

Nebraska's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals

Knowledge and Skills Needed to Effectively Work
with Children Ages Birth to Five Years



Vision for Nebraska's Core Competencies: All children have teachers and caregivers who are well prepared, knowledgeable and have the tools they need to advance children's learning and development

Table of Contents

Dedication.....ii
Introduction, Purpose, Benefits.....1
Levels of Core Competencies.....7
Overview of Competency Areas.....8

Core Competency Areas

A. Child Growth and Development.....10
B. Health, Safety and Nutrition.....14
C. Learning Environments.....20
D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum.....24
E. Interacting With Children and Providing Guidance to Children.....38
F. Observation, Documentation and Assessment.....42
G. Partnerships with Families and Communities.....48
H. Professionalism and Leadership.....52
I. Administration, Program Planning and Development.....58

Glossary of Terms.....62
Appendix A: Core Competencies Leadership Team.....64
Resources.....68

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Nebraska's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals

DEDICATION

Nebraska's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals is dedicated to all adults committed to supporting the learning and development of young children through partnerships with their families and providing high quality early childhood programs, services and experiences.

An Invitation . . .

You are invited and encouraged to use this document as a resource to support and enhance the work of individuals and programs involved in the care and education of young children and in providing support for families! So many can use the Core Competencies, including teachers, assistant teachers, family child care home providers, administrators, parents, trainers, and college faculty.

If you work directly with young children, the Core Competencies can assist you in planning and tracking your own professional development activities as you build your portfolio of training and experience. The document can guide you in deciding what knowledge and skills you want to focus on for your next training activity or area of study.

Program administrators who supervise staff can use the levels of competencies as a resource to assist in staff evaluation, recognition and support for ongoing learning and continuous program improvement.

For those of you who provide training, whether in-service or formal higher education programs of early childhood education study in 2-year or 4-year higher education institutions, this document identifies the broad range of core competencies to be integrated into workshops or coursework and on-site program experiences. You can use the Core Competencies document to assist you in highlighting knowledge and skills addressed in training or teacher preparation to strengthen the competence of staff working with young children and their families.

As parents or other adult family members, you can use this document as you make decisions about selecting early care and education programs for your children. It can also provide a resource to inform your own approaches to parenting your young children.

You are invited to use this document to plan, think about, and discuss what adults need to know and be able to do to best support the learning and development of young children in partnership with their families. Enjoy...and keep on learning!

Introduction

Core Competencies are:

what *all adults* who work with children need to know, understand, and be able to do to support children's development and school readiness.

The Nebraska Core Competencies Leadership Team was convened in 2006 to initiate development of core competencies for teachers/caregivers in the early childhood field. The Core Competencies Leadership Team was made up of early childhood education professionals from across Nebraska. The team included: family child care providers, child care center directors and teachers, Early Childhood Head Start directors and teachers, state agency representatives, and early childhood professional development staff and faculty from colleges and universities across Nebraska. (A full listing of the Core Competencies leadership team, the writing team and the review team can be found in Appendix A.)

The Leadership Team met and agreed on a common definition for core competencies, defined guiding principles for the core competencies, designed the initial framework for the essential areas of knowledge and skills needed to work in the early childhood field, and provided guidance on the number of levels needed within the Nebraska's Core Competencies.

A writing team worked for several months to draft the initial core knowledge competencies, and a review team examined the competencies for their usefulness, readability, and inclusiveness. The review team made recommendations for refining the draft.

The leadership team reviewed the refined draft and made recommendations for improving the document before it went to focus groups across Nebraska for review and comment.

Eleven focus groups were held across Nebraska from April to June of 2007. Focus groups provided feedback on the benefits of the core competencies document, ways they might use the document and suggestions for improving the document.

In July of 2007 the Core Competencies leadership team reviewed the revisions based upon focus group input and finalized the working document for final formatting, printing and distribution.

Vision for Nebraska's Core Competencies

All children have caregivers and teachers who are well prepared, knowledgeable and have the tools they need to advance children's learning and development.

Belief Statements

Core belief statements that are imbedded in Nebraska's Core Competencies and need to be understood and accepted by anyone who works in early childhood care and education include:

- All children require supportive and nurturing environments to grow and develop to their fullest potential.
- Early care and education teachers/caregivers recognize the family as the child's first teacher, so they work to support the family as a whole.
- Cultural diversity influences all areas of practice in early care and education.
- Children with disabilities or special needs should be served in natural environments with same-age peers or siblings and with the support necessary to advance their development and education .

Nebraska's Core Competencies:

- Apply to all early childhood settings and programs.
- Respect and value all roles in the early childhood care and education system (including trainers and instructors).
- Represent what everyone needs to know to work with all young children (all means the spectrum of abilities, temperaments, cultures etc.).
- Include specific core competencies for specific roles, such as director.
- Reflect practices that work with each child's developmental age.
- Are practical, useable, reasonable, achievable.

The Purpose of Core Competencies is to:

- Define what early childhood teachers/caregivers need to know and be able to do to provide quality care and education
- Serve as part of the foundation for Nebraska's professional development system
- Help early childhood programs, directors and teachers/caregivers define professional development needs
- Define the levels of competencies of the professional development system from entry level skills through advanced academic preparation and years of experience in early childhood programs
- Allow professionals to evaluate progress from one level to the next through a combination of training, education, and self-assessment

Nebraska's Core Competencies Are Voluntary

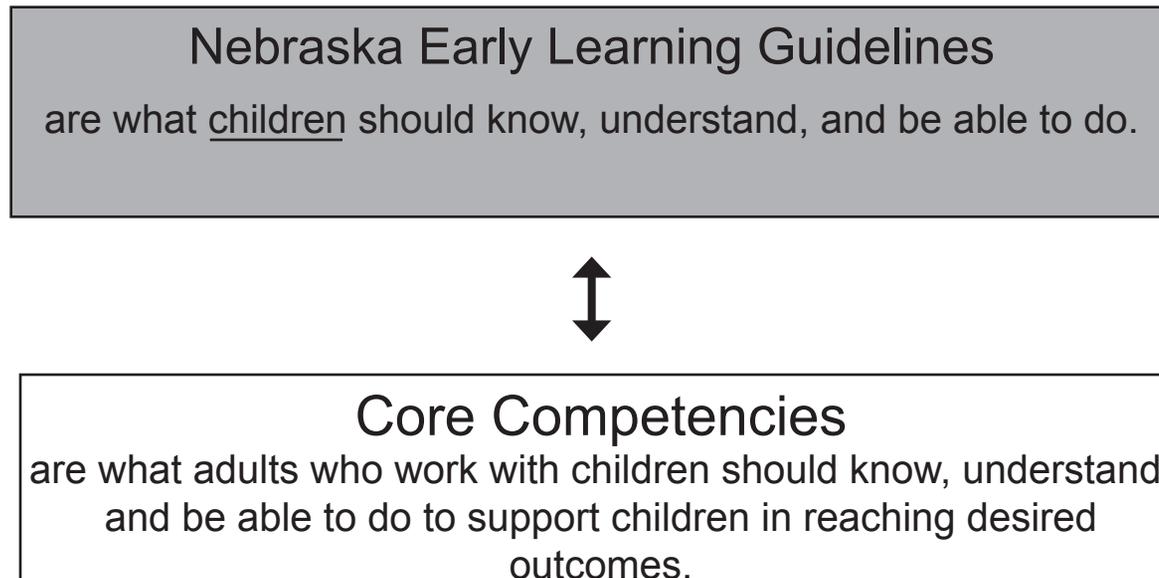
The competencies, skills, and levels described are voluntary for those working in the early care and education field. Programs, directors, teachers, family child care home providers and others are encouraged to use the document as they find helpful.

People might want to use them to help in making hiring decisions, writing job descriptions, assessing staff skills, identifying professional development goals, and designing training and in-service programs that can advance the skills and knowledge of those working with children. There are multiple uses for this document to benefit the early childhood field.

Relationship between Early Learning Guidelines and Core Competencies

Nebraska developed voluntary Early Learning Guidelines for children ages birth to three and for children ages three to five. The Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines were developed to describe what *children* need to learn and be able to do and how *adults* can support that learning. The Early Learning Guidelines is a resource to assist adults working in early childhood in their planning of meaningful learning experiences for young children.

The Core Competencies are Nebraska's description of the knowledge and skills that adults, who work with children from birth to age five, need to develop over years of experience and/or through a course of study. At the introduction to each Core Competency Knowledge Area is a description of sections from the Early Learning Guidelines that relate to the Core Competencies.



Benefits of Using Core Competencies

A. Early childhood teachers and caregivers can:

- ▶ Evaluate their own current level of knowledge
- ▶ Identify areas of training/educational needs
- ▶ Determine training/professional development that can meet those needs
- ▶ Identify potential career paths they can pursue

B. Directors or administrators can:

- ▶ Specify levels of training/education needed for individual jobs
- ▶ Develop more complete job descriptions based upon the competencies defined for the early childhood field
- ▶ Help staff develop professional development plans
- ▶ Plan educational or training opportunities that will best serve the needs of the teachers and caregivers in the program
- ▶ Develop a salary scale based upon levels of competency
- ▶ Appraise job performance of staff

C. Higher Education faculty members can:

- ▶ Design courses to ensure that students are able to demonstrate mastery of the competencies
- ▶ Coordinate content to facilitate transfer and articulation of college course work

D. Trainers or training organizations can:

- ▶ Understand the knowledge and skills necessary for professionals
- ▶ Plan educational or training opportunities that will best serve the needs of early childhood professionals throughout the state
- ▶ Evaluate audiences to determine levels of knowledge and skills
- ▶ Build evaluation components into training to demonstrate competencies



E. Career advisors can assist others to:

- ▶ Develop professional goals and objectives based on needed competencies
- ▶ Locate and select courses/training that reflect the skills and knowledge needed
- ▶ Keep professionals up to date on current credentials and requirements

F. Families can:

- ▶ Select programs with teachers and caregivers who demonstrate core competencies
- ▶ Communicate with elected officials about the importance of high-quality early childhood care and education

