

FIRST EDITION

Utah Core Competencies



What early care and youth education professionals should know and be able to do to provide quality care for Utah's smallest residents.

Executive Summary

The Core Competencies of Utah represent a collaborative effort between a number of early care and youth education agencies throughout the state. The competencies were written and developed in response to the need to develop a state-wide consistent base for training and other Professional and Career Development Systems. Child Care Professional Development Institute, in collaboration with the Department of Workforce Services, Office of Work and Family Life, Office of Child Care and Salt Lake Community College spearheaded this endeavor to create competencies that will serve as the foundation for all future professional development activities.

Recognizing the need to have input from all strands of early childhood and youth education throughout Utah, a number of individuals were invited to participate in a state-wide work group to develop the competencies. Members of the Core Competency Work Group represented diverse areas of the early childhood and youth education field, including child care providers/directors, family child care representatives, Head Start and Early Head Start, higher education faculty, state agency personnel, and Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies.

Utah's Core Competencies were developed using a number of research based sources and authored at the Child Care Professional Development Institute. As the Competencies were developed, they were sent to work group members via email, giving them an opportunity to examine them before each meeting. Members of the Core Competency Work Group met multiple times to discuss each initial draft and make any needed changes or additions. When the framework was completed, the competencies were sent out for public comment to numerous professionals throughout Utah. Reviewers' suggestions were considered before the final draft of the first edition of the Utah Core Competencies was published.



Utah Core Competencies are Voluntary

The competencies, skills, and steps described in this document are voluntary for those working in the early care and youth education field. The competencies serve as a guide and a tool for professional development. The use of this document is not required by the Bureau of Licensing or any other state entity. However, anyone working with young children could find this document beneficial and is encouraged to use it.

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Background

Utah's Core Knowledge and Competencies were written in response to the need to unify our professional development efforts within a common framework. As in all professions, there are skills, abilities, and qualities that individuals need to exhibit to effectively do their work, and early care and youth education is no exception. Although community based training has been well attended and our Career Ladder system accessed by hundreds of providers, a need still existed to create uniform guidelines that could be used by all providers, regardless of what type of program they work in or the length of time they have been in the field to help them grow professionally.

The Utah Core Competencies represent our effort to create a workable template developed specifically for the early care and youth professionals in our state. They are designed to be inclusive of all types of early care and youth education including: center based providers, family child care providers, Head Start and Early Head Start, pre-school teachers, higher education lab schools, school age programs, infant and toddler programs, and those who teach or mentor others in the field.

The intent of the competencies is that any individual, regardless of their background or where they are professionally can view their placement on the continuum and work toward future goals of improvement. Whether an early care or youth professional is just beginning in the field with very little experience or knowledge, is a recent graduate with an Associate's or Bachelor's Degree, is a seasoned professional with no formal higher education but years of practical experience in the field, teaches, mentors or trains others

our hope is they will find themselves somewhere on the core competencies continuum and thereby use them as a guide to improve their practices.

Definition of Utah Core Knowledge Areas and Core Competencies

Core Knowledge is the information early care and youth professionals need to know and understand to effectively work with children. Core Competencies are the observable skills related to the Core Knowledge that can be demonstrated in a practical setting. In other words, it is helpful to know information that leads to quality care for children, but the key to quality is the ability to connect that knowledge to practice and apply it while working with children.

Utah Core Knowledge and Core Competencies are Important for the Profession

Core Knowledge and Competencies are critical in any field of work, including early care and youth education. In a field that so greatly affects the outcomes of children's development, core competencies are vital in providing a template to outline standard practices for all individuals working in a variety of early care and youth education settings. They lay a foundation for and define an individual profession by providing a "blueprint" or common set of guidelines that can assist an individual in identifying needs for further training or setting goals along a continuum of personal professional growth and development. Core Knowledge and Competencies provide the framework to build a comprehensive system to support quality professional development training activities and experiences. They are fundamental in assisting those that develop curriculum and training content for future professional development needs of practitioners from all strands of early care and youth education.

Utah's Core Competencies are Important for Children

There have been huge strides made in the last 20 years in understanding the significance of the first eight years of development in human beings. We now have available to us research on brain development and early learning that we have never had before. This has increased national awareness that children are active learners and need to form strong attachments from birth to those adults that are central in their lives. We know that rich and meaningful early experiences play a crucial role in children's future learning, success, and relationships.

Research demonstrates there is a strong relationship between the amount of training and/or education a caregiver has received and the quality of experiences and environments they provide for children. This means that individuals working with children need to have not only an understanding of how to help children develop, but also have the ability to apply what they have learned. Creating positive environments, using developmentally appropriate practices and engaging in healthy interactions with children is fundamental to their ability to thrive and experience optimal growth in all developmental domains. Children and families benefit most by having a well-trained, competent work force, and the core competencies provide a pathway to assist practitioners in evaluating their current skill level within a continuum of professional development and what their next steps should be toward improving their practices with children.



How Can Core Competencies be used?

- **Providers, Practitioners, Teachers**
 - Self-assessment of knowledge and skills in each of the seven core knowledge areas.
 - Identify specific needs for future training and professional development activities.
 - Determine a course of action for goal setting and improvement in practice.
- **Directors, Program Administrators, Mentors**
 - Assist in assessing the learning needs of staff or protégés and helping them acquire appropriate training.
 - Develop and track professional development plans and activities for individual staff members.
 - Work closely with staff or protégé, to develop an individual plan to reach specific goals based on current knowledge and practice.
- **Trainers, Training Organizations**
 - Plan and organize training within the framework of the core knowledge areas and competencies.
 - Guide development of training curriculum and content for courses.
 - Determine gaps and duplication in current curriculums and plan for future revisions.
 - Help set goals and outcomes for training.
 - Encourage cross-sector involvement in training and training approval systems.
 - Promote training/education opportunities that are within the Core Knowledge/Competency framework throughout the community.
- **Higher Education**
 - Coordinate and design course content to facilitate transfer and articulation agreements.
 - Assess current program content to determine course development and modification.
 - Design pathways that lead to qualifications, degrees, and credentials.
 - Provide a framework for and develop articulation agreements.

■ 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 when beginning formal education.
- Promote use of Core Competencies across programs, agencies, and higher education institutions.

■ Professional Development Efforts

- Foundation for all components of a professional development system.
- Trainer and training approval.
- Provide access to competency-based education and training.
- Develops multiple pathways to credentialing and recognition in the field.
- Strengthens professionalism and quality of early childhood and youth education.

About Utah Core Knowledge

Utah Core Knowledge is comprised of seven core content areas. Core knowledge areas were determined after detailed research of a number of different sources. The components of the Child Development Associate Credential (CDA), information from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC), and other states' selections of core knowledge areas were examined. In addition, the content of the 11 Core classes taught through Utah's Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies were considered in the final selection of Utah's Core Knowledge areas. The Core Knowledge Areas were also written to correspond with traditional curricula in Early Childhood and Youth Education offered at Utah's colleges and higher education institutions. These seven content areas provide an overview of fundamental knowledge that all early care and youth professionals should know and understand.



These Core Knowledge Areas Are:

1. Health and Safety

All human beings have basic needs, and the environments that surround each individual must ensure their safety, health, and well-being. Providing healthy and safe environments for children provides the foundation for development and learning.

2. Child Growth and Development

Children develop universally in a predictable sequence, according to their own unique timetable, and within a distinctive cultural context. It is essential that each child's individual needs, age-level, and cultural/ethnic characteristics be considered when assessing children's rates and styles of development.

3. Child Guidance and Emotional Wellness

Children require warm, supportive relationships with adults to develop a positive self-esteem and social awareness of others. Children respond to positive guidance techniques designed to teach the child critical life skills, self-control and social competence.

4. Learning Environment and Curriculum Implementation

Developmentally appropriate environments and curricula have a positive impact on a child's emotional, physical, cognitive, communicative, creative and social development. Optimal development of children occurs in an organized, inviting, and accessible environment that has many diverse and appropriate materials, activities and experiences.

5. Observation and Assessment

All areas of a child's growth and development can be assessed with careful observation. Observing, recording, assessing and interpreting children's skills and behavior and using this information to better serve each child's individual needs and developmental level is crucial.

6. Family and Community Relationships

Recognizing the importance of the family as a child's first teacher helps to achieve positive outcomes for children. Understanding the role families and their culture play in a child's sense of self and nurturing the primary relationship between children and those that parent them is critical. Knowledge of resources available for families and providing assistance to connect families with these resources is an important component of working with families.

7. Personal and Professional Development

Adults providing early care and youth education must take advantage of opportunities to grow professionally, follow ethical standards of behavior, and demonstrate knowledge of and involvement in advocacy for early childhood learning environments.



About Utah's Core Competencies

Utah Core Competencies were written to fit within the framework of Utah's seven core knowledge areas. The areas of competency correspond with the core knowledge areas and address the development and learning of all individuals on the early care and youth education continuum. Although they are written separately, the competencies should be considered holistically. Much like children's domains of learning, the competencies are all interrelated and depend upon each other to give an accurate, complete picture of the "whole" professional.

The competencies were written with the belief that all early care and youth education professionals develop skills over time. As individuals master one skill they look forward to and develop plans for new ones as professional goals are considered. They allow practitioners the opportunity to evaluate personal progress from one step to the next through a combination of training, experience, education, self-reflection and assessment.

Each core competency area is organized in five "steps." The steps are cumulative and each step describes skills from entry level to those of a seasoned professional. This allows an individual to enter the continuum at the most applicable place and progress within their own individualized, professional development plan. The competency statements identify abilities that can be achieved as a professional develops and progresses through beginning, intermediate, and advanced skills and gains more proficiency in practices. One individual might also find themselves competent in skills in a number of steps at the same time. For example, someone may have accomplished all but 2 of the competencies in step one, but also have mastered 3 competencies in step two, and 1 in step 3.

Some of the core knowledge areas are broken down into sub-categories for comprehensive development of their corresponding competencies. For example, Child Guidance and Emotional Wellness are together in one core knowledge area, but there are separate competencies for each one.



Professionals can increase their knowledge of these areas in a number of ways including: Attending training classes or participating in higher education courses, reading materials based on current research and best practice, obtaining a mentor to assist with greater understanding and competency, experience working with children combined with self reflection and/or supervision by another person, etc.

■ **STEP ONE:** *Building Basic Knowledge and Skills;*

Competencies in step one are descriptive of individuals that are at an entry or beginning level with little experience or additional training in early care or youth education. Like so many of the providers teaching and/or caring for our children in a variety of care settings, these individuals may have awareness of the content of this level and may have begun gaining knowledge through attending training classes and practical experience, but still need much more training and experience to develop needed skills and apply them in their program.

■ **STEP TWO:** *Begins to Understand and Apply;*

Competencies at step two are inclusive of all those in step one and in addition demonstrate an individual's understanding of training concepts and the ability to begin to put into practice what is being taught in community based training or higher education classes. Additional knowledge is needed to raise the quality of care and education provided.

■ **STEP THREE:** *Knows, Explains, and Practices;*

Competencies at step three include all those in step one and two and give an accurate picture of a very competent professional. At this step knowledge is consistently connected to daily practices within a program. Individuals

demonstrating skills in step three have a solid knowledge base as well as an ability to understand and communicate ideas, theories, or concepts and can skillfully apply this knowledge when working with children. Continuing to grow professionally and gain more knowledge and expertise is still significant for an individual at step three.

■ **STEP FOUR:** *Evaluates, Models and Mentors;*

Step four includes skills on all previous steps and also reflects an individual's ability to use knowledge to evaluate programs and themselves. There is a consistent desire to seek additional knowledge and refine skills. In this step, modeling behavior related to best practices for other individuals and mentoring others to assist them in application of knowledge and competency level is an important component.

■ **STEP FIVE:** *Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, and Advocates;*

Step five includes skills on all previous steps and those of an individual that has mastered skills related to early care and youth education. This step includes creating advanced plans and implementing more complex ideas as well as having the ability to thoroughly explain concepts. Step five includes teaching and assisting others to facilitate professional growth in others. In this step, collaboration and advocacy concerning early care and youth education issues is a significant element.

Indicators Help Draw a Picture

Competencies describe major tasks or functions and the indicators tied to each one define the competency in more detail. The indicators are placed beneath the competencies and provide specific examples of what a professional can do to demonstrate their proficiency in each competency. Think of the competencies and indicators this way.....each competency is the destination on a map and the indicators are the key that give more comprehensive information to help an individual get to their destination. Indicators give simple, clear, smaller steps to achieving the goal and help create a reference point for anyone using them to know if a competency has been accomplished.

How To Read Core Competencies

Child Development

Core Knowledge Area

STEP 1:

Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

1. **Identifies basic developmental milestones of children**

Competency One

- Defines the term "milestone"
- Gives examples of milestones appropriate to the age group in which they work

Indicators For Competency One

2. **Acknowledges the wide range of development in all children**

Competency Two

- Verbalizes an understanding that children achieve milestones at their own pace

Indicators For Competency Two

3. **Recognizes that children learn through play**

Competency Three

- Gives children opportunities to play
- Gives examples of what children learn when they play

Indicators For Competency Three

4. **Demonstrates awareness that culture plays a role in children's development**

Competency Four

- Explains what the term "culture" means
- Is aware of different practices within the families of the program

Indicators For Competency Four

A Final Thought.....

The competencies were designed with the idea that a number of early care and youth education professionals could use them as a tool to improve their practices. Any time a document is created, there is a possibility that the contents can overwhelm any one and give them pause. It is not important at what step an individual begins. All of the steps are a valid starting place in which individuals can take pride in accomplishments and reach toward future goals. As people all across the state of Utah begin to receive and consider the competencies, the hope of those that developed them is that they will be viewed as a tool to assist practitioners in making little, permanent gains by reaching goals one step at a time. In other words, there is not an expectation that a person beginning at step one will be a step five in one year. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step," and that is what we encourage everyone to do.





Safety

STEP ONE:

Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

1. **Has completed infant/child CPR and First Aid Course**
2. **Maintains all areas in a safe manner at all times**
 - Keeps both the inside and outside of the program free of safety hazards (Uses licensing standards and other written information as references to keep areas safe)
 - Explains safety hazards that would be a problem
3. **Supervises and interacts with children to ensure their safety**
 - Never leaves children alone or unattended, according to applicable licensing regulations
 - Is able to see and hear children and is close enough to children to intervene if problems arise
 - Assists and is near children as they learn to use materials or equipment that may be challenging or they are engaged in for the first time
 - Is vigilant in playground supervision e.g., positions self to see all children, walks around the play area, ensures children are using equipment safely, avoids visiting with other staff, does not engage in personal tasks that would distract from supervision, checks equipment to ensure its safety, etc.
 - Follows regulations for the release of children to authorized persons

4. **Practices procedures concerning emergencies, including fire evacuation and disaster plans**
 - Knows where posted exit maps are and how to read them
 - Knows where emergency pull alarms are located
 - Explains evacuation plan and meeting place
 - Participates in monthly fire drills
 - Participates in disaster drills at least twice yearly
 - Plans and practices special methods to evacuate non-mobile infants and children and carries it out in drills
5. **Is aware of the location of safety equipment and knows how to use it**
 - Shows the location of safety equipment such as fire extinguishers, and can explain how to use such equipment
 - Knows location of crescent wrench and how to turn off the gas
6. **Takes appropriate action when children are injured, including both minor incidents and major accidents**
 - Documents all types of accidents and incidents and provides information to the parent on the day of the occurrence
 - Maintains first-aid supplies and knows basic first aid procedures appropriate for young children and infants
 - Responds immediately to children that are hurt or in distress and acts to comfort and assist the child appropriately
 - Provides for a child's needs in both minor and major accidents and incidents
 - Remains calm and in control while providing first aid or CPR for the child
 - Assesses the situation to decide if further action should be taken
 - If necessary, calls an ambulance or parent, depending on the severity of the situation
7. **Follows licensing standards for safety**
 - An emergency and disaster plan is in place
 - Parent's phone numbers and emergency numbers are easily accessible and portable
 - Knows where a copy of the licensing rules are and refers to them
 - Places infants on their backs for sleeping
 - Has completed health and safety training, including training on SIDS and Shaken Baby Syndrome if working in a program with infants
8. **Recognizes signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect**
 - Has completed training on child abuse and neglect
 - Explains signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect

9. **Knows and follows state and federal mandated Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Regulations**
 - Understands personal role as a "mandated reporter" and explains its meaning
 - Documents all injuries and concerns regarding each child
 - Keeps documentation in a child's file should any concerns arise that include the date, time and detailed information about what was observed
 - Reports abuse if there is any reason to suspect that it is occurring
 - Maintains the confidentiality of child abuse/neglect information

STEP TWO:

Beginning to Understand and Apply

1. **Maintains current infant/child CPR and First Aid Certification**
2. **Identifies potential safety hazard**
 - Follows guidelines to ensure the safety of the physical environment
 - Uses a child safety checklist to identify safety problems
 - If a problem is identified, quickly acts to remove it or have it taken care of
3. **Demonstrates knowledge of safe toys, materials, and equipment appropriate for age and developmental levels of children**
 - Describes and maintains a safe environment, including equipment and toys to prevent and reduce injuries
 - Knows and can verbally list some materials or toys that may not be age appropriate for the children they work with
 - Removes toys or equipment that become broken or present some type of safety problem
4. **Teaches children simple safety rules and practices, enforcing them consistently**
 - Teaches safe use of playground equipment and supervises children to ensure safe use of equipment
 - Talks about staying safe indoors and outdoors during group time, routines, play, and other times during the day
 - Reminds children of safety rules when needed, in a non-punitive way
5. **Regularly practices and documents emergency and safety drills such as fire, earthquake and other disaster drills**
6. **Ensures that safety equipment, such as smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are in working condition**
 - Ensures that safety equipment is in place and operable
 - Equipment is tested, serviced and tagged annually

STEP THREE:

Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices

1. **Conducts periodic safety assessments of the program and environment**
 - Completes a "safety checklist" at least monthly to detect possible problems
2. **Selects safe toys, materials, and equipment that is appropriate for the age and developmental level of individual children**
 - Checks labels and uses only toys and materials labeled non-toxic
 - Avoids toys that have sharp edges, small parts or sharp points
 - Ensures all equipment is sturdy and will not fall on children
 - Checks toy recall lists periodically and takes appropriate action
 - Selects toys that are age appropriate e.g., for children under 3 years of age there are no toys smaller than 1 ¼ inch in diameter and 2 ¼ inches long, toys with cords, strings, or straps over 12 inches long, marbles, or other small objects
3. **Organizes space into safe, functional areas, including traffic patterns that minimize accidents and injuries**
 - Avoids placing play areas or allowing children to play near doors that could open and hit them
 - Creates pathways and natural obstacles that discourage running inside
 - Sets up the room to discourage inappropriate climbing
 - Provides safe and age appropriate areas for physical activity (indoors)
 - Activities outdoors are not located in fall zone areas or in front of or behind swings
4. **Adapts the indoor and outdoor environments to maximize the safety and independence of children, including children with special needs**
 - Provides stools for young children to allow them to safely reach sinks, toilets, etc.
 - Provides shelves or storage to make materials accessible to children at their level and for children with special needs
 - Widens pathways/traffic areas to accommodate a wheelchair or a child using arm braces or crutches
 - Furniture is child sized and age appropriate or is adapted to allow a child with special needs to engage in activities, participate in regular meal times, etc.
 - Ramps are provided as needed in the outdoor area for special needs children

5. Ensures health and safety precautions are incorporated into daily routines, drills, and emergency situations

- Calmly addresses safety concerns without creating fear in the children
- Models safe behaviors
- Creates safety rules that state what is expected of children
- Uses simple explanations for why a rule is in place or what might happen in dangerous situations

6. Anticipates potential safety hazards and acts to prevent them, adjusting supervision to meet different ages, abilities, activities, and environments

- Removes broken toys or equipment and makes unsafe stationary equipment inaccessible to children, reports the problem to a supervisor or arranges to have it fixed or removed
- Assures all objects that could harm children are out of children's reach e.g., tools, poisonous plants, cleaning products, matches, pins, etc.
- If children are taken on walks or field trips, there are systems in place that assure the safety of the children e.g., staff familiarize themselves with the destination in advance to assure it is safe, there are enough adults to adequately supervise the children, measures are taken to assure children will not be separated from the group, children are told what to do if they become separated from the group, before the children leave the site safety rules are addressed, if children are transported, they are properly restrained, etc.
- Provides more supervision for mixed age groups, field trips, activities that require use of tools, during use of playground equipment, etc.

