Kentucky's Early Childhood Core Content

The Kentucky Early Childhood Core Content (Revised 2004) provides general direction for what early childhood educators need to know and be able to do in order to work effectively with young children and includes expectations for assessment and evaluation across five levels, from entry into the field to professionals with advanced degrees. At the entry level, professionals are expected to participate in and support the collection of assessment data. As professionals gain more experience and training, they are expected to implement assessment processes within the classroom or program and use the data collected to make appropriate instructional and programmatic decisions. At the advanced level, professionals are expected to choose appropriate assessment tools based on program goals, supervise and mentor staff in using assessment information, and use data gathered throughout all phases of the assessment system in program design, evaluation and reporting. Specific core competencies are presented below. Specific information about the Early Childhood Professional Core Content is available on the KIDS NOW website at http://www.kidsnow.ky.gov

Early Childhood Core Content

Core content is defined as the specific knowledge, competencies, and characteristics needed by early childhood practitioners to work effectively with young children and families. Core content is the foundation for determining training content, course content, and competency standards for professional performance.

The Core Content plan is drawn from existing professional resources that put forth standards, such as the Kentucky Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education program, the Child Development Associate functional area competency standards, and the national accreditation standards of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Association for Family Child Care, and the Head Start Program Performance Standards. Competencies are individually referenced from the early childhood literature or are cited from similar documents from other states. A complete reference list and a list of other resources consulted are included following the Core Content.

The Core Content plan is intended to be comprehensive and descriptive, but also fluid and flexible to allow for needed changes over time.

The Core Content Work Group created a plan that:

- Allows for multiple pathways for entering early childhood education and for exiting at various terminal points.
- Includes a mechanism for linking various early childhood education and training programs.
- Provides for continuous progress and professional development.

The Core Content plan covers seven essential competency subject areas of early childhood education. Each area is organized into five levels of increasing mastery.

Those individuals who are planning early childhood education and training programs may wish to use the Core Content plan to correlate program content with the expected skill levels and desired competency outcomes of the participants.

The Core Content plan, initially approved in 2002, has been reviewed by various practitioners and faculty and revised during Spring 2004. It will be reviewed and revised every five years hereafter.

Professionals in the field of early care and education become increasingly competent through their experiences and professional growth opportunities. This competence crosses a variety of content areas and many levels of skill. The competencies that are the focus of this document are organized from basic to high-level skills across five levels. Each level is a prerequisite to the next; thus the competencies build on one another. While skills generally progress from implementing recommended practices to planning programs and procedures to evaluating practices and resources, not all skills and knowledge in the field of early childhood are completely linear and not all begin at the entry level. Therefore, some skills that may seem similar (e.g., planning) may be initiated at differing levels, depending on the content.

These Levels of competencies are not awards or a certificate, but may overlap existing certificates or awards. Each level assumes greater knowledge and skill than the previous level; however, an individual level should not be seen as limited to a particular job or position of employment.

Level I - represents knowledge and skills across all seven content areas for professionals at the initial level, which includes entry into the field and a Commonwealth Child Care Credential.

Level II – represents knowledge and skills across all seven content areas for professionals with a Child Development Associate Credential.

Level III- represents knowledge and skills across all content areas for professionals from CDA to AA degrees.

Level IV - represents knowledge and skills across all content areas for professionals with a BA degree.

Level V - represents knowledge and skills across all content areas for professionals above a BA degree.

Levels

1) **Level 1.** Early childhood practitioners with a high school diploma or GED must demonstrate social skills such as courtesy, respect, and the appreciation for diverse ethnicities, cultures, ideas, and viewpoints. They must also demonstrate literacy skills that enable them to expressively read books appropriate for young children through age five; use acceptable grammar to communicate with children, staff, and parents; and legibly write a logical, organized lesson plan. They must also:
   - be able to verbalize their awareness of physical and biological processes in the natural environment;
   - display attitudes of wondering, investigation, and respect for the ecology of the natural world and enjoy partnering with children in experiencing all five senses and searching for more information;
   - demonstrate that they have the basic mathematical and spatial knowledge to solve practical problems while working with children and other adults;

- demonstrate fundamental, coordinated small and large muscle skills in physical movements and games;
- demonstrate a practical understanding of the principles of democracy, justice, and fair play by using techniques of positive guidance, conflict management, and peacemaking for children, other staff, and the community.

2) **Level 2.** At this level, practitioners may become lead teachers or administrators. They must:
- demonstrate increased abilities to reason, think critically and reflectively, discern relationships between areas of knowledge, and analyze the nature of physical and social problems;
- show evidence of basic computer literacy and internet search skills;
- possess literacy, speaking, interpersonal, and leadership skills sufficient for effectively conducting parent meetings, relating to a board of directors, writing descriptive newsletters, and constructing detailed curriculum plans that include individual children's developmental goals; and,
- master the grammatical and conversational rudiments of one other language, which assists early childhood educators in becoming aware of the rich cultures and languages of the children and families enrolled in their programs. Spanish is especially recommended because of the need to communicate effectively with Kentucky's rapidly increasing Hispanic populations.

3) **Levels 3, 4 and 5.** At these levels practitioners may increase their general knowledge through required and elective courses according to their interests and needs. In addition to exploring human development theories, anthropology, sociology, statistics, and consumer issues, they may select advanced studies in foreign languages, computer technology, psychology, philosophy, history, and the arts and sciences. Increased experience and leadership in the early childhood field may lead to higher levels of competence in reasoning, critical and reflective thinking, mathematics, and the physical or biological sciences.

In reality, the best early childhood educators are lifelong learners. Because of their long association with curious and uninhibited children, they may naturally take advantage of new opportunities for investigation.

Subject Areas

The degree to which early childhood professionals are expected to master these subject areas depends on their level of competence. Specific core content requirements for the first level, for instance, require describing and demonstrating basic knowledge of the subject area; succeeding levels require more complex knowledge and the ability to plan and implement programs or procedures; and the highest levels require evaluation of early childhood practices.

1) **Child growth and development** – Experiences for any child, regardless of age, must be planned around the child's developmental abilities. Development has several interrelated areas; each influences the others and all develop simultaneously. It is essential for early childhood educators to recognize that development proceeds in predictable steps and learning occurs in recognized sequences. At the same time, they must consider individual, age-level, and cultural/ethnic characteristics when assessing children's rates and styles of development.

2) **Health, safety, and nutrition** – These are basic needs of all human beings, and early childhood environments must ensure them. Programs must adhere to relevant laws and regulations; furthermore, they

must consider the health, growth, and developmental requirements for each child within the context of cultural and developmental diversity and any special needs.

3) **Professional development/professionalism** – Adults providing early care and 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.

4) **Learning environments and curriculum** – Developmentally appropriate environments and curricula have a positive impact on a child's emotional, physical, cognitive, communicative, creative, and social care. Adults who provide early care and education must know how to offer an organized, inviting, and accessible environment that has many diverse and appropriate materials, activities, and experiences.