G. Policymakers at the local, state and national levels can:

- ▶ Develop and implement policies that enhance professionalism and high-quality programs

H. Statewide Professional Development System can:

- ▶ Support the Nebraska Early Childhood Professional Development Framework
- ▶ Acknowledge professional growth
- ▶ Provide access to competency-based training/education
- ▶ Encourage compensation that is commensurate with training/education



Levels

There are many skilled early care and education professionals in Nebraska. Some of them have acquired the skills described in this booklet through working with children over a number of years and through independent study and learning; others have completed degree or certificate programs through colleges and

universities and worked for a number of years with children to refine their skills. Nebraska’s core competencies describe knowledge and skills based upon six levels of education/ experience in the early childhood field. The six levels are:

Level	Description
Level 1	Skills and knowledge anyone entering the early childhood field should have.
Level 2	All skills in level one plus skills and knowledge anyone working in the early childhood field should have after one to two years of employment.
Level 3	Skills and knowledge anyone working in the early childhood field might have, and specifically the skills you would expect to see in someone with a Child Development Associate (CDA) , a one year certificate/diploma in early childhood education, or three years experience in early childhood education. (Includes all of the skills in levels 1 and 2.)
Level 4	Skills and knowledge anyone working in the early childhood field might have, and specifically the skills you would expect to see in someone with an associate’s degree in early childhood education/child development or a related degree, and at least three years experience in early childhood education. (Includes all of the skills in levels 1, 2, and 3.)
Level 5	Skills and knowledge anyone working in the early childhood field might have, and specifically the skills you would expect to see in someone with a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education, child development, early childhood special education or a related degree, and at least three years experience in early childhood education. (Includes all of the skills in levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.)
Level 6	Skills and knowledge anyone working in the early childhood field might have, and specifically the skills and knowledge you would expect to see in someone with an advanced degree in early childhood education, child development, early childhood special education or a related degree and at least three years experience in early childhood education. (Includes all of the skills in levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.)

Core Competencies

Nebraska's Core Competencies are divided into nine areas of knowledge and skill. The nine areas are:

- A. Child Growth and Development
- B. Health, Safety and Nutrition
- C. Learning Environments
- D. Planning, Learning Experiences, and Curriculum
- E. Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children
- F. Observation, Assessment, and Documentation
- G. Partnerships with Families and Communities
- H. Professionalism and Leadership
- I. Administration, Program Planning, and Development



The order of the core competencies in this booklet is meant to reflect that, first and foremost, early care and education professionals are focused on children, their growth and development, their health, safety and nutrition needs, and on the learning environments and experiences that they have. The competencies then proceed to address the need to observe, document, and assess children's progress, our need to work closely with families and the community, and finally our need to develop as professionals, and to run programs well. All competency areas are critical to providing high quality care to young children.

The core competencies are intended to help professionals serve children and families from many racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. The core competencies are also intended to help early childhood teachers and/or caregivers serve all children and families, including children with special needs, in early childhood care and education settings.

A. Child Growth and Development Competencies

Early childhood teachers and caregivers understand how children develop physically, cognitively, and socially and emotionally.

Early childhood teachers and caregivers understand how children develop across early learning domains, factors that influence development, and how to maximize learning for all children.

Experiences for any child, regardless of age, must be planned around the child's developmental abilities. It is essential for early childhood professionals to recognize that development proceeds in predictable steps and learning occurs in recognized sequences.

Strong attachments created between adults and young children are the key to establishing young children's capacity to learn and grow.



Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 and Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5 describe skills adults need to support child development.

Examples:

- Knows and builds a trusting relationship with each child
- Engages children in social games and back and forth communicating

Child Growth and Development

May 2013

A. Child Growth and Development Competencies		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in level 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Addresses the individual needs of each child.</p> <p>1.2 Helps children learn to communicate and get along with others.</p> <p>1.3 Recognizes that children learn and develop through play and meaningful experiences.</p> <p>1.4 Recognizes and respects individual personalities and temperaments of children.</p> <p>1.5 Engages in a safe, secure, and responsive relationship with each child to promote the child's optimal development.</p>	<p>2.1 Accepts individual needs of children and the effects those variations may have on behavior and development.</p> <p>2.2 Encourages feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults.</p> <p>2.3 Provides a variety of activities that foster the development of the whole child.</p> <p>2.4 Recognizes and accepts individual, family, cultural and community influences on the development of children.</p> <p>2.5 Adapts curriculum/learning experiences as children grow and develop.</p>	<p>3.1 Recognizes different children's personalities and individual differences in development and their impact on children's needs.</p> <p>3.2 Understands the value of children's learning through trial and error and encourages exploration, experimentation, and creativity for the sake of learning.</p> <p>3.3 Identifies basic physical, cognitive, social/emotional, and language developmental milestones of children.</p> <p>3.4 Discuss first with families any suspicions that a child may have a disability, and then collaborates with other agencies in making referrals as needed.</p> <p>3.5 Recognizes risk factors, delays, or disabilities that may indicate a need for special services.</p> <p>3.6 Integrates inclusive practices into curriculum planning.</p>

A. Child Growth and Development Competencies

Level 4 (all skills is previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Identifies and describes age-typical physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language characteristics of children.</p> <p>4.2 Uses knowledge of children’s development as a framework to adapt curriculum/learning experiences into appropriate experiences for children.</p> <p>4.3 Describes individual children relative to developmental characteristics typical of their age.</p> <p>4.4 Collaborates with families and consultants in planning learning experiences for children’s individual needs.</p> <p>4.5 Employs teaching practices inclusive of children with variations in learning styles, cultural perspectives, abilities, and special needs.</p> <p>4.6 Demonstrates understanding of the development of mental health, and the importance of supportive relationships with adults and peers.</p> <p>4.7 Creates environments and experiences that affirm and respect cultural linguistic diversity.</p>	<p>5.1 Shares information with families about the general principles of child growth and development, including information on early brain development.</p> <p>5.2 Applies information on growth, development and learning patterns of individual children and groups of children to their work with children in the classroom.</p> <p>5.3 Understands and describes various personality and learning styles of children.</p> <p>5.4 Understands child development, developmental delays, and makes referrals to the Early Development Network, other agencies, school districts or professionals once parental/guardian permission has been obtained.</p> <p>5.5 Demonstrates knowledge of inclusive philosophy and practices and recognizes the range of development in young children.</p> <p>5.6 Demonstrates understanding of the developmental consequences of stress and trauma related to loss, neglect and abuse.</p>	<p>6.1 Promotes and communicates information about promising practices, issues, research and theory relevant to child growth and development.</p> <p>6.2 Accesses, analyzes, and evaluates current theory and research and applicable policies on child growth and development.</p> <p>6.3 Understands how to use educational research to influence children’s development.</p> <p>6.4 Expresses knowledge of cultural and linguistic diversity and the significance of family-child attachments and family dynamics as they influence children’s development and learning.</p> <p>6.5 Understands and articulates a systems perspective on issues related to wellness, mental health, children with disabilities, childhood obesity, the effects of stress on development, and the child’s need for support and protection.</p> <p>6.6 Articulates and understands the implications of research related to causes and effects of stress and trauma on children and families.</p> <p>6.7 Applies current theory and research to the design and implementation of quality services.</p>

B. Health, Safety and Nutrition Competencies

Early childhood teachers and caregivers establish and maintain an environment that ensures children's healthy development, safety, and nourishment.

Early childhood teachers and caregivers encourage children to pay attention to personal hygiene, healthy eating, and the importance of keeping bodies moving and active, including the need for outdoor play.

Early childhood programs must adhere to relevant laws and regulations; furthermore, they must consider the health, growth, and development requirements for each child within the context of the families' cultural traditions and any other special needs or unique physical and health conditions. Early childhood professionals should understand that children's physical health, mental health, and safety are the foundations for development and learning in children.



Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 and Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5 describe a variety of ways that Early Childhood Teachers can support children's health and physical development.

Examples:

- Ensures that materials do not present choking or other safety hazards
- Plans meaningful and challenging activities with materials that support development of fine (small) motor skills and large motor skills

Health, Safety, and Nutrition

May 2013

B. Health, Safety and Nutrition Competencies		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in level 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Practices effective hand washing, toileting and diapering, safe food handling, and safe sleep procedures to reduce the spread of disease and the possibility of injury to children.</p> <p>1.2 Practices universal precautions to minimize and control the spread of disease through body fluids.</p> <p>1.3 Has CPR/First Aid Certification or can readily identify the person in the program who has a current certification in CPR/First Aid. (If a Family Child Care Home Provider-must have CPR/First Aid.)</p> <p>1.4 Actively supervises children to ensure safety both indoors and outdoors and to ensure that children are released only to family or authorized escorts.</p> <p>1.5 Selects safe toys, materials, and equipment appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the children in care.</p> <p>1.6 Responds promptly and appropriately to children's injuries, documents any injuries and notifies families, while assuring the comfort and care of other children.</p>	<p>2.1 Teaches and supports children in effective use of hand washing procedures.</p> <p>2.2 Utilizes USDA guidelines to select appropriate foods for children, supervises mealtimes, and is vigilant about accommodating food choices based upon children's' allergies and/or health issues.</p> <p>2.3 Maintains certification in basic pediatric first aid and CPR training.</p> <p>2.4 Maintains accurate immunization and health records according to state and federal guidelines.</p> <p>2.5 Regularly assesses safe and sanitary environments inside and outside and ensures any problems are taken care of promptly.</p> <p>2.6 Ensures a consistent, daily routine for rest/sleep and active physical play as developmentally appropriate.</p> <p>2.7 Informs staff and families of emergency procedures.</p>	<p>3.1 Teaches, models and practices personal health and safety procedures with children.</p> <p>3.2 Keeps informed about safety procedures and shares resources with families.</p> <p>3.3 Follows policies for informing families of current health concerns in the program.</p> <p>3.4 Recognizes and discusses with families cultural health practices and implements these practices when appropriate.</p> <p>3.5 Adapts the indoor and outdoor environments to maximize their use by children with special needs.</p> <p>3.6 Designs and implements curriculum activities emphasizing healthy bodies, healthy lifestyles and a healthy environment for staff, children, and families.</p> <p>3.7 Teaches children about nutrition and plans and implements appropriate cooking experiences.</p> <p>3.8 Assesses children's health status through daily observation and documents symptoms when necessary.</p>