7. Implements activities that teach safety practices to children

- Uses diagrams, pictures, and words understood by children and adults to post instructions and practice procedures for fires and other emergencies, including safety procedures for children with disabilities
- Uses activities to teach children about safety e.g., reads books about topics relating to safety or shows pictures depicting both dangerous and safe situations and discusses them with children, role plays and uses puppets with preschoolers and older children to teach safety precautions

8. Ensures that state and federal mandated Child Abuse and Neglect regulations are followed

- Knows the procedure for making a report, communicates information needed to make a report, knows how to find the phone number for the hotline, and can explain this to others
- Shares knowledge of state and federal mandated Child Abuse and Neglect regulations and assures reports are made when necessary

9. Utilizes appropriate measures for supporting and caring for an abused or neglected child, including refraining from coaching the child or any other action that would compromise an investigation

- Listens to what the child says without making judgmental comments
- Stays calm and controls emotions of panic or shock
- Does not ask the child questions or force them to talk more than they want to
- Assures the child they are safe with the caregiver, reassures the child they did the right thing by telling an adult and that they are not to blame for what happened
- Writes down what the child said
- Makes a report to the appropriate agency and asks the person taking information for instructions on how to proceed
- Allows DCFS to do their job
- Maintains a trusting relationship with the family and treats them with respect

STEP FOUR:

Evaluates, Models, Mentors

1. Frequently checks and documents that both the indoor and outdoor environment, including the building and all equipment are safe and free from hazards

- Checks daily for safety problems within the program and outside and documents findings
- Acts immediately to resolve safety problems
- Removes unsafe equipment, indoors and out or makes it inaccessible to children
- Informs others working in the program of any problems

2. Uses safety assessments to make recommendations and implement changes

- Uses documentation of accidents and checklists to assist in making decisions for needed safety changes for both the indoor and outdoor environments
- Explains rationale to others concerning changes that need to be made

3. Provides information to staff and families about safety and injury prevention for children and adults

- Discusses safety information with parents and staff and provides them with resources such as poison control centers, emergency care clinics, SIDS and Shaken Baby Syndrome information, SAFE Kids Utah, etc.
- Provides training or workshops for parents and staff on relevant issues such as child guidance, Shaken Baby Syndrome, SIDS, injury prevention at home, etc.
- Invites guest speakers to speak on safety related topics

4. Evaluates established emergency procedures and safety practices and makes recommendations for change as necessary

- Periodically reviews emergency procedures and safety practices and modifies them for increased efficiency
- Develops new procedures as necessary and educates any individuals involved in future drills/procedures
- Plans emergency and safety procedures and uses additional resources beyond state requirements to assist in making a safety plan

5. Mentors others in implementing good health and safety practices within their program

- Explains the rationale behind health and safety practices
- Demonstrates and models good health and safety practices for others
- Helps others identify areas for needed improvement in health and safety procedures

6. Assists others in identifying potential abuse or neglect and helps support them in the reporting process

- Assists others when questions or concerns arise, helps them identify abuse, provides information for them concerning the reporting process and guides them through reporting if they need help
- Assists in training others about abuse and helps them understand the law, their role as a provider, and how to identify signs of abuse and neglect

STEP FIVE:

Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates

1. Designs, assesses, and assists others in creating safe indoor and outdoor environments

- Acts as a mentor or consultant to assist others in creating or changing the indoor or outdoor environment to make it more safe
- Observes in center or family environments and makes recommendations to make the environment safer for children and caregiver/staff

2. Plans, implements and assists others in understanding emergency evacuation policies and procedures

- Develops plans for emergency evacuation policies and procedures
- Takes responsibility to plan and conduct evacuation drills
- Trains others in understanding policies and procedures in case of emergency

3. Teaches others good principles of safety for young children and youth

- Teaches others about the most current research on safety practices and the rationale behind those recommendations
- Teaches others about child abuse and neglect including signs of abuse, stressors that more commonly lead to abuse, how to make a report and follow through in helping the child feel safe, SIDS and Shaken Baby Syndrome

4. Advocates to develop and implement strategies for improving the environmental safety of facilities caring for children

- Participates in community groups to develop and implement strategies for improving the environmental safety of facilities serving children

5. Acts as a resource and advocate for public education for prevention of child abuse and neglect

- Stays abreast of abuse issues and legislation on behalf of children and contacts legislators and other community leaders to bring awareness of child abuse to the forefront
- Works within the community to promote support for policies and intervention on behalf of children experiencing abuse
- Educates others in the community about child abuse and neglect, what they can do to help children they may have concerns about, and how they can support efforts to stop abuse





Health

STEP ONE:

Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

1. Keeps the area where care is provided clean

- Vacuums and/or mops the floor daily
- The walls are free of visible dirt
- The toys appear to be clean, with no obvious dirt visible
- Fixtures, shelves and other furniture are cleaned regularly
- High chairs, tables or any food services surfaces are free of dirt or food build up

2. Practices effective and appropriate hand washing techniques

- Uses liquid soap and disposable paper towels
- Washes hands under warm, running water
- Washes hands before:
 - Diapering
 - Preparing or serving food
 - Giving medication
 - Preparing a bottle or feeding an infant
- Washes hands after:
 - Using the toilet
 - Diapering or assisting a child using the toilet
 - Cleaning up any bodily fluids
 - After wiping a nose
 - Eating meals and snacks
 - Playing with animals
 - Coming in from outside
 - After cleaning or taking out garbage

3. Understands and complies with universal precautions to avoid contact with and control blood borne pathogens

- Knows what a “bodily fluids clean up kit” is, what items should be included in a kit, and demonstrates how to use it
- Restocks kit as needed
- Has received training on blood borne pathogens, knows what infectious agents are transmitted through contact with blood, what to do if contact should occur, and how to prevent transmission

4. Implements appropriate diapering/toileting practices

- Checks diapers at least every two hours and changes children immediately when diapers are wet or soiled using the following steps:
 - Gathers needed supplies before diapering/helping a child in the bathroom
 - Always keeps a hand on the child on the diaper table, or supervises children in the bathroom carefully
 - Cleans the child’s diaper area gently and thoroughly
 - Places soiled diaper in tightly covered garbage can or diaper pail
 - Puts a clean diaper on the child and/or dresses the child
 - Washes the child’s hands and returns them to their group
 - Disinfects changing table and any affected areas, or disinfects toilet or bathroom area if needed
 - Washes own hands, using proper hand washing techniques
- If a child has a toileting accident, their clothes are changed immediately
- There are extra clothes available for toileting accidents

5. Follows instructions for administration of medications and approved medication treatment, including related documentation

- Has received training on medication administration
- All medications are inaccessible to children
- Ensures all medications have not expired and are labeled for the specific child intended
- Requires written authorization from parent/guardian before administering medication
- Follows appropriate procedures for administering medication (as per appropriate Bureau of Licensing rules)
- Records all medication administered
- Reports any adverse reaction to appropriate individuals (parent, director, poison control) immediately

6. Possesses a current Food Handler’s Permit

7. Practices safe food handling

- Knows basic Health Department regulations for handling food
- Serves children’s food on dishes, napkins, or sanitary high chair trays
- Uses food service gloves or a utensil to avoid direct contact with any foods being served
- Uses proper food handling techniques when cooking with children or using food items in conjunction with an art project

- If meals are brought from home, the provider ensures that they are labeled with the child’s first and last name, dated, and refrigerated if needed.
- If family style dining is used, the caregiver has received training on appropriate practices

8. Takes appropriate steps to control communicable diseases

- Requires proof of immunizations according to Utah law
- Washes hands and has children wash hands at required times
- Cleans and disinfects toys for infants daily and weekly for children 2 and older
- When bodily fluids are present, protects children from contaminated area and cleans it up quickly, thoroughly disinfecting the area
- Provides adequate space between cribs and/or cots (per licensing rules)
- When a baby is done playing with a toy that has been in their mouth, the toy is cleaned and sanitized before it is used again
- Ill children are separated from the other children while waiting for parents to pick them and children and caregivers are excluded from the program until the communicable period is over
- Informs parents of exposure to communicable illnesses

9. Recognizes signs of illness in children and reports to appropriate person

- Has received some training on signs and symptoms of common illnesses
- Verbally lists some signs of illness in children
- Verbally reports concerns of illness to supervisor or parent
- Is aware of conditions children with special needs may have and how to effectively anticipate their needs, assist them, and report information

10. Maintains the confidentiality of health information

- Verbally explains why health information must remain confidential

11. Recognizes health hazards in meals (choking, allergies, etc.), and takes steps to prevent situations that could be harmful and can take appropriate action if needed

- Explains what types of foods should never be served to children under the age of three
- Cuts food to the appropriate serving size for infants (1/4 inch) and toddlers (1/2 inch) to reduce the risk of choking
- Makes appropriate food substitutions for children with allergies, or works with parents to ensure food substitutions are available
- Explains what steps to take if a child has an allergic reaction

- Has received training and knows how to meet nutritional needs or perform feeding procedures for children with special needs enrolled in the program
- Never props bottles, holds infants for bottle feeding and avoids giving them sugary drinks such as Kool-Aid or excessive amounts of fruit juice

12. Provides meals and snacks that are appealing, nutritionally balanced, and age appropriate

- Some training on infant and child nutrition has been completed
- Types and quantities of foods served are in compliance with the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program, or are approved by a dietitian
- Verbally lists what types of food should not be fed to infants or toddlers, and knows how some foods may need to be adapted for children two and older
- Offers meals or snacks at least once every three hours for children two and older and feeds infants and toddlers whenever they are hungry
- Provides a comfortable relaxed atmosphere for children during meals

13. Posts children’s allergies in the appropriate area/areas

- Allergies are posted in the kitchen, classroom or lunchroom where food is prepared and served
- All food preparation personnel and caregivers, including substitutes know which children have allergies



*Beginning to Understand and Apply***1. Demonstrates an understanding of how communicable diseases are transmitted**

- Explains how communicable diseases are spread
- Lists three preventive measures to take to reduce transmission of illness and explains why they are important

2. Teaches and supports children in effective hand washing procedures

Directly supervises children's hand washing

- Teaches children proper techniques for hand washing ie: songs to sing to assure washing for appropriate amount of time, signs that show hand washing steps in words and pictures, reminds children to use soap, encourages and demonstrates proper techniques for hand washing

3. Demonstrates an understanding of common childhood illnesses and exclusion requirements

- Verbally explains signs and symptoms of common childhood illnesses
- Knows or can find state exclusion requirements for childhood illnesses

4. Assesses each child's health status daily and utilizes appropriate exclusion policies

- Visually checks children's appearance upon arrival each day
- Demonstrates basic knowledge of health issues common to infants, toddlers, and young children
- Pays attention to cues given by children that they may not feel well ie: incessant crying, lethargic, not eating well, etc.
- Children who exhibit symptoms of contagious illness or do not feel well enough to participate in activities are excluded
- Discusses with parents at what point children may be readmitted when they have been ill and does not allow ill children to stay in care, even if the parent is persuasive

5. Understands policies and procedures and informs parents about practices in health and nutrition

- Communicates often with parents about children's health, nutrition, communicable diseases and medication
- Explains to parents how health practices used in the program benefit children
- Provides parents with a copy of policies and procedures concerning health practices, sick and exclusion policies, and other pertinent information
- Posts menus for parents review, including any daily substitutions
- For infants, toddlers and children with special needs, keeps written records of daily nutritional intake for parent's review

6. Documents illness and knows when and how to communicate with public health agencies about communicable disease

- Keeps track of illness patterns in writing
- Has completed training on communicable diseases and reporting requirements
- Has a list of required reportable illnesses, and keeps it as a reference

7. Models good nutrition habits for children

- Sits with the children during meals, eats what the children are eating and does not make negative comments about any of the food being served
- Does not snack in front of the children when the children are not eating

8. Communicates principles of good nutrition and how nutrition impacts a child's growth and development

- Explains the need to limit sugar, salt and processed foods, including sweetened beverages
- Knows what types of foods stimulate optimal growth for children and explains how they impact growth and development

9. Recognizes the importance of physical activity and participates in physical activities with the children

- Explains how physical activity benefits children and adults
- Participates in physical activities with children e.g., dancing, playing games, etc.

10. Demonstrates an understanding of the principles of good oral hygiene

- Explains why good oral hygiene is important for children

STEP THREE:*Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices***1. Actively promotes, carries out, and documents sanitation procedures**

- Removes toys from play that appear dirty or when contamination occurs
- There is a written schedule for cleaning toys, shelves, fixtures and walls and written records are kept to show that sanitation has occurred
- There is time designated for sanitation of toys, cots, furniture etc. e.g., during nap time, before children arrive or after they leave, etc.

2. Models and assures appropriate hand washing techniques are followed daily

- Shows and explains to children appropriate hand washing techniques
- Observes children and helps them remember proper hand washing techniques
- Posts hand washing procedures in words and pictures at all hand washing sinks

3. Identifies and follows written policies regarding health issues

- Knows how to use the policies and procedures and can find those regarding health issues
- Refers to policies when making decisions on health issues
- Is able to explain why each policy is beneficial for everyone
- Follows health policies and ensures they are met within the child care setting

4. Identifies and follows written policies regarding exclusion and readmission of sick children

- Explains exclusion policy clearly and the reasons exclusion benefits everyone
- Applies the exclusion policy to all families in a fair manner

5. Consistently follows procedures to avoid transmission of communicable diseases

- Examples of procedures to be used include: hand washing is consistently demonstrated at the appropriate times, disinfects changing tables after each use, follows sanitary food service guidelines, quickly changes children's diapers or clothing when they are wet or soiled, wipes noses quickly or helps older children to remember to wipe their nose, disinfects sensory tables after each use and assures children wash their hands before using it, etc.
- Follows exclusion policies to avoid transmission of illness

6. Provides opportunities for children to learn basic health practices

- Provides paper towels or individual wash cloths for children to clean their own faces
- Makes facial tissue accessible to children and teaches them how to properly blow their nose and reminds them to wash hands afterward
- Teaches children to cover their mouth when they cough or sneeze
- Provides low sinks or equipment to help children wash their hands independently
- Provides activities that teach children about personal care and basic health practices e.g., reads books about personal grooming, toilet training, or daily routines, role plays personal care routines with children, etc.

7. Plans activities in which children learn to make healthy food choices

- Plans and guides age appropriate food preparation and cooking experiences with children
- Talks about types of foods with children and discusses healthy eating habits both during meals and play or group times

- Incorporates hands on activities to learn about healthy food choices for the children e.g., provides play food in the dramatic play area and talks about the types of foods with the children as they play, brings in foods and provides opportunities to notice the colors, textures, tastes and shapes of the foods, shows pictures of healthy and unhealthy foods and discusses them, reads books about nutrition, etc.

8. Communicates with families about the foods children need and prefer

- Provides parents with information in newsletters or other literature about healthy nutrition habits for children
- Provides parents with community based nutrition resources
- Talks with parents about foods their child enjoys while in the program and gains information from parents about cultural and religious preferences for foods
- Provides fun, nutritious recipes parents can prepare with their children

9. Integrates good health practices into each daily activity

- Assures measures are taken before/during/after each activity to minimize the spread of germs e.g., sensory table is cleaned between groups of children using it and children are required to wash their hands before and after use, when play dough or other substances are used on tables the table is cleaned when the activity ends, tables where food is served are sanitized before service occurs, etc.

10. Designs and implements curriculum activities emphasizing healthy bodies, healthy lifestyles and healthy environments

- Uses a variety of methods and plans activities that teach children about healthy lifestyles e.g., reads books about healthy habits (brushing teeth, eating nutritious foods, personal hygiene, etc.), uses display and pictures that depict healthy habits and talks about them with children, provides daily opportunities for exercise, encourages children to help keep the environment clean, etc.



STEP FOUR:

Evaluates, Models, Mentors

- Demonstrates and provides instruction for new caregivers on hand washing, diapering, toileting, and sanitation practices**
 - Acts as a mentor/assists in training other individuals and can explain the rationale of why each practice needs to be carried out in a specific way
- Exhibits understanding and knowledge of the importance of education, supervision, and role modeling in the prevention of communicable diseases**
 - Recommends appropriate training for individuals needing instruction
 - Provides appropriate supervision to assure health practices are being carried out
 - Demonstrates methods to assist in reducing communicable diseases in a program and mentors others in developing healthy habits
- Models and provides direction concerning healthy food service**
 - Demonstrates techniques that promote healthy food service and/or trains or mentors others in best practices for healthy food service
- Mentors others in maintaining a healthy environment for young children**
 - Observes caregiver practices and makes recommendations for changes in practice
 - Educates others to assist them in establishing and maintaining a healthy environment for children
- Shares research based information regarding children's health**
 - Shares information about a number of health issues such as dental health and care, bottle rot, sleeping habits for children, SIDS, childhood obesity, exercise, effects of media, lead safety, etc.
 - Shares information in a number of ways; e.g., verbally explains information, gives articles, posts information for parents or other staff to view or take, directs others to relevant web sites, etc.
 - Talks with and provides resource information to families about health in a culturally responsive manner
- Articulates and modifies health procedures for children with special needs**
 - Is educated in health needs of children with special needs and works cooperatively with health care professionals and families to assure proper procedures are followed
 - Recognizes the signs of a health crisis that children with special needs may have and responds appropriately e.g., seizures, asthma, allergies, etc.

STEP FIVE:

Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates

- Teaches and communicates major theories, research and issues and applies relevant information to children's health issues**
 - Researches and writes curriculum that teaches "best practice" health information pertaining to early care and youth education programs
 - Teaches others about the most current research on health practices and the rationale behind those recommendations
- Uses a variety of resources to seek current "Best Practice" answers to questions about health issues**
 - Maintains a list of current health resources and refers to them when needed
- Monitors the effectiveness of health and nutrition practices in the program**
 - Keeps written records of illnesses to see if there are patterns, documents the results of methods used to reduce illness and evaluates the outcomes
 - Assesses program's nutritional plans and adapts practices to include most recent information available
- Addresses the child or family's individual needs for parent education, information, and community resources in relation to health issues**
 - Provides training or workshops for parents on relevant issues such as child guidance, nutrition, healthy lifestyles, etc.
 - Provides a needs assessment to families two times per year to evaluate individual families' needs
 - Invites guest speakers to speak on health related topics
- Advocates on behalf of children's health issues**
 - Stays abreast of health issues and legislation on behalf of children's health and well being and contacts legislators and other community leaders to bring awareness to the forefront
 - Works within the community to promote support for policies and intervention on behalf of children to provide healthy environments and meet children's health needs
- Collaborates with health professionals to ensure current best practices for health issues**
 - Develops partnerships with agencies/organizations that can provide help or resources for early care and youth professionals to improve health practices within their programs
 - Consults with health professionals (health dept., local physicians, etc) when concerns arise in regard to health issues to determine the best course of action

Child Development

STEP 1:

Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

- Identifies basic developmental milestones of children**
 - Defines the term "milestone"
 - Gives examples of milestones appropriate to the age group in which they work
- Acknowledges the wide range of development in all children**
 - Verbalizes an understanding that children achieve milestones at their own pace
- Recognizes that children learn through play**
 - Gives children opportunities to play
 - Gives examples of what children learn when they play
- Demonstrates awareness that culture plays a role in children's development**
 - Explains what the term "culture" means
 - Is aware of different practices within the families of the program
- Demonstrates awareness of children who may be exhibiting signs of atypical development**
 - Recognizes variations in ability and development that may indicate a need for special attention

STEP 2:

Beginning to Understand and Apply

- Identifies and describes basic developmental milestones and defines the developmental domains of children (cognitive, social/emotional, physical, and language development)**
 - Names the developmental domains and gives examples of each domain as demonstrated by children
 - Describes developmental milestones
- Recognizes personality differences in children and understands how temperament and learning styles effect behavior and development**
 - Identifies temperament traits and gives examples of how a child's temperament impacts development and behavior
 - Talks about individual differences in children's personalities, styles and paces of learning
 - Verbally articulates the caregiver's role in supporting children's development



- Demonstrates an understanding of the principal of universal development, yet respects each child's unique, individual timetable for acquiring skills**
 - Explains what is universal about children's development and what is individual about how each child develops
 - Accepts children's variations in development and does not have expectations for children based on what others are doing
- Understands how children learn and develop through play**
 - Explains specific concepts children learn through play
 - Recognizes the stages of play that children go through
- Understands and respects the cultural differences in children that may effect development**
 - Recognizes that home, family, and sociocultural background experiences do influence a child's behavior
 - Consistently follows established adaptations for children with cultural or religious needs
 - Speaks positively about cultural differences as they arise in the program
- Uses knowledge of child development to demonstrate an understanding of age appropriate expectations**
 - Has attended training concerning children's development to understand how children develop and gain realistic expectations for children they work with
 - Understands there are certain behaviors in every stage of development that may be challenging, and expects and plan for those behaviors

7. Describes some environmental factors that could affect children's behavior and/or development

- Recognizes physical or behavior changes that may indicate the presence of stress in children's lives
- Explains how stress resulting from separation from a primary caregiver, a new sibling, moving to a new home, starting a new child care situation, trauma, abuse, neglect, poverty, and other factors could affect individual children's development and behavior
- Explains how the day to day environment a child is placed in affects behavior and development e.g., effects of caregiver responsiveness, safety of the environment, the age appropriateness of the surroundings, what types of materials are available, goodness of fit with the caregiver or program, etc.

8. Communicates information about each child's development to parents or guardians on a regular basis

- Talks with parents informally about their child's development during drop off and pick up times
- Provides written communication for parent's about recent milestones and progress

9. Understands risk factors, delays, and disabilities that may indicate a need for special services, and communicates concerns to the appropriate individuals

- Is familiar with developmental checklists and uses them when there is a concern about a child
- Uses information from parents to plan for special needs of individual children
- Recognizes when to seek the help of others in understanding and addressing children's atypical development



STEP 3:

Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices

1. Understands and applies child development theory in daily practice

- Understands major child development theories and uses this knowledge to understand individual children's behavior
- Uses knowledge of child development theory to support children and meet their physical, social, emotional and cognitive needs
- Plans activities and arranges the environment based on knowledge of child development theories and how children best learn

2. Explains the developmental domains of children, how they are interrelated, and how they are different in individual children

- Articulates that development is continuous and generally sequential
- Defines the domains separately and verbalizes an understanding of each
- Explains how all domains are inter-related

3. Respects individual differences, temperament, character traits, learning styles and qualities in children and demonstrates the ability to adapt teaching styles to accommodate each child

- Applies principles of child development to establish appropriate expectations of individual children according to developmental level, strengths, and needs
- Identifies strengths, needs, and interests of each child and develops strategies to support each child's growth and development
- Supports the uniqueness of each child and uses a variety of strategies to encourage children's physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development
- Incorporates a variety of teaching strategies into daily practice and provides materials that appeal to all of the senses and learning styles

4. Demonstrates the ability to plan activities according to children's individual needs and interests and evaluates their effectiveness

- Evaluates practices needed to support and meet the individual needs of each child and implements them
- Integrates information on growth and development and learning patterns of individuals and groups to improve practices
- Integrates information on child development with children's individual approaches to learning to tailor the curriculum to each child
- Plans activities with specific goals and objectives in mind

5. Values stages of play and plans appropriately for children both as a group and individually

- Describes the stages of play and the way children usually interact with others within those stages
- Uses observation techniques to determine stages of play for individual children
- Plans and sets up the environment and activities to help facilitate the broad scope of the stages of play
- Has appropriate expectations regarding stages of play that children engage in e.g., does not expect two-year-olds to engage in cooperative play, accepts that very young children usually play alone or with an adult, does not force children into a specific type of play, etc.