5) **Child assessment** – Ongoing assessment helps early childhood educators evaluate all areas of a child's growth and development. Educators must be able to observe, assess, interpret, and document children's skills and behavior and systematically report on them to appropriate staff and family members.

6) **Family and community partnerships** – Understanding the roles that family members and others play in children's lives is vital for early childhood educators. They must be able to integrate the following concepts:
   - Children develop within the context of their families, which may take many forms. Families are the primary influence on children's development and have primary responsibility for child rearing. In turn, each child has influence on the members of his or her family and on the family as a system.
   - A responsive early education environment respects and celebrates the diversity of values, customs, and traditions in the family of each child. It nurtures the primary relationships between children and those who parent them. It also offers a variety of meaningful opportunities to families to participate in early childhood programs.
   - Early childhood professionals help connect children and their families with community resources. This can be accomplished through curriculum, interpersonal relationships and knowledgeable referrals.

7) **Program management and evaluation** – Adults providing early care and education must use all available resources for a quality program. They must also be effective communicators, planners, record-keepers, and evaluators. Evaluation of the program should include input from staff, families, and the community.

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Child Growth and Development

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Knowledge of Theory and Development	▪ Discuss at least three general principles of development that provide the basis for planning age appropriate programs for young children.[1]	▪ Demonstrate knowledge of basic differences in assumptions underlying major theories and basic practice compatible with the theories of development relative to children birth to six. Such theories include (but need not be limited to) those of *Piaget, Erikson, Vygotsky, Maslow, Bandura,* and *Skinner.*[1]	▪ State examples of how child development principles and theories influence aspects of program planning and implementation, such as guidance goals and practices, curriculum experiences, inclusion of families, and design of the physical space. Developmental theories include (but are not to be limited to) those of *Piaget, Erikson, Vygotsky, Maslow, Bandura,* and *Skinner.*[1]	▪ State the theoretical rationales for program planning; across all areas of development, that incorporate knowledge of both age-level characteristics and of developmental characteristics of individual children.[2]	▪ Provide guidance to ensure that practitioners understand developmental principles and incorporate the theories of *Piaget, Erikson, Vygotsky, Maslow, Bandura,* and *Skinner* (among other theorists) as they plan, implement, understand, and evaluate guidance goals and practice, curriculum experiences, inclusion of families, and design of the physical space.[2]

▪ Describe basic behavioral characteristics of children of various ages and stages, including the social/emotional, physical/motor, adaptive, communicative, and cognitive areas of development.[1]	▪ Describe comprehensive behavioral characteristics of the various ages and stages, including the social/emotional, physical/motor, adaptive, communicative and cognitive areas of development.[1]	▪ Describe behavioral, age-related examples of interrelationships between areas of development.[1]	▪ Evaluate guidance goals and practices, curriculum experiences, inclusion of families, and design of the physical space for evidence of the inclusion of developmental theories and principles.[2]	▪ Provide guidance to ensure that practitioners are able to incorporate knowledge of developmental characteristics into their interactions with children and to ensure that both age-level characteristics and the unique characteristics of individual children are respected and appreciated.[2]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Child Growth and Development (continued)

	Level I : Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	Level II: CDA **All items in Level 1, plus**	Level III: Associates All items in Levels 1 and 2, plus	Level IV: Bachelors **All items in** **Levels 1, 2 and 3, plus**	Level V: Masters All items in **Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4, plus**
Application of Theory and Development	▪ Demonstrate knowledge that young children are diverse with regard to different: – rates of development, – individual interests, – special needs, – temperaments, – languages, – cultures, – and learning styles.[1,3]	▪ Demonstrate knowledge that children are diverse through incorporating this knowledge into interactions with children in home and center-based programs.[1]	▪ Plan and implement curriculum activities that reflect the diversity of children with regard to different rates of development, individual interests, special needs, temperaments, languages, cultures, and learning styles in home and center-based programs.[1]	▪ Plan, implement, and evaluate comprehensive programming that incorporates all areas of development as well as knowledge of both age-level characteristics and developmental characteristics of individual children.[2]	▪ Evaluate the activities that early childhood practitioners plan and implement in home and center-based programs to ensure that activities reflect the diversity of children with regard to different rates of development, individual interests, special needs, temperaments, languages, cultures, and learning styles.[2]
		▪ Demonstrate awareness of indicators for early intervention based on knowledge of child development.[4]	▪ Implement, with consultation, appropriate program adaptations for individual children, based on indicators for early intervention.[4]	▪ Plan, with consultation, appropriate program adaptations for individual children, based on indicators for early intervention..[3,4]	
					▪ Apply theoretical and research knowledge to practice in early childhood settings.[5] ▪ Critically examine alternative perspectives regarding crucial and foundational issues in the field.[5]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Health, Safety and Nutrition

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
- When abuse or neglect is suspected, follow program procedures for reporting.	- Identify, document, and report suspected abuse and neglect to appropriate persons.[6, 3]			
- Monitor safe use of indoor and outdoor equipment by children.[3,6] - Verbalize and demonstrate procedures for supervising children's activities to prevent illness and injury.[3,6]	- Describe and check for safe environments and potential health hazards.[6]	- Use adaptive equipment appropriately with supervision.[7]	- Communicate appropriate use of adaptive equipment to staff and families.[7]	
- Follow regulations regarding health, safety and sanitation across multiple settings.[6]	- Describe and participate in techniques and strategies that promote the physical and emotional health of adults and children.[8] - Recognize indicators of potential mental and physical health problems and report indicators to supervisor.[6]	- Apply health promotion concepts in children and staff through health, safety, and nutrition practices.[6]	- Design and implement health, safety, and nutrition education for families, children, and staff.[6] - Implement appropriate health assessments and recommend referral and ongoing follow-up to appropriate community health and social services.[9] - Develop, or update as needed, health, safety, nutrition, and sanitation policies and procedures.[6]	- Collaborate with advisory groups or other community groups to identify health, safety, nutrition, and sanitation issues that impact children.[6]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Health, Safety and Nutrition (continued)

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
- Practice procedures for emergencies including first aid and CPR.[3,6] - Practice procedures for the following situations: fire, tornado, earthquake and man-made disaster.[10]	- Implement professionally recommended adaptations for children with special needs pertaining to emergency procedures, including first aid and CPR.[3]	- Participate in planning for special health needs.[7] - Develop a written plan for responding to emergencies for children who have been identified as having special health needs and be able to react appropriately.[6,7]	- Collaborate with specialists and families to develop and implement plans (i.e., IFSPs, IEPs, Family Partnership Agreements, special health plans) for children with developmental, emotional, and/or physical health care concerns or needs.[6,11,12]	
- Demonstrate proper techniques for preventing communicable diseases, including hand washing, diapering, cleaning, and sanitizing.[3,6] - Follow a morning health check and identify potential health concerns.[6]		- Design, in consultation with health personnel, appropriate procedures for morning health checks and for identification of health concerns.[4]		
- Follow regulations for appropriate response to and documentation of children's injuries.[3,6]		- Design, in consultation with health personnel, appropriate procedures for documentation of children's injuries.		

