

# Rhode Island's Workforce Knowledge and Competencies *for* Family Child Care Educators

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*Working With Children Birth Through Age 5 and Their Families*

**Last Updated 10/30/2013**

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# Introduction

## Welcome

Welcome to the first published edition of the Rhode Island Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Family Child Care Educators. This document is intended for family child care educators who work with children birth through age 5 and their families<sup>1</sup>. The Rhode Island Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Family Child Care Educators articulate the essential skills and knowledge that educators who work with young children in a home setting need to know, understand, and be able to do to promote young children's healthy development and learning. They are designed for many purposes including supporting an educator's individual professional development efforts and guiding higher education and professional development providers on the creation of curricula. This publication is designed to be a practical and living document. We hope that you find it useful and that you will contribute to the ongoing refinement of core knowledge and competencies for family child care educators in our state.

## Rationale and Purpose

Research shows that high-quality early childhood education produces substantial long-term educational, social, and economic benefits with the largest benefits for children occurring when educators are professionally prepared and adequately compensated. Furthermore, the knowledge and skills required of effective educators of young children have increased as science has revealed more about the capabilities of young children, how they learn best, and the importance of early learning for later school success<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, it is essential that a core component of Rhode Island's efforts to build a high quality early learning system is a highly qualified workforce with access to a high quality professional development system.

At the foundation of this system is the knowledge base of theory and research that underlies practice, *often referred to as core workforce knowledge and competencies*. In the United States, more than 30 states have published core workforce knowledge and competencies as a foundation of their professional development systems. Rhode Island's early education leaders recognize that our workforce, including family child care educators, must have access to a professional development system designed to build competencies that are linked to improved child outcomes.

The Rhode Island Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Family Child Care Educators are intended to be used by a variety of stakeholders. They will:

- Be used by Rhode Island's early education leaders as a framework for developing a state-wide professional development system.
- Help family child care educators focus on critical areas of professional development and recognize their own areas of exceptional skill and expertise.
- Assist family child care educators with the creation and implementation of their own personalized professional development plans.
- Guide higher education and professional development providers with the creation of curricula for professional development opportunities and coursework offered in the community.
- Help families identify best practices and select high-quality programming for their children.
- Serve as a tool for advocates and policy makers.

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<sup>1</sup> We recognize the field defines early childhood as birth-3<sup>rd</sup> grade. For the purposes of this document, we are referring to children age birth-5.

<sup>2</sup> Better Teachers, Better Preschools: Student Achievement Linked to Teacher Qualifications Issue 2 / Revised December 2004, W. Steven Barnett, National Institute for Early Education Research.

## **Organization**

Rhode Island's core knowledge and competencies for family child care educators are organized into six domains important to the profession. Each domain has a number of sub-headings. Although the domains are presented individually, all domains are intrinsically interrelated and interdependent. They are worded so they can be measured or demonstrated. The six domains include:

1. Physical and Mental Health, Safety, and Wellness
2. Family Engagement
3. Development and Learning
4. Curriculum
5. Assessment
6. Professionalism

Each of the six domains contains several skill levels that range from the skills and knowledge of a beginning practitioner to the more advanced skills and knowledge possessed by a more advanced professional. With these frameworks as organizing devices, the knowledge and competencies become more complex across the four levels reflecting what the individual should know and be able to do at each corresponding level. The core competency levels are also cumulative for each category. In other words, someone working at a Level III in any given competency area should have the knowledge and competencies identified for Levels I and II in that area.

## **The Family Child Care Career Pathway**

In addition, the family child care educator core knowledge and competencies are aligned with a career pathway for the role. The career pathway specifies the formal education, experience, professional development, and professional activities that correspond with a family child care educator who is at each level. Family child care educators progress from one level to another through a combination of formal study, experience, and professional development. The requirements in Level I correspond with Rhode Island's minimal expectations for family child care educators.

For the purposes of this document, "family child care educator" is defined as an individual primarily responsible for planning and implementing the educational program in a family child care program which is operated in a home environment. It is important to note that family child care providers are independent, self-employed business people who must fulfill multiple roles beyond their role of educator, for example managing the business and administrative side of their program. This document, as it is currently written, is focused explicitly on the family child care provider's role as an educator of young children within their program. The addition of competencies related to business management and administration for family child care providers will be developed through a subsequent process. **The family child care educator career pathway can be found on page 7.**

## **Background, History and Process**

In 2001-2002 there was a comprehensive, grass-roots effort, with broad representation from all areas of early childhood and youth development (YD) that created the June 2003 draft version of Rhode Island's core competencies. In the fall of 2007, a committee was brought together by the R.I. Department of Human Services/Childspan to revise the June 2003 draft in light of changes in the field such as new trends, new regulations, and ongoing development of state initiatives, e.g. Rhode Island Early Learning Standards (RIELS), BrightStars, and new NAEYC Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) guidelines. The committee composition was recommended by DHS and was comprised of representatives from major stakeholders such as the R.I.

Department of Education (RIDE), higher education, the R.I. Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), the R.I. Department of Health (DOH), ECE providers including Center-based and Family Child Care, BrightStars, and representatives from the Afterschool and Youth Development field.

This group began that work by making several significant design changes including:

- Separating out knowledge and competencies for center-based, family child care, and school age workforces.
- Separating out knowledge and competencies for teachers, teacher assistants, education coordinators, and administrators.
- Shifting the knowledge and competencies levels from six to four.
- Aligning the knowledge and competencies with Bloom's Taxonomy.