6. Explains and accepts how cultural differences may affect behavior and development

- Explains how cultural differences may affect behavior and development
- Identifies aspects of children's home and family culture that influence their development
- Models acceptance for cultural differences
- Provides materials and activities that affirm and respect cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity

7. Shares information about child growth and development and developmentally appropriate practice with families

- Shares information with parents about typical development e.g., verbally discusses information, posts articles on bulletin board to view or take, sends home information with parents, shares check lists of milestones their child has completed while at the program, directs parents to relevant web sites, etc
- Arranges for training, workshops or guest speakers for parents on relevant issues to children's development and developmentally appropriate expectations
- Talks to parents formally in parent teacher conferences concerning their child's development and progress

8. Develops plans to observe, evaluate, and assess each individual child's progress

- Conducts, documents, and interprets observations to evaluate each child's progress and any areas of concern
- Uses observations to help understand the child's current developmental level in the different developmental domains
- Uses developmental checklists with each child to identify next steps to help each child gain needed age appropriate skills
- Uses observation information to design instructional materials, activities and teaching strategies appropriate to a child's developmental level



9. Addresses special needs of individual children and recognizes the characteristics and signs of atypical development.

- Explains what developmental disability/delay means and the philosophy of inclusion
- Observes, determines, and records risk factors, delays, or differences in abilities which may indicate a need for services
- Develops activities or adapts equipment to meet individual requirements of children with special needs
- Consistently follows specific instructions/requirements for children in the program with special needs

STEP 4:

Evaluates, Models, Mentors

1. Evaluates practices of self and others using major child development theories

- Analyzes current developments in the field (including new research, theory and best practices), applies to practice, and assists others in applying to practice
- Assesses practitioners' interactions using knowledge of child development theories and research as a foundation for feedback

2. **Keeps up to date on current research and practices concerning child growth and development**
 - Maintains a list of resources containing child development information and theory
 - Stays up to date by reading child development journals, articles, research, and recent book publications
 - Attends workshops, conferences, college classes or other learning activities to increase knowledge and understanding of child growth and development
3. **Mentors others to help them understand typical development of children**
 - Explains typical behaviors in children for protégé
 - Demonstrates techniques to effectively work with children exhibiting typical but challenging behavior
 - Provides others with resource materials to help them understand developmentally appropriate behavior and practice
4. **Utilizes appropriate resources and services to assist children with special needs**
 - Maintains relationships with those that provide services for children with special needs and helps connect families to those that can assist them

- STEP 5:
Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates
1. **Assists others in evaluating different child development theories and applying them appropriately to individual children within each care setting**
 - Helps others understand and use developmental theory to understand children's typical behavior
 2. **Articulates, evaluates, analyzes, and applies current theory, research, and policy on child growth and development**
 - Employs current theory and research to support beliefs and practices concerning children's development
 - Uses theories to explain how children learn and develop within the domains
 - Is aware of current and future trends in education and the larger society and the implications for children's development
 - Articulates how major historical and current child development theories impact the practice of early childhood
 3. **Teaches major theories, research, and issues relevant to child growth and development**
 - Presents information on major research and theories of child development through college courses, in-service or community based training, or conference presentations

- Provides information on child development to others ie: books, magazine articles, class handouts, etc.
 - Promotes and communicates information about promising practices, issues, and research relevant to child growth and development
4. **Collaborates with other professionals to assist in meeting the needs of all children, including children with special needs**
 - Develops partnerships with agencies/organizations that can provide help or resources to work with individual children or children with special needs
 5. **Advocates for policies that are based on knowledge of child development**
 - Works within a personal program and the community to make information available on child development and developmentally appropriate practice
 - Takes opportunities to educate policy makers about how children develop and policies or legislation that would benefit children in the community



Guidance

- STEP ONE:
Building Basic Knowledge and Skills
1. **Exhibits self control and other pro-social behaviors**
 - Does not yell at or threaten children or other adults
 - Uses basic manners with children and adults
 - Does not use commanding or demanding statements in all verbal interactions
 2. **Never uses actions or words that would cause physical or emotional pain to children**
 - Never uses any type of corporal punishment: e.g., slapping, spanking, pinching, pulling by the ear, shaking, pushing, etc.
 - Never punishes children by confining or locking them in a room or closet, tying or taping them or restricting their movement e.g., puts an infant or toddler in a high chair to confine them as a disciplinary measure, forces children to sit with their nose in a corner, holds children down to get them to comply with a request/command, etc.
 - Never uses physical or verbal punishment that hurts, frightens, humiliates, or embarrasses children e.g., Degrades children by calling them names such as idiot, baby, stupid, tells children a monster will get them if they don't listen, pulls on their ear or hair to get their attention, etc.
 - Never withholds food or basic needs as a means of punishing children or controlling their behavior
 3. **Intervenes when children are hurting others emotionally or physically**
 - Provides appropriate supervision and interventions to keep children safe
 - The caregiver stops children when they are calling each other names, fighting, or doing anything to harm themselves or others
 4. **Able to find and explain local licensing regulations regarding discipline**
 - Has received training on licensing discipline rules and their own program's discipline policy
 - Knows where a copy of the licensing and program discipline rules are and can explain them
 5. **Is willing to examine personal beliefs about discipline and how children "should" behave**
 - Discusses personal beliefs and experiences concerning discipline
 6. **Demonstrates awareness that most children respond well to positive attention**
 - Compliments children when they play well together
 - Engages in positive interactions with children daily

- Emphasizes children's positive characteristics and behaviors
7. **Demonstrates awareness of some positive guidance techniques**
 - Models appropriate voice tones
 - Discusses a few positive reinforcement methods
 - Follows a predictable schedule or routine
- STEP TWO:
Beginning to Understand and Apply
1. **Interacts with children in a manner that encourages pro-social behavior**
 - Models positive social behaviors such as kindness, empathy, sharing, turn taking, cooperation, respectful interactions, etc.
 2. **Demonstrates age appropriate expectations of children's behavior**
 - Has completed training regarding behavior developmentally appropriate for the children in the group
 - Describes realistic behavioral expectations for the ages of the children in the group
 - Modifies the environment to support age-appropriate expectations e.g., provides a safe place in the room where toddlers can climb, provides duplicates of favorite toys, and sufficient number of materials for all of the children, etc.
 3. **Establishes and clearly communicates expectations of acceptable behavior**
 - Sets simple, clear rules and limits for children
 - If working with infants or toddlers, understands that children at this age are still learning and internalizing what appropriate behavior is
 - Understands some children including ELL and children with special needs may need additional help or clarification to understand appropriate behavior
 - Uses verbal or non-verbal cues to help children with special needs or ELL children understand expectations e.g., modeling, gesturing, picture cues, etc.
 - Asks for help from parents or individuals who can help interpret for the child or give key words that the child can understand
 4. **Uses daily activity plans, including planned transitions, and calmly responds to unexpected changes in the daily routine**
 - Provides consistent schedules and routines for children
 - Plans and prepares activities, routines, and transitions in advance
 - Alerts children in advance when changes in activities or routines will occur
 - Integrates transitions into activity plans

5. Acknowledges that personal beliefs and childhood experiences may affect practices in discipline and attitudes towards children's behavior in group care

- Able to discuss beliefs and attitudes about expectations of children
- Reflects upon personal experiences and can verbalize how they may affect practices in discipline
- Knows that discipline practices used within an individual's family structure may not be appropriate to use in professional practices

6. Uses positive statements and redirection to guide children

- Helps children explore options for play
- Describes for children what they can do instead of what they can't
- Acknowledges children when they display positive behaviors

7. Uses basic positive guidance techniques and can define and explain the meaning of the term "positive guidance"

- Models appropriate behavior
- Notices and gives attention for appropriate behaviors
- Verbally explains what the term positive guidance means

8. Tactfully communicates about a child's behavior to his/her family on a regular basis

- Discusses both positive and difficult behavior with families

STEP THREE:

Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices

1. Is consistent and fair with all children based on established expectations

- Does not show favoritism among children or single out any one child when there are problems
- Involves pre-school and school-age children in creating a few mutually agreed upon group rules
- Calmly and consistently reminds children of applicable rules

2. Responds to children in ways that show reasonable age appropriate expectations and uses or adapts guidance techniques that respect each child and are specific to each child's culture, language, and ability level

- Has reasonable expectations about children's age, attention spans, social and physical abilities, needs, and interests
- Recognizes that home, family, and sociocultural background experiences do influence a child's behavior and uses such information in understanding children's behavior

- Adapts guidance techniques that respect each child and are specific to each child's language, culture, and ability level

- Children are not compared with one another and behavior and caregiver responses are individualized

3. Sets up and adapts the learning environment and activities to minimize potential challenging behavior

- There are enough toys and materials for all the children
- Materials are accessible to children
- Activities in the care area are age appropriate for the children using them
- There are materials in the environment of varying skills levels
- If problems do arise, the caregiver acts quickly to resolve them

4. Plans and implements all transitions so children do not have to spend excessive time waiting

- Includes transitions in activity plans
- Does not expect children to wait unoccupied with nothing to do for long periods of time
- When waiting is unavoidable, uses strategies to occupy the children e.g., sings songs, hand or body movement games, a bag with props to use in simple activities, blows bubbles, tells a story or reads a book, etc.

5. Uses effective techniques to help children learn to make good choices

- Gives children valid, realistic choices when appropriate
- Asks children open-ended questions to help them see possible alternatives
- Describes children's actions so they are aware of them and how their actions affect others
- Uses role play scenarios, books, puppets, or other teaching materials to present social problems to children and brainstorms possible solutions with pre-school or school-age children
- Intervenes if a situation is escalating to help children work through it for a positive result

6. Helps children learn to problem solve and work through conflict

- Actively teaches children appropriate communication and problem-solving skills before conflicts arise
- Provides opportunities for children to listen to each other's point of view and learn to compromise
- Helps children learn to talk through problems together and negotiate for what they want instead of stepping in and telling children what to do
- Describes the situation, helps children identify and evaluate the problem and choose a solution



7. Identifies personal "hot buttons" and develops strategies to effectively work with children who are exhibiting challenging behavior

- Through self-reflection, has determined own beliefs about discipline, how children should behave, and evaluated life experiences to identify hot buttons
- Remains calm and in control of personal feelings and responses when problems occur
- Implements strategies to respond to children when they exhibit hot button behaviors ie: counts to ten before addressing the situation, takes a step back, gets help from another adult, etc.

8. Observes and records children's behavior to individualize and improve child guidance

- Uses observation tools such as an time sampling or running record to document children's behaviors
- Evaluates observation and assessment data to identify possible problems in the environment or reasons for a specific child's behavior
- Uses observation data to plan and implement guidance strategies to meet the needs of children

9. Understands the difference between "punishment" and guidance and uses numerous positive guidance techniques

- Verbally explains the difference between punishment and guidance and the effects that each can have on children
- Recognizes that the foundation of positive guidance is the establishment of a trusting, caring, and supportive relationship between the adult and child

- Uses a number of positive guidance techniques such as:

- Positive Reinforcement
- Encouragement
- Anticipates situations and plans for them in advance
- Provides extra support for children when needed
- Plans for typical behaviors
- Models appropriate behavior
- Sets up the environment to reduce behavior problems
- Provides an age appropriate daily schedule and/or routines
- Gives children appropriate choices as much as possible

10. Appropriately communicates concerns about children's behavior to families

- Discusses behavior concerns objectively, accurately, and empathetically
- Separates the behavior of the child from the child as a person

STEP FOUR:

Evaluates, Models, Mentors

1. Helps others to apply theories of child development to understand children's typical behaviors and improve child guidance

- Explains developmental theories and how they relate to behaviors commonly exhibited in children
- Helps others understand why certain behaviors are exhibited and how they can change their thinking to find more effective ways of guiding each child

2. Evaluates, models and mentors others in using appropriate guidance techniques with children

- Evaluates and models problem-solving and conflict resolution strategies and mediates/supports children's interactions with peers
- Shows best practice guidance techniques in hands on situations in personal program or that of a protégé
- Objectively observes conflicts within the program and how the caregiver manages the conflict and discusses feedback to assist in improving conflict resolution skills
- Objectively observes caregiver practices in relation to guidance methods and works with individuals to help them change personal behavior or evaluate behavior problems within the program

3. **Helps others identify personal “hot buttons” and assists them in developing strategies to address them**
 - Teaches others about “hot buttons”
 - Helps others self reflect to identify their personal issues
 - Helps others develop a plan for responding to personal “hot buttons”
4. **Supports others in establishing guidelines for effective child guidance**
 - Assists others struggling with child guidance issues in finding and putting into place reasonable behavior guidelines for the children in their program
 - Assists others in implementing guidance techniques in a way that respects all people
5. **Demonstrates knowledge of instructional and guidance procedures for integrating children with language, cultural, and special needs**
 - Develops individual guidance plans, accessing relevant professionals for support as needed
6. **Shares information on guidance techniques with families**
 - Knows about local resources/workshops that assist parents in learning about effective child guidance and gives parents information to access support or training
 - Shares articles or other information from reliable, best practice resources on child guidance information
 - When parents enroll their children the child guidance policies are specifically discussed and given to the parent in writing
7. **Collaborates with families to develop individually appropriate expectations for children’s behavior**
 - Talks with parents about guidance techniques being used with their child in the program, what is working, and what is not
 - Gently educates parents on what age appropriate behaviors can be expected for their individual child

STEP FIVE:*Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates*

1. **Provides training and technical assistance to others regarding appropriate guidance strategies and group management techniques**
 - Researches and writes curriculum that focuses on positive guidance and group management techniques
 - Teaches others about positive guidance strategies and how to effectively manage children in a group situation

2. **Keeps up to date on the most current research regarding guidance techniques**
 - Maintains current resources on child guidance and stays educated on the most recent research
 - Compares current theories and research and makes adjustments as needed according to the most recent research findings
3. **Collaborates with other professionals to integrate children of all abilities into the group, following appropriate instructional and guidance procedures**
 - Develops partnerships with agencies/organizations that can provide help or resources to help with integrating children with special behavior issues or children with special needs or language difficulties into the group
4. **Advocates on behalf of children with challenging behaviors**
 - Works within the community to make information available about positive guidance and effectively managing children
 - Works within the community to promote support for policies that strengthen early intervention initiatives for children with severe behavior difficulties

**Emotional Wellness****STEP ONE:***Building Basic Knowledge and Skills*

1. **When separation is difficult, attempts are made to comfort the child and reassure the parent**
 - The caregiver acknowledges the child’s feelings and assures the child the parent will return
 - Methods of physical or emotional comfort are tried e.g., cuddling, patting, rocking, using a soothing tone of voice
 - The child is not scolded, belittled or negatively disciplined for crying, withdrawing, or other typical separation behaviors
 - Does not suggest the parent “sneak out”
 - Assures the parent of their primary role with their child and they are irreplaceable
2. **Responds to children’s attempts to communicate, including crying and non-verbal communication**
 - Responds to crying as quickly as possible
 - Acknowledges children when they speak
 - Appropriately responds to children’s body language
 - Reacts appropriately to children’s signs of being tired, hungry, or need to use the toilet or have their diaper changed
3. **Provides predictable routines for children**
 - Completes tasks for each child’s daily care in a predictable order
 - Care routines are carried out similarly each day
 - Allows infants to eat and sleep according to their own individual schedule
4. **Acknowledges children when they are experiencing difficulty and responds in a positive manner**
 - Responds to children when they cry and finds ways to help them feel better
 - Comforts children when they are afraid, hurt, or embarrassed
 - Does not ignore children in distress

5. **Communicates expectations to children**
 - The children know what is expected of them
6. **Engages in conversations with children**
 - Talks to the children about interests or recent events in their lives
 - Some talk with the children is not directive commands
7. **Allows children to talk about their feelings**
 - Children are able to talk about their feelings without punishment or ridicule
8. **Demonstrates awareness that a child needs to form attachments to other human beings and feel secure in his/her environment**
 - Verbalizes an understanding that children (especially infants and toddlers) need to receive consistent care from the same caregiver/s on a daily basis
 - Verbalizes an understanding that children need to form bonds with adults to feel safe and secure
9. **Developing awareness that optimal brain development occurs from infancy through the first six years of life**
 - Verbalizes an understanding of the capacity young have to learn
 - Completes training on brain development

STEP TWO:*Beginning to Understand and Apply*

1. **Allows time for children to adjust to a new care situation or routine and is patient in their transition**
 - Shows understanding for the varying patterns of adjustment periods in children
 - Avoids telling children “you’re okay” or “stop crying” or refuses to give them comfort until they stop fussing
 - Does not use time out or other isolation methods in an attempt to stop children from crying due to separation
 - Shows patience by respecting the child’s individual needs while learning to trust the caregiving environment e.g., holding or not holding the child based on the child’s desires, verbally soothing and reassuring the child, allowing the child to have a security object, finding what interests the child and having specific objects or activities ready for him/her, acknowledges the child’s feelings of sadness or loss
2. **Listens and responds to each child’s concerns**
 - Gives children opportunities to speak and listens to them without interrupting
 - Responds verbally to children in a supportive way

3. Develops and follows a routine that is predictable, yet flexible

- Posts the daily schedule in both words and pictures for children 2-6 at children's eye-level
- Allows for flexibility in adapting the daily schedule to special needs or events that may arise

4. Helps children handle transitions, daily routines, and unexpected changes

- Gives children a warning in advance that they will need to move to the next activity/routine etc.
- Explains to children, including infants and toddlers what will happen next during routines
- Provides well-planned transition activities
- Has simple transition activities available to engage children during unexpected wait times
- Allows for unhurried time for daily routines such as eating, hand washing, diapering/ toileting, and dressing
- If unexpected events occur during the day e.g., fire drill, the caregiver handles it in a calm way and helps the children deal effectively with the change

5. Speaks to the children in a friendly, calm and respectful manner

- Greets children when they arrive
- Gets down on the child's level to talk to them
- Uses a tone of voice that is not threatening
- When problems arise, stays calm when talking with children
- Uses words that convey respect for children e.g., please, thank you, excuse me, etc.

6. Recognizes and acknowledges children's feelings and helps them label them

- Acknowledges children's feelings before attempting to help them solve problems
- Does not categorize any feeling as "bad" or "wrong"
- Helps children recognize and accept their feelings
- Talks about feelings as part of the teaching process e.g., reads books about feelings, shows pictures of facial expressions and talks about them, uses dramatic play opportunities to talk about feelings, etc

7. Develops an individual relationship with each child and provides consistency in interactions as well as physical and emotional security

- Addresses children by their names and talks with each child every day
- Validates the children's ideas and shows sincere interest in what they say and do
- Responds to children's verbal and non-verbal cues for attention e.g., when children hold out arms to them they are responded to, provides security objects for children if needed, comforts children who are emotionally upset

8. Explains the importance of relationships in promoting emotional wellness, including the impact it has on brain development

- Verbalizes how warm, consistent care of infants and young children significantly affects their emotional wellness and brain development
- Gently and pleasantly provides physical care to children

9. Demonstrates an understanding that a child is separate from his/her behavior

- Avoids comparing one child's behavior with another's
- Never uses personal derogatory remarks when dealing with children's behavior

10. Seeks information from parents regarding effective strategies to support their child in the child care setting

- Communicates with family members to find out about children's individual needs e.g., asks parents questions to gain information about the child's care at home and their beliefs and cultural practices, sends home surveys with parents new to the program to find out about their child's food preferences, activities, and other questions to assist in caring for the child most effectively, etc.

STEP THREE:*Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices***1. Demonstrates skill in assisting parent and child with daily separation in an empathetic and effective manner**

- Helps the parent develop a predictable "drop off" routine for their child
- Makes themselves available to help parent and child with transition
- Helps the child get involved in an activity
- Invites the parent to stay longer if needed
- Reassures both child and parent that the caregiver will be there to meet the child's needs both emotionally and physically

2. Listens attentively to children, tries to understand what they are trying to communicate, and takes appropriate action to meet each child's needs

- Pays attention to children when they speak by getting down on their level and making eye contact with them
- Restates what the child says and asks if that is what they are trying to communicate
- Follows through with appropriate action
- For infants and toddlers, the caregiver learns to anticipate needs and distinguish cries in order to meet them as quickly as possible

3. Provides supportive environments that allow opportunities for child choice and fosters the development of self-control

- Acknowledges children's ideas, work, or creations
- Allows children to move freely and choose the majority of their own activities
- Provides physical environments, schedules, and routines that promote self-control and self-regulation

4. Understands that stress and change may affect children's behavior and mental health and finds ways to help children learn to deal with stressors and changes in their lives

- Uses family background information to understand a child's behavior
- Before determining avenues of dealing with children's new challenging behaviors, communicates with the child's family to determine what support may be needed
- Helps children learn to verbally express their fears and concerns and gives them opportunities to do so
- Discusses common life and family changes and helps children deal with them through activities such as dramatic play, books and stories, puppet play, art, or music e.g., reads and talks about a book where a new sibling is born, creates dramatic play scenarios about moving to a new home, gives opportunities to express feelings using art materials, etc.