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Health, Safety and Nutrition (continued)

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
▪ Follow regulations/written policies for administration of medications.[3,6]		▪ Develop procedures for storing, administering, and documenting usage of medications.[6]		
▪ Demonstrate basic principles of oral health care with children.[6]		▪ Design, in consultation with health personnel, appropriate procedures for a comprehensive oral health care program.		
▪ Practice principles for SIDS prevention.[6]				
▪ Know food guide pyramid guidelines.[3,6] ▪ Follow regulations for food storage, preparation, serving, and clean-up.[3]	▪ Identify basic nutrition concepts and follow recommendations for mealtime.[13] ▪ Implement, with supervision, appropriate feeding procedures and adaptations for cultural preferences.[4]	▪ Create menu plans for children, including children with special dietary concerns, that are age-appropriate and meet federal guidelines.[6] ▪ Identify nutritional issues appropriate to the age and special needs of children, including feeding procedures, food choices and amounts, and cultural preferences.[7]		
	▪ Identify current health trends in society using research-based knowledge and information.		▪ Incorporate appropriate practices into program in response to current health trends.	▪ Analyze, evaluate, and apply current theory and research to health, safety, nutrition, and sanitation policies and procedures.[4,6]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Professional Development/Professionalism

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
▪ Maintain confidentiality.[3,14,15,16]				

▪ View self as a learner.[14,17]
 	
▪ Participate in professional development (i.e., credentials, degrees) as required for each level to improve performance and to expand personal knowledge of child development, interdisciplinary practices, and family-centered services.[2,3,15,18]
 	
▪ Develop and implement a written professional development plan.[2,15,19]
	▪ Practice self-evaluation to determine professional growth and performance, using *KY's Early Childhood Core Content* and other appropriate materials to assist in identifying areas of need.[2,15,20,21]
	
	▪ Develop, maintain, and continuously use a resource file or portfolio as documentation of growth and performance.[2,3,19]
		▪ Seek out professional relationships to enhance professional growth (e.g., securing a mentor).[18]	▪ Seek out knowledge to improve practice.[2]
			  ▪ Accept advice and constructive criticism to improve practice.[18]
			  ▪ Mentor colleagues and assistants.[4]
			▪ Support staff development through active listening; observation and constructive feedback; conferences; and the development of professional growth plans which reflect the results of self-assessment and performance reviews.[2,22,23]
			
			▪ Assist staff and assistants in selecting appropriate professional development formats and opportunities (e.g., observation, reading, training sessions, etc.) that are related to their individual growth plans.
				▪ Evaluate personal performance and set goals to advance knowledge of the field.[13]
				
				▪ Explore models of professional development and opportunities to promote others' professional growth.[18]
				
				▪ Design staff development opportunities for colleagues[18].
				
				▪ Employ adult learning principles in supervising and training other adults.[2,20]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Professional Development/Professionalism (continued)

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
	▪ Join organizations for professional development.[18]	▪ Actively participate in organizations for professional development.[18,23]	▪ Disseminate knowledge at local, state, regional, and national conferences.[18]	▪ Take leadership roles in professional organizations.[5] ▪ Show evidence of effective professional leadership by: o Communicating the importance of the early years and the role of quality early childhood educators in children's development with families, colleagues, and the community. o Supervising, coaching, mentoring, and training staff and volunteers. o Presenting at local, state, and national conferences. o Identifying and supporting the professional development of staff and volunteers.[2,5,19,20]
▪ Follow code of ethics.[9,24,25]	▪ Identify and report potentially unethical practices to supervisor.[16]	▪ Articulate and use a professional code of ethics for making professional decisions.[16]	▪ Articulate professional values and implement ongoing professional self-reflection to improve practice.[18]	
▪ Recognize symptoms of "burnout" and seek assistance when appropriate.[16]	▪ Implement strategies for preventing "burnout".[16]	▪ Recognize causes of "burnout" and develop strategies to prevent.[16]	▪ Assess effectiveness of "burnout" strategies for self and colleagues and make appropriate changes based on data.	

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Professional Development/Professionalism (continued)

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
	▪ Express a personal philosophy of early childhood education that includes active learning, developmentally effective approaches, and assessment.[15,24,25]	▪ Express a personal philosophy of early childhood education that includes active learning, developmentally effective approaches, assessment, and inclusionary practices.[15,17,23,24]		▪ Integrate knowledge of historical, philosophical, psychological, and social foundations of education, including early childhood education, into planning and decision-making.[18]
	▪ Demonstrate awareness of other disciplines (e.g., physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech, nursing, special education) for collaboration.[14,24,25]	▪ Demonstrate working knowledge of other disciplines in order to facilitate collaboration with colleagues, community members, families, and administrators[24,26] and enhance transitions for children and families.	▪ Assure compliance with regulations and laws for children, families, and individuals with special needs (e.g., IDEA, ADA) through adaptations to environment and curriculum and through staff training.[15,20]	
▪ Demonstrate job satisfaction and genuine interest in young children and their families.[3,16]	▪ Demonstrate commitment to child advocacy.[15,20,24]			▪ Support community initiatives and advocate for early childhood legislation at the local, state and national levels for improving quality in early childhood and early childhood special education fields.[22,27]
▪ Demonstrate dependable, responsible behavior including teamwork.[19,24]			▪ Facilitate group problem solving of ethical dilemmas.[16]	

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Professional Development/Professionalism (continued)

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
		▪ Describe the relationship between theory and practice.[16,17] ▪ Identify current trends in early childhood education.[16]	▪ Engage in critical analysis, assessment, and reflection of teaching practices and the behavior of children on a regular basis to improve competence, both for personal and professional growth and for the benefit of children and families.[2,16] ▪ Make program decisions based on professional standards and position statements of professional organizations.[16] ▪ Evaluate current trends in early childhood education and revise practice as appropriate. [16]	▪ Critically review and apply child development theories, position statements, research and recommended practices in the program.[2]
		▪ Gain knowledge of professional and community resources.[2]		
				▪ Engage in action research by systematically studying own teaching or children.[4]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Space and Furnishings	▪ Assist in arranging furnishings and materials to allow and encourage appropriate independence (e.g., appropriately sized furniture, age-appropriate toys, etc.).[3,28]	▪ Arrange furnishings and materials to allow and encourage appropriate independence (e.g., appropriately sized furniture, age-appropriate toys, etc.).[28]	▪ Organize space into identifiable areas that encourage active involvement, self-initiative, responsibility, and a growing sense of autonomy (e.g., variety of centers, adequate and varied materials, appropriate storage, labels).[24]		▪ Articulate how the arrangement of the environment reflects the philosophy of the program.[29]
		▪ Arrange environment to promote physical development, in both indoor and outdoor environments.[3,13] ▪ Arrange space to encourage appropriate communication.	▪ Organize environment to facilitate positive interactions between children and adults.		
		▪ Organize environment to include large group areas, small group areas, quiet areas, and interest areas, with areas for quiet and active play separated.[13,28] ▪ Implement and use outdoor environments and natural settings as an integral part of a child's active and quiet learning.[3,24]	▪ Organize and use the outdoor environment and natural settings as an integral part of a child's active and quiet learning.[24]		

