

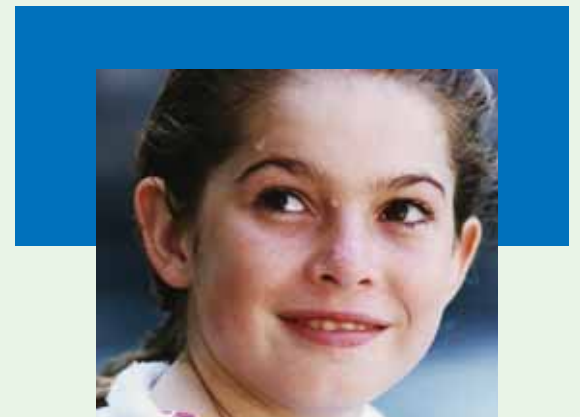


Minnesota School Age Core Competencies

First Edition, February 2006



for School-Age and Youth
Care Practitioners
who work with children
ages 5 through 12 and
their families



Welcome!

Welcome to the first edition of the Core Competencies for School-Age and Youth Care Practitioners in Minnesota. They are the result of years of extensive work of many dedicated individuals from across the field of school-age care in this and other states. The core competencies are divided into eight content areas. Each of the eight areas contains five levels that range from the skills and knowledge of a beginning practitioner to the more advanced skills and knowledge possessed by a professional with a master's degree.

The core competencies are designed to serve as a guide for improving your work with children, youth, and families. They are designed to be used by practitioners working in a variety of settings with school-age children and youth. These settings may be school-based, community-based, faith-based, center-based, or family care.

The competencies are worded so they can be measured or demonstrated. You may also find the core competencies contain new ideas or provide a new way of reflecting on your work. This publication is designed to be a practical and living document, and we hope you will enjoy using it. We also hope you will contribute to the ongoing refinement of core competencies for school-age and youth care practitioners in our state. In this way you will be ultimately contributing to the healthy growth and development of children and youth throughout Minnesota.

Acknowledgements:

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We would like to acknowledge Nancy Dougherty for her work on compiling this document.

Karen Kurz-Riemer is the Editor.

Sources:

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To download a copy of **Minnesota Core Competencies for School-Age and Youth Care Practitioners**, go to the Minnesota Professional Development Council webpage at www.mnpdcouncil.org



Reasons why core competencies are critical to the school age and youth care field

- ▲ Core competencies define what practitioners need to know and be able to do to provide quality education and care.
- ▲ Core competencies serve as the foundation for decisions and practices carried out by practitioners in all school-age and youth care settings and programs.
- ▲ Core competencies provide guidelines for education and training programs in meeting the needs of practitioners in the field.
- ▲ Core competencies serve as a means for incorporating new research findings and knowledge into practice in school-age and youth care settings.
- ▲ Core competencies establish standards for school-age and youth care that promote recognition of the significance and professional nature of this field.

Different ways core competencies may be used

Providers, Practitioners, Teachers

- ▲ Self-assess level of knowledge and skill in each of the eight content areas
- ▲ Self-identify specific areas for future professional development (e.g., education, training)

Directors, Program Administrators

- ▲ Create job descriptions and performance review instruments
- ▲ Specify education and training requirements for staff positions
- ▲ Develop staff education and training plans and policies
- ▲ Establish a salary scale based on levels of competency achieved by employees

Trainers, Training Organizations

- ▲ Plan and organize training and education to meet specific and consistent competencies
- ▲ Promote training and education opportunities that meet specific and consistent competencies

Higher Education Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

- ▲ Coordinate and design course content to facilitate transfer and articulation agreements
- ▲ Assess current program content to determine course development and modification

Introduction



Federal, State, and Local Agencies

- ▲ Develop and implement policies that will enhance professionalism in the field
- ▲ Link core competencies to efforts to support the success of each child in school
- ▲ Use core competencies as one tool to assess the quality of the school-age and youth care system
- ▲ Promote use of core competencies across programs, agencies, and higher education institutions

Professional Development Efforts (e.g., Minnesota Professional Development Council)

- Create the framework for a career development system that
- ▲ enables practitioners to plan and implement career development in school-age and youth care
 - ▲ provides access to competency-based education and training
 - ▲ strengthens professionalism and quality of school-age and youth care
 - ▲ promotes compensation commensurate with education and training

Introduction

Core Content Areas

The areas of competency address the development and learning of the "whole" practitioner and correspond with traditional curricular areas in school-age and youth care. Each content area describes the knowledge and skills practitioners need in order to work with children and youth ages 5 through 12 and their families. The core competencies are applicable in a wide variety of settings and programs, including center-based, faith-based, family care, school-based, and youth enrichment. The core competencies recognize the primary and central role of families in the growth and development of children and the strong influence of culture on all areas of practice in school-age and youth care.

- I. Child and Youth Growth and Development:** understand how children and youth acquire language and develop physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially
- II. Learning Environment and Curriculum:** establish an environment that provides learning experiences to meet each participant's needs, capabilities, and interests
- III. Assessment and Planning for Individual Needs:** observe and assess what children and youth know and can do in order to provide curriculum and instruction that addresses their developmental and learning needs
- IV. Interactions with Children and Youth:** establish supportive relationships with children and youth and guide them as individuals and as part of a group
- V. Families and Communities:** work collaboratively with families and agencies/organizations to meet participants' needs and to encourage the community's involvement with programming for school-age children and youth
- VI. Health, Safety, and Nutrition:** establish and maintain an environment that ensures the health, safety, and nourishment of participating children and youth
- VII. Program Planning and Evaluation:** establish, implement, evaluate, and enhance operation of a school-age or youth care program
- VIII. Professional Development and Leadership:** serve children and families in a professional manner and participate in the community as a representative of school-age and youth care

Levels of Competency

The levels of competency establish a continuum from the preliminary skills necessary to enter the field to an advanced level of academic preparation and varied experience.

Practitioners progress from one level to another through a combination of formal study and reflection on practice. Depending on the practitioner's role, setting, or experience, she or he may have skills at varying levels in the different core content areas.

The five levels are intended to be cumulative. For example, a practitioner working at Level 3 has knowledge and skills to meet the competencies at Levels 1, 2, and 3. At all levels, adults who care for school-age children and youth continue their participation in professional development activities and advance their knowledge and skills within each of the core content areas.

Level 1 Includes the knowledge and skills expected of a practitioner new to the school age education and care field, with minimal specialized training or education.