5. Provides activities that build confidence and competence and provides ample opportunities for children to master new skills, experience success, and safely take risks

- Encourages children to perform self-help skills as they are able
- Gives children daily opportunities to practice existing skills and learn new skills
- Compliments children when trying new things and encourages them throughout the process of learning a new skill
- Offers children help when trying something new
- Accepts children's mistakes and failures as part of the learning process and allows them to learn from mistakes without shaming them

6. Validates children's feelings and helps them learn to express feelings and assert rights in socially acceptable ways

- Verbally accepts feelings of children and responds to children's feelings in ways that show acceptance
- Gives the child specific, appropriate words to use in social situations
- When age appropriate, helps children learn how to ask for things without taking them

7. Nurtures an environment of trust and caring while maintaining a relationship with each individual child based on mutual respect

- Warmly addresses each child by name and talks with each child daily
- Displays affectionate and appropriate physical contact with each child daily
- Supports children with non-verbal cues e.g., winking, smiling, appropriate touch, etc.
- Gives one on one attention to each child as much as possible

8. Promotes brain development by providing emotional support to each child and a wide variety of experiences, interacting with them as an interested play partner

- Does not let children cry for long periods of time without checking needs and attempting to comfort or meet the need, and does not avoid holding children to assure they will not become "spoiled"
- Provides consistent, warm, loving care to all children equally and meets their needs as quickly as possible, to help them develop trust in the world around them
- Interacts with infants and children as they play and introduces a number of varied play experiences that appeal to all their senses





9. Addresses a problem behavior or situation without labeling the child, and conveys this difference to each child when the situation is being addressed

- Talks to children about their behavior and choices vs. making general comments about the child being a “good” or “bad” person
- Uses words and conversation with children to process behavior and how better choices could be made

10. Promotes children’s development of empathy and encourages children to comfort and help one another

- Responds empathetically to children who are hurt, angry, sad, fearful or anxious
- Provides opportunities for children to listen to each other’s point of view
- Demonstrates acts of empathy and compliments and acknowledges children when they help each other
- Encourages children to provide comfort to each other when someone is sad or distressed

11. Uses a variety of strategies to help children calm down when experiencing emotional difficulty or they are out of control

- Does not try to solve problems while a child is emotionally distraught
- Uses a soothing tone of voice and does not lecture or scold the child
- Helps children find physical ways to release frustration e.g., deep breathing, hitting a pillow, working with clay or play dough, water play, etc.
- Changes the environment e.g., takes child outside, provides a quiet place to talk with the child, redirects or removes the child from the source of anger or frustration, etc.

12. Recognizes behavior regarding a child’s emotional development that may indicate a need for further evaluation and/or intervention and communicates concerns to appropriate individuals

- Has completed training and understands typical emotional development for the children in the group
- Observes and records objective data about positive behavior or behavior of concern
- Talks to appropriate persons about observations and gives applicable information for resources that could be of help to a child and their parents

STEP FOUR:

Evaluates, Models, Mentors

1. Evaluates and moderates interactions with each individual child based on the child’s specific individual characteristics, temperament, strengths, interests, and needs

- Uses information learned about individual differences in children to guide personal interactions with each individual child
- Adjusts interactions accordingly with each child to match the child’s personality and needs

2. Models relationships of respect, trust and cooperation with children, coworkers and parents

- Speaks with others in a respectful manner
- Works well with parents, children and other staff to solve problems
- When interacting with others, avoids negative interactions in words and behavior

3. Models interactions and activities for others that promote optimal brain development

- Plays with children at their level in a meaningful way e.g., asks open ended questions, lets children guide the play, extends play by providing additional props, etc.

- Responds to children quickly and consistently in a nurturing way
- Provides a wide variety of activities for children and allows for child choice
- Allows children to repeat favorite activities

4. Helps families understand and foster positive social-emotional development

- Shares articles, books, or other information on social-emotional development
- Hosts in-service classes for parents concerning children’s social-emotional development
- When parents express frustration with children’s age-typical behavior, the caregiver tactfully finds a way to help the parent understand some annoying or difficult behaviors are developmentally expected

5. Collaborates with families regarding areas of concern, developing cooperative strategies to manage problems

- Shares observation information with families
- Talks with parents and develops a plan to work cooperatively to solve problems and continues to exchange information with parents

6. Collaborates with parents in finding appropriate resources to assist with children exhibiting severe social/emotional challenges

- Finds out specifically what the families’ needs are
- Asks parents if they would like help
- Provides resource information and support throughout the process

7. Networks with other professionals to share information on mental and emotional health

- Participates in community based or other types of training or conferences to gain and share information with others in the field about mental and emotional health
- Contacts mental health professionals to gain more current information

STEP FIVE:

Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates

1. Articulates, analyzes, evaluates, teaches and applies current theory and research on emotional and brain development, relationships and supportive interactions

- Employs current theory and research to support practices to promote emotional and brain development and to develop supportive relationships and positive interactions
- Compares current theories and research and makes adjustments as needed according to the most recent research findings

2. Designs, teaches and assists others in implementing curriculum that focuses on social-emotional development that respects diverse values, cultures and individual temperaments

- Researches and writes curriculum that focuses on social-emotional development
- Assists others in implementing curriculum in a way that respects all people
- Teaches others about social-emotional development

3. Collaborates with community partners in providing resources to assist families in dealing with severe social/emotional challenges

- Develops partnerships with agencies/organizations that provide help or resources for families dealing with severe social/emotional issues
- Works with agencies/organizations that provide assistance for social/emotional difficulties and finds ways to best assist families within that framework

4. Advocates on behalf of children by speaking out in support of better policies for children’s mental health issues

- Stays abreast of mental health legislation and contacts legislators and other community leaders to bring awareness to the forefront
- Works within the community to promote support for policies that strengthen and provide early intervention for children experiencing social/emotional difficulties



Learning Environment

STEP ONE:

Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

- Ensures equipment and materials are not harmful to the children**
 - All art materials used with children are age appropriate and non-toxic
 - Any broken equipment or toys are taken out of the play area
- Knows what materials are available and provides materials for children**
 - Assures there are enough materials to engage all the children at the same time
- Recognizes children need opportunities for both active and quiet play activities**
 - Provides time and space for quiet rest and relaxation each day
 - Allows for some physical activity/play each day
- Provides some variation of activities and materials**
 - There are multiple choices of activities and materials for children to use
 - Activity choices change at least once during the day
 - Children are given opportunities to interact with each other during play
 - Children are not required to do everything as a large group
- Encourages, but never forces children to participate in activities**
 - Invites children to join in an activity
 - Demonstrates a skill or how to do an activity if a child needs assistance
 - Allows a child to choose not to participate in an activity
- Demonstrates awareness that the way the environment is set up can support learning and independence**
 - Verbalizes ways that children are able to help themselves
 - Discusses what children may learn through play and daily routines



STEP TWO:

Beginning to Understand and Apply

- Appropriately uses or adapts equipment or furniture to meet each child's size and/or abilities**
 - Furniture provided for children allows them to sit comfortably
 - Uses safe equipment to allow children to do as much as possible for themselves e.g., small stools to help children reach the sink, steps on a changing table for toddlers to use to get up on the table themselves, etc.
 - Adapts equipment or furniture to allow full involvement of children with special needs
- Uses furniture and equipment to create specific activity areas and arranges pathways so they do not interfere with play space**
 - Space is organized into identifiable activity areas
 - There are clear pathways to help children get from one area to another without disturbing other children's play
 - Some areas are protected on three sides to minimize difficulties from interference of play e.g., building and construction areas, quiet area, art and writing areas
 - There are protected spaces for young infants to explore without interference from mobile infants or older children
 - Infants are provided enough space to freely move about and practice physical skills such as crawling and walking
- Plans for a balance of active and quiet play activities**
 - Provides space and opportunity for quiet play activities e.g., puzzles and games, reading, fine motor activities etc.
 - Provides space and opportunity for active play experiences e.g., dramatic play, block area, music area, a place to practice physical skills, etc.
 - Provides areas for messy play such as art materials or sensory play
 - Plans time for children to participate in active play, as well activities to help children calm down
- Provides a variety of activities and materials to accommodate young children and gives them opportunities to choose what they will use**
 - Balances the daily schedule to include all learning areas
 - Provides enough materials that all children can be actively engaged in play at the same time within the care area

5. Encourages children's active learning through play

- Offers play activities to help children gain skills
- Allows children to use materials in individual ways and/or for new purposes
- Allows children to choose play activities on their own

6. Supports and encourages children's participation in activities

- Provides children with a variety of materials and activity choices
- Joins children in play without taking over the play
- Guides children in choosing activities when they are having difficulty selecting one
- Stays with a child to offer encouragement, if needed

7. Arranges materials to foster self selection

- Materials are arranged so that children can easily see their choices and reach what they would like to use
- Materials are organized and easy for children to use and put away

STEP THREE:

Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices

1. Provides an interesting, safe and secure environment that uses space, relationships, materials, and routines as resources that encourage play, exploration, and learning

- Ensures the environment provides opportunities for learning in all developmental areas; cognitive, physical, social/emotional, language and creative
- Provides washable, soft elements that allow for comfort and relaxation
- Offers duplicates of favorite toys so several children can engage in similar play at the same time
- For infants, the environment is arranged to allow for convenience for the child and caregiver during routines
- Periodically varies and rotates the play and learning materials that are available to children
- The environment is structured to accommodate children with special needs currently enrolled in the program

2. Makes learning materials easily accessible to the children and labels bins and/or shelves with words and pictures, allowing children to self select and put away their own materials after they are finished using them

- Organizes and places materials at children's level
- Teaches and encourages children to clean up when finished using materials
- Teaches children to treat materials with respect

3. Balances and plans for active and quiet, open-ended and structured, individual and group, child initiated and adult directed, and indoor and outdoor activities

4. Uses a variety of developmentally appropriate materials, books, and equipment that are stimulating to each child and suitable to individual learning styles, including those of children with special needs

- Offers play and learning materials in each area that accommodate varying skill levels
- Offers materials that appeal to visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners
- Provides appropriately adapted materials for children with special needs (if applicable, for children currently attending)

5. Plans and allows for large blocks of time each day for children to play with each other and select their own play activities

- Allows the majority of the day to be spent in child-initiated activities
- Uses whole group times sparingly, for short periods, and mainly for community building activities
- Infants and toddlers are not required to sit in group times

6. Indoor equipment and space is designed and arranged to accommodate children individually, in small groups, and in a large group

- Designs play areas large enough to allow space for 4-5 children and small private areas for 2 or 3 children
- Helps children play alone or have some privacy when needed, while ensuring the area can be supervised by an adult

7. Provides hands on, open-ended activities that foster curiosity, exploration, and problem solving appropriate to the children's developmental level and relevant to their real world experiences

- Most teaching is done with concrete materials that children can look at, touch and explore with all of their senses
- Materials allow children to plan and carry out their own ideas
- Provides play and learning materials that give opportunities for children to develop skills they are ready to learn, based on observations of the children

- 8. **Develops strategies that allow children to play a role in planning activities**
 - Talks with children during group time and listens to individual conversations to determine the children's interests
 - Uses observation information to determine what may be included in activity planning or what materials could be added to areas
- 9. **Uses materials that demonstrate acceptance of all people**
 - Provides visuals that portray different family structures, races, cultures, languages, ages, abilities, and genders in positive ways
 - Reads books that show men and women in diverse roles, different cultures, varying ethnicity, and individuals with special needs
 - Provides play materials that represent various cultures e.g., food from different cultures, dolls with varying skin tones, dress up clothes from different cultures, plays music from varying cultures, etc.

STEP FOUR:
Evaluates, Models, Mentors

- 1. **Plans, implements, and evaluates the learning environment to maximize learning potential**
 - Ensures the environment facilitates learning in all developmental areas: cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional
 - Assesses effectiveness of the learning environment based on the children's interactions with it
 - Based on observations, gives written recommendations to strengthen the quality of environments for individual groups of children and caregivers
- 2. **Models an environment that supports both planned and spontaneous experiences that are developmentally appropriate, meaningful and challenging for young children, including those with developmental delays or special needs**
 - Adapts the schedule to accommodate children with special needs rather than requiring them to fit the schedule
 - Varies routines spontaneously to take advantage of unusual learning opportunities
 - Provides many opportunities for children to develop their senses and ability to concentrate

Demonstrates the ability to create learning environments using manipulative materials, child choice and decision making, and play as a context

- for enhancing development and active learning
Makes appropriate adaptations for children with special needs that allow them to more comfortably participate in activities within the environment
- 3. **Models the use of effective and appropriate learning centers**
 - Explains how different types of learners benefit from developmentally appropriate environments
 - Demonstrates techniques to use in designing appropriate learning environments
 - Shows effective ways of interacting with children while engaged in play in learning centers
- 4. **Mentors others in the selection of materials appropriate to the developmental levels of all children**
 - Helps others choose materials appropriate for their environment e.g., helps them find materials in catalogs, looks at current materials and makes suggestions for eliminating/reducing inappropriate materials or quantities, or provides written recommendations with suggested purchases
 -
- 5. **Communicates the importance of a developmentally appropriate learning environment to families**
 - Explains to parents how the set up of the environment can support children's learning
 - Gives written information to parents concerning developmentally appropriate environments and materials
 -

STEP FIVE:
Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates

- 1. **Evaluates, analyzes, articulates, and applies current research on environmental design**
 - Employs current theory and research to support environmental design
 - Compares current theories and research and assists others in finding the most appropriate environmental design for their program
- 2. **Teaches others best practice in relation to setting up appropriate physical environments and using developmentally appropriate learning materials**
 - Presents information on how to set up physical environments and select developmentally appropriate learning materials through college courses, in-service or community based training, or conference presentations
 -

- 3. **Provides training and on-site technical assistance in developing appropriate environments within an individual program's structure**
 - Assists others in evaluating their current environment and making necessary changes
 - Provides information on environmental design e.g., books, magazine articles, class handouts, etc.
- 4. **Supports others in adapting environments to support learning and making accommodations for all children**
 - Support can be given in a number of ways e.g., gives information based on current research of how the environment affects children's behavior, helps others arrange learning environments according to needs, suggests adaptive materials for children with special needs, refers an individual to an organization or agency that may be able to provide technical assistance, etc.
- 5. **Advocates for developmentally appropriate learning environments and curricula**
 - Works within the community to make information available on developmentally appropriate environments and curricula for children
 - Takes opportunities to educate policy makers regarding developmentally appropriate environments and curriculum



Promoting Physical Development

STEP ONE:
Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

- 1. **Allows for some physical activity daily**
 - Children have opportunity for at least 30 minutes per day for physical activity (includes outdoor play)
 - Provides safe, adequate space for infants and toddlers to practice physical skills
 - Infants are not left in stationary equipment for long periods of time and are given opportunities for floor time to develop physical skills
- 2. **Is available to and supervises closely when children engage in large motor play indoors or outdoors**
 - Is present in the outdoor area when children are there and walks around to ensure safe use of the equipment
 - Can see, hear, or easily reach children at all times
 - During large motor play activities, focuses attention on children and does not socialize with other caregivers, complete paperwork or personal tasks
 - If large motor activities are set up indoors, they are set up in a safe manner and proper planning is used to allow for an adult to monitor play
- 3. **Recognizes that children need to practice fine and large motor skills**
 - Verbally explains what fine and large motor skills are
- 4. **Recognizes that some children require more physical activity than others**
 - Verbally explains the differences in children's need for physical activity
- 5. **Demonstrates awareness that children learn best when given opportunities to use all of their senses**
 - Explains how children use their senses to learn about an object
- 6. **Allows children to attempt some self help skills on their own**
 - All children are encouraged or allowed to complete some self-help skills each day e.g., younger children: using a spoon at meal time, taking off own shoes at rest time, etc.; older children: putting on own coat or other clothing, washing hands with as little assistance as possible, putting away materials, etc.



STEP TWO:

Beginning to Understand and Apply

1. **Provides space and equipment for formal and informal large and fine motor activities, indoors and out**
 - An outdoor play area is available and there is some equipment to help children build physical skills (portable or stationary)
 - Provides designated space for fine motor activities indoors
2. **Supervises, supports, and participates with children during active play experiences**
 - Is vigilant in supervision of children during active play
 - Encourages and assists children in practicing and mastering large motor skills
 - Actively participates in children's activities and plays large motor games with the children
3. **Provides opportunities and materials for children to practice fine and large motor skills**
 - Three or more types of fine motor development materials are available at least one hour per day
 - Fine motor materials are organized so children can easily use them
 - Plans at least one large motor activity per week to help children build or practice new physical skills if they choose
 - When weather does not permit outdoor play, large motor activities are provided inside

4. **Provides activity options to accommodate children who require more physical activity**
 - Provides appropriate activities indoors for children who require more physical activity e.g. bean bag throw, play dough table, music area, etc.
 - Redirects more active children to appropriate physical activities when needed
5. **Introduces sensory experiences to children and discusses different smells, sights, sounds, tastes and textures with them**
 - Provides a sensory experience at least once a week for children
 - When interacting with children talks about things they see, smell, taste, sound and feel
6. **Gives children time to practice as many self help skills as possible on their own**
 - Allows adequate time for daily routines within the schedule
 - Avoids rushing children through tasks and routines
7. **Gives children many opportunities to practice physical skills to gain confidence and competence**
 - Allows at least one hour of active play each day, split into two separate time periods with at least 30 minutes outdoors, weather permitting (during times of poor air quality, children should not go outside)
 - Practices physical skills with children during transition times
 - Gives frequent opportunities for children to choose activities that refine fine motor skills
8. **Is aware of and has read Utah's Pre-K Guidelines on Physical Development (Only individuals working with pre-school age children)**

STEP THREE:

Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices

1. **Plans and provides a variety of activities, equipment, and experiences that promote physical development, indoors and out**
 - A variety of fine motor activities are available daily, at the children's level e.g., puzzles, manipulatives, art materials and sets of small building toys
 - Supports physical development by providing many opportunities for children to practice age appropriate large motor skills, if they choose
 - Provides sufficient materials to engage all children in motor development during free play or planned large motor activities e.g., balls, hula hoops, jump ropes, climbing equipment, throwing and catching items, wheel toys, etc.
 - Some fine and large motor materials are rotated on at least a monthly basis

2. **Observes children's current physical abilities and plans developmentally appropriate activities to help them develop new skills**
 - Records informal anecdotal, checklists and other observation data concerning each child's current physical skills, evaluates and plans activities to support individual growth
 - Adapts activities based on observation data to meet specific physical needs of individual children
3. **Identifies children that require more physical activity and assists them in finding appropriate activities to meet their needs**
 - Considers specific children's needs when planning routines, schedules and activities
 - Assists active children in finding an appropriate physical activity when needed
 - Understands and implements frequent opportunities for movement and physical exercise as a way to reduce or prevent many of children's health and behavioral issues
4. **Provides a wide variety of experiences to help children develop their senses and creates opportunities for sensory play**
 - Provides activities daily for children to explore textures and differences and similarities in how things look, sound, smell, taste and feel
 - Throughout the day points out environmental sounds, smells, tastes etc. when talking with children
 - Provides activities for children to develop their senses e.g., listening for specific sounds in a story or tape, looking for objects in the environment that are a specific color, identifying smells with their eyes closed, etc.
 - Rotates sensory materials on at least a weekly basis
5. **Uses naturally occurring opportunities to encourage the development of independence in personal care, hygiene, and other self-help skills such as:**
 - Assists children in learning to care for themselves when toileting
 - Encourages children to put on own shoes or coat, empty shoes of sand, or dress themselves
 - Places tissues and garbage cans in several locations within the room and teaches children proper etiquette for sneezing, etc.
 - During hand washing routines uses songs and other means to help children wash for appropriate amounts of time and complete needed steps
 - Provides foods that can be handled easily by children, and utensils and cups at meal times that are easy for them to use

6. **Provides activities that develop dexterity and control needed to use everyday objects**
 - Supply clothing in the dress up area that has buttons, zippers, snaps etc.
 - Equip math area with pegboards, lacing cards, geoboards, etc.
 - Play games or provide materials that develop pincer control e.g., Don't Eat Pete, Ants in My Pants, Hi Ho Cherry O, squeezable objects such as clothespins, tweezers, eye droppers, etc.
 - Provides play objects that require pushing buttons, dialing, opening and closing, etc.
7. **Incorporates Utah Pre-K Guidelines on physical development into classroom and curriculum planning (Only individuals working with pre-school age children)**
 - Has a copy of Utah Pre-K Guidelines and is familiar with them
 - Uses some suggested strategies from the guidelines when planning physical activities for pre-school children
8. **Provides opportunities and encourages children to play non competitive group games and plays with them**
9. **Communicates to children and their parents the importance of outdoor play and physical activity for healthy growth and development**
 - Talks to children about the importance of outdoor and physical activity during group times, routines, and while playing
 - Includes activities that teach about physical activity for healthy growth and development
 - Discusses the importance of outdoor play and physical activity for all age groups with parents, sends home articles or suggestions for activities to do at home with their children for different age groups
10. **Adapts physical activities for children with special needs**
 - Uses adaptive materials and equipment for children with special needs
 - Adapts the environment to be usable for children with special needs ie: arranges space to accommodate walkers/wheelchairs, etc.
 - Makes materials accessible for children with special needs.