B. Health, Safety and Nutrition Competencies		
Level 1 Continued	Level 2 Continued	Level 3 Continued
<p>1.7 Keeps environment free of health hazards.</p> <p>1.8 Maintains an accessible current list of emergency phone numbers both indoors and outdoors for contacting families and emergency services.</p> <p>1.9 Posts, regularly practices, follows and documents emergency and safety evacuation procedures such as fire, natural disaster, and tornado drills.</p> <p>1.10 Encourages children’s use of good oral health practices, wiping teeth of infant with clean wash cloth, using swish and rinse procedures for toddlers and/or encourages use of a tooth brush.</p> <p>1.11 Follows instructions for proper giving of and applying of medication to children.</p> <p>1.12 Understands the legal responsibility to recognize and report child abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse and neglect.</p> <p>1.13 Is familiar with all state rules and regulations pertaining to the specific type of early education program.</p>	<p>2.8 Ensures that children do not have pet allergies if pets are in the program, maintains safe handling and sanitation guidelines, and ensures pets are vaccinated.</p> <p>2.9 Identifies, documents, and reports suspected abuse of children in an immediate and appropriate manner.</p> <p>2.10 Ensures that all state rules and regulations are followed by all employees of the program.</p> <p>2.11 Appropriate safety seats for transporting children are provided.</p>	<p>3.9 Collaborates with nursing staff to ensure appropriate health practices are followed for children with special needs.</p> <p>3.10 Supports and assists staff in their efforts to document and report abuse of children in an immediate and appropriate manner.</p>

Health, Safety, and Nutrition

May 2013

B. Health, Safety and Nutrition Competencies		
Level 1 Continued		
1.14 Follows staff-child ratio requirements in state regulations.		
1.15 Pays attention to all children's allergies and health issues.		
1.16 If transporting children, utilizes age and weight appropriate child safety seats and follows all federal and state transportation regulations for transporting children.		

B. Health, Safety and Nutrition Competencies

Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Maintains a readily accessible list of health resource information to disseminate to families, and for consultation or referral as needed or in case of emergencies.</p> <p>4.2 Plans learning experiences, including field trips, with safety precautions in mind.</p> <p>4.3 Organizes space into functional areas with traffic patterns that eliminate accidents and injuries.</p> <p>4.4 Plans and evaluates menus and activities which encourage healthy food choices, address nutritional needs, and take into consideration children’s food allergies.</p> <p>4.5 Encourages children’s participation in family style meals, as skills and abilities develop, beginning at toddler age; and integrates foods from diverse cultures represented in the population served.</p> <p>4.6 Develops policies and prepares staff for emergencies such as terror threats, natural disasters, and intruders etc.</p>	<p>5.1 Works with health care professionals in the community to ensure that the health needs of all enrolled children are met.</p> <p>5.2 Participates in the evaluation and revision of policies and procedures to keep health, safety, and nutrition practices current.</p> <p>5.3 Designs emergency procedure plans, trains staff, and supervises the implementation of those procedures to maximize safety.</p> <p>5.4 Develops and documents contingency plans to meet staff-child ratio requirements in all situations.</p> <p>5.5 Assesses how licensing, fire and safety, sanitation, and other applicable regulations affect the quality of the program.</p> <p>5.6 Designs, documents and informs others of emergency, illness, injury and sanitation procedures.</p> <p>5.7 Establishes procedures for documentation and reporting of suspected abuse or neglect in compliance with state laws.</p>	<p>6.1 Conducts and participates in assessment of the program facility and the early childhood services for licensing, accreditation and quality improvement.</p> <p>6.2 Analyzes, evaluates, and applies current theories, research, and recommended practices on the health safety, physical development and nutritional needs of children.</p> <p>6.3 Participates on the program’s accreditation team or other committees working to address standards of quality.</p> <p>6.4 Collaborates with community groups to identify, and promote the health, safety, physical development, and nutritional welfare of the broader community.</p> <p>6.5 Provides or administers an environment that is physically and psychologically healthy for children, families, and staff.</p> <p>6.6 Articulates with others federal, state, and local requirements that must be addressed to meet young children’s health, nutritional, and physical development needs.</p>

Health, Safety, and Nutrition

May 2013

B. Health, Safety and Nutrition Competencies		
Level 4 (all skills at previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills at previous levels plus)	
<p>4.7 Implements contingency plans to meet staff:child ratio requirements in all situations.</p> <p>4.8 Assesses program health policies and procedures through use of a health checklist or the PEP manual.</p> <p>4.9 Collaborates with specialists and families to assess adequate caloric intake and socialization at meal times for children with special dietary needs.</p>	<p>5.8 Communicate appropriate use of adaptive equipment to staff and families.</p> <p>5.9 Participates in planning for special health needs and uses adaptive equipment appropriately with supervision.</p> <p>5.10 Assist families in locating community resources to provide medical, dental and nutrition services for their children when necessary.</p> <p>5.11 Establishes program policies regarding child transportation, provides training of staff regarding child transportation policies, and follows all federal and state laws pertaining to transportation of children.</p>	

C. Learning Environments Competencies



Early childhood teachers and caregivers establish an environment that provides learning experiences to meet each child's needs, capabilities, and interests.

Early childhood professionals must know how to offer an organized, inviting, and accessible environment that has many diverse and appropriate materials, activities, and experiences. A high quality early childhood environment will have a positive impact on a child's emotional, physical, cognitive, communicative, creative, and social development.

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Birth to Three and *Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Three to Five* provide examples of ways to adjust the learning environment to enhance and support children's learning.

Examples:

- Develop a safe, natural space for children to visit and explore.
- Provide children with opportunities to observe and make predictions about natural events (growing seeds, caring for animals, charting weather, etc.).
- The environment includes children's music and a place where children may listen to a variety of stories and sound recordings.

Learning Environments

May 2013

C. Learning Environments Competencies		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
1.1 Provides equipment and materials that are clean, safe, and free from hazards.	2.1 Selects materials appropriate for the developmental levels of all children.	3.1 Plans and adapts learning environments to meet the needs of all children, including children with special needs.
1.2 Follows a daily schedule.	2.2 Implement schedules, routines, and transitions to meet children's needs.	3.2 Provides a balance of scheduled and unscheduled activities. For example, time, space and equipment are provided for active and quiet play, child-directed and teacher-directed activities, individual and group activities, and indoor and outdoor play.
1.3 Arranges environment and routines to promote respect for materials, equipment and others in the room.	2.3 Arranges environment and routines to give children choices.	3.3 Observes children as they engage in learning centers and makes modifications and adaptations in the environment to support the individual needs of children.
1.4 Arranges materials on child's level to allow for exploration and independence.	2.4 Provides a variety of materials on a regular basis to allow children to have new experiences and opportunities for exploration and learning.	3.4 Organizes learning center to encourage active play, initiative, creativity, responsibility, and self-sufficiency for all children.
1.5 Observes health and safety practices in the environment.	2.5 Selects and provides materials that respond to the individual needs and learning styles of children.	3.5 Offers activities that routinely use materials representing multiple cultures and ethnic groups, and various ages and abilities.
1.6 Encourages children to participate in a variety of learning centers.	2.6 Provides an environment that encourages learning through play.	
1.7 Limits children's exposure to TV, videotapes, DVD's and passive learning.	2.7 Observes and documents children's learning as they participate in daily routines and transitions.	
	2.8 Utilizes a developmentally appropriate curriculum to help plan learning activities.	

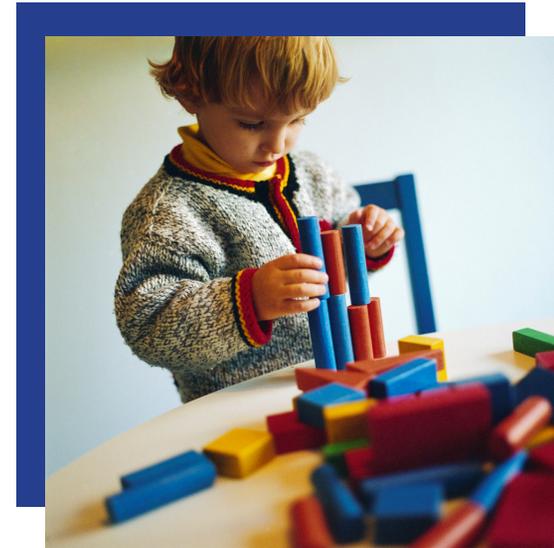
C. Learning Environments Competencies		
Level 4 (all previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Includes a variety of activities and materials for implementing curriculum which includes all domains of early childhood learning.</p> <p>4.2 Structures opportunities for children to work independently, with other children, and with adults in groups of different sizes.</p> <p>4.3 Designs and implements a child-centered environment to encourage independence, responsibility and positive social skills through a variety of activities.</p> <p>4.4 Plans and adapts a supportive learning environment to promote positive interactions between children and adults.</p> <p>4.5 Observes children and uses observations to plan appropriate activities for each child.</p> <p>4.6 Identifies delays in development and makes appropriate adjustments in expectations and learning opportunities.</p> <p>4.7 Uses criteria from Environment Rating Scales to maintain high quality learning environments.</p>	<p>5.1 Creates a learning environment using specific materials, child choice and play as a context for enhancing development and active learning.</p> <p>5.2 Invites all children to participate in planning and creating a rich, stimulating environment, encouraging interaction, exploration and investigation by all children.</p> <p>5.3 Makes the learning community visible to children and families through pictures, stories, newsletters, journals, artwork, and notes to families etc.</p> <p>5.4 Examines, evaluates, and identifies the appropriate use of technology with young children.</p> <p>5.5 Designs adaptations in learning environments to support the functional and developmental needs of individual children.</p>	<p>6.1 Advocates, evaluates, and justifies the need for appropriate curriculum and learning environments.</p> <p>6.2 Accesses, articulates, analyzes, evaluates, and applies current theory and research related to early learning environments both indoors and outdoors.</p> <p>6.3 Partners with other professionals to plan, create, and sustain learning environments in which children may work harmoniously, creatively, and productively.</p> <p>6.4 Develops strategies that support the children’s learning and families’ roles in planning curriculum and their children’s learning environment.</p> <p>6.5 Mentors other staff in designing, implementing, evaluating, and revising learning environments so that they are appropriate for children’s learning and development.</p> <p>6.6 Ensures that technology is used effectively within early childhood education learning environments to assist the program and to support children’s learning and development.</p>

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies

Early childhood teachers and caregivers plan learning experiences that promote physical development, cognitive development, language and literacy skills in children and social/emotional development of young children.