Level 2 Includes the knowledge and skills of Level 1 plus knowledge and skills commensurate with a Child Development Associate credential, a certificate or diploma in child development, or equivalent training, education, and relevant experience.

Level 3 Includes the knowledge and skills of Levels 1 and 2 plus knowledge and skills commensurate with an associate's degree in child development, or equivalent training, education, and relevant experience.

Level 4 Includes the knowledge and skills of Levels 1, 2, and 3 plus knowledge and skills commensurate with a bachelor's degree in child development or a related field and experience working with school aged children.

Level 5 Includes the knowledge and skills of Levels 1, 2, 3, and 4 plus knowledge and skills commensurate with an advanced degree in child development or a related field and extensive experience working with school aged children.





Level 1

- a. Recognizes that children and youth learn through their experiences, relationships, social interactions, and play/activities.
- b. Recognizes individual personalities and temperaments of children and youth.
- c. Understands that culture and language affect the behavior, development, and group interactions of children and youth.
- d. Acknowledges special needs variations and the effects those variations may have on behavior, development, and group interactions.
- e. Addresses the individual needs of children and youth.
- f. Understands the need of each child or youth to feel accepted in the group.
- g. Encourages feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children, youth, and adults.

Level 2

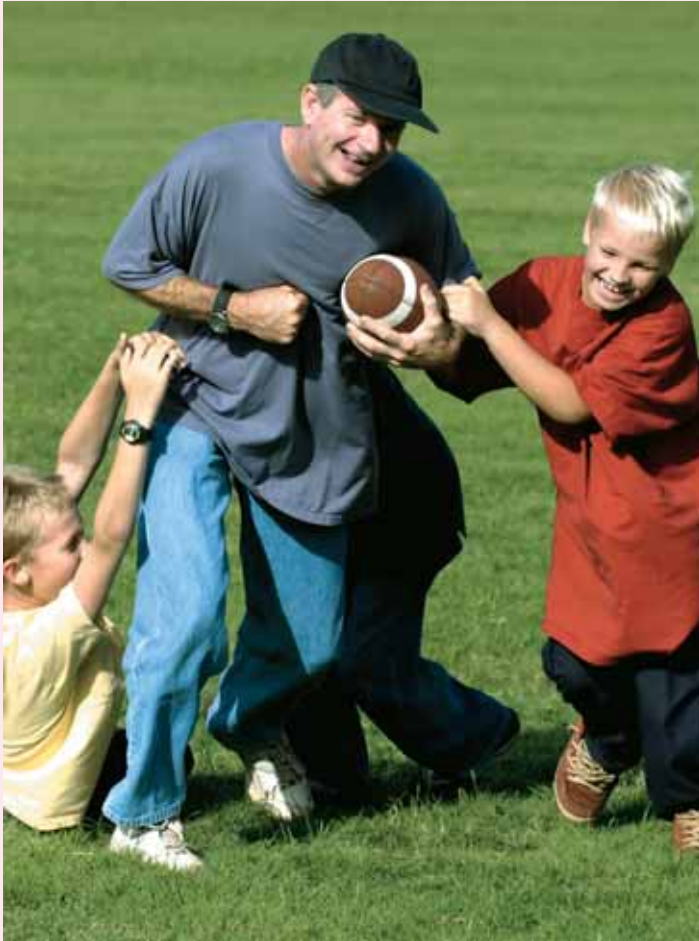
- a. Identifies basic physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language developmental stages of children and youth.

- b. Recognizes individual personalities and variations in development of children and youth and their effects on the needs of program participants.
- c. Matches activities and delivery strategies to meet the variable needs of children and youth.
- d. Encourages problem solving and positive decision-making strategies through activities that promote exploration, experimentation, and creativity without 'right' answers or standardized products.
- e. Teaches process as a method of passing on skills or to ensure children understand the principles of basic design or construction.
- f. Recognizes variations in ability and development that may indicate a need for special attention.

Level 3

- a. Realizes that culture and family have a critical impact on the positive development of children and youth, who are best understood in the contexts of their family, culture, and community.
- b. Uses a variety of strategies, activities, and experiences to promote physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development.
- c. Provides activities, experiences and delivery strategies inclusive of children and youth with variations in learning styles, cultural perspectives, ability, and special needs.
- d. Promotes an emotionally secure environment by demonstrating understanding of protective factors, resilience, mental health, and the importance of supportive relationships with adults and peers.
- e. Demonstrates understanding of the developmental consequences of stress and trauma.





Level 5

- a. Examines, describes and integrates theories of development and their implications for professional practice.
- b. Applies knowledge of cultural and linguistic diversity and the significance of socio-cultural and political contexts for development, learning, and social/group interactions.
- c. Understands and articulates a systems perspective on issues of mental health, the effects of stress and trauma on development, and child and youth support and protection.
- d. Analyzes current research from diverse cultural perspectives and suggests additional topics to researchers as needed.
- e. Is aware of current and future trends in education and the larger society and the implications for child and youth development.
- f. Demonstrates knowledge of major historical and current child and adolescent theories and their effects on school-age and youth care.

Level 4

- a. Understands and applies information about effective practices, issues, and research relevant to child and youth growth and development.
- b. Explains how developmental variations, family culture, language, and environment influence the growth and development of children and youth.
- c. Describes individual children and youth relative to developmental characteristics typical of their developmental age and stage.
- d. Understands and describes various personalities, learning styles, and needs of children and youth.
- e. Identifies and uses appropriate resources and services for children, youth, and families with risk factors, delays, or disabilities.
- f. Shares information with families about general principles of child and adolescent growth and development.



Learning Environment and Curriculum

Content Area II:

A. Creating the Learning Environment and General Curriculum

Level 1

- a. Follows a daily routine.
- b. Gives children and youth choices.
- c. Supports and encourages the participation of children and youth in a variety of activities, experiences, and social interactions.
- d. Actively participates with children and youth in a variety of activities.
- e. Provides a safe environment through active supervision of children and youth, materials, and equipment.

Level 2

- a. Maintains and monitors a predictable but flexible daily routine that allows children and youth to move smoothly from one activity to another, and that provides time for children and youth to make choices and socialize.
- b. As needed, can utilize a variety of space options-shared, dedicated, portable, and combinations of same.
- c. Identifies indoor activities and outdoor space needs for children and youth.
- d. Creates an interesting and varied environment with open-ended materials, activities, and opportunities that encourage children and youth to experiment and make discoveries.
- e. Incorporates a variety of cultures into the environment and curriculum.
- f. Invites children and youth to share their culture with others.
- g. Shares general progress and achievements of children and youth with families in a culturally appropriate manner.