STEP FOUR:

Evaluates, Models, Mentors

- 1. Evaluates the effectiveness and appropriateness of physical development activities to meet the needs of individual children**
 - Uses a variety of strategies to teach children physical skills
 - Observes children when engaged in physical activity and documents improvement of physical skills
 - Adapts physical activities according to individual child assessments
- 2. Integrates physical development with the arts and all curriculum areas**
 - Uses music, dance, and movement with children informally and frequently
 - Includes creative movement as a teaching strategy for a variety of physical skills
 - Designs and implements outdoor activities to extend classroom learning experiences
- 3. Models the use of well planned, age appropriate physical activities**
 - Explains to others children's needs for physical activities
 - Demonstrates how to incorporate age appropriate physical activities into the daily routine
 - Demonstrates techniques in carrying out activities that promote physical skills that are age appropriate and effective
- 4. Models methods to adapt physical activities for children with special needs**
 - Has successfully used methods that adapt physical activities for children with special needs and invites others to observe
 - Demonstrates effective strategies for effectively adapting physical activities for children with special needs
- 5. Mentors others in implementing age appropriate physical activities**
 - Provides information on physical development for young children e.g., books, magazine articles, class handouts, etc.
 - Uses current research and best practice information to help others implement age appropriate physical activities for children
 - Assists others in evaluating their current physical activities and developing additional enriching activities for children's physical development

STEP FIVE:

Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates

- 1. Evaluates, analyzes, articulates, and applies current theory and research on promoting physical development**
 - Employs current theory to support practices
 - Compares current theories and research and assists others in finding appropriate information to assist them in their work to help children develop physical skills
- 2. Provides training to others concerning children's physical development**
 - Presents information on how to plan developmentally appropriate physical activities through college courses, community based training, conference presentations, or in-service trainings
 - Uses current research based and best practice information to teach others
 - Uses a variety of teaching methods to appeal to all types of learners
- 3. Works collaboratively with other agencies to research and communicate information about promoting physical development**
 - Develops partnerships with agencies/organizations that can provide assistance in integrating an age appropriate curriculum that promotes best practices in promoting children's physical development
- 4. Advocates in the community for healthy lifestyles and age appropriate physical development within the community, including public education**
 - Works within the community to make information available to promote physical competence for children and wellness within programs
 - Works within the community to promote support for policies that provide opportunities for children to gain physical skills
 - Takes opportunities to educate policy makers regarding the importance of physical activity for children that promotes healthy lifestyles



Promoting Social Development

STEP ONE:

Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

- 1. Demonstrates awareness that children need positive role models to understand appropriate social behavior**
 - Maintains self control when frustrated or angry
 - Defines "positive role model" and gives examples of appropriate social behaviors
- 2. Acknowledges the importance of each child's family and is aware the family forms the basis for children's social development**
 - Talks positively to each child about their family members
 - Makes an effort to know something about each child's family
 - Verbalizes that parents are the most important people in an infant's/child's life

3. Understands that children within a child care setting need to feel valued and develop a sense of belonging within the program in order to feel comfortable

- Greets children by name as they arrive and helps them find an activity
- Acknowledges children's accomplishments
- Provides a space somewhere in the care area where each child can put personal belongings and call their own

4. Invites children to join in play

- Invites children to join in activities or games if they seem hesitant or unsure
- Suggests activities if children are unsure of what they want to do

5. Allows children to talk to and play with each other throughout the day

- When children are using materials or engaged in activities, they are allowed to talk with each other and work together if they choose
- Gives infants opportunities to play near each other every day and does not use cribs, bouncers, exersaucers and swings to restrict infants and toddlers

6. Demonstrates awareness that children are not born with social skills already in place, and need help developing social skills

- Verbalizes an understanding that developing social skills is a process and children may need help in social situations
- Expects there will be some conflict among children and understands this is a typical part of children's development
- Avoids labeling infants and young children when they do not show social awareness of others and does not assume an intent by the child to do harm

STEP TWO:

Beginning to Understand and Apply

1. Models appropriate social behavior for children

- Uses a respectful tone of voice, words, speech, and actions with children and other adults e.g., please, thank you, excuse me, etc.
- Acknowledges and responds appropriately to children when they speak or ask a question
- Does not show impatience, tease, belittle, or use sarcasm with the children or other adults
- Pays attention to infants and toddlers when carrying out routines and treats their bodies gently and with respect e.g., during diapering, hand washing, nap times, greeting, departure, feeding, etc.



2. Supports children in their family relationships and creates familiarity for the child of his first and last name, his parent's names, and names of friends

- Sings songs or plays rhyming games using the children's names
- Provides opportunities for each child to tell others about themselves and their family
- Suggests children draw family pictures, and then ask for parents' names to label their drawings
- Displays pictures of the children and their families within the environment and talks to the children about them
- Infant caregivers understand attachment to a parent is the cornerstone of social development in infants and toddlers and supports the parent and child bond

3. Helps children feel valued as members of the group and talks with them about what is happening in their lives

- Points out each child's strengths to the child and their peers
- Points out similarities the children have with each other and common interests
- Compliments children for positive social behavior
- Talks with children, including infants informally throughout the day e.g., during play time, hand washing, meals, diapering and toileting, greeting, departure, when putting children to sleep, etc.
- Assures every child has an opportunity to be recognized and notices their accomplishments individually and within the group

4. Guides and supports children when joining in play

- Encourages shy or quiet children to interact with others while respecting their personality style and temperament
- Initiates and /or joins in play with a child, draws in other children, and then steps out of the situation

5. Provides opportunities for the children to participate in social play

- Allows time each day for children to engage in play with one another that is not directed by the caregiver
- Encourages peer interaction and helps children learn to listen to and understand others as they communicate during play or when problems arise
- Understands that infants, toddlers and two-year-olds typically do not "play cooperatively," but enjoy playing near other children and provides opportunities for them to interact one with another

6. Teaches social skills as part of the every day curriculum

- Plans opportunities for children to develop social skills within the every day routine and activity plan e.g., uses dramatic play and role playing to address hypothetical social situations, reads stories about pro-social concepts, offers activities that require taking turns, uses puppets to teach appropriate social behavior, engages in group discussions about pro-social behaviors during circle time for older children, shows pictures depicting social situations and talks about them, models pro-social behaviors for children, etc.
- Social expectations for children are based on their different ages and abilities and are appropriate for the children in the group
- Encourages infants and toddlers to use "gentle touch" and models gentle physical interaction

7. Is aware of and has read Utah's Pre-K Guidelines regarding Social Development (Only individuals working with pre-school age children)

STEP THREE:

Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices

1. Interacts consistently in a positive manner with each child, showing genuine interest in what the child says and does

- Addresses every child by name, talks with each child every day, and encourages children to call each other by name
- Has affectionate and appropriate physical contact with each child daily in ways that convey love, affection, and security

- Learns the individual eating and sleeping rhythms of infants and toddlers and their preferences for comforting and approaching new people and experiences
- Responds to infants and toddlers "baby babble" and acknowledges it as social communication, encouraging the child to carry on a "conversation"

2. Supports children's developing awareness of the individual as a member of a family and of an ethnic or social group and is sensitive to different cultural values and expectations

- Is sensitive to differing cultural values and expectations concerning independence and expression of feelings
- Helps children appreciate and accept all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, and ability level
- Helps children connect the similarities they share with other children in the group and appreciate each child's uniqueness
- Selects and includes materials, activities, music, movement activities and display that depict all of the different cultures represented within the group

3. Fosters acceptance by the group through guiding and supporting children in identifying others' social cues and developing positive strategies to resolve social conflicts

- Provides opportunities for children to practice interpreting expressions and gestures during story time, music, art appreciation, and role play
- Coaches children in understanding the verbal and physical cues of others
- Encourages children to tell others how they feel when they are faced with a conflict, or experience success, sadness, or fear
- Guides children through problem solving and conflict resolution interactions
- Explains other children's actions, intentions and feelings to children, including infants and toddlers to help them understand other children's behavior

4. Guides and supports children in developing specific strategies to use to engage in play with others or invite others to play and encourages cooperation amongst children within the social setting

- Models and gives children words they can use to initiate or join in play with others
- Encourages older children to participate in different roles such as being "it" in tag games, dealing cards in card games, or being the patient at the hospital
- Provides some activities or projects children can work on together like a group mural or a cooking experience
- Suggests ways that the children can cooperate to solve a problem or complete a project

5. Encourages play and relationships among all children across racial, language, ethnic, age, gender groupings, and developmental abilities

- Children are not separated, excluded, or grouped based on gender, ethnicity, family structure, appearance, or ability level
- Avoids stereotyping any group and using stereotyping language e.g., "Sit Indian style", "Only girls play with dolls," etc.
- Regularly changes themes or props in dramatic play to attract different children to use them
- Emphasizes cooperation in games and activities and provides many opportunities for cooperative play

6. Provides a meaningful curriculum emphasizing social skills, relationships, and friendships

- Provides sufficient time for children to play and engage in sustained activities
- Allows children to move freely and choose their own activities for the majority of the day, so that natural groupings and interactions can occur between children
- Provides age-appropriate games, materials and activities which help children learn to take turns
- Ensures that meal and snack times are a pleasant social and learning experience for children
- Talks with children often about what it means to be friends, and to treat each other the same way you want to be treated yourself

7. Incorporates Utah Pre-K Guidelines on social development into classroom planning (Only individuals working with pre-school age children)





8. Works to create a caring community within the program by encouraging children to treat each other with kindness and respect, help maintain the area where care is provided, and to give and receive help from others when needed

- Acknowledges children's efforts and persistence when trying a new task
- Models empathy and caring behavior
- Talks with children in group time about what is happening in their lives
- Talks to the children about the importance of including everyone, and how it feels to be left out
- Organizes opportunities for children to carry out tasks or jobs to help maintain the environment
- Teaches children to clean up after themselves within an age appropriate context e.g., put away their own snack dishes, throw away their own garbage, pick up and put away materials they have used, etc.
- Points out and talks about positive social interactions the children engage in as they take place

9. Helps children learn that others have rights and possessions

- Guides children, if necessary, when asserting rights in real situations
- Models and teaches children how to ask permission to use things that belong to others
- Does not require children to share everything and allows children to have temporary ownership of objects
- Is available to help children work out social problems concerning rights and possessions when needed
- Makes children aware of the effect their actions have on others

10. Educates parents about children's stages of social development and typical issues such as separation anxiety, negative behavior, development of autonomy, shyness, and making friends

- Teaches parents about the importance of positive social interactions by modeling appropriate interactions with their children
- Provides guest speakers, training or workshops for parents and staff on issues related to children's social development
- Encourages parents to engage in play and activities with their children at home that help teach their children social skills e.g., plays board games that require turn taking, reads stories with their child depicting positive social behavior and discusses it with them, etc.

11. Recognizes behavior regarding a child's social development that may indicate a need for further evaluation and/or intervention and communicates concerns to appropriate individuals

- Understands typical social development in children
- Collects observational data and uses it to identify areas of potential concern
- Adapts the environment and uses strategies to meet the social development needs of individual children
- Knows what resources are available locally for children with concerns in the social domain and can provide information to parents
- Explains what steps to take if there is a concern, knows who to appropriately talk to about concerns, and maintains confidentiality at all times

STEP FOUR:

Evaluates, Models, Mentors

1. Understands the major theories of child development and how these affect children's social behavior and can communicate this to others

- Explains theories of child development to others to help them connect children's social behaviors to typical development
- Works closely with other individuals to help them understand typical child development and help them reframe their thinking of children's typical social behavior at different ages and stages

2. Models interactions with children for parents and other caregivers that promote social competence

- Demonstrates effective techniques to interact with children that help them develop socially
- Demonstrates effective strategies that make use of a "teaching moment" that teach children social skills vs. disciplining or punishing them

- Provides many opportunities for children to develop social skills each day within the curriculum and schedule

3. Mentors others in creating a caring community within their setting

- Has successfully developed a caring community within the care setting and invites others to observe
- Explains steps to develop a caring community amongst children

4. Mentors others in developing activities that teach social skills as part of the curriculum

- Assists others in evaluating their practices for teaching social skills and developing plans for implementing methods to teach these skills
- Provides current, research-based best practice information on social development and competence ie: books, magazine articles, class handouts, etc.
- Demonstrates techniques and methods to use with children to teach social skills

5. Shares current information on social development with families and other providers

- Discusses social development with parents and staff and how children can be guided to understand appropriate social behavior
- Knows about local resources/workshops that assist parents in learning about children's social development and gives parents information to access training
- Shares articles or other information from research based, best practice resources on children's social development and competence and the role it plays in each child's ability to succeed in other areas

STEP FIVE:

Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates

1. Evaluates, analyzes, articulates, and applies current theory and research on promoting social development

- Employs current theory to support practices
- Compares current theories and research and assists others in finding appropriate information to assist them in their work concerning aspects of social development and/or competence

2. Teaches others the process for developing curriculum that promotes social competence

- Works with others individually to assist them in developing curriculum that promotes social competence
- Teaches classes on how to develop curriculum that promotes social competence in venues such as community based training, workshops, or college courses

3. Provides training to others concerning children's social competence and how to respond to children's typical and atypical social development

- Presents information about children's social development and how to plan a developmentally appropriate curriculum to help children develop social skills through college courses, community based training, conference presentations, or in-service trainings
- Researches and writes curriculum that focuses on social development and competence and how to help young children develop optimally
- Uses research based and best practice information to teach others
- Uses a variety of teaching methods to appeal to all types of learners

4. Collaborates with other professionals to integrate best practice regarding social development into early care and youth programs and the community

- Develops partnerships with agencies/organizations that can provide assistance in integrating an age appropriate curriculum that promotes best practice to maximize social development in the children in the program
- Works with agencies/organizations that provide assistance for children struggling with social skills/development and finds ways to assist both the families and the child to develop needed skills

5. Advocates for better understanding of the importance of social competence and how it affects other areas of children's lives and the community

- Works within the community to promote support for policies that strengthen and promote social competence in children
- Takes opportunities to educate policy makers regarding the importance of social competence for young children and the impact poor social skills may have on a child throughout their lifetime.



Promoting Cognitive Development

STEP ONE:

Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

1. **Demonstrates awareness of the importance to be near to, supervise, and give children support as they play**
 - Remains in close proximity to the children as they play
 - Encourages and supports children in pursuit of their interests
2. **Demonstrates awareness of the importance of repetition for children's learning**
 - Repeats songs, rereads books and allows children to repeat activities they have enjoyed
3. **Provides opportunities for children to choose activities**
 - Allows children to self select activities at least part of the day
4. **Demonstrates awareness of the importance of children's curiosity**
 - Does not "shush" children or ignore them when they ask questions
 - Avoids showing irritation or annoyance when children ask questions
 - Expects children to talk, play and closely examine things they are interested in
5. **Defines the word "cognitive" and what it means in relation to children's development**
 - Describes some of the cognitive abilities of the children in the group
6. **Demonstrates awareness that children learn by doing**
 - Provides opportunities for children to use materials independently
 - Allows children to get "messy"
 - Limits use of group times to older children
7. **Demonstrates awareness that adults can reinforce children's learning**
 - Gives examples of how a caregiver supports children's learning
8. **Uses TV, video and/or computers sparingly and pre-views such materials to assure they contain no content that is violent, frightening, sexually inappropriate or culturally insensitive**
 - TV is used only to support curriculum e.g., music and movement videos, movies that support a concept being taught, etc.

- Assures children do not view inappropriate media materials, including frightening animated movies (See above)
- Computer games/programs are educational
 - Provides desirable choices for children who may not want to engage in media related activities
 - No TV or videos are not used with children under three years of age

STEP TWO:

Beginning to Understand and Apply

1. **Engages with children as an interested play partner**
 - Joins in activities with children
 - Allows children to lead play and responds to their cues e.g., a toddler hands a dress up item to a caregiver and she puts it on the child, a child pretends to take pictures and the caregiver poses, reads a book when a child asks them to or brings it to them, etc.
2. **Provides opportunities for children to repeat familiar and favorite activities**
 - Explains the value of repetition in relation to brain development
 - Provides favorite materials and activities daily
3. **Recognizes that children's concrete experiences and play contribute to their learning**
 - Explains the difference between active and passive learning and gives examples of each
 - Encourages active learning, rather than emphasizing that children listen passively to adults
4. **Encourages children to ask questions and responds to questions they may have**
 - Is attentive to children's questions and responds positively
5. **Provides materials for children with differing ability levels**
 - Points out at least three examples within the environment of materials of differing ability levels
 - Provides open ended materials that can be used by children of all abilities



6. **Understands how play promotes cognitive development**
 - Explains the relationship between play and children's learning
 - Provides materials that children can explore and master by themselves
 - Familiarizes children with mathematical language as they play e.g., bigger than, more than, as many as, etc.
7. **Shows interest in children's activities, accomplishments and discoveries**
 - Encourages children to talk about their experiences and observations
 - Shares excitement in children's discoveries
 - Acknowledges children's creations, work and play
8. **Is aware of and has read Utah's Pre-K Guidelines for cognitive development in Math, Literacy and Approaches to Learning (Only individuals working with pre-school age children)**
9. **Notices differences in individual children's learning patterns**
 - Understands that children develop at their own rate
 - Shares concerns about a child's development with an appropriate individual

STEP THREE:

Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices

1. **Interacts consistently in a positive manner with each child, showing genuine interest in what the child says and does, and asks open-ended questions**
 - Provides descriptive words for children, especially infants and toddlers, and describes what they see happening in the environment
 - Talks informally with children during play activities about concepts and logical relationships e.g., points out differences in the sizes of blocks children are using, wonders with the children why the snow on our shoes melts when we come inside, points out similarities and differences in the color and shape of play materials, etc.
 - Asks questions that have more than one answer and encourages children to speculate, guess or talk about their ideas e.g., "What do you think might happen if...?" or "How do you think he felt when...?" etc.
2. **Revisits learning activities with children so they can reflect and build on previous learning to develop and refine thinking skills**
 - Asks children questions that encourage them to reflect on past experiences
 - Uses routine daily activities to enhance children's learning e.g., counting the number of cups or spoons as children help get ready for snack, sorting items by a particular characteristic (color, size, shape) as children clean up, etc.
 - Supports children's repetitions of the familiar and introduces new experiences, activities and materials when children are interested and ready
 - Plans opportunities for children to revisit experiences over periods of days, weeks, and/or months
3. **Provides concrete experiences and activities that strengthen children's cognitive development**
 - Provides hands on activities that develop cognitive skills in children e.g., materials children can manipulate, match, sort, fit together, etc.
 - Provides a running commentary during routines and daily activities
 - Provides a variety of learning situations e.g., individual/group, active/quiet

4. Plans appropriate blocks of time for children to self select activities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem solving appropriate to the developmental levels, interests and learning styles of each child

- Allows plenty of time for active, hands-on play in which children can make their own discoveries
- Offers children the opportunity to choose among several activities
- Reduces distractions and interruptions so that children have opportunities to extend their attention span and persist at a self chosen activity

5. Leads math, science, and nature exploration in response to children's emerging interests

- Observes children and talks with them to find out their interests and plans age appropriate activities in science, math and nature to support them
- Engages children in activities that support scientific thinking and inquiry e.g., collecting, comparing, investigating, problem-solving, predicting, observing, exploring, and reporting
- Engages children in activities and provides materials that support mathematical thinking e.g., counting, sorting, measuring, matching, comparing, charting, moving in space, etc.
- Provides age appropriate daily opportunities for children to interact with the natural world e.g., takes children on nature walks, collects natural objects with the children, makes nature collages, encourages children to bring in nature materials to share with the class, provides natural objects within the environment such as plants, a class pet, collections of natural objects such as sea shells or rocks for children to examine with magnifying glasses, etc.