			• Model strategies, techniques, and methods which foster and ensure a physically and psychologically safe environment that promotes children's development and learning.[9]	• Provide well-arranged indoor and outdoor space which meets developmental needs of all children, including adaptive and assistive technology.[9]	

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Space and Furnishings (continued)	• Maintain materials and equipment in arranged environments to allow and encourage appropriate independence, promote physical development, and encourage appropriate curriculum.	• Maintain and/or obtain equipment.[14,15,19] • Rotate materials and equipment to encourage planned and spontaneous activities.[28,30]	• Organize environment to include a variety of materials and equipment.[13]	• Plan for and use materials that recognize and value diversity as a strength in children and families.[2,28]	
	• Demonstrate use of materials, such as blocks, etc., for play.[4]	• Demonstrate knowledge that children learn through interactive play with materials, other children, and adults in their immediate environments in home and center-based programs.[3,31] • Describe how materials, such as blocks, water, sand, books, and puzzles, and experiences, such as music and practical life, are used for play and learning in home and center-based programs.[31]			• Evaluate the program planning and implementation process of early childhood practitioners in various settings to ensure that practitioners demonstrate knowledge that children learn through interactive play with materials, children, and adults in their immediate environments.[31]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Personal Care and Routines	▪ Follow established routines for adults and children in regard to diapering, toileting, eating, dressing, tooth brushing, sleeping, and general hygiene.[16,25,32]	▪ Identify and implement developmentally appropriate nutrition, feeding, and self-help strategies for children on an individual basis.[3,14]			▪ Ensure that staff incorporate routine tasks (e.g., diapering, toileting, eating, dressing, and sleeping) into the program in a relaxed, reassuring, and individualized manner based on developmental needs.[5]
	▪ Assist in implementation of plans to make toileting, feeding, and the development of other independent skills a positive experience for children.	▪ Implement plans to make toileting, feeding, and the development of other independent skills a positive experience for children.	▪ Plan with families to make toileting, feeding, and the development of other independent skills a positive experience for children.[23]		▪ Ensure cooperative planning with parents to make toileting, feeding, and the development of other independent skills a positive experience for children.[5]
	▪ Assist in appropriate use of physical positioning and management techniques to support children with physical and health disabilities.			▪ Use appropriate physical positioning and management techniques to support children with physical and health disabilities.[20]	

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Language and Literacy	▪ Respond positively to children's attempts to communicate.[3,14,16] ▪ Use and respond to verbal and nonverbal communication techniques.[20,32.33]	▪ Promote activities that provide time for children to respond through open-ended questions.[23]	• Plan activities and experiences that encourage the development of communication skills, both auditory and verbal, appropriate for young children.[23]	▪ During communication activities, ensure a balance of listening and talking appropriate for age and abilities of children.[2,28] ▪ Develop strategies and methods to assist children in the use of alternative and augmentative communication systems.[20]	
	• Encourage children to engage in meaningful conversation.[3,14,32]	• Conduct developmentally appropriate conversations.[14,33] ▪ Implement daily intentional experiences with speaking and listening and immersion in an environment where oral and written language is used in meaningful ways by children and adults.[32,33,34]		▪ Design activities to encourage children to talk through or explain their reasoning when solving problems (e.g., why they sorted objects into different groups; in what way two pictures are the same or different).[28]	
		▪ Incorporate to the greatest possible extent native language and linguistically diverse routines relative to individual children and families.[3,25]			

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Language and Literacy (continued	▪ Engage in early literacy experiences with children, such as daily adult-child book reading, songs, and rhymes.[32,34]	▪ Select age-appropriate print materials and activities to support early literacy skills.[32] ▪ Conduct developmentally appropriate activities that support a print-rich environment, in which children learn about books, literature, and writing.[3,14,32,33]	▪ Plan early literacy experiences for children across all domains of the curriculum.[4]	▪ Facilitate activities to link children's spoken communication with written language (e.g., write down what children dictate and read it back to them; help them write a note to parents).[28,30,33] ▪ Facilitate and evaluate the effectiveness of children's early literacy experiences (e.g., adult-child book reading, intentional experiences with speaking and listening, immersion in an environment where oral and written language is used in meaningful ways by children and adults).[34]	▪ Evaluate activities that practitioners plan and implement to ensure that they demonstrate daily adult-child book reading, experiences with speaking and listening, and immersion in an environment where oral and written language is used in meaningful ways by children and adults.[2]
		▪ Provide activities and materials appropriate to children's age for phonemic/phonological awareness (e.g., rhyming words, matching sounds, syllable discrimination) and alphabet recognition.[32,33]			

	Early Childhood Core Competencies:				
	Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)				
	LEVEL I:	**LEVEL II: CDA**	**LEVEL III: Associates**	**LEVEL IV: Bachelors**	**LEVEL V: Masters**
	Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	**All items in Level I, plus**	All items in Level I, II, plus	**All items in Level I, II, III, plus**	**All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus**
Language and Literacy (continued)		▪ Assist colleagues, parents, and volunteers to promote children's early literacy experiences.	▪ Explain to colleagues and families how children's early literacy experiences begin with daily adult-child book reading, intentional experiences with speaking and listening, and immersion in an environment where oral and written language is used in meaningful ways by children and adults.[34]		▪ Collaborate with others in promoting language and literacy. ▪ Work with administrators to understand the goals, objectives and outcomes of emergent literacy.
					▪ Articulate, analyze, evaluate, and apply current theory and research on emerging trends in language acquisition, development, and emerging literacy.[16]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Activities and Materials	▪ Support children in making choices individually and cooperatively.[24]	▪ Provide opportunities for children to make choices individually and cooperatively.[3,24] ▪ Facilitate activities and routines for children to express growing independence and self-reliance, (e.g., the ability to make choices and initiate own activities).[3,35]			
Activities and Materials *(continued)*	▪ Support children in opportunities to be successful at meaningful tasks (e.g., using child-sized sinks or small, manageable, stable pitchers for pouring).[31]	▪ Provide children with opportunities to be successful at meaningful tasks (e.g., using child-sized sinks or small, manageable, stable pitchers for pouring).[3,31]	▪ Implement meaningful, integrated learning experiences, using the central concepts and tools of inquiry, in curricular areas including language and literacy, mathematics, science, health, safety, nutrition, social studies, art, music, drama, and movement.[5]	• Plan and develop meaningful, integrated learning experiences, using the central concepts and tools of inquiry, in curricular areas including language and literacy, mathematics, science, health, safety, nutrition, social studies, art, music, drama, and movement.[5]	▪ Develop and model meaningful integrated learning experiences, using the central concepts and tools of inquiry, in curricular areas including language and literacy, mathematics, science, health, safety, nutrition, social studies, art, music, drama, and movement.[5] ▪ Evaluate the use of meaningful, integrated learning experiences, using the central concepts and tools of inquiry, in curricular