Learning experiences are designed to be developmentally appropriate based upon the age and development of the children. Experiences are individualized to meet the needs of each individual child in the group. Learning activities build upon children's natural curiosities and motivations for learning.

Early childhood professionals should have a broad knowledge of appropriate curriculum for young children and take responsibility for planning and providing an integrated curriculum that can build on each child's current abilities and interests to expand their skills in all developmental domains.



Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to Three and Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5 provide examples of ways to plan learning experiences for young children.

Examples:

- Engages children in songs, rhymes, finger plays and stories to promote young children's language and literacy skills
- Encourages children's curiosity and answers questions to promote children's use of scientific skills and methods

Planning Learning Experiences Curriculum

May 2013

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Social and Emotional Development		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Engages in every day conversations with children.</p> <p>1.2 Encourages children to interact positively with one another.</p> <p>1.3 Acknowledges differences and treats others respectfully.</p> <p>1.4 Establishes trusting and caring relationships with each child.</p> <p>1.5 Respects and incorporates family beliefs and customs when preparing learning activities.</p>	<p>2.1 Encourages and supports children’s efforts, ideas, accomplishments and interests.</p> <p>2.2 Supports the children’s participation in group activities.</p> <p>2.3 Recognizes that periods of stress, separation and transition may affect children’s social interactions and socio-emotional behaviors.</p> <p>2.4 Promotes children’s social emotional development through encouraging self-regulation, emotional expression, and attachment to families and other significant adults in their life.</p> <p>2.5 Realizes cultural differences may affect children’s ways of expressing themselves.</p>	<p>3.1 Encourages feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults.</p> <p>3.2 Helps children communicate and get along with others.</p> <p>3.3 Models recognition and appropriate expression of feelings.</p> <p>3.4 Guides children in resolving conflict through positive communication.</p> <p>3.5 Helps children through periods of stress, separation and transition.</p> <p>3.6 Provides many opportunities for children to participate in cooperative play.</p> <p>3.7 Supports children’s developing appreciation of gender and cultural identity.</p> <p>3.8 Requests assistance when needed from specialists to meet the health and developmental needs of children with disabilities</p>

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Social and Emotional Development		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Provides words and positive responses to guide children’s self-control.</p> <p>4.2 Encourages children to experiment with their growing competence and independence.</p> <p>4.3 Learns and uses strategies to teach children problem-solving.</p>	<p>5.1 Provides meaningful curriculum emphasizing social skills, relationships and friendships.</p> <p>5.2 Strives to create a community within the classroom which includes all children as valuable members.</p> <p>5.3 Develops and implements strategies that encourage children’s social development in various roles such as leadership.</p> <p>5.4 Uses ongoing assessment of children to adapt and modify activities to meet the social emotional needs of individual children.</p> <p>5.5 Facilitate mutual problem-solving with care providers, families, and/or teacher regarding strategies to address disruptive, harmful or withdrawn social behaviors.</p>	<p>6.1 Communicates to others the process for developing curriculum that promotes social/emotional development.</p> <p>6.2 Articulates the process of how to design and adapt the curriculum to address children’s social and emotional development needs.</p> <p>6.3 Communicates the link between social/emotional health and children’s development and learning outcomes.</p> <p>6.4 Monitors the need to adapt, adjust, and update the learning experiences to advance children’s social and emotional development.</p> <p>6.5 Creates a classroom community that fosters social/emotional development in the home or in the classroom.</p> <p>6.6 Evaluates the suitability of curriculum and programs on social/emotional development for use with a particular child or group of children.</p>

Planning Learning Experiences Curriculum

May 2013

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Health & Physical Development		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Understands the value of play.</p> <p>1.2 Provides time and appropriate materials for fine motor skills such as cutting with scissors, drawing, and playing musical instruments.</p> <p>1.3 Acknowledges and supports children's natural tendency to move and be active throughout the day.</p> <p>1.4 Provides time for active physical play both inside and outside on a daily basis.</p>	<p>2.1 Plans activities, indoors and outdoors, that encourage the development of large and small motor skills.</p> <p>2.2 Introduces sensory experiences to children.</p> <p>2.3 Plans for outdoor activities on a daily basis.</p> <p>2.4 Provides instruction for basic health and safety rules.</p>	<p>3.1 Provides adequate time for children to practice, explore and expand their motor skills and interest.</p> <p>3.2 Integrates physical development across all curriculum areas.</p> <p>3.3 Models health and safety practices during regular activities including meals and snacks.</p>

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Health & Physical Development		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Plans for scheduled activities and encourages spontaneous activities that support the development of fine and gross motor skills.</p> <p>4.2 Integrates physical development across all curriculum areas.</p> <p>4.2 Adapts activities for children with special needs.</p> <p>4.3 Incorporates activities and materials that focus on the world of nature and the importance of outdoor play.</p> <p>4.4 Incorporates a variety of equipment, activities and learning opportunities to promote physical development of all children.</p>	<p>5.1 Uses on-going assessment of children to adapt and modify the health and physical development needs of individual children.</p> <p>5.2 Observes and documents the physical development of individual children.</p> <p>5.3 Plans and implements experiences that promote healthy living habits.</p> <p>5.4 Facilitates mutual problem-solving with care providers, families and/or teachers regarding strategies for addressing children’s unique health and/or physical development needs.</p>	<p>6.1 Communicates to others the process for developing curriculum that promotes health and physical development.</p> <p>6.2 Articulates the process of how to design and adapt the curriculum to address children’s health and physical development needs.</p> <p>6.3 Communicates the link between physical health and children’s social, emotional and cognitive development and learning outcomes.</p> <p>6.4 Monitors the need to adapt, adjust, and update the learning experiences to advance children’s health and physical development.</p> <p>6.5 Creates a classroom community that fosters children’s health and physical development in the home or in the classroom.</p> <p>6.6 Evaluates the suitability of curriculum and programs on health and physical development for use with a particular child or group of children.</p>

Planning Learning Experiences Curriculum

May 2013

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Language and Literacy Development		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Read age-appropriate books to children both individually and in groups.</p> <p>1.2 Respects and encourages children to retain the language of their family.</p> <p>1.3 Talks with children and stimulates conversation among children.</p> <p>1.4 Engages children in stories, songs and poems.</p> <p>1.5 Models appropriate language, communication, reading and writing.</p>	<p>2.1 Carries out formal and informal book reading experiences that encourage both listening and talking.</p> <p>2.2 Encourages families to be involved in reading to children at home to increase children's language development.</p> <p>2.3 Provides opportunities for children to engage in turn taking and dialogue in conversation with adults and other children.</p> <p>2.4 Uses a variety of songs, books and games including those from many cultures.</p>	<p>3.1 Provides a print rich environment.</p> <p>3.2 Uses a variety of songs, books, and games including those from many cultures.</p> <p>3.3 Provides opportunities and support to help children understand, acquire and use verbal and non-verbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings.</p> <p>3.4 Uses conversations to enrich and expand children's vocabulary.</p> <p>3.5 Encourages and supports children's verbal interactions with others.</p>

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Language and Literacy Development		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Encourages children’s rich discussions to further develop language and literacy skills.</p> <p>4.2 Demonstrates an understanding of how children use language, as well as other forms of communication, at all ages and stages of development.</p> <p>4.3 Facilitates the relationships between spoken and printed words.</p> <p>4.4 Uses concrete experiences and play to enhance and invite young children’s conversations and emerging literacy skills.</p> <p>4.5 Captures and documents children’s narratives in stories and otherwise.</p>	<p>5.1 Designs curriculum consistent with current theories of literacy use and language acquisition.</p> <p>5.2 Uses age appropriate technology to support language and literacy development.</p> <p>5.3 Adapts and modifies interactions and activities with children to meet the specific language development needs of individual children.</p> <p>5.4 Plans and implements book reading experiences to support language/ literacy goals for children.</p> <p>5.5 Uses on-going assessments of children to adapt and modify language and literacy development activities to meet the needs of individual children.</p> <p>5.6 Documents examples of children’s emerging language and/or literacy skills.</p>	<p>6.1 Communicates to others the process for developing curriculum that promotes language and literacy.</p> <p>6.2 Articulates the process of how to design and adapt the curriculum to address children’s language and literacy needs.</p> <p>6.3 Communicates the link between language and literacy and children’s development and learning outcomes.</p> <p>6.4 Monitors the need to adapt, adjust, and update the learning experiences to advance children’s language and literacy skills.</p> <p>6.5 Creates a classroom community that fosters language and literacy skills in the home or in the classroom.</p> <p>6.6 Evaluates the suitability of curriculum and programs on language and literacy for use with a particular child or group of children.</p>