6. Provides opportunities for children to raise questions about the world around them and to investigate their questions using developmentally appropriate, open ended, hands on experiences

- Responds to questions in ways that extend children's thinking e.g., "That's a good question; let's see if we can find out."
- Respects the ideas children come up with and allows them to act on them
- Helps children feel good about expressing their ideas and solving problems on their own
- Plans activities to engage children in problem solving and constructing their own knowledge
- Engages in collaborative inquiry with the children



7. Provides opportunities for children to discuss, organize, compare and contrast thoughts, words, objects, and sensations and to solve problems

- Provides a wide variety of age appropriate math and science materials and activities that are accessible to children for the majority of the day and are rotated at least monthly e.g., children have opportunities to compare likenesses and differences, sort and classify, to make predictions, recognize shapes, develop seriation and sequencing skills, measure, etc.
- Helps children explore concepts such as space, time, shape, and quantity in meaningful ways through direct experiences

8. Recognizes and plans for differences in children's ability levels and individual learning styles and finds ways to work effectively with each child

- Explains cognitive development and the relationship of children's earliest experiences to their individual differences
- Offers play/learning materials in each area that address varying skill levels
- Varies teaching strategies to correspond to multiple learning styles
- Adapts materials, equipment, environment, and caregiver interactions to meet specific children's abilities and interests

9. Understands the effect TV, video and/or computers can have on children's cognitive development, considers this when pre-viewing and selecting such materials, and carefully monitors the amount of time each child uses them

- Uses technology/media appropriately to extend children's learning
- Provides guidelines for the amount of time children may use the computer or other media materials and finds ways to assure that they are not overused by any one child
- Provides many desirable choices for children that do not want to watch TV

10. Collects examples/observation records that document children's cognitive development

- Understands typical cognitive development in children
- Uses observational data to plan for curriculum, identify a child's strengths and identify areas of potential concern
- Knows what resources are available locally for children with concerns in the cognitive domain and can provide information to parents

11. Incorporates Utah's Pre-K Guidelines for Math and Approaches to Learning into curriculum plans (Only individuals working with pre-school age children)

STEP FOUR:
Evaluates, Models, Mentors

1. Understands and communicates the major theories of child development in relation to children's cognitive development

- Explains stages of children's cognitive development to others
- Articulates the major theories of children's development and learning and applies them to diverse settings

2. Evaluates the effectiveness and appropriateness of cognitive development activities to meet the needs of individual children and adapts planning accordingly

- Identifies and communicates skills fostered in each learning area
- Evaluates individual learning in children

3. Models appropriate adult-child interactions that promote cognitive development for other adults

- Demonstrates the use of effective open-ended questions
- Shows how to effectively become involved in children's play without taking over

- Demonstrates effective strategies that capitalize on children's individual discoveries and "Ah Ha" moments

4. Models the use of age appropriate cognitive activities that promote thinking in children

- Demonstrates techniques to use with children that promote cognitive development and problem solving
- Integrates many daily opportunities for children to develop cognitive skills within the curriculum and schedule and invites others to observe

5. Mentors others in creating an environment that encourages active exploration and learning

- Assists others in evaluating their current activities and developing activities based on active exploration and learning
- Provides current, research-based information on cognitive development and active learning to protégés e.g., books, magazine articles, media materials, etc.
- Provides technical assistance in order to help others develop open-ended, child-oriented activities that promote thinking in children

6. Uses research information on technology to communicate appropriate use of TV, video and computers for children

- Discusses appropriate use of technology (television, videos, DVDs, computers, etc.) with families and other professionals
- Teaches others how to select media materials that promote active involvement for children

7. Shares current information on cognitive development with families and other professionals in the field

- Promotes the importance of helping children develop critical thinking skills in a developmentally appropriate manner
- Shares information about cognitive development in a number of ways e.g., verbally explains information, gives articles, posts information for parents or other staff to view or take, directs others to relevant web sites, etc.
- Educates parents about trends, fads or gimmicks that may be ineffective or harmful to children's optimal growth and cognitive development



STEP FIVE:

*Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates***1. Evaluates, analyzes, articulates, and applies current theory and research on promoting cognitive development**

- Utilizes current theory and research on cognitive development
- Evaluates cognitive development activities and compares current theories and research to assist others in effectively facilitating cognitive development activities

2. Provides training to others concerning cognitive development and how to set up an environment that promotes child exploration and problem solving

- Presents information on ways to promote critical thinking in children and how to set up environments that provide opportunities for children to learn through active exploration through college courses, community based training, conference presentations, or in-service trainings
- Uses research based and best practice information to teach others
- Includes approaches to scientific thinking and problem solving in teaching practices

3. Keeps up to date on current research regarding the effects of TV, video and/or computers and teaches others how the use of these can affect children's learning and development

- Maintains current, reliable information concerning the effects of media on children's development and uses it to convey information to others
- Helps others understand how to effectively use media as a teaching tool

4. Collaborates with other professionals to integrate best practice regarding cognitive development into early care and youth programs

- Consults with early care and youth professionals and other agencies that serve children to find ways to assist programs in developing appropriate cognitive activities
- Works collaboratively with community resources and agencies to research and communicate information on cognitive development

5. Advocates for better understanding of the importance of developmentally appropriate activities and play experiences that foster learning and development

- Works within the community to promote support for policies that promote learning for children through active exploration and hands-on activities
- Develops partnerships with agencies/organizations that can provide help for families who's children may be experiencing learning difficulties
- Provides training on forming partnerships to more effectively serve the same child e.g., early intervention and child care work together to help a child



Promoting Language and Literacy Development

STEP ONE:

*Building Basic Knowledge and Skills***1. Verbally interacts with children**

- Sings songs or does finger plays with children
- Gives positive verbal direction
- Understands crying is a form of communication and does not ignore children when they cry or speak

2. Uses appropriate language in the work environment

- Uses a pleasant tone of voice
- Does not use sarcasm with children
- Does not use words that may be offensive to others

3. Comments on sounds that may be heard in the environment**4. Allows the children to look at books****5. Provides writing materials and paper for older children to use**

- Allows children to use some type of writing paper and utensil of their choosing e.g., crayon, pencil, pen, colored pencil, etc.

6. Allows children to talk with each other during meals and other times during the day

- Does not discourage or stop children from talking to each other during each activity and routine, except during rest time
- Does not punish children for talking to each other

7. Demonstrates awareness that children sometimes make common grammatical mistakes when learning language

- Understands grammatical mistakes are part of typical language development
- Accepts children's grammatical mistakes without correction

8. Demonstrates awareness that children benefit from exposure to print, pictures and symbols

- Notices children are able to identify logos and other types of symbols that have significance to them

STEP TWO:

*Beginning to Understand and Apply***1. Listens to and talks with children**

- Speaks on a language level the children can understand
- Exchanges conversation with children
- Acknowledges infants' coos or babbles and children's comments, feelings, thoughts and ideas by listening, responding appropriately, and taking turns with the child
- Limits social conversations between caregivers so there is more time to converse with children

2. Speaks in a way that is understood by children

- Speaks clearly
- Uses words that are part of a child's every day experiences

3. Points out sounds to children or asks children questions about what they hear**4. Provides books in the environment and reads to children**

- Makes books available to children daily and allows children opportunities to choose their own books and look at them independently
- Reads to children at least once during the day

5. Schedules some time for children to play together in small groups where they can carry on conversations

- Does not require children to sit in group times for long periods of time without opportunities to interact or talk to one another
- Provides at least two one hour time periods or more during the day when children can choose their activities and playmates (In a full day program)

6. Demonstrates realistic expectations for children's understanding and use of speech

- Has completed training on children's typical language development
- Identifies ways infants and children communicate both verbally and non-verbally
- When children make grammatical mistakes, the caregiver does not correct them, but instead repeats the words or phrase correctly

7. Provides some environmental print

- Items belonging to children are labeled with their names
- Displays some print, pictures and symbols within the environment

8. Provides opportunities for children to see writing and use beginning writing skills

- Encourages children to write and provides age appropriate opportunities to experiment with writing as they show interest
- Validates children's attempts at writing and pre-writing scribbles

9. Knows that children who are English Language Learners or children with disabilities may need more assistance with development of language and develops strategies to communicate with them

- Learns key words from parents in the child's first language to better meet children's immediate needs e.g., bathroom, eat, sleep
- Develops simple ways to communicate non-verbally with children who do not understand the language spoken in the classroom e.g., modeling, pictures, sign language, etc.

10. Shares children's communication/language achievements with parents

- This can be done in a number of ways e.g., talking with parents in informal conversations when they drop off or pick up their child, writing notes to the parent, in parent-teacher conferences, etc.

11. Is aware of and has read Utah's Pre-K Guidelines regarding Language and Literacy Development (Only individuals working with pre-school age children)**STEP THREE:***Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices***1. Actively communicates with children and interacts in ways that promote the development of expressive language and thought**

- Talks with children throughout the day, including during routines, transitions, large and small group activities, outside, and one on one conversations
- Gets down on children's level to talk with them
- Plays and interacts with children, asking open-ended questions e.g., what, where, why, how, and what if questions
- Uses descriptive words as opportunities arise during the day, talks about things children see, helps children name things, describes actions for children, and helps children connect word meanings to experiences and real objects

2. Understands the caregiver's role as a language model for children and uses affectionate and playful tones, clear speech, and responsive conversation

- Speaks in simple sentences of varying lengths
- Recognizes, understands, and respects local speech patterns and idioms and can effectively communicate so the children can understand
- Models good listening and speaking behaviors e.g., does not interrupt others, does not use baby talk with children, does not mimic or tease children when they speak incorrectly, etc.
- Recognizes and practices conversational turn taking with children e.g., repeats the sounds babies and toddlers make in playful conversations, uses words to describe a child's actions, and adds words to what children are saying
- Uses non-verbal cues to help children understand what is being communicated e.g., pictures, touch on shoulder, sign language, eye contact, etc.

3. Provides activities that encourage children to develop listening and comprehension skills

- Plays games with older children such as Simon Says or Mother May I, which require listening, and/or games with babies and toddlers such as Peek-a-Boo, This Little Piggy, etc.
- Provides listening opportunities for the children e.g., a listening center for older children with a variety of stories, songs, and books, provides opportunities for older children to listen and respond during stories, songs and games, provides noise making toys for infants and toddlers, sings, reads books, plays games, etc.
- Encourages children to take turns talking and listening
- Finds ways to ensure each child has an opportunity to talk and share their thoughts and ideas

4. Provides an attractive, comfortable area with a wide variety of books for children to enjoy and reads out loud to children frequently

- Provides at least one protected, soft, cozy, and comfortable space for children
- Places books at the children's level in an organized manner and in a way that attracts their interest
- Maintains a wide selection of appropriate books about a variety of topics accessible to children for the majority of the day
- Reads to children both at planned story times and spontaneously throughout the day, asks children questions about what is happening, re-reads favorite stories, and models a love of books
- There are many types of books available e.g., fiction, non-fiction, poetry, pictures, nursery rhymes, etc. and they are rotated on at least a monthly basis
- Gives age appropriate books to non-mobile infants

5. Provides blocks of time for uninterrupted play with a number of open ended play options that encourage the use of language and other forms of communication

- Arranges the schedule to allow children many opportunities to talk with each other each day
- Encourages and supports children's verbal interactions with one another, sometimes providing help with peer communications
- Provides age appropriate materials that encourage the use of language or helps children engage in language concepts e.g., dramatic play props, puppets, three dimensional letters for exploration and sorting, use of a word wall, art materials e.g., letter play-doh molds, letter shaped sponges for painting, etc.

6. Immerses children in a print-rich environment

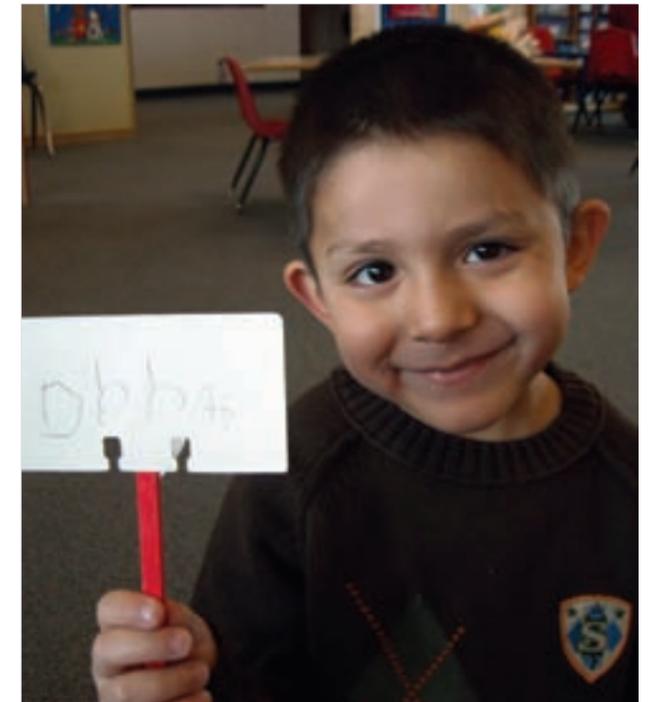
- Labels centers and materials with picture symbols and words
- Uses print to describe routines, rules, and materials
- Much of the display such as posters, pictures, and bulletin boards include print
- Provides print in each learning center e.g., menus, phone books, receipts in dramatic play area, materials to make signs in the block area, materials in the art area that promote language, etc.

7. Helps children develop awareness of the relationship between spoken and printed words

- Models writing for children e.g., writes down stories dictated by children, labels children's drawings (with children's permission), makes lists, writes down things they remember about recent experiences, points to words as they are read in a book, points to pictures for infants and toddlers, etc.
- Conveys to children that print helps us acquire information e.g., reads rules for a game out loud, reads a recipe out loud, points out symbols or words on a sign, reads procedures for putting something together out loud, etc.

8. Provides developmentally appropriate reading and writing materials and activities in the program and integrates them into activity/learning areas in a developmentally appropriate manner

- Understands stages of children's reading and writing development
- Exposes children to plenty of rhythm, rhyme, and repetition in stories, songs, finger plays, poems, and nursery rhymes
- Reading and/or writing materials and activities are readily available in art, dramatic play, blocks, and other learning centers (for pre-school age children)



- Plans activities that help children develop phonemic awareness and alphabet knowledge as well as other concepts of literacy and pre-reading and writing skills e.g., print conveys a story, print is read from top to bottom and left to right, books have sequences such as a beginning, middle, and end, etc.
- Encourages children's writing through a variety of methods e.g., provides a writing center stocked with a variety of materials, tools and mediums for writing, provides journal writing opportunities, children sign themselves in each day, children may write notes to each other, thank you notes or invitations, includes writing experiences as part of the daily routine, provides models of writing, provides materials for toddlers to scribble, etc.

9. Uses concrete experiences and play to enhance and extend children's language development and early literacy e.g., songs, stories, books, and games-including those from the children's cultures

- Uses age appropriate techniques to support language and literacy such as reading, singing, talking, labeling, and words and picture recognition
- Plans and implements language experiences and activities
- Promotes literacy-related play activities that encourage children's attempts at writing and storytelling

10. Incorporates Utah Pre-K Guidelines on language and literacy into program and curriculum planning (Only individuals working with pre-school age children)

11. Develops strategies to communicate with and support second language learners and children with special needs

- Slows down the rate of singing and speaking for children with language delays and for English Language Learners (could make a recording of favorite songs, finger plays and stories at a slower speed)
- Values and encourages children in the development of their home language e.g., labels some things in the environment in the child's home language, supplies books and plays music in the languages of the children in the group
- If possible, asks a child or another staff member to translate or speak to the child in their home language



- e.g., pictures or a picture schedule, sign language, pointing or gesturing, etc.
- Explains actions and uses gestures as an activity happens and uses language directly connected to the objects or the action

12. Recognizes and responds to the general warning signs of hearing problems or communication/language delays and disorders for children of various ages

- Understands typical language development of children
- Writes down observational data to support any concerns
- Knows what resources are available locally for speech and hearing assessment and intervention and can provide information to parents
- Explains what steps to take if there is a concern, knows who to appropriately talk to about concerns, and never makes a diagnosis

STEP FOUR:

Evaluates, Models, Mentors

1. Evaluates the effectiveness of language and literacy activities for children

- Uses ongoing assessment and evaluation to adapt and modify interactions to meet the specific language development needs of individual children
- Evaluates the effectiveness of language and literacy activities and modifies as needed

2. Models appropriate verbal and written communication skills for children and adults

- Uses appropriate language and proper grammar when speaking to parents, children, other staff or protégés
- Proper spelling and punctuation is used in all written communication and print displayed in the program and the words and letters are legible.

3. Mentors other professionals in developing activities that teach language and literacy skills and in creating a language rich environment

- Assists others in evaluating their current language and literacy activities and developing additional activities to help children develop language and literacy
- Explains the stages of reading and writing to others
- Provides age appropriate information on language, literacy and writing e.g., books, magazine articles, class handouts, etc.
- Demonstrates age appropriate techniques to use with children to promote language and literacy

4. Shares current information on language and literacy development with families and other providers

- Shares information from current, researched based sources
- Informs others about the importance of adult-child and child-child interactions in children's language development
- Encourages and offers simple parent-child language and literacy activities
- Responds to language differences and literacy abilities of families in printed materials sent home with children

STEP FIVE:

Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates

1. Evaluates, analyzes, articulates, and applies current theory and research on emerging trends in language acquisition, development, and early literacy

- Employs current theory and research to support practices
- Compares current theories and research to make decisions concerning language and literacy curriculum

2. Teaches others the process for developing curriculum that promotes language and literacy development

- Uses research based, best practice information to teach others how to design curriculum consistent with current theories of language use and acquisition
- Provides technical assistance to others in developing language and literacy activities or selecting language and literacy materials

3. Collaborates with language specialists to modify and adapt curriculum activities and experiences to meet the developing language and literacy needs of each child

- Consults with language professionals when concerns arise in regard to language/communication issues to determine the best course of action for individual children e.g., speech therapists, sign language interpreters, speech pathologists, etc

4. Collaborates with other professionals to integrate best practice regarding language and literacy development into early care and youth programs and the community

- Develops partnerships with agencies/organizations that can provide help or resources for early care and youth professionals to improve practices in language and literacy development



5. Teaches others about children's language development and how adults can appropriately support children as they grow and develop

- Presents information on ways to promote language development and literacy in children through college courses, community based training, conference presentations, or in-service trainings
- Teaches others about the stages of reading and writing in children
- Uses current, research based information when teaching others

6. Advocates for programs that promote oral language and literacy

- Develops family and community awareness about the importance of reading to young children
- Works within the community to promote support for policies that strengthen early intervention initiatives for children with communication/language delays



Creative Expression and Fine Arts

STEP ONE:

Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

1. **Provides opportunities for children to use art materials every day**
 - There is time for children to color, paint, glue or participate in some type of art activity
2. **Uses music in the program in some way each day**
 - Provides music opportunities e.g., plays music for children during specific times, sings and does finger plays and/or uses musical instruments with children each day
3. **Prepares movement and/or dance activities at least weekly**
 - Encourages children to respond through movement to music of various tempos, types, and styles
4. **Provides opportunities for children to engage daily in dramatic play**
 - Children can choose to engage in make believe play during free time

5. **Explains the difference between the process of creating and the product**

STEP TWO:

Beginning to Understand and Apply

1. **Provides opportunities for children to use some art materials independently**
 - All art opportunities are not directed by the adult e.g., children are not told what they must make or required to complete a “project” the adult dictates
 - Some art materials are accessible to children to use during free choice times
2. **Sings with the children throughout the day and provides opportunities for the children to experiment with instruments**
 - Sings during transition times, group times, spontaneously, and other times
 - Provides weekly opportunities for children to use instruments e.g., allows children to experiment independently, creates a marching band, encourages children to play along with the rhythm of a song, etc.
3. **Dances or participates in movement activities with the children**
 - Implements opportunities at least weekly to participate in both teacher initiated and child initiated activities
 - Includes rich stimuli for dance or movement including recorded music, props that inspire children to move in different ways, imitation activities, etc.
 - Includes movement vocabulary during movement activities e.g., fast/slow, high/low, smooth/bumpy, etc.
4. **Participates in dramatic play with the children**
 - Follows the children’s lead in make believe play while not taking over
 - Provides puppets and props to act out stories and role plays
5. **Provides time for the children to become completely involved in the process and experience of creating and gives them ample time to finish their creative work**
 - Does not require children to finish a project or do things one way
 - Children are not hurried or rushed through art experiences
6. **Plans for some art, music, dance and make believe experiences**
 - Plans experiences into the activity plan that include art, music, dance and make believe
 - Plans “arts” experiences that are relevant and age appropriate

7. **Uses the cultures of the families and the community as a resource for creative experiences**

- Keeps informed about cultural resources in the community and uses them with children whenever possible
- Asks parents for input concerning their culture and incorporates different ideas into creative experiences

8. **Values children’s creative art work and displays it in the child care setting**

- Attractively displays children’s art work at their eye level

9. **Shares children’s creative activities with parents**

- Shares creative work in a number of ways e.g., displays work in the child care setting, collects some art work throughout the year in a portfolio and shares it with the parent at parent teacher conferences, invites parents to participate in creative work with children, verbally shares a child’s creative moments with parents (what they did in the dramatic play area or in a dance), takes pictures or video tapes children involved in dance/movement or dramatic play and displays them within the environment, etc.

STEP THREE:

Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices

1. **When age appropriate, provides an art center with a variety of art materials where children can actively engage in open ended art activities**

- Sets up an art center in the environment where children may independently use art materials of their choosing
- Provides a variety of non-toxic, open-ended materials in the art center e.g., various kinds of paper, glue, crayons, markers, chalk, collage materials, colored pencils, paint and paint brushes, yarn, felt, scissors, paper punches, clay or play doh and accessories, etc.
- Does not show or expect specific models for children to follow in their creative work

2. **Encourages and integrates creative expression throughout the curriculum**

- Uses art, music, and dramatic play as a springboard for language and conversation
- Modifies curriculum and experiences to promote creative expression
- Uses homemade materials and found objects
- Avoids the use of ditto sheets, coloring books, and finished product patterns
- The majority of art opportunities in the program support individual expression

3. **Frequently provides open-ended opportunities for children to express their creativity through language, music and dance, dramatic play, and art media**

- Allows time for spontaneous and extended play within the daily routine
- Provides a variety of music and movement activities including listening, singing, finger plays, games and performances e.g., different music selections, including music from different cultures, during circle time and transitions, uses musical instruments, provides age appropriate props to use with music experiences such as scarves, streamers, bean bags, musical games such as hokey pokey or Farmer in the Dell, claps rhythmic patterns to music, etc.
- Extends children’s make believe play by introducing new materials into their play
- Creates alternative settings in the dramatic play area e.g., post office, dance studio, hair salon, restaurant, grocery store, space ship, camping, etc.