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
					areas including language and literacy, mathematics, science, health, safety, nutrition, social studies, art, music, drama, and movement to meet the needs of all children.[5]
	▪ Follow program rules, routines, and activities, following children's lead.[24]		▪ Plan and implement program rules, routines, and activities, using children's input.[24]		
Activities and Materials (continued)		▪ Assist in planning and implementing developmentally and functionally appropriate individual, small and large group activities, which include teacher-designed and child-initiated experiences, based on the needs and interests of all young children.[9,20,24]	▪ Plan and implement developmentally and functionally appropriate individual, small and large group activities.[9,20,24] ▪ Implement both adult-directed and child-initiated activities, based on the needs and interests of all young children.[35]	▪ Plan and implement developmentally and individually appropriate curricula and instructional practices based on assessment knowledge of individual children, the community, and curricula goals and content.[5,9,20]	▪ Apply and provide rationale for daily practice, based on how it relates to theories of child development.[4,36]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
	▪ Use non-biased activities and materials.[3,14]	▪ Implement and adapt activities that reflect developmental and individual needs of children identified through ongoing assessment, including progress toward IEP objectives, IFSP outcomes, and/or Family Partnership Agreement goals.[2,12,15]	▪ Routinely incorporate activities and materials that represent and respect gender, age, roles, culture, and ethnicity.[30] ▪ Adapt the curricula to meet individual needs identified through ongoing assessment and transition planning, including progress toward IEP objectives, IFSP outcomes, Family Partnership Agreement goals.[2,15]	▪ Provide activities and materials that address individual learning styles, varied developmental needs, and cultural diversity.[24]	▪ Ensure that staff is individualizing curricula by adapting to individual needs identified through ongoing assessment and transition planning, including progress toward IEP objectives, IFSP outcomes, and/or Family Partnership Plan outcomes.[2,15]
Activities and Materials (continued)		▪ Provide a variety of age appropriate materials and activities that encourage problem solving.[3,14,33]	▪ Ensure that a variety of materials are available across a variety of interest centers (e.g., small figures and animals in block area; puppets and flannel board pieces in book area; toys for dramatic play outdoors and indoors).[28,30]	▪ Incorporate experiences for children to construct their own knowledge in culturally familiar ways, through various strategies which include problem solving and inquiry experiences.[24]	▪ Use and explain the rationale for developmentally appropriate methods that include play, small group projects, open-ended questioning, group discussion, problem solving, cooperative learning, and inquiry experiences to help young children develop intellectual curiosity,

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
					solve problems, and make decisions.[5]
				▪ Create a caring community of learners, supporting children's individual development and learning, constructing appropriate curriculum, assessing children's learning and development for the purpose of planning, and establishing reciprocal relationships with families.[13]	
Activities and Materials (Motor)	▪ Support a variety of activities which promote large and small muscle development.[14,25,31,32,33]	▪ Assist in planning and offer a variety of activities which promote large and small muscle development.[3, 14,25,31,32]	▪ Plan and implement many and varied activities for gross and fine motor play, both indoors and outdoors, as defined in daily lesson plans and curriculum.[28]	▪ Develop and implement on a daily basis developmentally and individually appropriate activities that enhance fine motor skills.[28,30] ▪ Develop and implement on a daily basis developmentally and	▪ Ensure and evaluate the daily implementation of developmentally and individually appropriate activities to enhance fine motor skills.[28,30]

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
				individually appropriate indoor and outdoor curricular activities that enhance gross motor skills and coordination.[28,30]	▪ Ensure and evaluate the daily implementation of developmentally and individually appropriate indoor and outdoor curricular activities to enhance gross motor skills and coordination.[28,30]
	▪ Support children's use of a variety of age appropriate block play opportunities.[14]	▪ Assist in planning and offer a variety of age appropriate block play opportunities.[14]			
	▪ Support children's use of appropriate art materials and experiences.[14,32,33]	▪ Assist in planning and offer appropriate art materials and experiences.[3,14,32]			
	▪ Support children's use of developmentally appropriate music experiences.[14,32,33]	▪ Assist in planning and offer developmentally appropriate music and movement experiences.[3,14,32]			
Activities and Materials (Sensory)	▪ Support children's opportunities to explore their senses (e.g., sand and water play, art and music experiences, exploration of textures).[3,14,32]	▪ Offer and implement many and varied activities for children to explore and develop their senses, both indoors and outdoors (e.g., sand and water play, music experiences, clay, collage	▪ Plan many and varied activities for sensory development, both indoors and outdoors, as reflected in daily lesson plans and curriculum.[14]	▪ Ensure that developmentally and individually appropriate curricular activities are provided on a daily basis to enhance children's learning through all of	▪ Ensure that staff provide many and varied materials for sensory exploration and development.[28,30] ▪ Evaluate the provision of developmentally

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		materials, textures).[14,32]		their senses.[28,30]	and individually appropriate curricular activities to enhance children's learning through all of their senses.[28,30]
			▪ Implement sensory stimulation programs, as appropriate, for children with special needs in collaboration with related service personnel.[20]	▪ In collaboration with related service personnel, plan sensory stimulation programs, as appropriate, for children with special needs.[20]	▪ Ensure that staff provide sensory stimulation programs, as appropriate, for children with special needs in collaboration with related service personnel.[20]
			▪ Implement experiences for sensory learning through projects that are integrated across the curriculum and extend over a period of time.[28]	▪ Plan opportunities for sensory learning through projects that are integrated across the curriculum and extend over a period of time.[28]	▪ Ensure that staff provide opportunities for sensory learning through projects that are integrated across the curriculum and extend over a period of time.[28]
Activities and Materials (Social/ Emotional)	▪ Model respect for self and others.[37]	▪ Offer and support an environment to assist children in developing respect for self and others, self-control, and self-direction through dramatic play, large/small group activities, modeling, etc.[32,33,37]	▪ Plan and implement an environment to assist children in developing respect for self and others, self-control, and self-direction through dramatic play, large/small group activities, modeling,	▪ Ensure and evaluate an environment to assist children in developing respect for self and others, self-control, and self-direction.[37]	

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: **Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential**	LEVEL II: CDA **All items in Level I, plus**	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors **All items in Level I, II, III, plus**	LEVEL V: Masters **All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus**
			etc.[37]		
				▪ Provide opportunities, daily routines, and materials which foster caring, helping, cooperating, and negotiating.[33,35]	▪ Ensure and evaluate the provision of opportunities which foster caring, helping, cooperation and negotiation.
				▪ Provide space for children to be alone to enhance development of concentration, independence, and relaxation.[28]	▪ Ensure and evaluate the provision of space for children to be alone.[28]
Cognitive	▪ Encourage the development of cognitive skills by providing concrete experiences. ▪ Engage children in play that encourages curiosity, exploration, and problem solving.[32,33]	▪ Provide activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem solving appropriate to the developmental levels and learning styles of the children.[3,33]	▪ Demonstrate awareness that individual cognitive development is related to a child's earliest experiences. ▪ Integrate cognitive development into the arts and all curricular areas. ▪ Support and scaffold learning activities for children so they can develop thinking skills.	▪ Describe how cognitive development and other areas of development interrelate. ▪ Plan, implement, evaluate, and modify curriculum to encourage children to construct knowledge. ▪ Encourage children to reflect and build on previous learning to develop and refine thinking skills.[4]	▪ Ensure and evaluate the implementation of activities that are consistent with cognitive growth.[4] ▪ Articulate, analyze, evaluate, and apply current theory and research on promoting cognitive development.