Planning Learning Experiences Curriculum

May 2013

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Mathematical Thinking		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Encourages children to ask questions and actively listens to their responses.</p> <p>1.2 Offers a variety of counting activities, number puzzles and books that encourage mathematical thinking.</p> <p>1.3 Provides blocks of various shapes and sizes to encourage children to make associations and comparisons.</p> <p>1.4 Provides activities that connect new learning to past experiences and events that expand learning.</p>	<p>2.1 Asks children relevant open-ended questions that stimulate thinking.</p> <p>2.2 Encourages indoor and outdoor play experiences that promote mathematical thinking.</p> <p>2.3 Provides a variety of materials within the daily routine for sorting and counting.</p> <p>2.4 Allows children time to construct their own mathematical understanding.</p>	<p>3.1 Provides activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem solving appropriate to the developmental levels and learning styles of children.</p> <p>3.2 Encourages math exploration to expand children's interests.</p> <p>3.3 Engages children in activities that support mathematical thinking such as: counting, sorting, measuring, matching, comparing, charting, and moving in space.</p> <p>3.4 Incorporates mathematical language in daily experiences. For example: bigger than, more than, over, under, before, after, yesterday, today, and tomorrow.</p> <p>3.5 Encourages children to begin to predict what comes next in pattern, order and sequencing of events.</p>

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Mathematical Thinking		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Plans and implements age appropriate learning opportunities to support mathematical development in response to children’s interests.</p> <p>4.2 Revisits mathematical activities with children so they may reflect and build upon previous learning to develop and refine thinking.</p> <p>4.3 Provides a variety of appropriate materials so children can explore properties related to mathematical concepts such as space, time, shape, and quantity in meaningful ways.</p> <p>4.4 Designs mathematic learning opportunities reflective of the cultures in the community.</p>	<p>5.1 Observes and documents children’s mathematical concepts/skills in play based experiences.</p> <p>5.2. Uses a variety of methods and strategies that appeal to a variety of learning styles that encourage active involvement of all children.</p> <p>5.3 Plans, implements, evaluates, and modifies curriculum to encourage children to construct mathematical knowledge and problem solving skills.</p> <p>5.4 Uses on-going assessment of children to adapt and modify mathematical thinking activities to meet the needs of individual children.</p>	<p>6.1 Communicates to others the process for developing curriculum that promotes mathematical thinking skills in children.</p> <p>6.2 Articulates the process of how to design and adapt the curriculum to address children’s mathematical thinking skills.</p> <p>6.3 Communicates the link between mathematical thinking skills and children’s development and learning outcomes.</p> <p>6.4 Monitors the need to adapt, adjust, and update the learning experiences to advance children’s mathematical thinking skills.</p> <p>6.5 Creates a classroom community that fosters mathematical thinking skills in the home or in the classroom.</p>

Planning Learning Experiences Curriculum

May 2013

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Scientific Thinking		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Encourages children to ask questions and listens to their responses as they explore the classroom and other learning activities.</p> <p>1.2 Provides children opportunities to observe the natural environment and their surroundings.</p> <p>1.3 Models enthusiasm for self-discovery and exploration of nature and nature education.</p>	<p>2.1 Observes children in play based experiences.</p> <p>2.2 Incorporates living things such as plants and pets (if there are no children with allergies to pets) into the environment and models appropriate, safe and healthy practices.</p> <p>2.3 Provides materials to encourage scientific exploration.</p> <p>2.4 Encourages children's use of their five senses as they explore their surroundings.</p>	<p>3.1 Encourages children to discuss objects and events that have been observed.</p> <p>3.2 Provides children opportunities to make predictions about natural events.</p> <p>3.3 Provides activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem solving appropriate to the developmental levels and learning styles of children.</p> <p>3.4 Encourages scientific exploration in response to children's interest.</p>

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies

Focus: Scientific Thinking

Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Encourages children to observe and describe what they learn using their senses.</p> <p>4.2 Encourages children to ask questions and find answers through active exploration and reflection on what they learn.</p> <p>4.3 Plans and implements science activities based on children’s interests.</p> <p>4.4 Engages children in activities that support scientific thinking such as collecting, investigating, problem solving, predicting, observing, exploring, and recording.</p> <p>4.5 Revisits science activities with children so they can reflect and build on previous learning to develop and refine thinking skills.</p>	<p>5.1 Uses ongoing assessment of children to adapt and modify scientific thinking activities to meet the needs of individual children.</p> <p>5.2 Plans, implements, evaluates’ and modifies curriculum to encourage children to construct scientific knowledge.</p> <p>5.3 Observes and documents children’s scientific thinking as they explore their world.</p>	<p>6.1 Communicates to others the process for developing curriculum that promotes scientific thinking skills.</p> <p>6.2 Articulates the process of how to design and adapt the curriculum to address children’s scientific thinking skills.</p> <p>6.3 Communicates the link between scientific thinking skills and children’s development and learning outcomes.</p> <p>6.4 Monitors the need to adapt, adjust, and update the learning experiences to advance children’s scientific thinking skills.</p> <p>6.5 Creates a classroom community that fosters scientific thinking in the home or in the classroom.</p>

Planning Learning Experiences Curriculum

May 2013

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Creative Arts		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Encourages and allows time for spontaneous and extended creative play.</p> <p>1.2 Supports creative expression including visual arts, music, movement, and dramatic play.</p> <p>1.3 Encourages individuality including unique expression of ideas.</p> <p>1.4 Values every child's creative spirit.</p>	<p>2.1 Models and encourages creative expression through language, music, dramatic play, and art, both inside and outside.</p> <p>2.2 Accepts cultural differences that may affect children's ways of expressing themselves creatively.</p>	<p>3.1 Encourages imagination and creativity as the foundation of new ideas.</p> <p>3.2 Encourages appreciation for the natural beauty within the learning environment.</p> <p>3.3 Facilitates activities that promote creative expression.</p> <p>3.4 Values creative expression as part of the development of the child.</p>

D. Planning Learning Experiences/Curriculum Competencies		
Focus: Creative Arts		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Ensures that all children have access to opportunities that allow for individual creative expression.</p> <p>4.2 Plans opportunities for children to use items found in nature to creatively express themselves.</p> <p>4.3 Views the community as a resource for creative and aesthetic experiences.</p> <p>4.4 Informs families about the importance of individual creative expression.</p>	<p>5.1 Encourages creative expression throughout the curriculum.</p> <p>5.2 Uses ongoing assessment of children to adapt and modify interactions to support creativity of individual children by adapting time, space and materials.</p> <p>5.3 Shows respect for creative expression through appropriate documentation and display of children’s work.</p>	<p>6.1 Communicates to others the process for developing curriculum that promotes creative arts in young children.</p> <p>6.2 Articulates the process of how to design and adapt the curriculum to address children’s creative and expressive arts.</p> <p>6.3 Communicates the link between creative and expressive arts and children’s development and learning outcomes.</p> <p>6.4 Monitors the need to adapt, adjust, and update the learning experiences to advance children’s creative and expressive arts.</p> <p>6.5 Creates a classroom community that fosters creative and expressive arts in the home or in the classroom.</p>

E. Competencies for Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children

Early childhood teachers and caregivers establish supportive relationships with children and guide them as individuals and as part of a group.

Early childhood teachers and caregivers make decisions regarding interactions and activities that promote a safe, secure environment that encourages growth in pro-social behaviors and self regulation in children.

They also provide children with skills to resolve conflicts, solve problems, and develop a sense of connectedness and belonging with other children and adults.



Nebraska's Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 and Nebraskas Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5 provide examples of ways that adults can provide guidance to children.

Examples:

- Assists and encourages children to use language rather than expressive action in their relationships with others (asks peers to share, expresses feelings, etc.)
- Provides opportunities for children to develop an awareness of their own feelings, as well as ideas and actions of others
- Provides words and positive responses to guide children's self control

Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children

May 2013

E. Competencies for Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Shows respect for all children in all situations.</p> <p>1.2 Cares about each child as an individual.</p> <p>1.3 Interacts in a manner reflecting respect for self and others.</p> <p>1.4 Provides appropriate supervision of children's play.</p> <p>1.5 Demonstrates realistic expectations about children's abilities and needs.</p> <p>1.6 Communicates acceptance and understanding in the context of guidance.</p> <p>1.7 Treats all children equitably and fairly.</p> <p>1.8 Addresses behaviors or situations, rather than labeling the child.</p> <p>1.9 Avoids actions that would cause physical or emotional harm, including, but not limited to corporal punishment, humiliation, yelling or name calling, teasing, criticizing children or their families.</p>	<p>2.1 Builds a trusting relationship with each child, providing physical and emotional security.</p> <p>2.2 Assists children in communication and their abilities to get along with others.</p> <p>2.3 Demonstrates respect for children's and families' diversity (for example: culture, language, religion, ability, income).</p> <p>2.4 Provides opportunities for individual, small group, and whole/large group activities both indoors and outdoors.</p> <p>2.5 Helps children through periods of stress, separation, and transition.</p> <p>2.6 Alerts children well in advance to changes in activities or routines.</p> <p>2.7 Uses a positive approach in guidance with children.</p>	<p>3.1 Models identification and appropriate expression of feelings; has realistic expectations for children's ability to appropriately express feelings.</p> <p>3.2 Models and encourages age appropriate pro-social behavior (helping, sharing, and cooperating).</p> <p>3.3 Uses information from families to understand children and adapt interactions as necessary (for example, if the child has specific fears or the family is experiencing stressors).</p> <p>3.4 Recognizes the influences of the physical setting, schedule, routines, and transitions on children's social competence and self-regulation, and adapts these factors as necessary in order to support children's development and learning.</p> <p>3.5 Seeks out information and support from professionals related to addressing children's behavioral needs.</p> <p>3.6 Establishes and communicates consistent limits for acceptable behavior in the early childhood setting.</p>

E. Competencies for Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
	<p>2.8 Provides directives to children in a positive format: telling them what “to do” and avoiding negative directives, unless necessary for safety or health reasons.</p> <p>2.9 Intervenes in children’s disagreements prior to children getting hurt.</p> <p>2.10 Provides consistent clear rules, which are explained to children.</p>	<p>3.7 Uses a variety of positive direct and indirect guidance methods (re-direction, problem solving, prompts).</p> <p>3.8 Anticipates potential problems (environmental; child/child or teacher/child interaction) and works to prevent them.</p> <p>3.9 Shows and tells children acceptable alternatives to unacceptable, undesirable, or inappropriate behaviors.</p> <p>3.10 Bases expectations for children upon knowledge of child development.</p> <p>3.11 Plans for ease in transitions.</p> <p>3.12 Maintains professionalism and respect for children when communicating with families and other adults about children’s behavior.</p> <p>3.13 Affirms children’s appropriate behaviors, using a variety of techniques.</p>

Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children

May 2013

E. Competencies for Interacting with Children and Providing Guidance to Children		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Uses guidance strategies appropriate to children’s personalities, temperaments, and levels of development.</p> <p>4.2 Provides guidance during conflict resolution, problem solving, friendship development, communication, and other social interactions.</p> <p>4.3 Creates a learning environment and curriculum to minimize potential challenging behaviors (limits wait time, separates quiet and active play areas, and allows self-selection of activities and materials; enriches or defines limits for learning areas/centers).</p> <p>4.4 Involves children in making classroom or program rules to promote social competence and self-regulation.</p> <p>4.5 Uses methods of behavioral support and guidance techniques including a range of strategies from less directive methods (i.e., verbal support and modeling) to more directive and structured methods (i.e., applied behavioral analysis).</p> <p>4.6 Facilitates smooth transitions from one activity to another activity.</p>	<p>5.1 Demonstrates flexibility in implementing and adapting plans based on children’s current behavior(s), interests, and/or needs.</p> <p>5.2 Plans and implements curricular activities that promote pro-social behavior (kindness, sharing, cooperation and helping) and self regulation.</p> <p>5.3 Documents patterns of behavior and contexts for unique behaviors before implementing specific interventions or guidance techniques.</p> <p>5.4 Collaborates with the professional team and family to design, implement, and monitor individual guidance plans, and revises as needed.</p>	<p>6.1 Assures that family partnerships are utilized to develop and implement individual child guidance plans.</p> <p>6.2 Applies theories of child development to support the design and implementation of programs that encourage children’s social competence and self-regulation.</p> <p>6.3 Develops written policies for effective child guidance; monitors their implementation.</p> <p>6.4 Recognizes the need to access relevant professionals and resources to develop individual guidance plans for children.</p> <p>6.5 Clarifies the intention of guidance policies and practices and mentors/ supervises others as they implement those policies, intervening when inappropriate guidance strategies are being used with young children.</p>

F. Observation, Documentation and Assessment Competencies

Early childhood teachers and caregivers observe, measure, and determine what children know, what interests them, and what children can do in order to provide learning activities that meet their developmental and learning needs.

Early childhood teachers and caregivers respect the confidentiality of information about children and families in their programs. They have defined procedures for collecting information, organizing that information, and communicating about children's progress around learning outcomes. All assessment utilized is developmentally appropriate based upon the age of the child in the program, and the results of the assessments are used in planning for both the individual child as well as for the group.

Early childhood teachers use documentation processes to observe and reflect on children's learning in order to improve communication and learning within an educational setting and assist planning. Teachers make documentation displays, booklets, and presentations as part of observing and reflecting on children's learning. Teachers gather evidence of children's learning through photographs, anecdotal notes, work samples, conversation transcripts, and children's and teachers' reflections, and analyze, interpret and share with others, in order to improve communication and planning in the educational setting.



Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 and Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5 provide examples of observation, documentation and assessment.

Examples:

- Writes children's explanations or labels on projects, artwork, block constructions, etc.
- Identifies children's current knowledge and understanding of the world, and use it as a basis for making new experiences, ideas and concepts meaningful

Observation, Documentation, and Assessment

May 2013

F. Observation, Documentation, Assessment Competencies		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Recognizes and identifies behaviors in children which indicate physical, social-emotional (affective), language, and cognitive (mental/intellectual) growth and development.</p> <p>1.2 Acknowledges that children develop at their own rates.</p> <p>1.3 Assists with collection of information about each child's development.</p> <p>1.4 Maintains confidentiality among the program staff and the child's family, regarding each child's observation and assessment.</p> <p>1.5 Uses photos to make children visible in their space.</p> <p>1.6 Displays children's artwork or other creations in their space.</p> <p>1.7 Is aware of signs of emotional distress, child abuse and neglect, and complies with mandatory reporting procedures for child abuse and neglect.</p>	<p>2.1 Is aware of the <i>Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 and Ages 3 to 5</i> and understands that children's learning needs to be observed related to all domains.</p> <p>2.2 Contributes to assessment on individual children under the guidance and direction of a supervising teacher/director, if applicable.</p> <p>2.3 Records anecdotal observations on children.</p> <p>2.4 Assist in reporting assessment results to families.</p> <p>2.5 Displays photos of children engaged in current or recent classroom experiences, coupled with examples of their artwork or other creations.</p> <p>2.6 Gathers examples of children's work and records observational notes to share with families.</p>	<p>3.1 Identifies various ways to get to know each child as an individual, including strengths, needs, interests, family, and life situation.</p> <p>3.2 Collects and organizes information about each child, on a regular basis, such as collecting samples of the child's work, recording anecdotal notes, and keeping accurate records.</p> <p>3.3 Follows appropriate procedures of child observation and documentation, engaging families as partners in observational assessment.</p> <p>3.4 Plans for and communicates observations to families.</p> <p>3.5 Documents a learning experience that includes children's words along with photos and an explanation of what happened.</p> <p>3.6 Shares detailed notes with families about the children's day and their learning moments.</p>

F. Observation, Documentation, Assessment Competencies		
	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
	<p>2.7 Seeks guidance and support from other professionals as needed (i.e. suspected developmental delay, assistance for behavioral problems and/or atypical behavior).</p>	<p>3.7 Recognizes environmental factors which may place children at risk.</p> <p>3.8 Respects educational requirements needed for various assessment instruments, and uses only those instruments appropriate for education and skill level.</p>

Observation, Documentation, and Assessment

May 2013

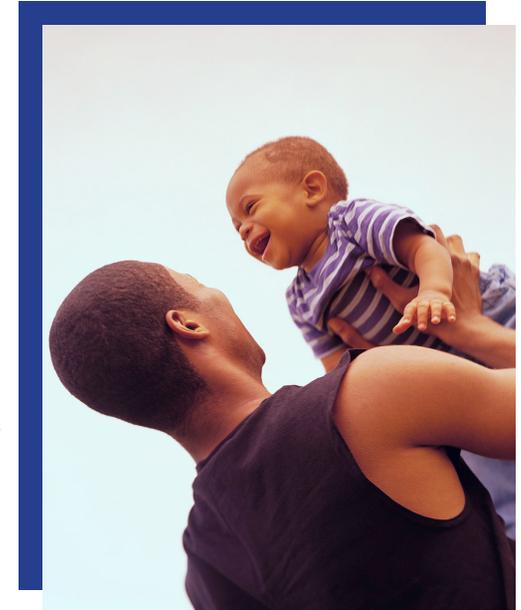
F. Observation, Documentation, Assessment Competencies		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Continually observes children, analyzes and evaluates observations, and applies this knowledge to practice.</p> <p>4.2 Adapts curriculum and environment (on the basis of observational findings) to a range of development and skills among children in the early childhood education setting.</p> <p>4.3 Applies basic elements of child development knowledge (based on theory and research) to observation methods and processes. (This includes knowledge of Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines.)</p> <p>4.4 Selects appropriate observation and assessment methods for the individual child and situation.</p> <p>4.5 Works collaboratively with Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) team members in gathering information.</p> <p>4.6 Guides and assists teachers and care givers with documentation training and experiences in conducting observation and assessment methods.</p>	<p>5.1 Refines or adapts instructional practice as informed by observations and assessment.</p> <p>5.2 Establishes systematic reporting processes for families and appropriate referrals to professionals.</p> <p>5.3 Communicates assessment results to families, both authentic and standardized, in a clear and supportive manner.</p> <p>5.4 Works with families and professionals in establishing appropriate goals, IEPs, or IFSP's for children and/or families, as a result of observations and assessment processes.</p> <p>5.5 Involves families and other professionals as partners in observation, documentation and assessment.</p> <p>5.6 Selects and conducts culturally diverse, gender equitable assessments and reporting strategies.</p> <p>5.7 Reviews and refines ongoing observation and assessment processes for productive purposes in the early childhood education setting.</p>	<p>6.1 Utilizes theories, research and recommended practices to select appropriate observation, documentation and assessment tools and procedures that relate to individual child development and/or the learning curriculum.</p> <p>6.2 Establishes criteria, procedures, and documentation methods for assessment and curriculum modification.</p> <p>6.3 Works collaboratively with colleagues and administrative professionals in observational data gathering, assessment, and reporting methods.</p> <p>6.4 Exercises leadership in establishing and/or maintaining documentation study groups within the program or school.</p> <p>6.5 Uses documentation and assessment results for advocacy purposes with policymakers, community members, or professional development groups.</p> <p>6.6 Monitors and trains others in cultural and gender-equitable observation, assessment, and document processes and procedures and ensures they are used appropriately for good teaching and reporting practices.</p>

G. Partnerships with Families and Communities Competencies

Understanding the roles that family members and others play in children's lives is vital for early childhood educators. They must understand that families are the primary influence on children's development and have primary responsibility for child rearing. Conversely, each child has influence on the members of his or her family and on the family as a system.

Early childhood professionals also help connect children and their families with community resources. This can be accomplished through curriculum, interpersonal relationships and knowledgeable referrals.

Early childhood professionals should use their knowledge of family and social systems to create reciprocal productive interpersonal relationships that recognize and enhance the contributions of family, programs, and community participants to the development, learning, and well-being of children and their families.



Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 and Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5 provide examples of skills early childhood teachers need to work with families and communities.