Level 3

- a. Understands the different aspects of the environment - physical, organizational, instructional, and social - and how each aspect supports the others.
- b. Uses physical space, materials, relationships, activities, and routines to provide a learning environment that encourages play, exploration, and learning.
- c. Provides a learning environment that encourages responsibility, creativity, self-discipline, social interactions, citizenship, leadership development, and a sense of belonging.

- d. Uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage the development of critical thinking, problem solving, life skills development, and competence with children and youth.
- e. Selects materials and activities that are appropriate to the developmental stages of individual children and youth.
- f. Ensures that materials and activities are readily available to children and youth with a wide range of skills, abilities, interests, temperaments, and personal needs.
- g. Provides sufficient time in the schedule for a balance of physical activity, creative arts, free choice, relaxation and quiet activities, long-term projects, and especially for older children and youth, clubs and/or opportunities to pursue special interests.
- h. Provides knowledge and skill in appropriate usage of technology and media with children and youth.
- i. Designs and offers developmentally appropriate learning opportunities and environments that reflect a wide variety of cultures and family constellations, including those represented in the surrounding community.
- j. Asks for assistance from participating children and youth to plan activities that reflect and build upon new and previous interests.

Level 4

- a. Designs, creates, and maintains a predictable, yet flexible environment that reflects the cultures, backgrounds and experiences the children, youth, families, and staff bring to the setting.



- b. Provides activities, experiences, and materials appropriate to the developmental stages of all children and youth served.
- c. Provides choices and activities through integrated curriculum that includes opportunities for literacy, language arts, math, science, social studies, health, safety, nutrition, art, music, drama, recreation, and physical activities.
- d. Encourages children and youth to plan, research, carry out, and reflect on their own activities and learning experiences.
- e. Uses appropriate assistive technology for children and youth with disabilities.
- f. Uses and explains the rationale for developmentally appropriate teaching strategies that include play, small group projects, open-ended questioning, group discussion, problem solving, cooperative learning, and inquiry experiences.
- g. Understands and applies the major theories of teaching and learning and uses a variety of teaching strategies to correspond to multiple learning styles and linguistic abilities.
- h. Understands and implements principles for the design of programming and activities that support the developmental characteristics and needs of children and youth.
- i. Demonstrates knowledge of the inter-relatedness of the physical, language and literacy, cognitive, personal/social, and creative development of children and youth.
- j. Works collaboratively with community resources and agencies to communicate information on services for children and youth.

Level 5

- a. Plans, evaluates, and modifies curriculum to encourage problem solving, positive decision-making, and active learning for children and youth.
- b. Teaches others how to design curriculum/programming if applicable.
- c. Develops strategies that support the roles of communities, families and children when planning curriculum.
- d. Analyzes and applies current theory and research from various cultural perspectives on promoting the learning of children and youth.
- e. Recognizes and articulates the roles of family, peers, and the community as primary sources of learning.

B. Promoting Physical Development

Level 1

- a. Actively participates in children and youth's activities.
- b. Interacts appropriately with children and youth during physical activities.

Level 2

- a. Demonstrates knowledge of the stages of physical development for children and youth.
- b. Understands the role of informal, creative, large motor play.
- c. Provides space and equipment for formal and informal large motor activities.
- d. Understands the importance of non-competitive and competitive sports and games that support the development of children and youth of all abilities and ages.
- e. Adapts activities and equipment for children and youth with varying abilities and special needs.
- f. Provides activities that stimulate all the senses (i.e., sight, hearing, touch, smell, taste).

Level 3

- a. Promotes healthy living strategies by providing culturally appropriate activities for children and youth, including nutrition, hygiene, gender, developmental differences, and environmental education.
- b. Uses a variety of equipment, activities, and opportunities that require a broad range of physical skills and engage children and youth with varying interests and abilities.
- c. Plans indoor and outdoor activities for both large and small motor skills.
- d. Understands and implements frequent opportunities for movement and physical exercise as a way to reduce or prevent many of the health and behavioral issues of children and youth.
- e. Understands the role of small motor development in academic success.



Learning Environment and Curriculum

Content Area II:

Level 4

- a. Plans activities that integrate physical development with the arts and all curriculum areas.
- b. Works with families and communities to encourage and reinforce parent-child/youth activities that involve physical activity and movement, both indoors and outdoors, and in natural settings and parks when possible.
- c. Recognizes individual and cultural variations in norms of physical development for children and youth.
- d. As needed and cooperatively with parents and/or guardians, refers children and youth who may need extra support and skill development to a pediatrician, speech and language therapist, physical or occupational therapist, or other specialist.

Level 5

- a. Explains how physical development and other areas of development interrelate.
- b. Uses knowledge of kinesthetic learning styles when teaching others.
- c. If applicable, designs staff development and family education activities on teaching children to use media (e.g., computers, CDs, videos, DVDs, computer games, etc.) wisely so as not to impede their healthy physical development.

C. Promoting Language Development and Literacy

Level 1

- a. Encourages children and youth to explore their environment through activities related to literacy, math, science, geography, history, etc.
- b. Provides opportunities for conversation and language development that include support for English Language Learners.
- c. Supports children and youth in creative activities and problem solving.
- d. Reads books with children and youth (a section at a time with chapter books) and models reading behaviors.

Level 2

- a. Demonstrates knowledge of the stages of cognitive development for children and youth.
- b. Encourages concept development specific to developmental status of children and youth.

- c. Asks children and youth relevant open-ended questions and uses conversations to enrich and expand vocabulary.
- d. Provides materials such as hats and other clothing items, old telephones, stethoscopes, art supplies, and other props to act out and tell stories and help children and youth develop communication skills.
- e. Provides and supports opportunities for literacy development; e.g., books and other print materials that appeal to children and youth.
- f. Encourages opportunities for creative writing.
- g. Describes, discusses, and accepts the process as well as the product of creative activities of children and youth.
- h. Supports and understands non-verbal communication.

Level 3

- a. Plans activities that promote and support concept development specific to developmental status of children and youth.
- b. Is aware of K-12 learning standards.
- c. Promotes language development by integrating opportunities to speak, listen, read, and write into all activities in a way that supports English Language Learners.
- d. Uses a variety of music, books, stories, and games from many cultures, and in all languages used by children in the setting.
- e. Solicits and respects ideas, suggestions, and solutions from children and youth.
- f. Works with children and youth to plan, research, carry out, and reflect on their activities and learning experiences.
- g. Shows respect for creative expression through appropriate documentation and display of children and youth's work.