4. **Carefully avoids gender stereo-typing in play and educates parents about the value of all types of play for both boys and girls**

- Does not present any activity as only for boys or girls or prevent a child from using any materials based on their gender
- Makes materials equally accessible to both boys and girls
- Provides and rotates a variety of dress-up clothes and other props for all children
- Gives parents information about supporting children’s interests and allowing play of all types for both boys and girls e.g., provides written information to parents such as articles in the newsletter or articles from magazines, talks to parents about the avoidance of gender stereotyping within the program, etc.

5. **Understands that each child’s creative expression is unique and does not require uniformity**

- Provides opportunities that encourage children to play with sound, rhythm, language, materials, space and ideas in individual ways
- Encourages children to use their individual self expression and conveys the idea that there is not one “right way” to do anything

6. **Integrates a variety of music, art, literature, dance, role playing, and other creative activities from varied cultures in program activities**

- Accepts cultural differences that may affect children’s ways of expressing themselves creatively
- Invites parents or guests to share creative activities from their culture with the children

7. **Using specific examples, is able to explain how children represent their thoughts, feelings, and ideas through creative outlets**
8. **Evaluates the effectiveness and appropriateness of creative development activities to meet the interests and needs of individual children and makes appropriate adaptations**
 - Observes children to evaluate the effectiveness of creative activities and uses the information to plan future experiences
 - Knows the children's individual preferences for creative experiences and makes plans for children individually
9. **Helps parents understand the importance of creative expression in children's development, including process vs. product**
 - Educates the parents about the importance of creative activities in a variety of ways e.g., Provides parents with written information in newsletters, gives them articles or suggests books about how creative expression affects children's development, talks to them about why the program does creative activities, explains the concept of the process of doing creative activities is more important to the child's development than the product they produce, involves parents in creative activities with their children, etc.

STEP FOUR:*Evaluates, Models, Mentors*

1. **Models the use of age appropriate creative activities that promote children's individual expression**
 - Explains the value of creative activities and what children gain from them
 - Demonstrates how to effectively use an art center that is child oriented
 - Demonstrates techniques in carrying out creative experiences with children that are age appropriate and effective
2. **Mentors others in creating an environment that encourages creativity and individual expression**
 - Provides technical assistance to others in developing age appropriate creative activities for children
 - Assists others in evaluating the effectiveness of creative development activities in their program
 - Explains the difference between the process of creative experiences and the product that is produced and helps others understand this concept
 - Helps others select creative materials such as musical instruments, movement props, and art materials appropriate for the children in the group

3. **Understands and explains the value of creative development activities for children and how these activities affect children's development**
 - Explains to parents, class participants, staff or others how children use creative activities to express themselves

STEP FIVE:*Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates*

1. **Evaluates, analyzes, articulates, and applies current theory and research on promoting creative experiences in early care and youth programs**
 - Employs current theory and research concerning best practice, age appropriate creative expression for children
 - Compares current theories and research and assists others in finding the most appropriate creative experiences for the children they work with
2. **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**
 - Uses research based and best practice information to teach others the value of creative expression and how to incorporate art and creative activities in a developmentally appropriate way that allows children to express their individuality
3. **Collaborates with other professionals to integrate best practice regarding creative development into early care and youth programs within the community**
 - Develops partnerships with agencies/organizations that can provide resources to help with incorporating creative activities into the program effectively
4. **Advocates for the "arts" as a valuable part of a child's development**
 - Works within the individual program and the community to make information available about the importance of creative activities for children and educating the "whole" child
 - Works within the community to promote support for policies that support creative expression activities for children, in both private and public education

**Observation and Assessment****STEP ONE:***Building Basic Knowledge and Skills*

1. **Demonstrates awareness that all people have personal biases**
 - Recognizes that life experiences affect how we view others
2. **Informally observes children's behavior**
 - Verbally describes children's behavior at certain times during the day
 - Describes noticeable changes in children's development over time
3. **Begins to make anecdotal observations**
 - Shares personal observations of children with their parents
4. **Maintains child related records**
 - Records information for individual children e.g., diaper changing, feeding schedules, accident reports, etc.
5. **Defines diagnosis vs. personal opinion**
 - Understands the role of the caregiver is not to diagnose disabilities or medical conditions
 - Knows that objective, factual information may be shared with a parent concerning their child
6. **Maintains confidentiality concerning child observation and assessment information**

STEP TWO:*Beginning to Understand and Apply*

1. **Realizes personal biases may affect how a child and his family are viewed**
 - Identifies own individual personal biases
 - Explains how personal biases may affect children and families in their care
 - Explains measures taken to learn to work effectively with all children and parents
2. **Recognizes the importance of objectively observing and documenting children's behaviors and interests and seeks more information on proper methods of observation and documentation**
 - Completes training on objective observation techniques
 - Seeks guidance and support from other professionals as needed in relation to observation and documentation
 - Explains the purpose and value of recording observations of children
 - Defines the terms "objective" and "subjective"
3. **Collects work samples or observations that provide information about each child**
 - Collects samples of each child's developmental progress e.g., art work, dictated or written stories, writing samples, photographs, recordings, etc.
 - Has developed a system for collection and storage of children's work samples and observations
4. **Identifies various ways to get to know each child as an individual, including strengths, needs, interests, family and life situations**
 - Gives examples of methods used to get to know the children in the group
5. **Provides verbal and/or written information to parents and/or supervisors based on personal observations and interactions regarding a child**
 - Sends notes home with parents sharing anecdotal information about their child
 - Has informal conversations with parents at drop off and pick up times and shares positive information about what they have observed about their child
 - Explains why observation and assessment information should be shared with families in a sensitive and supportive manner
6. **Shares information regarding individual children or youth behavior/development to appropriate individuals**
 - Uses recorded documentation to support shared information e.g., strengths, abilities, concerns, interests, etc.

STEP THREE:

Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices

- 1. Understands and uses different types of observational assessment methods**
 - Effectively utilizes an array of observation and assessment tools e.g., running record, anecdotal, time sampling, checklists, surveys, etc.
 - Selects appropriate observation and assessment methods for the individual child and the situation
 - Uses culturally and gender-equitable assessment tools
- 2. Reflects on personal biases in order to objectively observe and assess children**
 - Explains an understanding of the influences of environmental factors, cultural/linguistic differences, and diverse ways of learning in a child's development
 - Explains how personal biases may affect objectivity in observation and assessment of children
- 3. Observes and records the growth, behavior and progress of each child and shares the information with appropriate individuals both verbally and in writing**
 - Uses observation on a regular basis to document children's growth and development including; social/emotional, physical, cognitive, language, and creative
 - Utilizes child assessment information for fostering growth, development, and learning
 - Based on assessment results, establishes next steps for individual children



4. Objectively observes and documents children's activities and interactions with others

- Observation documents convey only objective words and there are no judgmental statements in them
- Is consistently objective when recording information about every child

5. Uses work samples and observations to share children's progress and with parents

- Maintains a collection of work samples and records of varying types of observations for each child e.g., pictures, written observations, tape recordings, etc.
- Schedules time with parents to review work samples and observations

6. Recognizes observation is an on-going process and develops and follows a schedule of recording development and behavior

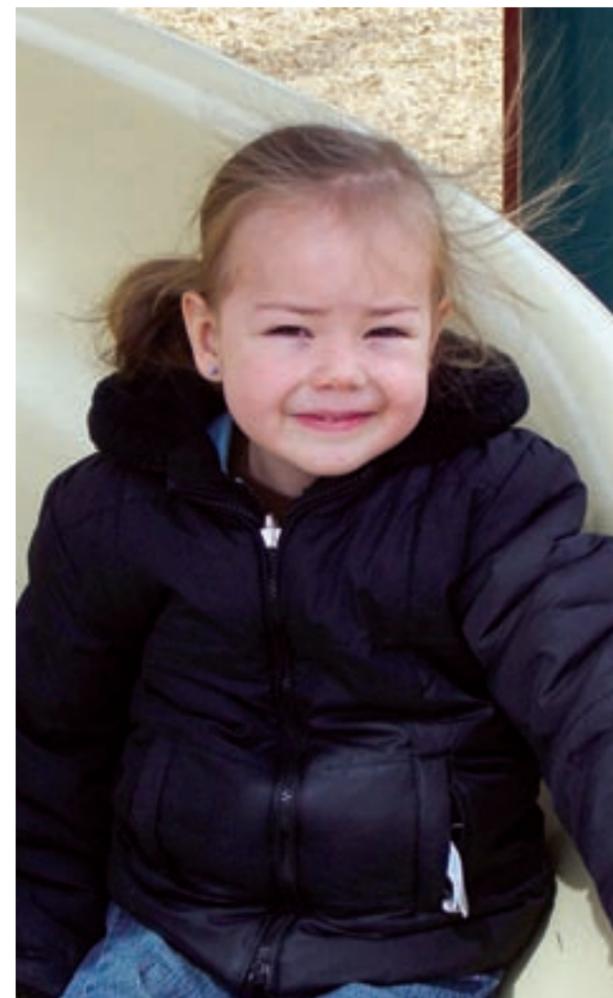
- Explains the importance of ongoing assessment to other professionals and families
- Creates and implements a system to assure that observation data for all children is consistently completed
- Continually observes children, analyzes and evaluates findings, and applies this knowledge to practice

7. Evaluates observation data to guide personal or program practices with individual children as well as planning for curriculum and group activities

- Uses formal and informal assessment for individualizing curriculum, adapting/modifying for individual differences, and for identifying children in need of further evaluation
- Interprets and uses assessment information in curriculum planning, designing the environment, working with parents, and individualizing goals for the children
- Reviews and interprets child observation and assessment data to ensure that children's developmental needs are met and to ensure informed practice

8. Uses information gained through observation to refer parents to trained professionals for further evaluation, testing and follow up

- Plans for communicating observations to families
- Engages families in positive dialogue about observational assessment, results, and implications
- Communicates observation information to parents in a clear and supportive manner
- Follows established referral procedures



9. Integrates informal child assessment data with formal assessment information to plan for each child and for groups of children

- Understands the purposes and appropriateness of various developmental screening and assessment procedures and instruments
- Interprets observation and assessment data and develops action plans based on findings

10. Based on observation and assessment, adapts curriculum and environment to meet the needs of and include children with special needs

- Uses the results of child observation and assessment to develop plans for children with special needs
- Uses recommended adaptive materials and plans for adaptations in play and routines throughout the day
- Involves families in assessing and planning for children with disabilities, developmental delays, or special abilities

STEP FOUR:

Evaluates, Models, Mentors

1. Assumes responsibility for and can assist others in initiating the process for developing and maintaining child portfolios

- Establishes criteria, procedures, and practical methods for developing and maintaining child portfolios
- Assists others in understanding the value of child portfolios and how to develop and maintain them

2. Selects appropriate observation methods and analyzes and evaluates observation and assessment findings and applies this knowledge to practice

- Modifies classroom curriculum to meet individual needs of young children based on observation and assessment findings
- Selects, creates, adapts and uses multiple modes and methods of assessment which are sensitive to the unique cultural and learning needs of each child
- Develops an assessment plan that describes procedures for collection and utilization of assessment information for program improvement to include modifying curriculum/learning experiences

3. Stays current on recent research and best practice related to the observation and assessment of children

- Maintains a list of current resources for best practices information on observation and assessment techniques
- Can discuss the pros and cons, strengths and weaknesses of various observation and assessment tools and techniques

4. Participates in the review of the program's observation and assessment practices/procedures and contributes to revisions of the process as needed

- Establishes criteria, procedures, and documentation methods for assessment of program effectiveness with individual children
- Ensures that results of assessments are used responsibly and to benefit the child and family

5. Models appropriate observation techniques for others in the field

- Demonstrates objective observation techniques and explains which type of observation tool to use to gain specific information and how to use each one

6. Mentors other professionals concerning proper methods of observation and assists with program wide adaptation of assessment practices

- Provides guidance and mentoring to others in understanding the methods and uses of observation and assessment
- Assists others in evaluating their methods for observation and assessment and current environment and making necessary changes
- Provides information to others on observation and assessment e.g., books, magazine articles, class handouts, etc.

7. Works together with parents and other professionals to make decisions concerning referrals to other agencies and programs offering diagnostic/intervention services

- Fully understands and uses established procedures for initiating referrals for young children with health and developmental concerns
- Works cooperatively and collaboratively with assessment and health care teams for all children, including children with special needs

STEP FIVE:

Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates

1. Articulates and applies current theory, research, and policy on assessment

- Communicates major theories, research, and issues relevant to observation and assessment
- Employs current theory and research to support practices and policies regarding observation and assessment
- Compares current theories and research and assists others in evaluating current practices and policies regarding observation and assessment.

2. Teaches others and/or provides technical assistance in the area of observation and assessment

- Presents information on how to objectively observe and record children's behavior and how to use the information to assess children's needs through college courses, in-service or community based training, or conference presentations
- Works with individuals within their program to provide technical assistance and support to help them develop and understand observation and assessment practices that are objective and helpful

3. Assists others with analyzing and evaluating observation and assessment findings and helps them apply this knowledge to practice

- Provides current, credible information on objective observation and assessment e.g., books, magazine articles, class handouts, etc.
- Consults with others to review and interpret observation and assessment data objectively

4. Advocates for age appropriate, objective observation among peers, community and policy makers

- Works within the community to make information available concerning observation and assessment, how it can assist in understanding and developing programs for individual children, and age appropriate methods
- Takes opportunities to educate policy makers regarding developmentally appropriate observation and assessment and works to eliminate testing for young children as a qualifier for funding



Family and Community Relationships

STEP ONE:

Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

1. Begins to establish positive relationships with parents and children

- Asks new parents about how their child prefers routines to be handled
- Asks the parents for information and observations about the child and his/her interests
- Greets parents and child upon arrival
- Gathers daily information from parent to help with children's routine care

2. Understands there are varying family structures

- Explains different family structures encountered in the program

3. Talks informally with parents

- Gives parents anecdotal information about what their child did that day
- Shares information about program activities with parents

4. Observes strict confidentiality concerning information about children and families

- Maintains confidentiality when talking with staff and other families both inside and outside of the program
- Explains why confidentiality is important in a parent/caregiver relationship

5. Demonstrates awareness that culture, language, and each family's individual values affect how children interact with the world around them

- Explains how behaviors exhibited by children are related to their families cultural practices

6. Demonstrates awareness that when children and families experience stress, children may behave differently

- Explains observable behavior children may exhibit when a family is experiencing stress

7. Developing awareness that there are community resources available to assist families

- Defines the term 'community resource'

STEP TWO:

Beginning to Understand and Apply

1. Respects the family's role as primary educator and uses various techniques to invite parents to share information about their child

- Invites parents to talk about expectations for their child and listens respectfully
- Uses a parent questionnaire to gather information about the child's family and their interests and traditions
- Supports each child's sense of belonging to his/her family and recognizes that caregivers can support parents in their role
- Exchanges positive information about the child with parents during drop off and pick up times

2. Learns about children's diverse family structures, values, and traditions

- Encourages children to share family experiences
- Encourages families to share photographs of their family to display in the program
- Demonstrates awareness of the complexity and dynamics of family systems and understands how it applies to the children they care for

3. Develops appropriate and positive communication skills and techniques

- Identifies different types of communication e.g., verbal, non-verbal, written, etc.
- Describes components of effective communication e.g., listening, observing speaking, writing, and reading
- Keeps parents regularly informed, in conversation or in writing, about their child's interests and activities

4. Creates and maintains open, friendly, and cooperative relations with families and communicates with them frequently

- Demonstrates a welcoming attitude toward all parents/families in the program
- Uses different types of communication to keep families informed
- Effectively communicates with parents about child's daily needs and activities
- Encourages parents to call and check on their children during the day if they are concerned about something
- Identifies communication skills needed to effectively communicate with families with various cultural values
- Finds ways to appropriately communicate with families who cannot speak the same language as the caregiver

5. **Understands the difference between ethnicity and culture, acknowledges cultural differences and makes attempts to talk with parents about their families' culture**
 - Identifies personal beliefs, values, and biases
 - Explains the difference between ethnicity and culture
 - Recognizes that diversity exists in language, culture, socioeconomic level, special needs, family structure and individual differences
 - Works cooperatively with families on mutually agreed upon practices e.g., infant feeding, toddler toilet learning, etc.
6. **Recognizes stress factors affecting children and their families**
 - Explains what types of stressors may affect families
7. **Maintains program policy regarding confidentiality**
 - When necessary, makes parents aware of the program confidentiality policy
8. **Identifies and knows how to find some local community resources that support children and families**
 - Knows location of flyers, brochures and information about community resources that are available on site
 - Identifies local, state, and national resources that support children and families
 - Identifies activities in the community which benefit the child and family



- STEP THREE:**
Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices
1. **Provides ongoing, relevant information to families about the program, curriculum, child growth, development, and learning**
 - Provides parents with written information that explains the policies, philosophy, and teaching approaches of the program
 - Tells parents about children's achievements and shares their pleasure in new abilities
 - Helps parents understand the importance of play for all children
 - Provides a variety of forms of written communication with parents e.g., newsletters, letters, daily or weekly parent notes, a parent message board, a notebook or journal for each family in which both caregivers and parents can make daily notes for one another, etc.
 2. **Respects each family's culture, supports each child within their own family structure and works effectively with families from a variety of cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds**
 - Designs and implements an environment and curriculum that reflect sensitivity and respect of diversity
 - Engages with parents in tactful dialogue to gain information about the way their family defines their own race, religion, home language, culture, and family structure
 - Respects each family's cultural background, religious beliefs, and child rearing practices
 - Does not make judgments about parenting skills or cultural practices within families unless the child is in a harmful or dangerous situation
 - Invites parents to spend time in the program sharing a skill, talent or appropriate cultural practice with the children
 3. **Uses different types of positive communication with parents (verbal, non-verbal, written, etc.) and practices effective communication skills**
 - Builds partnerships with families through frequent, effective communication about their child's experiences and development
 - Defines active listening and consistently uses active listening
 - Uses I-messages in communication and avoids placing blame
 - Finds and builds on areas of mutual agreement with families
 - Explains the significance of body language in communication and uses facial and body expressions that show openness and interest

- Examines personal communication skills for cultural sensitivity and overall effectiveness
 - Applies a variety of communication strategies that are respectful, non-biased, and reflective of children's diverse family structures, values, and traditions
4. **Exhibits an understanding of the effects of family stress or crisis on the behavior of young children and effectively supports children during stressful family events**
 - Recognizes signs of stress within families and appropriately responds
 - Collaborates with parents to respond to a child's behaviors influenced by family situations
 - Works with individual families to develop a plan to support the child through stressful or crisis situations
 - Suggests community resources that could assist the family e.g., social workers, local food bank, housing authority, etc.
 5. **Plans and conducts family conferences (parent-teacher conferences)**
 - Holds family conferences at least twice during the year
 - Uses conferences to share information about the child's current development and how to support emerging developmental needs
 - Shares written information, including observational data and anecdotal records with parents
 - Develops a portfolio for each child and shares it with parents, pointing out progress of the child over the year e.g., samples of child's work, art work, anecdotal observations, developmental screenings or checklists, pictures, etc.
 6. **Provides opportunities for parents to give feedback about their experience with the program both verbally and confidentially in writing**
 - Asks for parent feedback about the program in a parent satisfaction survey
 - Provides a suggestion box where parents can contribute ideas to improve the program
 - Holds periodic parent meetings to get verbal feedback about the program
 7. **Collaborates with families to resolve problems or concerns**
 - Talks with and listens to parents to clarify all points of view are understood
 - Respects and tries to understand the parents' views when they differ from the program's goals or policies and attempts to resolve the differences
 - Implements effective conflict resolution techniques with family
 - Knows how to appropriately diffuse a situation when a parent is angry and can redirect the parent to discuss it at a more suitable time when they are calm



8. **Encourages and creates opportunities for parents to become involved in the child care environment**
 - Encourages parents to visit the program, spend time with their child, participate in activities, and make suggestions for the daily program
 - Provides opportunities for parents and other family members to share their skills and talents in the program
 - Provides programmatic opportunities for parents to socialize with other parents and families e.g., ice cream social, program picnic, seasonal events, family fun night, invites parents for lunch, special family programs, etc.
 - Provides specific suggestions and requests for parent involvement in the program and provides flexibility for parents to participate according to their own schedule e.g., invites parents to help with a party or social event, asks for donations of old clothing or scrap materials for art projects, requests help on a field trip, a fund raising event, or to contribute something to a teacher appreciation event, etc.
9. **Provides ideas for developmentally appropriate activities for parents to use with their children that extend learning into the child's home**
 - Suggests ways that parents can reinforce learning at home
 - Helps parents find ways to use items found in the home or participate in nature activities with their children to promote learning
 - Provides home activity kits parents can check out and take home to use with their children



10. Provides families with information about available community resources

- Communicates with families about the availability of community resources e.g., provides families with community resource information through brochures and flyers, develops a community resource file which is available to families, including information about health and social services, etc.
- Uses the community as a resource for children's learning e.g., field trips, visitors, etc.
- Offers information and referrals to community resources based on family needs and interests
- Supports, encourages and provides information for family participation in community events and attractions

STEP FOUR:

Evaluates, Models, Mentors

1. Models culturally rich environments that are welcoming to all families

- Provides an environment that supports all cultures and invites others to observe e.g., the environment includes environmental pictures depicting all of the cultures of the children in the program, books, dramatic play props and other materials are inclusive of all cultures and people of differing ages and ability levels, etc.