With this new framework, the group developed a four level career pathway for center-based teachers and drafted several domains for center-based teachers including, health, safety and wellness, child development and learning, and curriculum. In 2010, DHS received CCDBG ARRA funding which it allocated to completing the core knowledge and competencies for teachers and teacher assistants. Additional Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge funding awarded to Rhode Island by the United States Department of Education supported the completion of core workforce knowledge and competencies for family child care providers, professional development providers, higher education providers, special educators and administrators in 2013. The Rhode Island Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Family Child Care Educators was completed by a work group comprised of state agency leaders, professional development providers, and family child care providers (see Appendix A for a list of work group members).

## Domains and Sub-Domains at a Glance

### Domain 1: Physical and Mental Health, Safety, and Wellness (HSW)

- Knowledge of State and Federal Regulations
- Safety and Emergency Procedures
- Health
- Food and Nutrition

### Domain 2: Family Engagement (FE)

- Creating Respectful, Reciprocal Relationships with Families
- Engaging Families in Their Children's Development and Learning
- Utilizing Community Resources to Support Families

### Domain 3: Development and Learning (DL)

- Child Development
- Influences on Development

### Domain 4: Curriculum (C)

- Content
- Process
- Teaching and Facilitating
- Context
- Building Meaningful Curriculum

### Domain 5: Assessment (A)

- Knowledge of Early Childhood Assessment
- Implementing a Comprehensive Assessment Plan and Conducting Developmentally Appropriate Authentic Assessments
- Practicing Responsible Assessment
- Collects Assessment Data from Multiple Sources Using a Variety of Methods
- Documenting and Organizing Assessment Data
- Using Assessment Data in Curriculum Planning
- Communicating Assessment Data

### Domain 6: Professionalism (P)

- Identifying and Involving Oneself with the Early Care and Education Profession
- Ethical Standards and Professional Guidelines
- Valuing Diversity
- Advocating for Children, Families, and the Profession
- Commitment to Ongoing Professional Development

## The Family Child Care Educator Career Pathway

The career pathway for family child care educators specifies the formal education, experience, professional development, and professional activities that correspond with an educator who is at each level. For the purposes of this document, “family child care educator” is defined as an individual primarily responsible for planning and implementing the educational program in a family child care program which is operated in a home environment. Family child care educators progress from one level to another through a combination of formal study, experience, and professional development.

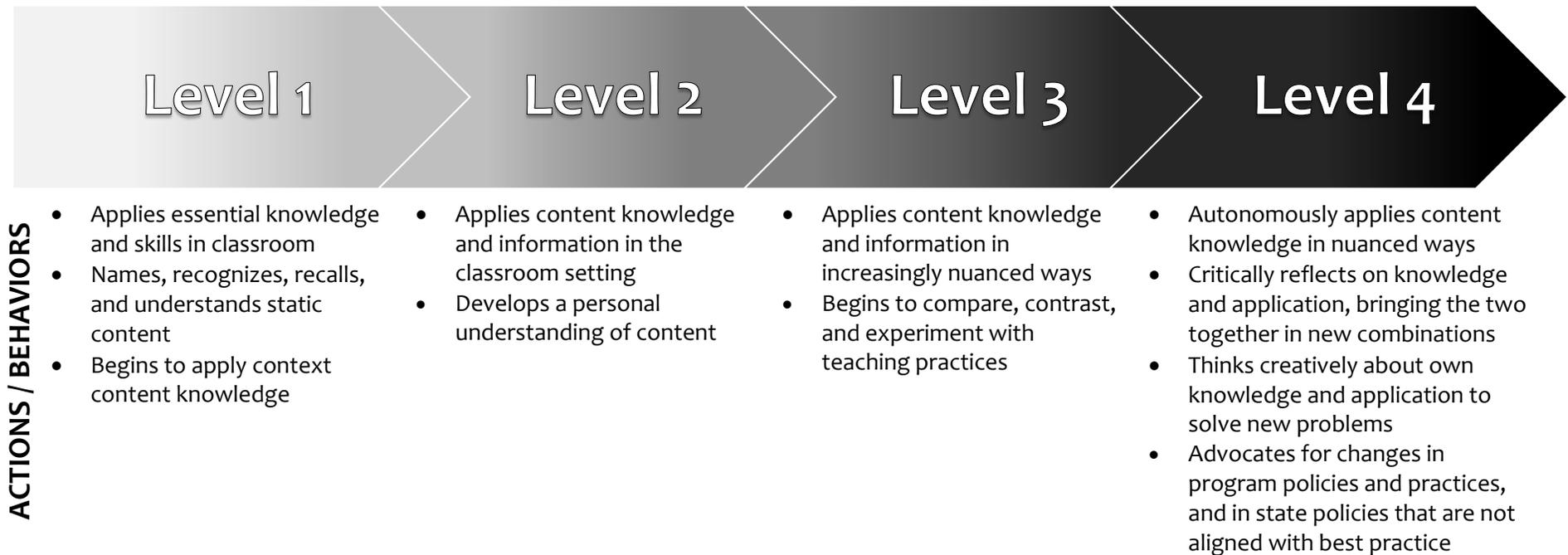
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
<b>Formal Education</b>	High School Diploma or GED.	12 credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE). <b>OR</b> A CDA plus 9 credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE).	AA in Early Childhood Education (ECE). <b>OR</b> 24 credits in Early Childhood Education (ECE).	Bachelor’s Degree in addition to or including 30 credits in Early Childhood Education (ECE). <b>OR</b> Has RI Early Childhood Certification PreK - 2 (includes Bachelor’s Degree).
<b>Experience</b>	Minimum of 1 year of relevant experience in Early Childhood Education (ECE).	Minimum of 1 year of relevant experience in Early Childhood Education (may include fieldwork, coaching, mentoring, practicum or technical assistance).	Minimum of 1 year of relevant experience in Early Childhood Education (may include fieldwork, coaching, mentoring, practicum or technical assistance).	Minimum of 2 years of relevant experience in Early Childhood Education (may include fieldwork, coaching, mentoring, practicum or technical assistance).
<b>Relevant Professional Development/ Credentials</b>	Minimum of 20 hours/year of professional development directly pertaining to the workforce knowledge and competencies. <b>OR</b> Comparable credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE).	Minimum of 20 hours/year of professional development directly pertaining to the workforce knowledge and competencies. <b>OR</b> Comparable credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE).	Minimum of 20 hours/year of professional development directly pertaining to the workforce knowledge and competencies. <b>OR</b> Comparable credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE).	Practitioner portfolio <b>AND</b> Minimum of 20 hours/year of professional development directly pertaining to the workforce knowledge and competencies. <b>OR</b> Comparable credit hours in Early Childhood Education (ECE).
<b>Professional Activities</b>			Membership in professional organization related to Early Childhood Education (ECE).	Membership in professional organization related to Early Childhood Education (ECE). <b>AND</b> Participation in at least one state, regional, or national conference via attendance, planning or presentation. <b>OR</b> Participation in community or state coalition related to early childhood.