Level 4

- a. Provides opportunities for English language learners to identify with and use their home language.
- b. Understands and applies multiple intelligence and learning style theories in deciding which activities to provide and how to structure them.
- c. Provides activities that support K-12 learning standards.
- d. Recognizes the signs of language delays or other communication impairments and makes appropriate referrals.
- e. Works with children, youth, and families to become critical and thoughtful users of technology (i.e., television, videos, DVDs, computers, Internet, etc.).

Content Area II:

Learning Environment and Curriculum



- f. Offers ongoing information to family and community members on simple ways to expand reading and language skills at home.
- g. Encourages awareness and appreciation of the arts and creative expression from a variety of cultures.

Level 5

- a. Understands and explains current ideas about cognitive development.
- b. Develops programming that supports K-12 education standards.

D. Promoting Personal and Social Development

Level 1

- a. Engages in everyday conversation with children and youth.
- b. Treats children and youth as individuals with their own strengths and needs.
- c. Helps children feel valued as members of the group.
- d. Helps children through periods of stress, separation, and transition.
- e. Acknowledges and shares children's excitement in discoveries, exploration, and manipulation of items in the environment.
- f. Acknowledges the efforts, accomplishments, and innate gifts of each child and youth.
- g. Emphasizes cooperation in games and activities.

Level 2

- a. Provides physical and emotional security so children and youth feel safe and are safe.
- b. Understands the functions that peers/friends serve for children and youth as they learn to solve problems, communicate, and learn about social behavior.

- c. Provides daily opportunities for children and youth to develop friendships, social skills, and leadership through sharing their feelings, empathizing, helping, cooperating, negotiating, solving conflicts, and talking through interpersonal problems.
- d. Guides children and youth to make positive choices in relationships and to oppose bullying and teasing.
- e. Helps children and youth learn about, and respect all forms of diversity, including differences in ability, age, class, culture, ethnicity, family composition, gender, language, race, religion, and sexual orientation.
- f. Recognizes that periods of stress, separation, trauma, and transition may affect the personal and social development of children and youth.
- g. Provides many opportunities for cooperative play, games, and activities.

Level 3

- a. Understands the impact of the expanding social world on the behavior of the child or youth, including the changing roles of family members, siblings, and peers in social development.
- b. Ensures that each child or youth has a positive and supportive relationship with at least one adult in the program who can provide individual attention to that child or youth.
- c. Identifies each individual's social strengths and needs, including communication skills, and plans accordingly.



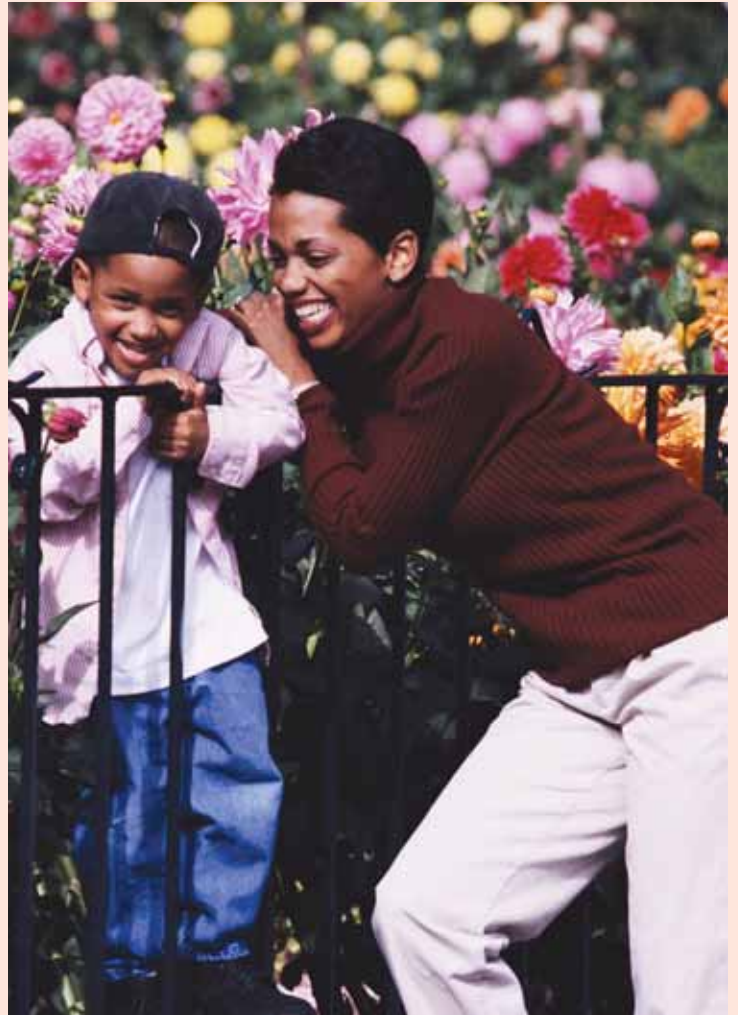
Learning Environment and Curriculum

Content Area II:

- d. Plans for the development and practice of these personal/social skills in children and youth: self-respect, group membership, communication (e.g., listening, language skills), conflict resolution, problem solving, positive values, respect for others and for diversity, and decision-making.
- e. Facilitates the development and practice of real-life skills (e.g., planning a budget for a cooking project).
- f. Provides opportunities for children and youth to develop a sense of identity, independence, interdependence, empowerment and responsibility for self and the group.
- g. Provides opportunities for children and youth to participate in their community through service learning projects.

Level 4

- a. Understands how economic conditions and the impact of trauma affect the development and social/emotional functioning of children and youth.
- b. Observes each child and youth to identify emotional strengths and needs and plans accordingly.
- c. Identifies and communicates to others specific strategies for interacting with children and youth with challenging behaviors.
- d. Designs and provides a curriculum that emphasizes and enhances development of social skills, relationships, friendships, real-life skills, citizenship and leadership development.
- e. Supports children or youth to organize service learning opportunities in their community.
- f. Recognizes atypical personal and social development and initiates appropriate referral strategies.
- g. Is aware of current peer and media influences and understands that knowledge of and engagement in pop culture may be perceived by children and youth as necessary to gain social acceptance.