Examples:

- Knows the children and families as individuals and appreciates differences in values and backgrounds
- Encourages parents to develop and maintain their first language in the home
- Families should be aware of programmatic goals, experiences that should be provided to children, and expectations for their children's learning and development by the end of preschool years

Partnerships with Families and Communities

May 2013

G. Partnerships with Families and Communities Competencies		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
1.1 Respects the family’s role as the child’s first teacher.	2.1 Encourages family involvement in supporting their children’s care and education.	3.1 Demonstrates awareness of how families’ attitudes influence children’s abilities and interests in learning.
1.2 Supports and respects the diversity of families.	2.2 Adapts to changes that are designed to meet the needs and preferences of individual children and families.	3.2 Recognizes and understands how stress affects families.
1.3 Establishes positive communication and relationships with individuals and families.	2.3 Uses a variety of approaches to communicate with families, i.e. bulletin boards, Web site, notes home, and newsletter.	3.3 Provides opportunities for families to share skills and talents.
1.4 Knows and follows the rules of confidentiality.	2.4 Seeks out information on child-specific needs in terms of cultural expectations and special education needs.	3.4 Collaborates with families to resolve problems and issues.
1.5 Willing to learn about the IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) and IEP (Individual Education Plan) process and working with a team of professionals to serve a child with a verified disability.	2.5 Respects families’ choices, goals, and decisions for their children.	3.5 Offers families referrals to appropriate community resources.
	2.6 Provides encouragement, support, and appropriate information to develop trust with families.	3.6 Ensures that community diversity and cultures are reflected throughout the program.
	2.7 Participates in IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) and IEP (Individual Education Plan) meetings with the family and the team of professionals when a child has a verified disability.	3.7 Plans and conducts formal family conferences and/or home visits.
	2.8 Shares knowledge of general child development with families.	3.8 Provides meaningful input into the IFSP (Individual Family Service Plan) and IEP (Individual Education Plan) meetings with the family and team of professionals based upon observation and progress notes of the child.

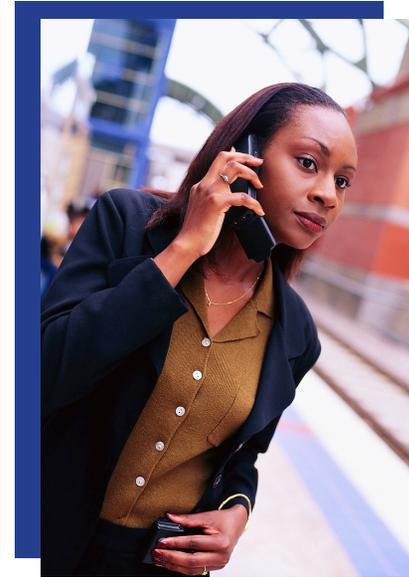
G. Partnerships with Families and Communities Competencies		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Involves families in planning learning activities and evaluating the program.</p> <p>4.2 Acknowledges personal beliefs and biases regarding children and families, and is able to make objective decisions and act in the best interest of the families.</p> <p>4.3 Partners with other professionals and families to plan, create, and maintain a safe, healthy climate in which the children will play and grow.</p> <p>4.4 Uses the information gained through observation, assessment, and evaluation to make thoughtful, informed, and appropriate interventions as needed and/or indicated.</p> <p>4.5 Interacts effectively with volunteers and other community resources.</p> <p>4.6 Supports the children’s families and acknowledges the critical roles they play in the children’s lives.</p>	<p>5.1 Applies current theory and research on reciprocal relationships with families.</p> <p>5.2 Articulates the various theories of family systems and the effects of crises on families.</p> <p>5.3 Coordinates with community resources and provides families with resources that might be able to assist them.</p> <p>5.4 Assists with public awareness activities and community outreach efforts to model the importance of early childhood education.</p>	<p>6.1 Articulates, evaluates, and applies current theory and research on relationships with families in order to promote family strengths and goals.</p> <p>6.2 Develops formal collaborative agreements to meet the needs of individual children and families.</p> <p>6.3 Maintains collaborative relationships with other child and family specialists and professionals to create systems of care that are responsive to children and families.</p> <p>6.4 Acts as advocates for both children and families in order to help them access services and to promote high quality early care and education.</p> <p>6.5 Represents the interests of families and the early childhood field in community and volunteer endeavors.</p>

H. Professionalism and Leadership Competencies

Early childhood teachers and caregivers serve children and families in a professional manner, establish professional relationships with colleagues and co-workers and participate in the community as representatives of early childhood care and education.

Early childhood teachers and caregivers take seriously their need for professional growth and development, understand the work they do requires lifelong learning, and assume leadership roles in professional associations, the community, and in working with others in the early childhood field. Quality early care and education requires early childhood professionals who continually seek opportunities to grow and develop in the field through review of research, theory, and best practice.

Professionalism in early care and education involves making decisions and basing program planning and practice on the best professional standards and information available and following ethical standards of behavior.



Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 and Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5 describe the importance of early childhood teachers functioning as professionals and leaders within their field.

Examples:

- Models respect for others, the materials and equipment in the environment
- Partners with other professionals and the children to plan, create, and sustain a safe climate in which children may work harmoniously, creatively, and productively

Professionalism and Leadership

May 2013

H. Professionalism and Leadership Competencies		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
1.1 Enjoys working with children and displays a positive attitude.	2.1 Enjoys working with children and treats each child with respect.	3.1 Manages the demands of personal and professional commitments.
1.2 Demonstrates empathy for children and families.	2.2 Shows professional work habits by keeping spoken and written information confidential, respects others, uses time well, and is dependable.	3.2 Reflects on their own teaching and learning practices and improves knowledge by interacting with staff, attending trainings or taking classes, and reading early childhood journals, books, and research.
1.3 Dresses and behaves in a professional manner. (Dress may be adjusted based upon the program activities of the day.)	2.3 Can articulate major ideas from a professional code of conduct for early care and education teachers, such as <i>National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Professional Code of Ethical Conduct</i> .	3.3 Behaves ethically in a way consistent with a professional code of conduct, such as <i>National Association for the Education of Young Children Professional Code of Ethical Conduct</i> .
1.4 Has dependable work habits, shows up on time, and completes activities as planned.	2.4 Shows commitment to the program's goals.	3.4 Promotes quality in early childhood services.
1.5 Is aware of a professional code of conduct for early care and education teachers and caregivers, such as <i>National Association for the Education of Young Children Professional Code of Ethical Conduct</i> and why this code is important to follow.	2.5 Is able to work independently and as a member of a team.	3.5 Uses problem-solving skills in the work environment.
1.6 Knows, supports, and follows regulations and licensing standards.	2.6 Utilizes self-reflection and has the ability to engage in ongoing assessment of strategies and effectiveness.	3.6 Recognizes causes and symptoms of "burnout" and develops prevention and coping strategies.
1.7 Maintains positive working relationships with co-workers and other team members in the program.	2.7 Aware of the effects of one's own personal and cultural background on one's work.	3.7 Utilizes initiative to pursue new information or information not familiar with as needed.
1.8 Interactions reflect value for oneself and respect for others.		

H. Professionalism and Leadership Competencies		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
1.9 Demonstrates openness to different approaches and perspectives.	2.8 Recognizes one’s limitations and seek help when needed.	3.8 Persistent in trying to engage hard-to-reach families.
1.10 Is aware of professional resources for learning.	2.9 Recognizes and take steps to reduce personal stress and burnout.	3.9 Uses supervision effectively.
1.11 Actively pursues knowledge to improve practice.	2.10 Evaluates own performance and sets goals to learn more information about the field.	3.10 Attends classes or training and/or does independent reading to gain new knowledge and information about the early childhood field.
1.12 Accepts advice and constructive criticism to improve practice.	2.11 Actively participates in training opportunities.	3.11 Takes advantage of opportunities to improve the level of performance, both for personal and professional growth, and to help children and families.
1.13 Recognizes professional behavior in others.	2.12 Recognizes professional behavior in others and incorporates that behavior into own practice.	3.12 Follows developments in national accreditation standards.
1.14 Aware of quality early care and education.	2.13 Models quality early care and education.	3.13 Models professional behavior.
		3.14 Advocates for quality early care and education.

Professionalism and Leadership

May 2013

H. Professionalism and Leadership Competencies		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus))
<p>4.1 Is familiar with current trends in early childhood education.</p> <p>4.2 Discusses and models a professional code of ethics for early childhood teachers and caregivers.</p> <p>4.3 Recognizes potentially unethical practices and addresses them with the staff; reports are made when it is determined appropriate.</p> <p>4.4 Participates in program decision making.</p> <p>4.5 Works toward early childhood credentials, degrees, and/or program accreditation.</p> <p>4.6 Develops and carries out a personal professional development plan.</p> <p>4.7 Develops professional relationships with other early childhood professionals.</p> <p>4.8 Shows understanding of the early childhood profession and historical, social, and political influences on its current practices.</p>	<p>5.1 Critically reflects on own professional and educational practices from community, state, national, and global perspectives.</p> <p>5.2 Ensures ethical practices in early care and education program.</p> <p>5.3 Clearly discusses personal philosophy of early childhood education based on knowledge of child development and teaching practices best for children.</p> <p>5.4 Evaluates current trends in early childhood education and revises practice as appropriate.</p> <p>5.5 Is aware of the Council for Exceptional Children/Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices for education and care of children with special needs.</p> <p>5.6 Actively participates in professional development opportunities and professional organizations.</p> <p>5.7 Uses professional resources to improve practice.</p>	<p>6.1 Remains current on research relevant to early care and education and revises practice accordingly.</p> <p>6.2 Provides leadership in promoting ethical practice across the early childhood care and education field.</p> <p>6.3 Evaluates the program using a professional code of conduct to provide insight into program improvement and professional practices.</p> <p>6.4 Maintains knowledge of state, local and national policies relevant to early care and education and takes steps to revise practice accordingly.</p> <p>6.5 Promotes the Council for Exceptional Children/Division of Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices for education and care of young children with special needs.</p> <p>6.6 Provides leadership by presenting at local, state and national conferences, by participating in professional organizations, and by designing and implementing staff development opportunities based upon professional development research.</p>

I. Administration, Program Planning, and Development Competencies

Early childhood directors, teachers and caregivers establish, implement, and evaluate early care and education programs. Early childhood teachers and caregivers operate their programs using sound business practices around hiring, training and developing staff, and managing program finances.

Programs have policies and procedures for keeping records on children and families around licensing requirements, state and federal regulations and program quality standards.

Regular communication about program policies is shared with staff and families. Emergency policies and procedures are understood by all staff and communicated to families.



Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 and Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5 provide guidance on key components of programming that are needed in early childhood programs.