## Developing a Framework to Guide and Assess Skill and Knowledge Progression

Like many core competency documents across the country, Rhode Island’s core knowledge and competencies were designed using a theoretical framework. The work group selected and adapted Bloom’s Taxonomy as a guide for how knowledge and skill should deepen over the levels. Because each educator’s professional development and practice does not always fit into the hierarchical structure of Bloom’s —educators at each level are expected to apply knowledge as the primary instructional leader/caregiver in the classroom— the team revised and expanded its theoretical framework to account for application of skills occurring at each level.

The resulting framework draws upon Lilian Katz’s four levels of professional development: survival, consolidation, renewal, and maturity. The resulting framework, illustrated below, was used to provide a structure for communicating the increasingly sophisticated knowledge and application of knowledge that a teacher exhibits. As the visual below illuminates, the knowledge and competencies become more complex across the levels and the language of those competencies changes to reflect deeper and more critical reflection and practice. An individual teacher may move within and across levels over the course of professional development as she acquires knowledge and skills from a variety of learning experiences, such as training, mentoring, and earning credentials. Each level also takes into account the credentials, experience, and professional involvement of educators in the corresponding level of the career pathway.

### Rhode Island’s Framework for Competency Development



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## **Family Child Care Educator Core Competencies Domain 1: Physical and Mental Health, Safety, and Wellness**

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Last Updated 2/25/2013

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Young children's physical and emotional health and safety is vital for fostering competence in all developmental areas. Family child care educators must have a sound knowledge of state and federal regulations related to safety and health. They must also be able to ensure children's safety and be competent in preparing for and handling emergencies. Finally, they promote sound health, dental, and nutrition practices.

**DOMAIN 1: PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLNESS**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>HSW 1: Knowledge of State and Federal Regulations</b>	<p>Understands the purpose of and follows state and federal regulations including, but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration of medication</li> <li>• Infant and Child CPR and First Aid training</li> <li>• Fire and disaster drills</li> <li>• Abuse and neglect</li> <li>• Communicable disease</li> <li>• Staffing ratios</li> <li>• Transportation of children</li> </ul> <p>Communicates information pertaining to safety standards to families.</p>			
<b>HSW 2: Safety and Emergency Procedures</b>	<p>Routinely practices emergency plans and drills (e.g. fire, weather-related and lockdown) including safety procedures for children with disabilities.</p> <p>Understands ratio requirements and takes appropriate measures to make sure they are met.</p> <p>Monitors and maintains safety in all areas, both indoors and outdoors, including condition of equipment and materials, and the identification and removal of potential hazards.</p> <p>Evaluates established safety procedures and makes improvements, as necessary.</p> <p>Analyzes learning environments regularly to provide a safer learning environment for children.</p> <p>Actively supervises children and teaches age appropriate safety precautions and rules to children to ensure safety, both indoors and outdoors.</p>			

DOMAIN 1: MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELLNESS

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>HSW2: Safety and Emergency Procedures (cont'd)</b>	Follows recommended guidelines to prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) when caring for infants.			
<b>HSW3: Health</b>	<p>Understands program policies and practices regarding children’s health and safety status.</p> <p>Models, supports, and assists children in developing appropriate hygiene practices including hand washing, teeth brushing, and toileting, and follows appropriate diapering practices, when applicable.</p> <p>Communicates with families about program policies and practices regarding health and individual children’s health status.</p> <p>Understands indicators of child maltreatment, follows program policies regarding documentation and notification, and performs responsibly as a mandated reporter for child abuse and neglect.</p> <p>Understands the signs and symptoms of common childhood illnesses and notifies appropriate program personnel and/or families as appropriate while ensuring the comfort and care of the child and other children.</p> <p>Recognizes and seeks to understand culturally influenced health practices of children.</p> <p>Follows policies and procedures for infection control and universal precautions.</p>			