Level 5

- a. Analyzes and applies current theory on attachment and promotion of social and emotional development.
- b. Helps others to develop curriculum that promotes social and emotional development and positive approaches to learning.
- c. Understands and communicates information on the moral development of children and youth.



Content Area III:

Assessment and Planning for Individual Needs

Level 1

- ❑ a. Understands that each child and youth develops at his/her own rate.
- ❑ b. Raises concerns regarding individual children or youth to supervisors.
- ❑ c. Maintains confidentiality regarding each child or youth's development/behaviors.
- ❑ d. Is aware of the signs of emotional distress, child abuse, trauma and neglect in a variety of cultural contexts, including immigrant and refugee populations.
- ❑ e. Complies with mandated reporting procedures for child abuse and neglect.

Level 2

- ❑ a. Identifies various ways to get to know each child or youth as an individual, including strengths, needs, interests, family, and life situation.
- ❑ b. Contributes to informal evaluation through observations, surveys, and conversation.
- ❑ c. Understands the importance of objectively observing and recording the behavior of children and youth.
- ❑ d. Gathers and organizes information about each child or youth, such as collecting samples of work and recording anecdotal notes.

Level 3

- ❑ a. Maintains confidentiality and privacy of children, youth, and families while keeping appropriate records of development and behavior.
- ❑ b. Works cooperatively with assessment and health care teams for children and youth with special needs or suspected developmental delays or disabilities.
- ❑ c. Evaluates activities, environment, and social interactions of each child/youth for developmental appropriateness.
- ❑ d. Uses observation strategies and techniques to learn about individual children, youth, and their families' needs, interests, preferences, and particular ways of responding to people and events.
- ❑ e. Uses observation strategies to learn how each child or youth relates to others in the program and to plan how to assist children/youth who have difficulty being accepted by their peers.



- ❑ f. Plans for and includes both verbal and non-verbal demonstrations of skills with children and youth who may be English Language Learners or have speech, language, and communication difficulties, using a variety of methods including but not limited to Braille, ASL, or assistive technology.

Level 4

- ❑ a. Objectively observes and records the patterns of development, behavior, and preferred learning styles for children and youth.
- ❑ b. Analyzes findings of observations and uses the information to plan activities and provide resources so that children and youth can pursue their interests or master a skill.
- ❑ c. Exhibits understanding of the influences of environmental factors, cultural/linguistic differences, and diverse ways of learning on assessment outcomes.
- ❑ d. Involves families in assessing and planning for individual children and youth, including children/youth with disabilities, developmental delays, or special abilities.
- ❑ e. Develops, implements, and evaluates a curriculum and environment that focuses on the developmental needs and interests of children and youth.
- ❑ f. Gathers information about and incorporates the home experiences and cultural and societal values of families, children, and youth into the curriculum.
- ❑ g. Understands and uses local process for initiating referrals for children and youth with health and developmental concerns.
- ❑ h. Integrates comments and recommendations from families about the needs and strengths of each child or youth into program plan.

Level 5

- ❑ a. Understands and applies major theories and research from a variety of cultural perspectives relevant to observation and assessment.
- ❑ b. Addresses issues relevant to observation and assessment.
- ❑ c. Establishes criteria, procedures, and documentation methods for assessing developmental progress.
- ❑ d. Establishes criteria, procedures, and documentation methods for assessing effectiveness of program or setting with individual children and youth.
- ❑ e. Understands and articulates assessment issues and strategies and communicates these to families and other professionals.

Interactions with Children

Content Area IV:

Level 1

- a. Establishes and communicates limits for acceptable behavior.
- b. Identifies feelings and appropriate ways to express feelings.
- c. Provides appropriate supervision.
- d. Understands and supports play, activities, experiences, and social interactions.
- e. Addresses behaviors or situations, rather than labeling the child or youth.
- f. Shows respect for children, youth, self, and others in all interactions and situations.
- g. Demonstrates that children and youth are appreciated, valued, and enjoyed.
- h. Builds a trusting relationship with children and youth, providing physical and emotional security.

Level 2

- a. Uses positive behavior guidance to set clear and consistent limits and consequences.
- b. Ensures that play, activities, experiences, and social interactions are safe and appropriate for the environment.
- c. Demonstrates a variety of positive guidance techniques such as positive reinforcement, encouragement, logical consequences, and modeling that are sensitive to issues of self-concept.
- d. Responds to children and youth's behavior in ways that encourage problem solving, self-regulation, group membership, and decision-making.
- e. Provides a supportive environment in which children and youth can learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as a group.
- f. Facilitates smooth transitions of individuals and groups from activity to activity.
- g. Reports positively to families about children's and youth's progress and challenges.

Level 3

- a. Understands how the environment (i.e., space, room arrangement, work climate, daily routines, and schedules) affects the behavior of children, youth, and staff and adapts the environment and curriculum to minimize potential challenging behaviors.
- b. Demonstrates realistic expectations about children's and youth's emotional needs, interests, social abilities, and physical needs.
- c. Uses strategies to assist children and youth in learning to express emotions, solve problems, and make decisions in positive ways.

- d. Encourages citizenship and leadership development in children and youth through helping them identify and develop ideas, problems, questions, and relationships.
- e. Demonstrates effective and developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) in school-age and youth care.
- f. Maintains professionalism and respect for children and youth when communicating with other adults about children's and youth's behavior.
- g. Builds relationships with families that allow for constructive communication about children and youth's behavior.

Level 4

- a. Develops and implements strategies to practice complex communication skills such as assertiveness, conflict resolution, and positive decision making.
- b. Develops cooperative skills such as negotiating, compromising, and problem solving while working in pairs or small groups.
- c. Communicates with families regarding areas of concern, developing cooperative strategies to manage problems.
- d. Relates guidance practices to knowledge of children's personalities, developmental stages, and developmental or environmental stressors.
- e. Uses the learning methods of open ended questioning, group discussion, problem solving, cooperative play, and guided and self-directed experiments to engage children and youth.
- f. Demonstrates knowledge of instructional and guidance practices for integrating children and youth with disabilities.
- g. Proactively encourages and reinforces positive adult-child/youth interactions within the family.

Level 5

- a. Develops written policies for effective child and youth guidance.
- b. Understands and describes the principles for intervention and conflict resolution in children's and youth's interactions.
- c. Recognizes and advocates family-provider partnerships to establish positive interaction patterns in program/setting, school, and home.
- d. Develops individual guidance plans, using relevant professionals, resources, and family members for support as needed.
- e. Uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- f. Analyzes, evaluates, and applies current theory and research from a variety of cultural perspectives on individual and group guidance.

