

# Participant Guide

## Getting to Know Minnesota's Knowledge and Competency Framework: *Early Childhood Practitioner Session*

**Total number of hours: 2**

Participant Guide/handouts available for download at: <http://mncpd.org/resources>.

Knowledge and Competency Framework: Content Area

**Content Area VI**: Professionalism: Engaging in Professional Development VI.A.1

CDA Content Area: Content Area 6 Maintaining Professionalism

Parent Aware training Indicator: standard and indicator N/A

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## Learning Objectives

You can reasonably expect that, by the end of this session, actively engaged participants will be able to:

- Describe the need for Minnesota's Knowledge and Competency Framework
- Review the content and organization of the Knowledge and Competency Framework
- Determine personal and professional uses for the Knowledge and Competency Framework

## Session Outline

<b>Time</b>	<b>Section</b>	<b>Overview</b>
15 minutes	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Welcome and Introductions</li><li>• Discussion and information collection</li><li>• Who are we in the Field of Early Childhood?</li></ul>
20 minutes	IDEAL Early Childhood Professional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activity and Small Group Discussion–</li><li>• IDEAL Early Childhood Professional</li></ul>
45 minutes	Getting to Know the Knowledge and Competency Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation – Who? What Why? KCF</li><li>• Presentation and Discussion – Organization of the KCF using the participant guide</li><li>• Activity : KCF Content Areas</li><li>• Activity : Stages of Development</li></ul>
25 minutes	Using the Knowledge and Competency Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Activity--Connecting skills and practice</li><li>• Personal SMART Goals</li></ul>
15 minutes	Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discussion – Session summary</li><li>• Activity - Reflection</li></ul>
<b>2 hours total</b>		

## Notes:

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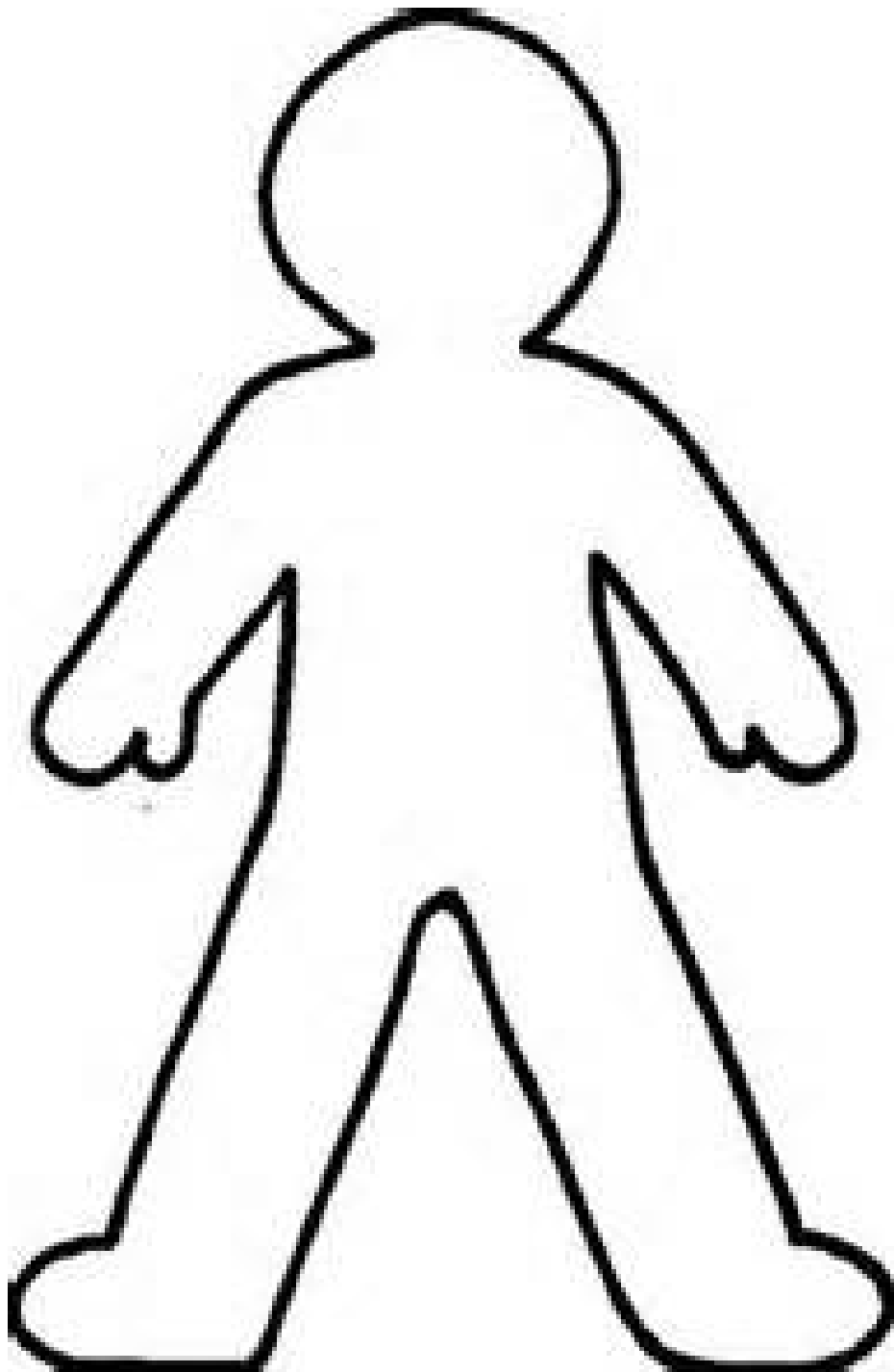
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**IDEAL** Early Childhood Professional