2. Models working effectively with families from a variety of cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds

- Demonstrates effective strategies to get to know families
- Works effectively within the program to benefit families from all backgrounds

3. Partners with families to develop healthy behaviors and routines for their children to help avoid or deal with stress

- Collaborates with parents to implement healthy behaviors and routines
- Shares information about local resources/workshops that assist parents in learning about children's healthy behaviors and routines for children
- Shares articles, videos or other information from research based, best practice resources on promoting healthy behaviors and routines for children

4. Models effective communication with families

- Demonstrates techniques to use in effective communication with families
- Assists others in conflict resolution with families

5. Plans, conducts and evaluates activities for family support and participation

- Involves families in planning program events and asks for their feedback regarding previous activities
- Evaluates previous family involvement activities and makes adjustments if necessary

6. Mentors others in building partnerships with families

- Explains methods used to develop positive relationships and communication with families
- Works with and assists others in evaluating their practices in working with families and develops plans for implementing new practices
- Assists others in developing a family centered philosophy in their program
- Provides current, research-based best practice information on building partnerships with families e.g., books, magazine articles, class handouts, etc

7. Creates developmentally appropriate activities for parents to use with their children that extend learning into the child's home

8. Develops relationships with community resources to better assist families in obtaining information and access when needed

- Becomes familiar with the social service, health and education resources in the community and works with them on behalf of families
- Serves as a resource to colleagues, teachers, and staff in connecting families to services in the community
- Establishes liaisons with community services that respond to family violence
- Accesses appropriate family intervention resources for diverse families
- Communicates with community services (with permission of the family) and interacts with the agency, co-workers, parents/guardians to support families in crisis



STEP FIVE:

Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates

1. Works collaboratively with agencies to meet the needs of families in the community

- Serves as a resource to colleagues, teachers, and staff in connecting families to services in the community

2. Provides one on one training and/or technical assistance to others regarding effective communication and conflict resolution techniques with families

- Provides support for development and growth of other professionals in communicating and relating with families
- Evaluates a variety of communication techniques and helps others select appropriate methods to build partnerships with families through frequent, effective communication

3. Teaches others best practice information on communicating effectively with, supporting, and involving families in their program

- Teaches classes on how to develop positive relationships with families in venues such as community based training, conferences, workshops, or college courses.
- Uses research based and best practice information to teach others
- Uses a variety of teaching methods to appeal to all types of learners

4. Assists with public awareness activities to inform the community about early care and education services

- Promotes public awareness about early and youth education by educating consumers
- Works within the community to bring awareness to the importance of early care and education experiences for children and their families
- Works within the community to educate families about quality programs for children and characteristics of "quality" child care

5. Advocates for quality services and resources for families

- Actively participates in promoting appropriate services and legislation for young children and families
- Works with other professionals and parents to develop effective strategies to communicate to decision makers the needs of children and families
- Takes opportunities to educate policy makers regarding the impact quality care has on families and the need for funding and support to provide optimal environments for children and families
- Describes the legislative process, including legal and advocacy issues, that impact children and their families and communicates this information to others

Professional and Personal Development

STEP ONE:

Building Basic Knowledge and Skills

- 1. Exhibits good hygiene and an appropriate appearance**
 - Clothes are clean and in good repair
 - Provides a good model of grooming and hygiene for children
 - Wears clothing that is not revealing
- 2. Understands job responsibilities and follows program schedules**
 - Center providers are at work and ready to care for children at their scheduled time
 - Family child care providers are ready to care for children at the time agreed upon with parents
 - Coordinates schedules with parents or other co-workers
 - Describes job responsibilities
- 3. Is aware of and complies with licensing standards and regulations**
 - Demonstrates support for licensing regulations
 - Follows policies and procedures designed to support regulations
- 4. Completes training hours as required by licensing or program**
- 5. Demonstrates awareness of the benefits of working cooperatively with others**
 - Greets co-workers and/or families each day
 - Is friendly toward other staff members and/or families
 - Refrains from gossiping
- 6. Understands the need for and maintains confidentiality of staff and family information at all times**
 - Explains what confidentiality means and why it is important
 - Explains measures taken to ensure confidentiality is respected
- 7. Makes children the first priority and has a positive attitude toward her/his role in working with children**
 - Shows genuine interest in children and what they are doing
 - Smiles at and talks with children
 - Does not engage in activities that would distract from supervision, interaction or care of children e.g., Engages in lengthy personal conversations with other co-workers, talks or texts on the phone for personal reasons, sleeps, pays bills, writes letters, reads novels, etc.

- Maintains professional boundaries with children and families
- To assure children's safety at all times, never leaves children unattended

8. Developing awareness of the value of observation and feedback, self reflection and assessment

- Seeks input from supervisors and colleagues about own practices
- Begins to understand that feedback from others (parents, supervisors, co-teachers, peers) can improve their care giving practices

STEP TWO:

Beginning to Understand and Apply

- 1. Shows care in the use and maintenance of equipment and materials**
 - Organizes and stores materials in a manner that protects them
 - Cleans and sanitizes materials and equipment regularly
 - Teaches children to use equipment and materials appropriately
 - Keeps clutter to a minimum in areas where children are cared for
- 2. Acts in a dependable, responsible manner in cooperation with others involved in the care and education of children**
 - Understands the importance of attendance and staff to child ratios
 - Is dependable and notifies appropriate persons in advance if unable to care for children
 - Uses positive communication strategies for use with co-workers and/or families
 - Understands the importance of working as a team with parents and/or other staff
- 3. Schedules time for program planning**
- 4. Participates in educational opportunities for increasing knowledge and skills**
 - Participates in ongoing training such as Career Ladder classes, in-service training, conferences, workshops, college courses, etc.
- 5. Recognizes that caregiver fatigue, low morale, or lack of work satisfaction affects an individual's work with children**
 - Develops supportive professional relationships
 - Develops a personal support system outside of work
 - Cares for self e.g., gets enough rest, eats healthy, exercises, etc.
 - Understands the effect of a caregiver's emotional state on children's growth and development

6. Develops a personal professional development plan

- Demonstrates awareness of professional resources to assist in developing a plan e.g., community agencies, NAEYC state and local affiliates, professional journals, higher education institutions, Utah Training Registry, Office of Child Care, Child Care Professional Development Institute, local Child Care Resource & Referral
- Discusses philosophies related to early care, health, and education

7. Collects resources and materials to create a professional resource file or portfolio

- Majority of materials collected are current within the last ten years
- Materials could include articles from professional magazines or journals, information collected at classes, professional early childhood web sites, videos, books, developmentally appropriate activities to do with children, etc.

8. Understands the value of observation and feedback and views opportunities to improve competence and professional practices through these methods in a positive manner

- Defines self-reflection and begins to practice with support from supervisor or mentor
- Discusses experiences and practices with colleagues identifying areas of strength and weaknesses
- Accepts and uses feedback from supervisor or observation as an opportunity for professional growth

STEP THREE:

Knows, Explains and Uses Best Practices

1. Demonstrates professional work habits including dependability, responsibility, time management, independence, teamwork, effective communication skills, maintaining professional confidentiality, and an organized work space

- Works cooperatively with other staff members, accepts supervision, and helps promote a positive atmosphere
- Supports and helps other staff members when the need arises
- Shows positive attitudes towards other staff members
- Models professional behavior
- Interacts in a manner reflecting value of self and respect for others
- Shares responsibilities fairly with others
- Expresses programmatic concerns appropriately and identifies possible solutions
- Keeps work space organized

2. Communicates and works cooperatively with co-teacher or other team members (if applicable)

- Discusses roles and expectations of each other
- Communicates expectations of children and discusses approaches that will be used
- Conveys the same messages to the children
- Agrees on tasks to be performed and by whom
- Interacts in a respectful manner
- Discusses programmatic planning and children's progress
- Effectively addresses any cultural or language issues

3. Develops program goals and objectives and uses them in daily practice

- Shows commitment to program goals
- Considers program goals and objectives when developing daily activity plans
- Incorporates program and individual standards into practice
- Seeks out training opportunities to help meet program objectives

4. Demonstrates knowledge of the early childhood profession, including organizations and publications

- Keeps informed about child care practices, research, legislation, and other developments in early childhood and youth education
- Views self as a professional and the early childhood field as a profession

5. Effectively manages the demands of personal life and professional commitments to minimize the effects on children and families

- Understands how personal issues can affect work performance and finds strategies to avoid bringing personal problems into the work environment
- Personal problems are not reflected in interactions with children
- Appropriate action is taken in response to emotional difficulty e.g., asks for a short break if needed, arranges for someone else to care for children if unable to remain in emotional control, arranges for a "mental health" day, etc.



6. Develops strategies to prevent burnout and finds ways to meet his/her own needs to maintain energy and enthusiasm

- Promotes own health and well-being
- Recognizes symptoms and causes of “burnout” and acts quickly when early signs develop
- Finds ways to reenergize e.g., takes vacation at least once a year, does not work when sick, finds time for a personal hobby, sets limits both professionally and personally to avoid overload, attends a conference, develops time management skills, maintains appropriate boundaries with families, etc.

7. Demonstrates a commitment to a Professional Code of Ethics (NAEYC)

- Explains the difference between a professional Code of Ethics and personal values
- Identifies ethical dilemmas and recognizes potentially unethical practices
- Behaves in an ethical manner

8. Is a member of a professional organization**9. Creates a professional resource file/portfolio and shares resources and information with other professionals**

- Is familiar with current trends in early childhood education
- Organizes resources and information in an organized, usable format that others can understand
- Shares and/or exchanges resource file/portfolio information with others

10. Practices self-assessment and self-improvement as an early childhood professional on an on-going basis

- Routinely engages in self reflection of teaching practices and makes modifications to improve work with young children, families, and co-workers
- Develops personal goals based on reflections of current practice

11. Seeks out professional relationships to enhance professional growth and participates in opportunities for observation and feedback

- Participates in a supervisory or mentoring relationship and/or other available supports
- Uses consultation, mentoring, and technical assistance to improve practice
- Uses recommendations from observations to improve practices

STEP FOUR:*Evaluates, Models, Mentors***1. Establishes a leadership role in strengthening communication among staff, families, and colleagues**

- Facilitates the exchange of professional ideas among staff or peers
- Initiates problem solving and conflict resolution for program and staff
- Works to provide a culture that fosters staff initiative to solve problems and resolve conflict

2. Actively participates in a professional organization

- Attends and/or supports local board meetings of a professional organization and serves on committees or assists with community projects

3. Analyzes and evaluates personal and program practice on an ongoing basis and implements changes that will strengthen the quality and the effectiveness of the work

- Examines own work, sources of professional knowledge, and the Early Care and Youth Education field
- Recognizes the benefits of program evaluation and assessment, participates in self assessment of the program and develops goals based on those results
- Reflects on current trends and research in early care and youth education and adjusts practices as appropriate
- Promotes best practice and quality early care and youth education for all children

4. Creates and evaluates a personal vision, which supports individual growth and includes an increased understanding of self and others

- Articulates personal philosophy of early childhood and youth education based on knowledge of child development and best practice
- Verbalizes the relationship between personal philosophy and daily practice
- Chooses to work in an environment that is compatible with personal philosophies

5. Understands and models professional behavior and adheres to a Professional Code of Ethics (NAEYC)

- Practices and promotes the responsibilities in the applicable code of ethical conduct
- Analyzes ethical dilemmas and determines appropriate course of action
- Integrates the ethical code into practice, policies and instruction

6. Understands the Developmental Stages of Teachers and uses them when mentoring or supervising individuals and suggesting tasks and training needs

- Has read and can articulate the ideas behind the Developmental Stages of Teachers
- Identifies where individuals are in their professional development and recommends appropriate training for them based on this knowledge

7. Mentors others by providing observation and feedback opportunities and helps individuals use results to strengthen professional practices

- Describes the benefits of mentoring and supervisory relationships
- Chooses appropriate observation tools and knows how to use them
- Conducts observations of staff, colleagues and/or protégés
- Gives constructive, supportive feedback and helps individuals identify areas for improvement and set realistic, achievable goals

STEP FIVE:*Creates, Teaches, Collaborates, Advocates***1. Evaluates and recommends opportunities to promote the professional growth of others**

- Advises and informs others about options for professional growth and development
- Explains career pathways for different roles in Early Childhood and Youth Education
- Explains the role of Core Competencies in professional development
- Provides learning opportunities for staff and colleagues that enhance their professional growth

2. Shares knowledge with others at local, state or regional conference

- Recognizes the differences in adult learning styles and incorporates strategies and activities to appeal to all types of learners

3. Provides leadership within a professional organization

- Participates in professional organizations or groups in a leadership capacity

4. Provides vision and direction for the program through knowledge of current research, trends, policies and effective practice relating to children and families

- Explores current trends and research-based practices in Early Care and Youth Education

- Organizes a professional development plan for the program
- Revises practice according to research
- Articulates and implements program vision, goals and expectations clearly and consistently

5. Motivates others to advocate for high quality programs and services for families and children at local, state, and national levels

- Learns about new laws and regulations affecting early care and youth education, children, and families
- Works within the community to bring awareness of the importance of positive early experiences for children
- Describes the legislative process, including legal and advocacy issues, that impact children and their families and communicates this information to others
- Actively participates in promoting appropriate services and legislation for young children and families

6. Motivates others to advocate for a work force in early care and youth education that is well trained, receives worthy compensation, and has a voice in the work place

- Works within the community to help others to recognize Early Care and Youth Education as a profession
- Understands how public policies are developed and uses strategies to influence public policy

7. Teaches others how to objectively use research based observation tools

- Provides technical assistance for others on conducting observations of staff, colleagues, and/or protégés
- Teaches classes or provides support to those that are developing skills to mentor, observe, or act as an advisor to others
- Teaches methods for recording and sharing information objectively

8. Collaborates with colleagues and others to improve programs and practices for young children and their families

- Communicates and interacts with co-workers, colleagues parents/guardians and the community to support children's learning and well-being
- Participates in group problem solving of ethical dilemmas
- Discusses, articulates, and uses NAEYC code of ethics for making professional decisions

Glossary of Terms

Adult Educators	Someone who educates adults, usually in their work setting.
Advocates	Supports or promotes a specific cause.
Age Appropriate Expectations	An understanding of children's typical development that allows an individual to expect specific behaviors appropriate for a specific age.
Analyzes	Determines the nature of parts and how they work as a whole.
Anecdotal Record	A documentation method that briefly describes an activity, a snatch of conversation, a chant, and so on. Anecdotal records can be based on reflection or written on the spot.
Articulates	Accurately puts in to words.
Assessment	The process of gathering information about a child's capabilities through a variety of means and then using the gathered evidence to evaluate the child's progress and approaches to learning.
Bias	A personal and sometimes unreasoned judgment or prejudice.
Career Ladder	A program to recognize and reward early care and youth education providers for completing ongoing, approved training in the early care and youth education field. The Career Ladder consists of 10 educational levels. Each level has specific training goals that need to be met.
CCR&R	Child Care Resource and Referral Agency. Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies help meet the needs of the community by providing the bridge between parents, providers, community leaders, and policy makers. Utah's six Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies offer valuable services to child care providers, including start-up support, inexpensive training, lending libraries and free parent referral listings.
Child Portfolio	A purposeful collection of a child's work and other indicators of learning collected over time, that demonstrate to the child and to others the child's efforts, progress or achievement.
Code of Ethics	States the values to which people in a profession are committed to serve as a guide in everyday professional conduct.
Cognitive	Of, relating to, being, or involving conscious intellectual activity (as thinking, reasoning, or remembering).
Collaboration	To work jointly with others or to cooperate with an agency with which one is not immediately connected
Community Resource	Services available to people in a geographic area that improve the quality of life.
Confidentiality	Entrusted with private information not be shared with others.
Conflict Resolution	The process of resolving a dispute or a conflict permanently, by provide each sides, needs, and adequately addressing their interests so that they are satisfied with the outcome.

Cultural Identity	Part of self-concept, cultural identity relates to everything we do, how we look, talk, what we eat, where we live, and how we look at the world.
Culturally Sensitive	Recognition and consideration of the differences between a practitioner within a professional and that of his or her clients.
Developmentally Appropriate Practice	Teaching young children in ways that meet children where they are, as individuals and as a group, and help each child reach challenging and achievable goals that contribute to his or her ongoing development and learning.
Developmental Checklist	A list of skills or behaviors used as a guide for recording the presence or absence of each behavior by a particular child.
Developmental Delays	Areas of development where a child is lagging behind other 'typically developing children'.
Developmental Domains	Areas of development in young children (e.g., physical, cognitive, language, social, emotional, creative).
Diversity	Distinct or unlike qualities and characteristics representing an individual or group of people.
Documentation	A variety of records that represent children's learning, skill building, social-emotional development or thought processes. Documentation captures the processes and products of children's daily experiences and can be in the form of written records, but also can include photographs, tape recordings, and videos.
ELL	English Language Learner.
Endorsement	Endorsements to the Career Ladder offer focused training in specific specialty areas, such as Infant Toddler Care, School Age Care, School Readiness, Working with Children with Special Needs, etc. Each Endorsement topic area consists of 40 hours of Career Ladder training.
Engages	Involves and/or holds the attention span of a child or adult.
Ethical	Conforming to an accepted standard and especially professional standards of conduct.
Evaluates	To determine the significance or worth through careful appraisal or study.
Facilitate	To make easier or help bring about.
Fine Motor	Use of small muscles of the hands and fingers, feet and toes, and face.
Goodness of Fit	Creating caregiver environments that acknowledge each child's temperament while encouraging more adaptive interaction with individual children
Integrate	To form, coordinate or blend in to a functioning or unified whole.
Intervention	A collection of services provided by public and private agencies that are designed by law to support children and families to enhance a child's potential for growth.
Large Motor	Physical movement that requires the use of larger muscles such as rolling over, pulling up, climbing, walking, running, jumping.

Learning Centers	Areas in an Early Care and Education environment intended for specific activity (ie: block area, dramatic play, art area, small motor, etc.)
Legislation	Rules (as laws) that have the force of authority by virtue of being put forth by an official of a state or other organization.
Mentor	An individual who counsels self of guides other caregivers.
Milestone	Marks the growth/development of children.
Model	To set an example by performing behaviors, actions and interactive styles that others observe and imitate.
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children.
Non-stereotypical	An open view opposite of a standardized mental picture held in common by members of a group representing an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude, or judgment not related to fact or truth.
Objectivity	Seeing and recording what is actually taking place, trying not to be influenced by value judgments or inherent biases, and not recording interpretations of the behaviors being observed.
Observation	The act of recognizing and noting a fact.
Observational Assessment	Assessment based on teachers' systematic recordings and analysis of children's behavior in real-life situations.
Open-Ended	Play and learning experiences that allow for a variety of successful outcomes.
Phonemic Awareness	To hear and discriminate between the separate sounds of spoken words; recognize words that sound the same and words that sound different.
Positive Reinforcement	Response to an actions or a behavior that strengthens the likelihood of that action or behavior being repeated.
Practice	That which is done within a professional environment by the individual acting.
Professional Development Plan	The process of seeking training and education to increase skills and abilities related to a specific profession.
Philosophy	The core beliefs, concepts, and attitudes of a program or individual.
Professional Development	The process of seeking training and education to increase skills and abilities related to a specific profession.
Professional Resource File	Materials and topics collected to use in teaching young children. May include regulations, policies, observations, resources and ideas.
Provider	An individual working in the early care and youth education field who provides services to children and their families, such as, child care, after school activities, pre-school services.
Public Policy	A course or method of action to guide decision making of a public agency or service.

Rationale	Description of an underlying reason.
Referral	An outside service that has been identified as a source of assistance to meet a particular family's needs.
Reflections	Thoughts and consideration of action, specific subject matter, and idea, or purpose.
Regulations	Rule or orders issued by an executive authority or regulatory agency of a government and having the force of law.
Respectful	Action which holds the individual being interacted with high consideration and esteem.
Running Records	A written description of the behavior of a child, including exactly what the child says and does, in sequence, recorded as it happens.
Self-Reflection	Examining one's own beliefs, ideas and practices.
Sequential	Following a specific order or logical continuity of progression.
Sociocultural	The affect language and culture have on learning.
Socioeconomic	Relating to, or involving a combination of social and economic factors.
Subjective	Statements of opinion or assumption.
System	Regularly interacting or interdependent groups of items forming a unified whole.
Temperament	An overall personality style based in genetic origin that develops within a social context
Time/Event Sampling	Documentation in which examples of categories of behaviors are recorded as they occur or at previously determined intervals.
TLS	A program to recognize and reward licensed providers for a combination of Career Ladder training and years of continued licensed experience. Participating providers receive an annual cash award based on their level on the Career Ladder and years of continuous licensed experience.
Transition	A period of adjustment or change between activities or events.
Typically Developing Child	A child who develops along known timelines with no major delays.
Universal Precautions	The process of preventing and controlling infection by use of prescribed sanitary measures such as hand washing and wearing disposable gloves.
Work Sample	Tangible items that result from children's work and play that give evidence of their learning e.g., writings, artwork, photos of block constructions, audio and video recordings, etc.

Resources and References

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Early childhood program standards and accreditation criteria:
The mark of quality in early childhood education

Child Development Associate Credential, Council of Professional Recognition

Available online at www.cdacouncil.org

Utah Pre-Kindergarten Guidelines

Utah State Office of Education
Utah Department of Workforce Services, Office of Work & Family Life

Environment Rating Scales

All About the ITERS - R

All About the ECERS - R

Thelma Harms
Richard Clifford
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Cathy Riley

National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC)

NCCIC, a service of the Child Care Bureau, is a national clearinghouse and technical assistance center that links parents, providers, policy-makers, researchers, and the public to early care and education information.

Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Professionals in Kansas and Missouri, Summer 2000

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