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Cognitive (continued)	▪ Support planned math, science, and nature exploration in response to children's emerging interests.[32,33]	▪ Guide math, science, and nature exploration in response to children's emerging interests.[3]	▪ Plan and implement math, science, pretend, and nature exploration activities in response to children's emerging interests and cognitive development.[3]		
		▪ Facilitate children's exploration of concepts such as space, time, shape, size, and quantity in meaningful ways,[32,33] ▪ Facilitate activities and opportunities appropriate to children's development that promote counting and number concepts.[32,33]	▪ Plan activities and opportunities appropriate to the children's developmental levels that promote exploration of shapes, sizes, space, measurement, and time.[32] ▪ Provide opportunities for children to organize, compare and contrast, pattern, and categorize thoughts, words, objects, and sensory experiences.[32,33]	▪ Evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of activities and opportunities for promoting exploration of shapes, sizes, space, measurement, and time. ▪ Evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of opportunities for children to organize, compare and contrast, pattern, and categorize thoughts, words, objects, and sensory experiences.	
		▪ Maintain adult's role as facilitator or partner in play.[3,32]			
		▪ Provide materials and opportunities for children to imitate and engage in pretend and			

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

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		dramatic play.[32,33]			
Interaction— Adult/Child and Child/Child	▪ Demonstrate behavior that communicates the importance of each child.[3,14]	▪ Encourage feelings of empathy and respect for others[3,14,32,33].		▪ Articulate the importance of relationships to children's development and learning.[38]	
	▪ Foster children's sense of security.[14,32]		▪ Facilitate children's sense of security during transition through linkages with and visitation to the new setting/staff.		
	▪ Communicate frequently with each child, both verbally and non-verbally (e.g., calm voice, smiles, touch, embraces, child's eye level).[3,14,32]				
		▪ Recognize a variety of child behaviors according to individual development levels.[4]	▪ Respond appropriately to a variety of child behaviors, recognizing individual development levels.[13]		▪ Ensure that staff respond appropriately to a variety of child behaviors, recognizing individual development levels.

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			▪ Utilize modeling and various prompting techniques to facilitate children's interactions with their environment.[24]		
Interaction—Adult/Child and Child/Child				▪ Provide developmentally appropriate interactions that include play, small group projects, open-ended questioning, group discussion, problem solving, cooperative	▪ Articulate the rationale for developmentally appropriate interactions that include play, small group projects, open-ended questioning,

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

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(continued)				learning, and inquiry experiences to help young children develop intellectual curiosity, solve problems, and make decisions.[5,32]	group discussion, problem solving, cooperative learning, and inquiry experiences to help young children develop intellectual curiosity, solve problems, and make decisions.[5]
				▪ Provide assistance during conflict resolution, problem solving, friendship development, and other social interactions, which are based on the child's ability to understand.[29,32,36]	

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Interpersonal Interaction	▪ Follow regulations regarding behavior guidance.[3,10,25]				
and Guidance	▪ Treat all children equitably and fairly.[25] ▪ React consistently to children's behavior.[30]	▪ Use positive guidance techniques and behaviors to help children act responsibly (e.g., consistent, kind, redirecting, modeling).[35] ▪ Establish supportive relationships with children and implement developmentally appropriate techniques of guidance and group management.[9,14,29,39]	▪ Provide consistent, clear rules, which are explained to children and understood by adults.[23,32]	▪ Embed opportunities into the normal routine to teach conflict resolution skills based on the child's ability to understand at different ages.[36]	▪ Ensure the use of positive techniques of guidance that include redirection, elimination of potential problems, positive reinforcement, and encouragement rather than competition, comparison, or criticism.[4,5]
		▪ Assist with methods of behavior support and management appropriate for young children with special needs.[9]	▪ Implement, in collaboration with related service personnel, methods of behavior support and management appropriate for young children with special needs, including a range of strategies from less directive, less structured methods (e.g., verbal support and modeling) to more directive, more structured methods (e.g., applied behavior analysis).[9]	▪ Work collaboratively with related service personnel to plan and document methods of behavior support and management appropriate for young children with special needs, including a range of strategies from less directive, less structured methods (e.g., verbal support and modeling) to more directive, more structured methods (e.g., applied behavior analysis).[9]	▪ Ensure that staff implement guidance practices appropriate to each child's personality and individual development.

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
		▪ Recognize signs of emotional distress in young children and follow procedures.[9,3]			
Program Structure and Management (Individual Needs)	▪ Follow basic daily schedule that is familiar to children.[3,28]	▪ Implement a schedule that meets children's need for routine and play, including indoor/outdoor activities, individual and group activities, quiet and active activities, and child-chosen and teacher-directed activities, for a substantial part of day.[14,28]	▪ Plan a schedule that meets children's need for routine and play, including indoor/outdoor activities, individual and group activities, quiet and active activities, and child chosen and teacher directed activities, for a substantial part of day.[28] ▪ Arrange variations of schedules, activities, and materials to meet individual needs (indoor and outdoor).[28] ▪ Prepare and organize materials to implement daily lesson plans.[20]	▪ Plan and implement developmentally and individually appropriate curricula and instructional practices.[5,9]	▪ Incorporate evaluation, planning, and management procedures that match learner needs.[20]
	▪ Support children's transition between activities.[3,14]	▪ Implement procedures that help children make smooth transitions from one activity to another.[14]	▪ Plan procedures that help children make smooth transitions from one activity to another.[14]	▪ Develop transition plans to support children's movement between activities.[13]	▪ Evaluate procedures to help children make smooth transitions between programs and within classroom events.[14,15,27,29]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Program Structure and Management *(Individual Needs)* *(continued)*	▪ Assist in implementation of program's curriculum and philosophy of learning. ▪ Demonstrate knowledge of *KY's Early Childhood Standards.*	▪ Describe program's curriculum and philosophy of learning. ▪ Utilize community resources to enrich curriculum.[3,19,25] ▪ Demonstrate knowledge of *KY's Early Childhood Standards* and its relationship to daily activities.	▪ Articulate various early childhood curricula approaches. ▪ Use a variety of strategies to encourage children's physical/motor, social/emotional, aesthetic, and cognitive/language development.[23] ▪ Use *KY's Early Childhood Standards* as a guide to plan appropriate activities and experiences based on children's developmental progress.	▪ Evaluate critical attributes of various curricula approaches and potential outcomes for children. ▪ Select intervention, curricula and methods for children with specific disabilities.[9] ▪ Use strategies for facilitating maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments.[20]	▪ Ensure the use of pedagogically sound and legally defensible instructional practices.[20] ▪ Recognize the differences in adult and early childhood learning styles and apply knowledge to practice.[16,17]
		▪ Use technology for efficiency in basic program management activities.[2]		▪ Select and use computer software to meet the management needs of the program.[2]	▪ Identify and use human, material, and technological resources to keep abreast of the changing early childhood field.[5]
		▪ Utilize computer software to promote developmental skills of children, when	▪ Select and plan for use of computer software to promote	▪ Ensure the appropriate use of computer software and technology to assist in	▪ Work, in collaboration with related service personnel, to evaluate