**Minnesota's Knowledge and Competency Framework Content Areas**

<b>I. Child Development and Learning</b>	An educator understands theories of development, research and best practices to help children acquire physical, social, emotional, language, cognitive and creative skills; understands individual differences and approaches to learning; understands the critical role of family, culture and community; and understands the interrelationships among culture, language, and thought.
<b>II. Developmentally Appropriate Learning Experiences</b>	An educator establishes and maintains safe and healthy environments, and plans and implements a variety of developmentally appropriate learning experiences that promote cognitive, social and emotional, physical, and creative growth and development.
<b>III. Relationships with Families</b>	An educator establishes and maintains positive collaborative relationships with families to meet the needs of children.
<b>IV. Assessment, Evaluation and Individualization</b>	An educator observes, records and assesses children's skills to identify strengths, needs and approaches to learning to plan appropriate activities, interactions and environments; and assesses and evaluates program quality in an effort to continually improve programming.
<b>V. Historical and Contemporary Development of Early Childhood Education</b>	An educator understands how historical and contextual influences impact current practice and the effects of current issues on children, families and programs.
<b>VI. Professionalism</b>	An educator views learning and continuous improvement as a career-long effort and responsibility; serves children and families in a professional manner; collaborates with others.
<b>VII. Health, Safety and Nutrition</b>	An educator establishes and maintains an environment and curriculum that ensures the health, safety and nourishment of every child and offers experiences that promote optimal health, safety, nutrition, physical, and social emotional development that support life-long healthy behaviors and lifestyles.
<b>VIII. Application through Clinical Experiences</b>	An educator applies effective education practices in a variety experiences and program models.

*\* Some content areas are further broken down into areas of learning. For example, the content area called Developmentally Appropriate Learning Experiences is further broken into areas of learning including: cognitive development, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development.*

## Stages of Teacher Development

Stage	Novice	Advanced Beginner	Proficient	Expert
<b>Theme</b>	Survival	Consolidation	Renewal	Maturity
<b>Question</b>	<i>Am I cut out to be a teacher?</i>	<i>How can I grow in my competence and confidence?</i>	<i>What can I do to improve with experience rather than lose effectiveness?</i>	<i>What impact have I had on the lives of children and families?</i>
<b>Metaphor</b>	<i>Barely keeping my head above water</i>	<i>Putting it all together. Finding my way.</i>	<i>Avoiding falling into a rut. Seeking new challenges</i>	<i>Really making a difference. Taking on the mentoring role for the next generation of teachers.</i>

From: Jalongo, 2012

### **Connections to Explores, Implements, Designs and Leads?**

**Think of one example, from your experience, that may have caused a shift (backward or forward) in your stage of development. Describe that experience:**

*"Teaching young children is serious work that requires high quality, dedicated, professional teachers who see the importance of what they do and are eager to increase their effectiveness, knowledge and skills." (Goble & Horm. 2010)*

Early educators who are most effective hold certain dispositions or a tendency or inclination to behave in certain ways. These dispositions are considered "soft skills" that are important to recognize and strengthen. The self assessment below is designed using the dispositions and work habits outlined in the Minnesota Knowledge and Competency Framework with indicators from additional sources in the field. The assessment can be used to help individuals see their strengths and growth areas and designate areas for self reflection and growth. Check indicators in each box to assess if this describes your behavior in each dispositional or work habit area.

### KCF Dispositions and Work Habits Self-Assessment

Disposition	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
<p><b>Is compassionate, sensitive to the needs of others and emotionally available</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistently demonstrates genuine concern for others.</li> <li>Puts children's needs above own</li> <li>Creates a positive, nurturing environment for children <i>and</i> adults (staff and parents)</li> <li>I am able to identify how I am feeling. I am able to identify how children are feeling.</li> <li>I notice when children are angry, sad, bored.</li> <li>Most people I know consider me to be perceptive about my emotional state and theirs.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Possesses a sense of humor and can be playful</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comfortable <i>truly playing</i> with children</li> <li>Joke and laugh with children, accept silliness</li> <li>Most often found engaged with children in play.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Possesses childlike curiosity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shows a commitment to and demonstrates a love of learning.</li> <li>Sends a message to others that curiosity and learning are important. Model inquisitive attitude.</li> <li>Shows excitement and engagement in learning activities (in classroom and professional development opportunities)</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Can be flexible, creative and resourceful</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responds to surprises and unexpected outcomes in ways that improve the situation for learners.</li> <li>Uses a problem solving approach</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Questions, demonstrates an interest in learning and reflects on current practices as a way to improve practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Testing out new thinking and seeking alternatives</li> <li>Posing meaningful questions that frame and reframe thinking</li> <li>Self-aware, reflective</li> <li>Evaluate own performance</li> <li>Strives to improve</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Likes children and believes in their ability to learn</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Believes that all children are capable of learning.</li> <li>Holds high expectations for all children.</li> <li>Treats children with unconditional positive regard.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Is optimistic when faced with challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accepts that there are few easy answers in teaching and persists to find appropriate solutions when challenges arise</li> <li>Solution oriented</li> <li>Positive seeking</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Collaborative</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fosters positive relationships between and among all stakeholders in the child's education</li> <li>Works in partnership with others</li> <li>Is cooperative</li> </ul>			