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>HSW3: Health (cont'd)</b>	<p>Knows individual children’s allergies and other health needs and monitors compliance with requirements indicated by parents or a medical professional.</p> <p>Establishes an environment where children can sleep without disturbance.</p>			
<b>HSW4: Food and Nutrition</b>	<p>Understands that the nutritional needs of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers are unique to their development.</p> <p>Maintains appropriate communication systems with families regarding eating habits and food intake.</p> <p>Ensures that policies regarding allergies and family food restrictions are followed.</p> <p>Respectfully communicates with families about food restrictions and special needs.</p> <p>Respectfully communicates with families regarding family preferences and cultural influences on food and eating habits.</p> <p>Understands and utilizes developmentally appropriate practices which support healthy eating habits for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.</p> <p>Joins children for meals and snacks and models healthy eating habits with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.</p> <p>Recognizes potential health hazards in meals (choking, allergies, etc.) and takes steps to avoid them.</p> <p>Practices safe food handling, follows general sanitation practices, and maintains sanitary environments.</p>	<p>Provides families with information about nutrition and food appropriate for children at different ages.</p> <p>Observes children during mealtime to learn about individual eating preferences and uses observations to inform menus, meal schedules, and communication with families.</p>	<p>Recognizes symptoms and behaviors of children that signal possible nutritional need or feeding/eating concerns and communicates the concerns with families</p>	

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## Family Child Care Educator Core Competencies Domain 2: Family Engagement

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Last Updated 2/25/2013

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Family child care educators understand the roles that family members and others play in the lives of children and the importance of engaging them in their child's education. They understand that children develop within the context of their family and that there are a variety of different family structures and dynamics. They also demonstrate respect for the family's role as the primary educator and advocate for the child and they know how to build relationships with families and utilize community resources to support and strengthen families.

Family child care educators respect each family's values, attitudes, and expectations, and honor and celebrate the diversity of languages, customs, and traditions in the family of each child. They create an environment that both conveys this respect and creates opportunities to celebrate diversity among families in their program. They nurture the primary relationships between children and those who raise them and maintain an awareness of and willingness to try to overcome barriers and address inequities. They also strive to utilize a range of techniques to communicate effectively with all families, including families with linguistic differences.

Finally, family child care educators understand that they must employ a comprehensive approach to family engagement. They do so by creating meaningful opportunities for families to be actively engaged in their children's education by sharing relevant information about each child's development and learning, and welcoming them into the program. They also help families of children with special needs obtain information and advocate for special services, and help connect children and their families with community resources.

**DOMAIN 2: FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>F1: Creating Respectful, Reciprocal Relationships with Families</b>				
<b><i>F 1a: Family systems</i></b>	<p>Is welcoming to all families.</p> <p>Respects and values the varying structures, languages, and cultures of children’s families.</p> <p>Recognizes and respects the family role as the primary educator, advocate, and “expert” on their own child and actively seeks family opinion and input.</p>	<p>Understands how families operate as a system and can be affected by a variety of issues at different levels of the system.</p>	<p>Identifies and responds effectively to emerging family issues.</p> <p>Seeks information from families regarding variations across cultures in terms of family strengths, expectations, values, and child-rearing practices.</p> <p>Understands and believes in the capacity of the family to change during children’s growth and development and supports the change process.</p>	
<b><i>F 1b: Communication</i></b>	<p>Communicates respectfully with and about families and uses this communication to build positive relationships with families.</p> <p>Creates opportunities for two way communication to build relationships with families based on mutual trust and understanding.</p> <p>Communicates honestly, sensitively, and empathically in a family-friendly and culturally appropriate way.</p>		<p>Utilizes a range of techniques to communicate effectively with all families, including families that speak a language that is unfamiliar to the teacher or have a different communication style or needs.</p>	<p>Reflects on effectiveness of communication techniques and adjusts to achieve a high level of family engagement.</p>

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b><i>F1c: Professional Relationships</i></b>	<p>Understands the characteristics of positive and appropriate relationships with families.</p> <p>Develops appropriate boundaries between home life and program.</p> <p>Understands the differences between personal and professional relationships with families and sets appropriate boundaries.</p> <p>Demonstrates and maintains positive and appropriate relationships with families.</p>		<p>Assesses relationships with individual families and employs creative strategies to maximize engagement with all families.</p>	
<b>F2: Engaging Families in Their Children’s Development and Learning</b>				
<b><i>F2a: Sharing Information with Families</i></b>	<p>Shares knowledge of general child development with families.</p> <p>Communicates with families regarding children’s daily activities, developing skills, and accomplishments.</p> <p>Employs regular and ongoing opportunities to exchange information with families pertinent to their child’s learning and development.</p>	<p>Begins to utilize information from families regarding variations across cultures in terms of family strengths, expectations, values, and child-rearing practices in their teaching practice.</p>	<p>Utilizes conferences and other formal strategies to exchange information with families in an ongoing way about their child’s development and learning.</p>	<p>Consistently incorporates information from families into many aspects of program planning.</p>