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Learning Environments and Curriculum (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
		appropriate to their age and abilities.[40]	developmental skills of children, when appropriate to their ages and abilities.[40] • Implement assistive technology for children with special needs, in collaboration with related service personnel.[2,27]	meeting the developmental and special needs of individual children.[2,9] • Implement appropriate use of technology, including adaptive and assistive technology, in collaboration with related service personnel.[9]	the appropriate use of technology and computer software to meet the developmental and special needs of individual children.[2]
Program Structure and Management (Adult Interaction)	• Cooperate with team members to implement daily activities.[28]	• Identify individual roles and responsibilities specific to daily routines, adult and child interactions, child supervision and guidance.[25,28]	• Cooperate with team members to develop and implement daily activities.[28]	• Develop team strategies to plan for children's group and individual needs.[5,28]	• Administer, supervise, and consult with, or instruct other adults.[2,20]
	• Collaborate daily with team members to share child-related information.[28]				
		• Identify and utilize appropriate community resources (e.g., mental and physical health agencies, educational programs- museums, libraries, and available social services).[3,25]			
Family/Staff	• Conduct informal daily communications with	• Provide families with administrative information (e.g., parent handbooks,		• Establish culturally and linguistically diverse, family-friendly strategies of	

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
	families.[3,28]	fees, hours of operation, transition procedures) in writing.[3,28]		communication with families through regular newsletters, bulletin boards, telephone calls, and other similar measures.[2,5]	
	▪ Develop a positive, collaborative relationship with families.[3,5,9]		▪ Foster partnerships between parents and staff to facilitate family and child interactions as the primary contexts for learning and development.[9,37]		
Family/Staff (continued)			▪ Plan for transition by linking children's current developmental and learning experiences and teaching strategies with those of the next educational setting.[9]	▪ Communicate options for programs and services at the next level and assist the family in planning for transition. [9]	▪ Design and evaluate processes and strategies that support transition among hospital, home, and infant/toddler, preschool and primary programs.[9,20]

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
				▪ Engage families in the assessment process of observing and recording children's development and learning.[5]	▪ Provide guidance for observing, recording, and assessing young children's development and learning for the purpose of planning appropriate programs, environments, and interactions and adapting for individual differences.[5] ▪ Interpret sensory, mobility, reflex, and perceptual information to create appropriate learning plans.[20]
				▪ Implement a range of family oriented services based on a family's identified resources, concerns, priorities, and, as appropriate, due process safeguards.[9,20]	
				▪ Develop, monitor, summarize, and evaluate the acquisition of child and family outcomes as outlined in the IFSP, IEP, or Family Partnership Agreement.[15,24]	

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Child Assessment

	LEVEL I: **Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential**	LEVEL II: CDA **All items in Level I, plus**	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors **All items in Level I, II, III, plus**	LEVEL V: Masters **All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus**
Record Keeping Tools	▪ Assist with collection of information about each child's development.[4]	▪ Participate with supervision in developmental screening and classroom/instructional assessment of children's social, emotional, physical, communicative, and cognitive development.[41,42] ▪ Observe, collect, and record information about children across all areas of development and their families in a non-judgmental and unbiased manner.[9,14,24,42]	▪ Supervise screening, classroom/instructional assessment of children, and documentation of information collected across all areas of development.[42]	▪ Integrate informal assessment information with formal assessment data, ensuring that authentic procedures have been used during assessment.[5]	• Communicate major theories, research, and issues relevant to observation and assessment.[16]
	▪ Implement appropriate use of techniques for assessing young children, such as observation and anecdotal records.[42]	▪ Model and implement appropriate methods for assessment of children's social/emotional, physical, communication, and cognitive development.[42]	▪ Plan for and supervise the use of appropriate methods for assessment of children's social/emotional, physical, communication, and cognitive development.[41,42]	▪ Select, create, adapt, and use multiple modes and methods of assessment which are sensitive to the unique cultural and learning needs of each child.[2,42] ▪ Select, administer, and evaluate instruments and procedures for a continuous assessment system, based on program goals and compliance with established criteria and standards, taking into consideration specific exceptionalities.[5,9,20,42]	• Establish criteria, procedures, and documentation methods for assessment that are systematic, multidisciplinary, and based on everyday tasks.[16,42,43] • Ensure the selection and administration of assessment instruments and procedures for a continuous assessment system based on program goals and established criteria and standards.[9,42]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Child Assessment (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Record Keeping Tools *(continued)*				▪ Collaborate with related service personnel in the administration of diagnostic instruments, when indicated.[42]	• Administer diagnostic instruments to assess children as indicated, through screening, observation, and interview, in keeping with appropriate training and in collaboration with the family and other professionals.[42]
		▪ Have knowledge of and use the *KY's Early Childhood Continuous Assessment Guide* for assessment of children.	▪ Use *KY's Early Childhood Continuous Assessment Guide* as a tool in planning a continuous assessment system for a program.		
		▪ Communicate assessment information to families and other appropriate professionals in written and oral form and document.[14,42]			
		▪ Collect and maintain records from a variety of assessment sources (e.g., screening, observation, interviews, portfolios) concerning the progress in growth, health, and behavior in each area of development.[3,16,25,42]			

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Child Assessment (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Assessment and Team Collaboration	▪ Participate as a team member in planning, coordinating and implementing assessment procedures.[42]	▪ Participate and collaborate as a team member with other professionals in conducting family-centered assessments for all children, including children with exceptional learning needs.[9]		▪ Promote and demonstrate team collaboration in planning, coordinating, implementing, and evaluating assessment procedures.[42]	▪ Identify and ensure the existence of structures supporting intra-agency/interagency collaborations, including agreements, referrals, and consultation.[20]
			▪ Involve families in assessing and planning for all children.[9,42]	▪ Assist families in identifying resources, priorities, and concerns related to their child's development, incorporating where appropriate into child and family outcomes.[9] ▪ Communicate to families assessment information and relevant activities that may be embedded into the family's daily activities and routines.[2,9] ▪ Monitor, summarize, and evaluate the acquisition of child and family outcomes as outlined in the IFSP, the IEP, and/or the Family Partnership Agreement.[9,15,12]	▪ Ensure staff is sharing assessment information and relevant activities that may be embedded into the family's daily activities and routines.[2]
			▪ Articulate that various types of assessment procedures are used across a variety of settings.[20,41]		