Level 1

- a. Values each family as an integral partner with the program in caring for children and youth.
- b. Establishes positive communication and relationships with families.
- c. Responds appropriately to family questions, and/ or refers them to supervisor or service agency in the community.
- d. Acknowledges the varying structures, cultures, and traditions of children and youth's families.

Level 2

- a. Maintains an open and cooperative relationship with each child's and youth's family and communicates about events.
- b. Models appropriate interactions with children, youth, families, providers, and other community members.
- c. Supports the child and youth's relationship with his or her family.
- d. Respects families' choices and goals for their children and youth.
- e. Identifies and builds on each child's or youth's family/cultural values.
- f. Understands the collaborative role of facilities and providers.
- g. Recognizes different ways children and youth can feel a part of the larger community.
- h. Respects and supports cultural and linguistic differences and diverse family structures.
- i. Recognizes stress factors and trauma affecting families, including challenges faced by new refugee immigrant populations.



Level 3

- a. Invites family involvement by providing opportunities for families to share skills and talents, participate in special events and family education, volunteer at the program, be involved in program/setting evaluation and decision making, and participate on advisory councils and boards if applicable.
- b. Provides opportunities for individual conferences with families, staff or providers, school personnel and any other person who may have an important role in the child's life as the need arises.
- c. Effectively and positively communicates verbal and written information to families.
- d. Shares knowledge of general child/youth development with families.
- e. Demonstrates knowledge of and respect for variations across cultures and family structures, in terms of family expectations, values, and child-rearing practices.
- f. Demonstrates understanding of the complexity and dynamics of family systems.
- g. Exhibits understanding of the effects of family stress on the behavior of children, youth, and other family members.
- h. Works cooperatively with families on mutually agreed upon practices (e.g., homework, behavior guidance).
- i. Understands the concept of children and youth being an integral part of their community and having an impact upon the lives of many families.
- j. Demonstrates knowledge of community members who can share their special knowledge and skills with children and youth.
- k. Promotes a sense of community responsibility by providing children and youth opportunities for community involvement and community service.
- l. Recognizes and uses a variety of communication links between the school, the family, and the program or setting.





Level 4

- a. Seeks and maintains a collaborative relationship with parents, guardians, families, schools, community agencies, and other professionals to meet the needs of each child and youth.
- b. Establishes frequent contact with families through a variety of communication strategies, including information in children's/youth's home language and use of interpreters, to provide information to families about child/youth growth, development, and learning.
- c. Helps parents assess educational and parenting options.
- d. Works effectively with families from a variety of cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds.
- e. Communicates with families about strategies they can use to support the social/moral development of children and youth.
- f. Demonstrates awareness of school curriculum and knows how to link activities to local and state curriculum standards.
- g. Establishes strategies to communicate with schools regarding program support of school curriculum and state education standards.
- h. Analyzes the impact of the school-age and youth care setting on the community.
- i. Develops relationships with agencies providing community resources, provides families with resource information, and makes appropriate referrals.

Level 5

- a. Acts as advocate for children, youth, and their families.
- b. Articulates the various theories of family systems and the effect of stress and crisis on families.
- c. Plans, conducts, and evaluates activities for family support and participation.
- d. Promotes staff growth and development in communicating and relating with families.
- e. Serves as a resource to colleagues, teachers, and staff in connecting families to services in the community.
- f. Works collaboratively with agencies and community resources to meet the needs of families in the community.



Level 1

Health

- a. Practices good hygiene and appropriate hand-washing techniques.
- b. Encourages children and youth to practice habits that promote good health and nutrition.
- c. Practices proper techniques to avoid and control blood-borne pathogens.
- d. Responds to and documents any injuries of children and youth.
- e. Reports all suspected incidents of abuse or neglect to supervisor and then follows mandated reporting procedures.

Safety

- a. Is aware of the potential for hazards in the environment, corrects those that are immediately correctable, and alerts supervisor to any others.
- b. Actively supervises and interacts with children and youth to ensure safety both indoors and outdoors.
- c. Recognizes and responds to individual safety needs of child or youth in all circumstances.
- d. Releases children and youth only to authorized persons.
- e. Follows procedure for admitting and monitoring unauthorized visitors to program site.
- f. Knows how to fill out accident and illness forms.
- g. Follows safety regulations and participates in emergency and disaster drills.

Nutrition

- a. Practices safe food handling and observes general sanitation practices.
- b. Maintains sanitary environments.
- c. Recognizes health hazards (e.g., choking, allergies, etc.) in meals and snacks and takes steps to prevent dangerous situations.

Level 2

Health

- a. Monitors children and youth daily for signs of illness and possible signs of emotional distress, abuse, or neglect.
- b. Identifies, documents, and reports suspected emotional distress, abuse, and neglect of children and youth in an immediate and appropriate way.
- c. Follows procedures to avoid transmission of communicable diseases.

- d. Follows instructions for administration of medicine and approved medical treatments, including related documentation.

Safety

- a. Demonstrates knowledge of procedures that are implemented when a child or youth is missing.
- b. Describes and maintains a safe environment, including equipment, toys, and materials, to prevent and reduce injuries.
- c. Holds a current first aid certificate.
- d. Teaches simple safety precautions and rules to children and youth.
- e. Demonstrates ability to use safety equipment, e.g., fire extinguisher.
- f. Verbalizes and adheres to emergency, illness, injury, and sanitation procedures, including an emergency evacuation plan.

Nutrition

- a. Provides appropriate meals and snacks in a relaxed and social setting.
- b. Provides information on healthy foods and food groups for children and youth.
- c. Guides cooking experiences with children and youth.
- d. Adapts/adjusts meals and menus to accommodate religious values and traditions of families.

Level 3

Health

- a. Provides a consistent daily routine for rest/sleep and physical exercise as developmentally appropriate.
- b. Recognizes and responds to each child's or youth's need for physical health and emotional well-being.
- c. Models and provides direction on sanitation procedures.
- d. Demonstrates basic knowledge of health issues common to children and youth.
- e. Locates resources on health and hygiene, such as magazines, books, pamphlets, and visiting health and dental professionals, and makes them available for children and youth.
- f. Informs families when their child or youth has been exposed to communicable disease or illness.

Safety

- a. Demonstrates knowledge of a floor plan that incorporates clear pathways for children and youth to move from one area to another without disturbing other activities and includes accommodations for those with special needs.