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>F2: Engaging Families in Their Children’s Development and Learning (cont’d)</b>				
<b><i>F2b: Creating Opportunities for Families to be Actively Engaged in Their Child’s Education</i></b>	Creates and maintains a safe and welcoming environment for families, including providing a quiet space for families to nurse, soothe, or comfort a child.	Understands that meaningful opportunities for family engagement linked to children’s learning goals occur both in the program and at home.	Provides relevant information about child development, learning and healthy attachment to help families actively engage in their child’s education.  Provides opportunities for family engagement both in the program and at home that build upon families’ strengths, skills, talents, interests, and availability.  Provides opportunities for family engagement both in the program and at home tied to established learning goals for children.	Consistently provides opportunities for families to be engaged in their child’s education in a way that reflects cultural and linguistic differences.  Evaluates and improves family engagement opportunities on a regular basis to meet the needs of current families.  Designs and implements strategies for supporting the attachment relationships between families and their child.
<b><i>F2c: Working with Families of Children With Special Needs<sup>3</sup></i></b>	Understands and values the benefits of integrating children with special education and health needs.  Works with families to understand and respond to children’s special education and health needs and makes necessary modifications so that the child can participate in the program.	Helps all families understand the ways in which children benefit from an inclusive program environment.	Helps families obtain clear and understandable information about their child’s special needs.  Helps families to advocate for special services, when necessary, including documenting and sharing information with appropriate professionals.	Works collaboratively with families in the development of Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs), and other individualized plans for children.

<sup>3</sup> In this document *Special Needs* refers to children with special health needs, developmental delays, or disabilities

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>F2: Engaging Families in Their Children’s Development and Learning (cont’d)</b>				
<b><i>F2d: Utilizing Community Resources to Support Families</i></b>	Is aware of resources within surrounding community (e.g. early childhood special education, pediatricians, mental health services, health care, adult education, ELL instruction, economic assistance, etc.).	Recognizes when families may be in need of support.	Accesses community resources to communicate effectively with families from diverse backgrounds.	Builds relationships with community organizations and their representatives to bring services to children and their families in the program.  Works in partnership with families to respond appropriately to a range of family needs from informational to crisis intervention.  Facilitates/supports families in making connections to formal and informal community support.

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## Family Child Care Core Educator Competencies Domain 3: Development and Learning

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Last Updated 2/25/2013

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Family child care educators recognize that experiences for children in early childhood programs, regardless of the child's age, must include consideration of the child's developmental level, temperament, needs, and learning styles. Development includes several interrelated areas (physical, cognitive, social/emotional) that influence each other and develop simultaneously. Family child care educators recognize that the developmental process typically precedes in predictable steps and in recognized sequences, but also has an awareness and understanding of differences and different abilities in relation to development sequence.

In addition to typical development, family child care educators must take into account factors that influence development, including 1) each child's unique temperament, learning style, and interests; 2) environmental influences such as culture and ethnicity, home language, and community characteristics; and 3) short and long-term risk factors such as poverty, illness, changes in family structure, and ability levels including the influence of disabilities and special needs. They also believe that an inclusive environment benefits both children with and without special needs and they embrace an inclusive philosophy where all children are individually valued.

**DOMAIN 3: DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>DL1: Child Development</b>				
<b><i>DL1a: General Knowledge of Domains, Stages, and Milestones</i></b>	<p>Recognizes the major developmental milestones of children.</p> <p>Begins to understand the importance the relationship between caregiver and child and how early experiences affect brain development.</p>	<p>Recognizes the major developmental milestones of children and understands that although there often is a typical sequence of development and learning, individual differences or circumstances can influence development.</p> <p>Understands that children’s development includes several inter-related domains, (such as physical health and motor, language, social and emotional, literacy, cognitive development, etc.), that can simultaneously influence each other within the developmental process.</p> <p>Understands that it is typical for each child to develop differently across developmental domains.</p>	<p>Understands research-based theories regarding the importance of early experiences on the development of the brain.</p> <p>Uses knowledge of child development in order to provide developmentally appropriate and engaging experiences and interactions.</p>	<p>Comprehends and applies major child development theories and understands the interrelationships across developmental domains.</p> <p>Consistently applies an understanding of child development in order to provide appropriate and engaging experiences and interactions.</p>
<b><i>DL1b: Fostering Healthy Attachment</i></b>	<p>Begins to understand the concept of attachment as it relates to children’s growth and development.</p>	<p>Understands process of attachment as it relates to the continuity of care and the growth and development of children.</p>	<p>Uses knowledge of attachment theory to support children’s healthy attachment with adults, e.g., help them prepare for separation from parents and other caretakers.</p>	

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>DL2: Influences on Development</b>				
<b><i>DL2a: Individual Needs and Differences</i></b>	Understands and values that each child has unique characteristics including developmental levels, learning styles, temperament, and interests.  Is responsive to the individual needs of children.	Understands and values the unique developmental levels, learning styles, temperament, and interests of each child.  Recognizes children’s individual schedules/preferences and uses that knowledge when planning daily routines and interactions, especially when caring for infants and toddlers.	Understands individual differences in development, temperament, learning styles, and interests and applies this information to individualize interactions with children.	Applies knowledge of individual differences in development, temperament, learning styles, and interests to adapt environments and experiences for individual children.
<b><i>DL2b: Environmental Influences</i></b>	Is aware that environmental influences such as culture and ethnicity, home language, family structure, child-rearing practices and traditions, and community characteristics impact children’s development and learning.	Recognizes environmental as culture and ethnicity, home language, family structure, child-rearing practices and traditions, and community characteristics that may affect the pre- and post-natal development and learning of children in both positive and negative ways.	Begins to appropriately integrate knowledge of applicable environmental influences to promote children’s development.	Consistently uses knowledge of environmental influences to adapt environments and learning experiences for individual children.
<b><i>DL2c: Risk Factors Impacting Children</i></b>	Is aware that risk factors exist and can impact children’s learning and development.	Recognizes short and long-term risk factors such as poverty, illness, changes in family structure, crises within families, etc. that may affect a child’s development and learning.	Applies knowledge of child development to identify and be responsive to the impact of risk factors on child development.	Identifies appropriate resources and services to address risk factors impacting children, and partners with families to make appropriate referrals where needed.  Applies strategies to support children’s resiliency to mitigate the impact of potential risk factors in their lives.