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Child Assessment (continued)

	LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
Assessment and Team Collaboration (continued)			▪ Articulate that authentic assessment measures which address multiple developmental areas are used for classroom/ instructional assessment and that information gathered is used to plan curriculum, instruction, and individual and group learning goals.[41]	▪ Use *KY's Early Childhood Standards* as a framework for determining overall progress of children's development.	▪ Ensure that assessment and curriculum are integrated throughout the program and that assessment is consistent with and relevant to the goals, objectives, and content of the program.[41,42]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Family and Community Partnerships

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
▪ Demonstrate confidentiality relative to all aspects of the lives of individual children and their families.[3,14,16,35]				
	▪ Demonstrate awareness of individual families relative to differences in family strengths, structure, lifestyle, expectations, values, religions, customs, traditions, childrearing practices and language.[3,16,19,24,25,35]	▪ Demonstrate respect for individual families relative to differences in family strengths, structure, lifestyle, expectations, values, religions, customs, traditions, childrearing practices, and language.[16,19,23,24,35]		▪ Apply family systems theory and knowledge of the dynamics, roles, and relationships within families and communities.[20]
	▪ Respect the family's role as primary decision-maker for their child.[14,35]	▪ Assist families in making their own decisions, accessing services, finding their own resources, and becoming independent of professionals.[41]		
▪ Follow the program's plan for maintaining written and verbal daily communication with families.[3,16,19,25,35]	▪ Conduct effective home visits with families to share information, report progress, and demonstrate developmentally appropriate techniques, in the home language whenever possible.[14,24,25,35] ▪ Conduct parent conferences in collaboration with the program director and other staff, in the home language whenever possible.[3,14,24,25,35]	▪ Plan and implement effective family meetings, considering adult learning principles and the interests and needs of families in the home or center-based program.[2,24,26,35]		

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Family and Community Partnerships (continued)

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
• Show a warm, welcoming attitude toward families and their involvement in the life of the center, child care home, or school.[3,19,35]	• Assist families and children to become acquainted with the program and the staff on the child's first day.[3,14,24,25]	• Assist families to become active participants on the educational team.[20]	• Foster alternative models and methodologies for family support and involvement.[3,5,19,35] • Provide opportunities to families and the community to be members of an advisory board that assists in policy setting and program evaluation.[3,5,19,35]	
	• Respond empathetically and knowledgeably to families' feelings and concerns regarding child care, guidance, and their children's development, using the home language whenever possible.[14,24,25,35]	• Incorporate the role of families' cultures, religions, and child rearing practices into the program.[4] • Utilize family goals, traditions, and cultural considerations in planning environments and programming to enrich children's health and experiences.[2,24,26,35]	• Demonstrate knowledge sufficient to serve as a culturally responsive resource to families for information regarding child development and child rearing.[5,24,35] • Anticipate and negotiate potential conflicts in philosophies and child rearing practices between self, the program, and diverse parents.[5,19]	
	• Show awareness of community resources[19,35]. • Provide relevant information to families regarding community resources.[3,14,24,25,35]	• Develop positive learning opportunities for families.[44]		
	• Collaborate with families to support transition of children.[2,25]			

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Family and Community Partnerships (continued)

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
			▪ Actively involve families in the assessment of their children's development and communicate results in everyday language, using the home language whenever possible.[2]	▪ Ensure that child assessment is shaped by family priorities and information needs, as well as by child characteristics and diagnostic concerns.[45]
		▪ Identify the potential impact on the family of a child with special needs.[24]	▪ Collaborate with families in providing intervention strategies, including assistive technology, that promote development and learning for children with diverse needs and abilities.[2,5,19,35]	▪ Ensure the provision of a range of family-oriented services based on each family's identified resources, priorities, and concerns.[2]
			▪ Effectively supervise and evaluate support staff in their work with families.[5,19]	
		▪ Implement and interpret to other adults the program's policies and procedures related to parents and families, including transition.[2,24,26]		
				▪ Apply and/or conduct research that addresses families & communities.[19] ▪ Apply research information regarding family systems and stresses to daily practice with families and children.[2,5,19,24]
				▪ Provide leadership through teaching, research, and advocacy for issues across the field of family and community involvement in early childhood development and education.[19]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:

Program Management/Evaluation

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
▪ Adhere to program policies and regulations and assist with maintaining individual child records.[14,15,19]	▪ Implement program policies and regulation requirements.[3,14] ▪ Maintain and update individual child records.[3,14,15,19] ▪ Maintain staff records required by program policies and regulations.[3,14,15]	▪ With the family's permission, ensure that child's records are transferred for transition purposes in a timely manner.		
▪ Assist with program evaluation by providing input.[2]	▪ Become knowledgeable of various nationally recognized program and management/supervision evaluation tools.[42]	▪ Utilize nationally recognized program evaluation tools appropriately (e.g., NAEYC Accreditation Classroom Observation Book, 2003; ECERS-R, 1998; ELLCO, 2002; McWilliam & Winton, 1990; ITERS-R, 2003).[28,30,42,,46,47,50]	▪ Apply professional guidelines/mandates in program evaluation.[2,42] ▪ Design and ensure program evaluation, based on overall program goals, to determine if outcomes have been met and to ensure continuous and comprehensive quality of the total environment for children, families and the community.[5,42]	▪ Demonstrate knowledge of the theoretical and practical intent of various program evaluation tools, so that appropriate instruments and strategies that are sensitive to culture and individual learning styles and abilities are used for enhancing program quality.[5,15,24,42,48]
	▪ Obtain feedback from families and staff for program evaluation.[42]	• Communicate program evaluation outcomes to staff and families.[42]	▪ Involve families, other team members, community, patrons, and advisory boards in evaluation of programs.[2,15]	▪ Ensure that the concerns and input of families and other stakeholders are reflected in program evaluation outcomes and result in appropriate modifications and adaptations in practice to accommodate the needs of the program, children, families, staff, and community. [29]

Early Childhood Core Competencies:
Program Management/Evaluation (continued)

LEVEL I: Pre-CDA/ Commonwealth Child Care Credential	LEVEL II: CDA All items in Level I, plus	LEVEL III: Associates All items in Level I, II, plus	LEVEL IV: Bachelors All items in Level I, II, III, plus	LEVEL V: Masters All items in Level I, II, III, IV, plus
	▪ Orient new or substitute staff[3,14,25].			
			• Develop plan to implement program changes that is reflective of program evaluation data[29,42,48].	
				• Demonstrate an understanding of one's own managerial style and the impact on motivating, leading and supervising various staff[21,49].
				▪ Promote an inclusive program, based on current research and coordination of services, personnel, and resources, which results in healthy growth and development for all children and which supports families and staff[27,48].

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