Health, Safety, and Nutrition

Content Area VI:

- b. Demonstrates knowledge of procedures for assuring children's and youth's safety while on field trips.
- c. Analyzes and adjusts space to maximize ease of staff supervision of children and youth.
- d. Holds a current certificate in CPR.

Nutrition

- a. Understands the relationship between poor nutrition and behavioral and emotional difficulties.
- b. Plans and implements cooking experiences with children.
- c. Teaches children and youth about nutrition and healthy food choices.
- d. Includes foods from diverse cultures on a regular basis and helps children and youth to understand the cultural background of the foods they are eating.

Level 4

Health

- a. Talks with and provides culturally responsive resource information about health to families.
- b. Designs and implements curriculum activities emphasizing healthy bodies, lifestyles, and environments.
- c. Recognizes signs of emotional distress, physical illness, and child abuse or neglect and acts appropriately to the situation; e.g., initiates discussions with families, refers to appropriate professionals, and/or reports to designated authorities.

Safety

- a. Plans and implements safe field trips.
- b. Designs and facilitates indoor and outdoor learning environments to promote each child's physical and emotional well being.
- c. Designs and implements effective and developmentally appropriate strategies for educating children and youth about safety hazards; e.g., substance abuse, sexual behavior, sexual abuse and exploitation, violence, and mental illness.
- d. Keeps informed about and shares safety information and resources with families and, as applicable, other staff members.
- e. Demonstrates and informs others about emergency, illness, and injury procedures.



Nutrition

- a. Recognizes and responds to each child's and youth's nutritional needs.
- b. Plans and evaluates menus to meet proper nutritional guidelines.
- c. Bases educational activities on nutritional information responsive to multiple cultures.
- d. Provides opportunities and reinforcement for children's and youth's practice of healthy nutritional choices.
- e. Involves children and youth in making food choices.

Level 5

Health

- a. Provides an environment that is physically and psychologically healthy for children, youth, families, and staff.
- b. Designs, documents, and informs others of emergency, illness, injury, and sanitation procedures.
- c. Establishes procedures for documentation and notification of suspected abuse and neglect.
- d. Works with health care professionals in community to ensure that the needs of children and youth are met.
- e. Has current knowledge of the correlation between health issues and socio-economic and cultural factors.

Safety

- a. Maintains appropriate levels and standards for state and federal regulations.
- b. Identifies opportunities to fund environmental safety improvements.
- c. Conducts self-assessments of facility for licensing and accreditation.

Nutrition

- a. Assesses nutritional plan and adapts practices accordingly.
- b. Has current knowledge of the correlation between health issues (e.g., eating disorders, diabetes, lowered life expectancy, etc.) and poor diet.

Content Area VII:

Program Planning and Evaluation

Due to licensing regulations and the fact that family child care providers are the owner/operators of family child care businesses, family child care providers need some skills at an earlier level than those working in child care centers. These skills are marked with an **FCC** below.

Level 1

- a. Exhibits responsible staff behavior. **FCC**: Exhibits responsible program management behavior as the owner operator of the child care.
- b. Participates as a team member in programs with more than one staff person.
- c. Keeps appropriate records.
- d. Complies with program policies and licensing/accreditation requirements. **FCC**: Ensures that program is adequately insured.
- e. Communicates and works effectively with other staff, volunteers, administrators, substitutes, and helpers.
- f. Has or is gaining functional technological skills (e.g., computer, fax machine, speaker phone, etc.)
- g. Is able to receive, give, and use constructive feedback.
- h. **FCC**: Keeps accurate records of enrollment, emergency information, participant attendance, injuries and other serious incidents.
- i. **FCC**: Develops and implements program policies and fee structure.



Level 2

- a. Supports the program mission and purpose. **FCC**: Develops the program mission.
- b. Organizes, plans, and keeps records effectively.
- c. Assists in gathering information for evaluation.
- d. Values the program's team of staff, administrators, and volunteers, and works to strengthen it.
- e. Is able to give constructive feedback to staff, second adults, substitutes, and helpers in a respectful manner.
- f. Assists in the delivery of curriculum.
- g. Provides information on supplies, materials, and equipment needs for the program. **FCC**: Orders supplies, materials, and equipment for the program.
- h. Participates in program goal setting. **FCC**: License holder sets goals. Second adults or other staff in a family child care home participate in program goal setting.

Level 3

- a. Possesses and uses functional computer skills.
- b. Participates in strategic planning and goal setting for the program. **FCC**: Does strategic planning and goal setting for the program.
- c. Recognizes the importance of evaluation and assists in evaluating the program's effectiveness.
- d. Uses both self and collaborative staff evaluations as part of on-going program evaluation.
- e. Verbalizes the relationship between the program's philosophy and daily practice.
- f. Understands and articulates agency/family child care home policies related to legal and safety issues of children, youth, and families.
- g. Assists in the development of curriculum. **FCC**: Develops the curriculum for the program.
- h. Assists in maintaining supplies, materials, and equipment. **FCC**: Conducts and maintains the inventory of supplies, materials, and equipment.
- i. Assists in developing program budget. **FCC**: Develops the program budget.



Program Planning and Evaluation

Content Area VII:

Level 4

- a. Engages children, youth, families, and staff in ongoing regular program evaluation.
- b. Plans and implements family orientation and family education programs.
- c. Demonstrates knowledge of valid and appropriate assessment and evaluation practices.
- d. Uses a variety of techniques and procedures to evaluate and modify program goals for children, youth, and their families.
- e. Develops methods to incorporate research findings regarding ethnic and gender identity into an anti-bias program.
- f. Develops and reviews curriculum to reflect the families, children, and youth served.
- g. Provides effective lines of communication among all adults involved with the program, including families.
- h. Keeps accurate records of enrollment, emergency information, participant attendance, injuries, and other serious incidents.
- i. Develops and monitors program budget.
- j. Supervises interns, practicum students, second adults, substitutes, helpers, and/or volunteers.
- k. Plans for, recruits, orients, and supervises all adults involved with the program.
- l. Encourages and supports staff in meeting professional development goals.
- m. Clearly articulates developmentally appropriate practices to colleagues, families, second adults, helpers, substitutes, and/or community members.

Level 5

- a. Sets clear policy and practices for positive family-staff relationships.
- b. Communicates effectively with board and advisory groups and other stakeholders including families, schools, fiscal agents, host agencies, and partners.