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>DL2: Influences on Development (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>DL2d: Identified Special Needs<sup>4</sup></i></b>	<p>Understands that there is a wide range of identified special needs.</p> <p>Understands that an inclusive environment benefits children with and without special needs.</p> <p>Follows specific requirements for children in their care as outlined in Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and/or Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs), if required.</p>	<p>Understands that risk factors, developmental delays, or disabilities may indicate a need for special services.</p> <p>Understands that there is a process for accessing special education services for children with developmental delays, disabilities, or other special needs.</p>	<p>Employs practices that support an inclusive philosophy.</p> <p>Utilizes the appropriate resources and services for children with special needs.</p> <p>Begins to apply knowledge about children with special needs and consistently make accommodations and adaptations to ensure their optimum participation.</p> <p>Collaborates with other significant adults in planning appropriate activities, routines, and experiences for individual children with special needs.</p>	<p>Demonstrates knowledge of inclusive philosophy and practices and understands the range of development in young children.</p> <p>Utilizes knowledge about individual children with special needs and consistently makes accommodations and adaptations to ensure their inclusion.</p> <p>Collaborates with team members, and participates, as appropriate, in the development of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs).</p> <p>Collaborates with a multi-disciplinary team to develop and implement strategies for working together to benefit children with special needs.</p>

<sup>4</sup> In this document *Special Needs* refers to children with special health needs, developmental delays, or disabilities

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# Family Child Care Educator Core Competency Domain 4: Curriculum

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Last Updated 2/25/2013

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Family child care educators design, implement, and evaluate multi-level curriculum that promotes positive development and learning for each and every child through intentional learning experiences. They know and understand that curriculum for early childhood settings have four core components: content, process, teaching and facilitating, and context. They consider all four of these areas and their inter-relatedness when building meaningful curriculum.

Family child care educators know the learning goals within each of the nine Early Learning and Development Standard domains including physical health and motor development, social and emotional development, language development, literacy, cognitive development, mathematics, science, social studies and creative arts. They know that each domain has various components that are important to infant, toddler, and pre-school curriculum as reflected in current literature.

Family child care educators think about how young children learn. They know that a child's development in each domain is sequential and dependent on a child's experiences and they recognize that each child is unique and learns in a distinctive way. They also understand the importance of relationships and high-quality interactions in supporting successful learning and they provide a learning environment that is respectful, supportive, challenging and aesthetically pleasing which will have a positive impact on the whole child. They design, implement, and evaluate a meaningful and challenging curriculum using their experience and knowledge of 1) the RI Early Learning and Development Standards, 2) current research, theory and best practice of how children learn and develop, 3) child assessment data, and 4) the unique interests, strengths, and needs of the children and families in the program. They know that this curriculum must allow for individualized learning opportunities and the intentional development of responsive and respectful relationships with each child, and advocate for resources and revisions to support optimal curriculum for all children.

While most center-based classrooms have children grouped by age, a family child care provider usually has mixed-age groupings which could include infant, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children. This requires family child care educators to use their knowledge to design curriculum for multi-aged groups of children of varied abilities.

**FAMILY CHILD CARE DOMAIN 4: CURRICULUM**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>C1: Content</b>				
<b><i>C1a: Physical Health and Motor Development</i></b>	<p>Understands that curriculum for <b>physical health and motor development</b> is organized around the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Begins to provide opportunities to support children’s development and learning in the domain of <b>physical health and motor development</b>.</p>	<p>Understands the learning goals (scope) and definitions of <b>physical health and motor development</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>physical health and motor development</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler, and preschooler experiences.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers, and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>physical health and motor development</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>physical health and motor development</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p>
<b><i>C1b: Social/Emotional Development</i></b>	<p>Understands that curriculum for <b>social/emotional development</b> is organized around the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Begins to provide opportunities to support children’s development and learning in the domain of <b>social/emotional development</b>.</p>	<p>Understands the learning goals (scope) and definitions of <b>social/emotional development</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers, and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>social and emotional development</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>social and emotional development</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p>

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<i>C1b: Social/Emotional Development (cont'd)</i>		Understands that development in the domain of <b>social/emotional development</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler, and preschooler experiences.		
<i>C1c: Language Development</i>	<p>Understands that curriculum for <b>language development</b> is organized around the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Begins to provide opportunities to support children’s development and learning in the domain of <b>language development</b>.</p>	<p>Understands the learning goals (scope) and definitions of <b>language development</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>language development</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler, and preschooler experiences.</p> <p>Understands that English Language Learners must have opportunities to progress in their home language as they are learning English.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers, and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>language development</b>.</p> <p>Applies strategies in the program so that English Language Learners have opportunities to progress in their home language as they are learning English.</p>	<p>Works with children and their families, using community resources as needed, to maintain the child’s home language.</p> <p>Incorporates researched-based individualized instruction designed to promote English language development of English Language Learners.</p>