<p><b>Is passionate about working with young children</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genuinely enjoy being with children however messy or challenging they may be</li> <li>• Share in excitement of children's discoveries</li> <li>• Energetically and intensely involved in children's activity</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Shows respect for self and others</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand how your values and beliefs affect your practices and everyone with whom you interact</li> <li>• Treat children, families and colleagues with dignity and esteem</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Values and appreciates differences; is non-judgmental</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzes beliefs and assumptions; not just those of others, but also your own</li> <li>• Tries to see situations from multiple perspectives</li> <li>• Open and accepting of varying perspectives and diversity</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Demonstrates a high level of integrity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approaching teaching with enthusiasm, energy and dedication</li> <li>• Uses research based practices that lead to positive outcomes for children</li> <li>• Compare performance to a standard of excellence</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Is open to new ideas and concepts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Realize the more I learn about children, the more I need to know</li> <li>• Choose to be a lifelong learner</li> <li>• Learn from children each day</li> <li>• Stay up to date about new knowledge</li> <li>• Continue to grow as professionals</li> </ul>			
<b>Work Habits</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Always</b>
<p><b>Is punctual and responsible</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrives for work on time</li> <li>• Attends staff meetings</li> <li>• Takes responsibility for own actions</li> <li>• Others can count on me</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Cares for personal hygiene and dresses appropriately for the activity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wears professional and practical attire for working with children.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Expects and responds flexibly to continuous change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expects teaching to be unpredictable and challenging</li> <li>• Revises options based on information and data</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Collaborates with coworkers and works as a member of the team</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respects the individual knowledge, strengths and needs of everyone with whom you work.</li> <li>• Plan and make joint decisions with members of your teaching team</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Accepts constructive feedback and learns from mistakes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willing to admit when you may be wrong</li> <li>• Accepts responsibility for your beliefs and their consequences</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Listens and responds appropriately</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listens to others points of view and interacts in productive ways</li> <li>• Learning to listen carefully, observe thoughtfully and ask questions that promote understanding</li> </ul>			

Sources: Minnesota's Knowledge and Competency Framework, 2014.

Bredenkamp, S. (2014). *Effective practices in early childhood education*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Colker, L. (2008). *Twelve characteristics of effective early childhood teachers*, Young Children.

Jalongo, (2012) *Exploring Your Role in Early Childhood Education*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.

Kremenitzer, J. & Miller, R. (2008). *Are you a highly qualified, emotionally intelligent early childhood educator?* Young Children.

**Next, determine which dispositions are your strengths and determine areas for consideration of growth.**

**Areas of strength:**

Discuss how you demonstrate your areas of strength in your daily practice with children, families/ colleagues and how you can share this strength or knowledge with others.

**Areas of growth:**

Determine which areas you may need to grow and learn. In what ways can you improve? How will you get there? What resources might you need?

Area/s of Strength	Demonstrated by:	How I can share with others:
1.		
2.		
Area/s of Growth	Ways to Improve?	How will I get there?
1.		
2.		



<b>Ideal EC Professional Characteristic</b>	<b>Disposition or Work Habit?</b>	<b>Competency?</b>	<b>Content Area and Level</b>
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

# Personal SMART Goals

S

**SPECIFIC:** What is my goal? What do I want to achieve? Why do I want to improve in this area-- reasons, purpose? How will this help me in my role as an EC Professional?

Define:

M

**MEASURABLE:** How will I know when my goal is accomplished? What competency will I show? At what level? What actions do I need to take? How much change needs to occur? What le

Define:

A

**ATTAINABLE:** Is the goal a reasonable stretch for me (neither out of reach nor too easy)? Can I access the resources needed to achieve this goal? What is the result I am after? Who will help me? Can I break my goal down into smaller pieces?

Define:

R

**RELEVANT/REALISTIC:** Is this goal related to my work with children and families? How will it help me become a better EC Professional? Does it fit with my other goals? How? What content area in the KCF does it fit in? Can I commit to this goal? Is it meaningful to me?

Define:

T

**TIME-BOUND:** What is the deadline for reaching the goal? When do I need to take action? What can I do today?

Define:

## Reflection

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Take a few minutes to reflect on what you have learned in this session of this class. Use the spaces below to capture your ideas and plans for action.

In this session I learned...

Based on what I learned, some things I plan to do ...

This session started me thinking about...