- c. Communicates effectively with community and media representatives.
- d. Applies knowledge of federal, tribal, state, and local legislation, regulations, and professional standards to provide healthy and safe practices for all children.
- e. Maintains current accreditation standards, license, and/or any required program guidelines.
- f. Develops and implements program policies and fee structure.
- g. Identifies, develops, and implements formative and summative program evaluation strategies and understands their benefits, strengths, and limitations.
- h. Designs and implements staff job descriptions and performance review forms and procedures.
- i. Plans and implements professional development opportunities for all adults involved with the program.
- j. Sets clear policy and practice for positive and mutually supportive work environment.
- k. Evaluates assessment practices and remains updated on assessment research.
- l. Advocates for developmentally appropriate assessment of children, youth, and program.
- m. Plans, maintains, and reports on budget to appropriate stakeholders, investors, and government regulatory groups. **FCC:** not applicable.
- n. Identifies and seeks additional funding opportunities as needed.
- o. Develops and maintains program marketing plan as needed.
- p. Possesses legal knowledge necessary for effective management.



Content Area VIII:

Professional Development and Leadership



Level 1

- a. Enjoys working with children and youth and models a positive attitude.
- b. Interacts in a manner reflecting respect for self and others.
- c. Exhibits good hygiene and personal appearance.
- d. Demonstrates good work habits.
- e. Consults with supervisor or resource person regarding concerns if applicable.
- f. Works cooperatively with colleague or assistants, if applicable.
- g. Is aware of professional code of ethics.
- h. Behaves ethically, maintaining confidentiality and impartiality.
- i. Shows commitment to the goals of program or setting.

Level 2

- a. Manages demands of personal and professional growth.
- b. Uses problem-solving skills as needed.
- c. Promotes value of quality in school-age and youth care programs.
- d. Demonstrates commitment to a professional code of ethics.
- e. Is aware of professional resources.
- f. Takes advantage of opportunities to improve competence.

- g. Accepts advice and constructive criticism to improve practice.
- h. Participates in one (or more) professional associations.

Level 3

- a. Demonstrates practices that support inclusion and cultural and linguistic diversity.
- b. Routinely reflects on teaching strategies and interactions and on behavior of children.
- c. Plans and implements routine tasks to maximize the amount of time spent interacting with children.
- d. Participates in professional organizations and on-going professional development to enhance knowledge and skills.
- e. Consistently adheres to professional code of ethics.
- f. Is knowledgeable of other professions providing related services for children, youth, and their families.
- g. Exhibits knowledge of child, youth, and family advocacy issues.
- h. Demonstrates knowledge of federal, tribal, state, and local regulation of programs and services for children and youth ages 5 through 12.
- i. Demonstrates awareness of own culture and begins to articulate how cultural heritage influences values, decisions, and behavior.



Professional Development and Leadership

Content Area VIII:

Level 4

- j. Seeks out professional relationships to enhance professional growth (e.g., identifies a mentor).
- k. Becomes a mentor to others, as applicable.
- a. Demonstrates critical reflection on own professional and educational practices from community, state, national, and global perspectives.
- b. Articulates and uses code of ethics for making professional decisions.
- c. Participates in group problem solving of ethical dilemmas.
- d. Understands the historical, philosophical, and social foundations of the school-age and youth care profession.
- e. Articulates personal philosophy of school-age and youth care based on knowledge of child/youth development and best practices.
- f. Evaluates current trends in child and youth development and revises practices as appropriate.
- g. If applicable, demonstrates knowledge of basic principles of administration, organization, and operation of school-age and youth care programs, including supervision of staff and volunteers.
- h. Uses professional resources to continually improve practice.
- i. Actively participates in career development.
- j. Acknowledges and assesses personal values and own cultural biases.
- k. Serves as a mentor to others working with children, youth, and families.
- l. Communicates and interacts with parents/guardians, families, colleagues, second adults, substitutes, and the community to support child and youth learning and well-being.
- m. Establishes effective working relationships with K-12 education practitioners to promote continuity in children's and youth's development and learning.



Level 5

- a. Initiates and mediates group problem solving of ethical dilemmas.
- b. Recognizes causes and symptoms of "burnout" and develops strategies to prevent it.
- c. Keeps current on research and policy relevant to child and youth development from diverse cultural perspectives and uses information to inform programming.
- d. Analyzes the foundations of the school-age and youth care profession and their impact on current practice and future trends.
- e. Understands the impact of public policy upon children, youth, families, and educational programs and advocates for supportive public policies.
- f. Designs staff development and/or training opportunities for all adults involved with the program.
- g. Ensures staff development in cultural dynamics (e.g., ethnocentrism, prejudice, cultural mistrust, white privilege).
- h. Recognizes variations in adult and child learning styles and applies knowledge to practice.
- i. Provides a work culture that encourages professional development and leadership.
- j. Serves on professional boards and committees.
- k. Advocates for excellence in programs and services for children, youth, and families.
- l. Provides strong leadership and visionary direction.



Professional Development Record

Suggestions for using this record

- ▲ Keep your Professional Development Record in a safe place at your home or place of work.
- ▲ After attending a training session, transfer the information from the training certificate you receive into your Professional Development Record. You and/or your employer should each keep a file of your training certificates. The certificates and this record may be used to document annual training clock hours.
- ▲ Share information in this record with your child care licenser during his/her visit.
- ▲ Keep track of what is in your Professional Development Record. Look at it often. During the year, plan to attend training on several different topics.

▲ When you have filled the Professional Development Record, a new Core Competency booklet may be requested from:

Minnesota Association for the Education of Young Children (MnAEYC)

1821 University Avenue West, Suite 298-S
St. Paul MN 55104

Phone: 651-646-8689 • Fax 651-646-4514

Email: professionaldevelopment@mnaeyc.org

Web: www.mnpdcouncil.org

Minnesota School Age Care Alliance

1000 Westgate Drive, Suite 252

St. Paul, MN 55114

Phone: 651-290-7478 • Fax: 651-290-2266

E-mail: mnsaca@ewald.com

Web: www.mnsaca.org

Content Area I: Child Growth and Development

Date	Training Title	Instructor/Organization	Level	Hours	Certificate
8/1	Youth Development 1	MnSACA	1	10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Content Area II: Learning Environment and Curriculum

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Professional Development Record

Record

Content Area III: Assessment and Planning for Individual Needs

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Content Area IV: Interactions with Children

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Content Area V: Families and Communities

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Professional Development Record

Content Area VI: Health, Safety, and Nutrition

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Content Area VII: Program Planning and Evaluation

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Content Area VIII: Professional Development and Leadership

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