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b><i>C1d: Literacy</i></b>	<p>Understands that curriculum for <b>literacy</b> is organized around the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Begins to provide opportunities to support children’s development and learning in the domain of <b>literacy</b>.</p>	<p>Understands the learning goals (scope) and definitions of <b>literacy</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>literacy</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler, and preschooler experiences.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers, and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>literacy</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>literacy</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p>
<b><i>C1e: Cognitive Development</i></b>	<p>Understands that curriculum for <b>cognitive development</b> is organized around the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Begins to provide opportunities to support children’s development and learning in the domain of <b>cognitive development</b>.</p>	<p>Understands the learning goals (scope) and definitions of <b>cognitive development</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>cognitive development</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler, and preschooler experiences.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers, and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>cognitive development</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>cognitive development</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p>

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b><i>C1f: Mathematics</i></b>	<p>Understands that curriculum for <b>mathematics</b> is organized around the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Begins to provide opportunities to support children’s development and learning in the domain of <b>mathematics</b>.</p>	<p>Understands the learning goals (scope) and definitions of <b>mathematics</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>mathematics</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler, and preschooler experiences.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers, and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>mathematics</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>mathematics</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p>
<b><i>C1e: Science</i></b>	<p>Understands that curriculum for <b>science</b> is organized around the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Begins to provide opportunities to support children’s development and learning in the domain of <b>science</b>.</p>	<p>Understands the learning goals (scope) and definitions of <b>science</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>science</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler, and preschooler experiences.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers, and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the area of <b>science</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>science</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p>

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<i>C1f: Social Studies</i>	<p>Understands that curriculum for <b>social studies</b> is organized around the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Begins to provide opportunities to support children’s development and learning in the domain of <b>social studies</b>.</p>	<p>Understands the learning goals (scope) and definitions of <b>social studies</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>social studies</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler, and preschooler experiences.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers, and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>social studies</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>social studies</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p>
<i>C1g: Creative Arts</i>	<p>Understands that curriculum for <b>creative arts</b> is organized around the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Begins to provide opportunities to support children’s development and learning in the domain of <b>creative arts</b>.</p>	<p>Understands the learning goals (scope) and definitions of <b>creative arts</b> as outlined in the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p> <p>Understands that development in the domain of <b>creative arts</b> is sequential and is dependent on infant, toddler, and preschooler experiences.</p>	<p>Plans and implements intentional learning experiences designed to support what infants, toddlers, and preschoolers should know, understand, and be able to do in the domain of <b>creative arts</b>.</p>	<p>Utilizes in-depth knowledge of the scope and sequence of learning goals in the area of <b>creative arts</b> to develop and implement a comprehensive, integrated curriculum aligned with the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.</p>

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>C2: Process<sup>5</sup></b>				
<b><i>C2a: Play</i></b>	Understands that play is a primary vehicle for learning in all domains.	Facilitates children’s play as a vehicle for learning in all domains.	Implements a learning environment and plans experiences that maximize play as a vehicle for learning.	Utilizes knowledge of children’s interests, learning styles, and stages of development to create meaningful play opportunities.
<b><i>C2b: Interactions Between Children</i></b>	Understands that peer interactions support learning and development.	Facilitates developmentally appropriate interactions between children to support learning and development.		Reflects on interactions between children to identify opportunities to extend children’s learning and development.

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<sup>5</sup> Guiding children’s social development and behavior management are important components of family child care educators’ role. This document is intentional in not including a separate section dedicated to guidance and behavior management resulting from the belief that the skills required to be effective in this area are found throughout the document. Specifically, the core knowledge and competencies that encompass guiding children’s social development and behavior management can be found in the following sections: In the Development and Learning Domain, competencies related to creating engaging experiences, adapting the environment for the needs of individual children, understanding environmental influences and risk factors on children’s behavior, and making accommodations and adaptations for individual children are all relevant skills. In the Curriculum Domain, content related to social and emotional development, language development and communication, and physical health and development are all relevant. The process component of curriculum emphasizes the importance of providing for play and supporting interactions between children. The teaching and facilitating component of curriculum informs educators of the importance of developing positive, respectful relationships, providing for all kinds of learners, and using a wide variety of instructional approaches. The skills and knowledge in the context component of curriculum emphasize the influence of the environment, materials, and daily schedule on children’s behavior. There are also relevant core knowledge and competencies in the domains of Family Engagement and Observation and Assessment as collaborating with families to address guidance and program management and gathering and using assessment information to inform curricular decisions are relevant skills.