Examples:

- Quality programs provide a challenging but achievable curriculum and engage children in thinking, reasoning, and communication with others
- Maximizes use of space and integrates a variety of materials and equipment that stimulate active learning
- Adults assure that time and opportunity are provided for children to work together.

Administration, Program Planning and Development

May 2013

I. Administration, Program Planning and Development Competencies		
Level 1	Level 2 (all skills in level 1 plus)	Level 3 (all skills in levels 1 and 2 plus)
<p>1.1 Supports the mission and policies of the program.</p> <p>1.2 Respects confidentiality of co-workers, families and children.</p> <p>1.3 Processes payment of family fees or financial payments according to program policy.</p> <p>1.4 Uses time and materials efficiently.</p> <p>1.5 Implements the program-defined curriculum as specified by supervisor.</p> <p>1.6 Is familiar with <i>Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3</i> and <i>Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5</i>.</p>	<p>2.1 Supports personnel and professionals in early childhood care and education through program planning.</p> <p>2.2 Respects confidentiality at all levels of communication.</p> <p>2.3 Complies with policies and procedures around handling of payments and fees following record keeping procedures defined by the program.</p> <p>2.4 Makes effective use of available resources within the program.</p> <p>2.5 Is aware of the National Association for the Education of Young Children or the National Association for Family Child Care standards for early childhood program accreditation.</p> <p>2.6 Provides a family handbook to all families describing all program policies and procedures.</p> <p>2.7 Utilizes <i>Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3</i> and <i>Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5</i> as a reference and resource for program planning.</p>	<p>3.1 Supports and/or implements the operation of a program focused on developmentally appropriate practices.</p> <p>3.2 Builds and maintains positive relationships with co-workers, personnel, families, volunteers, and other professionals.</p> <p>3.3 Applies a basic understanding of organizing, planning, and recordkeeping for program operation.</p> <p>3.4 Selects appropriate resources, equipment, and materials for practical application while operating within the budget.</p> <p>3.5 Manages the program to encourage learning and development of children in all developmental domains.</p> <p>3.6 Writes goals, objectives, and outcomes for program events and daily activities.</p> <p>3.7 Assists in gathering information for evaluation and assessment purposes.</p> <p>3.8 Selects age-appropriate curriculum for use in the program.</p>

I. Administration, Program Planning and Development Competencies		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.1 Assumes a leadership role in program operations.</p> <p>4.2 Strengthens the skills and abilities of the program’s staff, administrators, and volunteers.</p> <p>4.3 Assures that proper documentation is maintained which meets federal, state, and local legislation, regulation, and professional standards.</p> <p>4.4 Understands and communicates the relationship between the program’s philosophy and the application of daily events.</p> <p>4.5 Supports community and family collaboration by planning family education programs.</p> <p>4.6 Assumes responsibility for program assessment by conducting observations and evaluations for the purpose of program improvement.</p> <p>4.7 Communicates effectively with the board and advisory groups.</p>	<p>5.1 Provides strong leadership and visionary direction to the overall operation of the program.</p> <p>5.2 Recruits, orients, provides opportunities for professional development, supervises, and evaluates staff in the early care and education program.</p> <p>5.3 Recruits, orients, and supervises volunteers to the program.</p> <p>5.4 Applies knowledge of federal, state, and local legislation, regulations, and professional standards to provide healthy and safe practices for all children.</p> <p>5.5 Develops and implements public relations strategies to establish the program in the community.</p> <p>5.6 Develops and implements program policies, daily operations, and program assessments.</p> <p>5.7 Supervises practicum students and student teachers.</p>	<p>6.1 Articulates vision and direction for the program through knowledge of current research, trends, and effective practice.</p> <p>6.2 Develops policies, procedures, and an employee handbook with information on hiring practices, benefits, performance appraisals, staff development, and disciplinary process if needed.</p> <p>6.3 Defines program goals and expected outcomes clearly and consistently to families, personnel, and the public.</p> <p>6.4 Designs a marketing plan for the early care and education program.</p> <p>6.5 Assumes leadership role in collaborating with families, professionals and community groups.</p> <p>6.6 Articulates, evaluates, and applies current theory, research, and policy on program planning and evaluation and collects data measurements for program decision making.</p>

Administration, Program Planning and Development

May 2013

I. Administration, Program Planning and Development Competencies		
Level 4 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 5 (all skills in previous levels plus)	Level 6 (all skills in previous levels plus)
<p>4.8 Plans a budget while developing a fee structure.</p> <p>4.9 Reviews curriculum implementation to determine what refinements can be made to improve children's learning.</p>	<p>5.8 Manages program resources effectively according to program philosophy. (Resources include financial, personnel, and time).</p> <p>5.9 Collaborates with the board in leading, defining direction and finalizing strategic plan for the program.</p> <p>5.10 Establishes program policies and procedures that address serving children from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds.</p>	<p>6.7 Mentors student teachers and provides appropriate suggestions for professional growth and practice.</p> <p>6.8 Utilizes sound financial management practices to achieve program goals and objectives.</p> <p>6.9 Knows how to apply for grants and other funding sources.</p> <p>6.10 Ensures the program meets diverse needs and reflects cultural uniqueness of children, families, personnel, and community partners.</p> <p>6.11 Understands local, state, and federal laws around hiring and personnel practices.</p> <p>6.12 Develops, implements, and communicates policies in the staff handbook, parent handbook, and policies and procedures manual for the early care and education program.</p> <p>6.13 Provides a work culture that fosters staff initiative to solve problems and resolve conflict.</p>

Glossary of Terms

Accommodations- Changes in the curricular material and experiences to accommodate a child's particular needs.

Adaptive Equipment- Equipment suitable to meet requirements for conditions a person might need, either temporarily or for significant portion of his/her life.

Anecdotal Assessment (Anecdotal Observations)

Observing children while they work and writing notes on observations to reflect on later.

Authentic Assessment- Children are assessed while they complete real-world tasks that demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

Assessment and Evaluation- A process through which written observations, children's work, stories, photos of children working and anecdotes are gathered in a range of content areas over time. The collection of all of the information is analyzed, organized and interpreted to determine both a child's understanding and their ability to apply that understanding. The information can then be made available to other teacher, adults, and family members.

Competency- The knowledge, skill, or capacity needed to perform effectively.

Confidentiality- Ensuring that information on children or other adults who work in the program is only available to those who need the information to do their work.

Cooperative Play- Making or doing something together that requires the skills, ideas, and contributions of each person.

Curriculum- Curriculum is the written and implemented plan for learning experiences and activities to stimulate and enhance children's growth and learning of the knowledge, skills, and values deemed important for their development. In early childhood, the curriculum includes how the appropriate materials and learning space/classroom are organized and used (both in and out of doors) and how the adults and children interact. The curriculum also recognizes and builds on the children's interests, and acknowledges their families' contributions and cultural backgrounds.

Documentation- Gathering samples of children's work or your own written observations of children while they work. Documentation might include gathering photos of children working, written recordings of children's comments, stories and conversations. All of the gathered samples are then reflected upon to determine what interests, learning opportunities, and next steps can be taken to advance children's learning.

Diversity- Recognizing and valuing differences: Includes the belief that each family has its own structure, roles, values, beliefs, and coping styles. Respect for and acceptance of this diversity is a cornerstone of high-quality, family-centered programs.

Developmental Delay- A child birth through age eight who has been identified by a multidisciplinary team as having either a significant delay in the function of one or more of the following areas: cognitive development, physical development, communicative development, social emotional development, or adaptive behavior or skills development or a diagnosed physical or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in a substantial delay in function in one or more of such areas.

Developmentally Appropriate- Learning environment and teaching strategies that are based on theories and research about the growth and development of children.

Domains- Key areas of children’s development and learning.

Dramatic Play- Play that promotes children’s use of their imagination and ability to pretend.

Environment Rating Scales- Scales designed to assess the quality of the learning environments, curriculum, and interactions within early childhood education programs.

Fine (Small) Motor Skills- Skills that use small muscle groups such as hands and fingers and frequently involve hand-eye coordination.

Gross (Large) Motor Skills- The movement and action of large and/or major muscle groups.

Inclusion- The practice in which all children, with a range of abilities and disabilities, participate together and are regarded as equal members of the learning community.

Integrated Curriculum- Connects separate subject areas by presenting information/activities in a thematic, holistic manner to meet the common needs of all learners.

Literacy- A person’s ability to read and write.

Literacy Rich Environment- Program includes literacy activities (reading and writing) in every component of the schedule, every day and throughout the environment.

Mathematical Thinking- Counting, sorting, measuring, matching, comparing, charting, and moving in space. Predicting what comes next in a pattern or sequence of events.

Open-ended Questioning Techniques- Questions that must be answered with a response other than “yes” or “no” and usually with more than one word.

Peer- Person of the same age.

Pro-social Behavior- Encouraging children to help, share, cooperate, show kindness, listen to others, take turns, etc.

Positive Communication- Displaying a positive attitude, encouraging others, using a positive tone when speaking to others, demonstrating openness to hearing from others, and listening to their response.

Scientific Skills and Methods- Process used to investigate observations, solve problems, and test hypotheses.

Sensory Experiences- How things look, feel, taste, sound, and smell.

Social and Emotional Development- Children’s abilities to form and sustain social relationships with adults and peers.

Transition- Movement or change from one condition, place, or activity to another.

Universal Precautions- Infection control guidelines designed to protect adults and children from the spread of disease through body fluids.

Appendix A

Core Competencies Leadership Team

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Resources

DEC (Division of Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children) **Recommended Practices in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education** by Sandall, Hemmeter, Smith and McLean.
URL: http://www.dec-sped.org/About_DEC/Recommended_Practices

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines, Nebraska Department of Education.
URL: <http://ectc.education.ne.gov/ELG/elg.html>

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct;
URL: http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ethical_conduct

Other support materials for Nebraska's core competencies, including professional development planning documents and assessment instruments, can be found at **Nebraska's Early Childhood Training Center** at: <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/ectc.html>

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For more information about this document, please visit our website: <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/ectc.html>



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