership; **AND** three (3) years of experience in a regulated program or setting in the early childhood/afterschool field

Entry Professional

Vocational School, High School, Non-Credit Training, College Credit Non-Degreed, Unrelated Degree

Developed by the Professional Impact NJ Clearinghouse Committee and the NJ Council for Young Children Workforce Committee
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**NJ Registry Professional
Development Provider
Approval System 2014**
(as of 10/20/14)



Renewal Requirements

Apprentice Instructors, Associate Instructors, Instructors, and Master Instructors will renew membership every three (3) years as per the NJ Registry Career Lattice: Sixty (60) hours completed in the last three (3) years, **with at least 20 of the 60 renewal hours in Developing as a Professional OR Early Childhood Leadership**

Master Instructor

- Must be at the Advanced Degreed Professional Level on the NJ Registry for Childhood Professionals Career Lattice
- Completion of six hours in the past three years of Professional Impact NJ approved train-the-trainer instruction covering leadership, mentoring, coaching, adult learning, and reflective practice
- A minimum of three years full-time work experience directly with children in a regulated early childhood setting **AND** with adults as a learning partner, coach, or technical assistance specialist at an educational institution
- Demonstration of 100 clock hours within the past three years responsible for the professional development of other adults, verified by a letter from the applicant’s director/supervisor, letter from client, copy of evaluation forms, **OR** agenda, **OR** a conference brochure **OR** training advertisement listing the applicant as the instructor

Instructor

- Degreed Professional (Bachelors Degree) **OR** Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus License/Endorsement Related to Early Childhood Level on the NJ Registry Career Lattice
- Completion of ten hours in the past three years of Professional Impact NJ approved train-the-trainer instruction covering leadership, mentoring, coaching, adult learning, and reflective practice
- A minimum of three years full-time work experience directly with children in a regulated early childhood setting **AND** with adults as a learning facilitator
- Demonstration of 60 clock hours within the past three years responsible for the professional development of other adults, verified by a letter from the applicant’s director/supervisor, letter from client, copy of evaluation forms, **OR** agenda, **OR** a conference brochure **OR** training advertisement listing the applicant as the instructor

Technical Assistance Specialist

- Degreed Professional (Bachelors Degree) **OR** Bachelors Degreed Professional Plus License/Endorsement Related to Early Childhood Level on the NJ Registry Career Lattice
- Completion of ten hours in the past three years of Professional Impact NJ approved train-the-trainer instruction covering leadership, mentoring, coaching, adult learning, and reflective practice **(1)**
- A minimum of three years full-time professional work experience directly with children and/or families in a regulated early childhood setting **AND** with adults as a learning facilitator
- Demonstration of 60 clock hours within the past three years responsible for the professional development of other adults, verified by a letter from the applicant’s director/supervisor, letter from client, copy of evaluation forms, **OR** agenda, **OR** a conference brochure **OR** training advertisement listing the applicant as the instructor
- Completion of PINJ approved six-hour Technical Assistance Specialist Training within six (6) months of hire in NJ as a Technical Assistance Specialist with follow-up activities (which will also count toward renewal requirements)

Associate Instructor

- Must be at the Degreed Professional (Associates Degree) Level on the NJ Registry for Childhood Professionals Career Lattice
- Completion of fifteen hours in the past three years of Professional Impact NJ approved train-the-trainer instruction covering leadership, mentoring, coaching, adult learning, and reflective practice
- A minimum of three years full-time work experience directly with children in a regulated early childhood setting **AND** working with adults as a learning facilitator
- Demonstration of 45 clock hours within the past three years responsible for the professional development of other adults, verified by a letter from the applicant's director/supervisor, letter from client, copy of evaluation forms, **OR** agenda, **OR** a conference brochure **OR** training advertisement listing the applicant as the instructor

Apprentice Instructor

- Must be at the Credentialed Professional Level on the NJ Registry for Childhood Professionals Career Lattice
- Completion of twenty hours in the past three years of Professional Impact NJ approved train-the-trainer instruction covering leadership, mentoring, coaching, adult learning, and reflective practice
- A minimum of two years full-time work experience directly with children in a regulated early childhood setting **AND** working with adults under the supervision of a mentor/coach
- Demonstration of 21 clock hours within the past three years responsible for the professional development of other adults, verified by a letter from the applicant's director/supervisor, letter from client, copy of evaluation forms, **OR** agenda, **OR** a conference brochure **OR** training advertisement listing the applicant as the instructor

Content Specialist

Content Specialist Requirements

- An approved specialist in his/her field (excluding the Early Childhood or School-Age field) who provides instruction in a NJ Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals area related to the individual's area of specialization
- Verification of area of specialization is required, and can include an official college transcript **OR** a copy of professional certificate or credential

- (1) Individuals hired as Grow NJ Kids Quality Improvement Specialists in 2013-2014 may complete the required ten hours of Professional Impact NJ approved train-the-trainers instruction covering leadership, mentoring, coaching, adult learning, and reflective practice **within the first year of hire.**

/ a collaborative project between. /

PINJ

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Championing the early childhood workforce