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>C2: Process</b>				
<b><i>C2c: Interactions with Adults</i></b>	Understands that learning is facilitated through responsive adult-child interactions.	Applies knowledge of how children learn to individualize interactions with children.	Utilizes engaging conversations and thought provoking questions based on children’s involvement in activities or expressed interests to facilitate children’s learning.	Reflects on situations in order to identify when to interact with a child to deepen the child’s understanding.
<b><i>C2d: Interactions with Materials</i></b>	Understands that children learn through interaction with materials as they explore, problem-solve, and discover.	Provides opportunities for children to interact with materials as they explore, problem-solve and discover.	Facilitates children’s learning as they interact with materials to explore, problem-solve, and discover.	Reflects on children’s learning through their interactions with materials as they explore, problem-solve, and discover in order to deepen understanding.
<b><i>C2e: Individual Ways of Knowing and Learning</i></b> (see <i>Development &amp; Learning for related competencies</i> )	Recognizes that each child is unique and learns in a distinctive way.	Recognizes children’s unique and distinctive ways of learning and uses that knowledge when planning daily routines and interactions.	Provides opportunities and experiences to support each child’s unique and distinctive way of knowing and learning.	Reflects on learning experiences to ensure opportunities for all kinds of learners.
<b>C3: Teaching and Facilitating</b>				
<b><i>C3a: Repertoire of Instructional Approaches (between the educator and the child)</i></b>	Recognizes that positive interactions and relationships are a primary instructional approach for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.	Has a beginning understanding of current theoretical perspectives and research specific to teaching and facilitating.  Understands that various instructional approaches should be used to meet individual children’s needs.	Identifies and applies sound theoretical perspectives that support teaching strategies.	Reflects on own instructional approaches to support individual children’s development and learning.  Consistently integrates sound theoretical perspectives into teaching strategies and researches innovative approaches.

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>C3: Teaching and Facilitating (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>C3b: Positive Relationships and Interactions</i></b>	Understands that positive relationships with children, families, and other adults are a foundation for healthy development and learning.	Develops and maintains positive relationships with children, families, and other adults.	Promotes positive relationships and models respectful and supportive interactions among, families, children, and other adults.  Responds consistently to each child's individual needs.	Analyzes own relationships and interactions with children, families, and other adults and implements strategies to continuously improve relationships.
<b>C4: Context</b>				
<b><i>C4a: Environment</i></b>	Understands the impact of indoor and outdoor learning environments on children's development and learning.  Creates a learning environment that encourages children's autonomy and exploration.	Understands that environmental design supports learning in all domains and encourages choice, play, and exploration.	Applies knowledge about children's learning and development to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments.	Assesses and adjusts environments based on child level assessment data, input from families and, when applicable, input from other professionals.
<b><i>C4b: Materials</i></b>	Understands how the environment and materials support children's learning in all domains.  Prepares and organizes the environment by setting up materials.	Utilizes materials that demonstrate acceptance of all children's gender, family, race, culture, and special needs.  Chooses toys and materials that children find interesting and keeps multiples of favorites.  Adapts and modifies materials for children with special needs.	Utilizes knowledge of child development and individual children to select materials.	Provides open-ended materials that encourage problem solving and creativity and challenge children to construct knowledge in each domain outlined in the RIELDS.  Intentionally selects and rotates materials that reflect children's interests, learning styles, and stages of development.

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>C4: Context (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>C4c: Daily Schedule</i></b>	<p>Understands how the daily schedule support children’s learning in all domains.</p> <p>Prepares and organizes the environment by maintaining the daily schedule.</p> <p>Implements curriculum plans.</p>	<p>Supports children’s understanding of the daily schedule through predictable and consistent daily routines.</p> <p>Maintains a daily schedule that provides balance between active and quiet, child-directed and educator-directed, individual and group, and indoor and outdoor activities.</p> <p>Ensures that the daily schedule is responsive to the developmental needs of individual children within the group.</p> <p>Ensures that the daily schedule includes substantial blocks of time for uninterrupted play.</p>	<p>Establishes and maintains a daily schedule that is flexible and responsive to the needs and interests of the group and the individuals within the group.</p> <p>Plans transitions which are efficient and maximize learning opportunities.</p>	<p>Analyzes and adapts daily schedule to reflect the needs and interests of the group and the individuals within the group.</p>
<b>C5: Building Meaningful Curriculum</b>				
<b><i>C5a: Integrating the Four Components</i></b>		<p>Understands the importance of including content, process, teaching and facilitation, context, and the inter-relatedness of the nine Early Learning and Development Standard domains when planning curriculum.</p>	<p>Plans curriculum that integrates the nine content domains, knowledge of process, strategies for teaching and facilitation, and appropriate context.</p>	<p>Reflects on planned curriculum and analyzes effectiveness by looking closely at content, process, teaching and facilitation, and context and ensuring the integration of the nine domains.</p>

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>C5: Building Meaningful Curriculum (cont'd)</b>				
<b><i>C5b: Incorporating Meaningful Information</i></b>	Understands that curriculum is influenced by a variety of factors including, but not limited to: the children, their families, culture, and the community.	Understands that meaningful curriculum is developed through a process that integrates information about children, families, culture, and the community.	Intentionally incorporates child, family, culture, and community factors into curriculum planning.	Consistently, with family input, incorporates child, family, culture, and community factors into curriculum planning.
<b><i>C5c: Utilizing Assessment Data</i></b> <i>(*see the Assessment Domain on page 37 for more detail)</i>	Understands and values the link between curriculum and assessment.	Understands the importance of utilizing child assessment data when planning curriculum.	Utilizes child assessment data to plan developmentally appropriate curriculum.  Analyzes assessment data to determine whether further evaluation by other professionals is warranted.	Utilizes assessment data from a variety of sources to establish objectives and develop multi-level learning curriculum for individuals, small groups, and large groups of children.  Is able to aggregate and analyze assessment data.  Utilizes assessment data to establish objectives for children.
<b><i>C5d: Utilizing Curriculum Resources</i></b>	Knows how to find a variety of curriculum resources to support curriculum planning.	Understands that curriculum resources (including books, web site resources, and commercially- prepared curricula) vary in quality and that high quality resources reflect the knowledge and principals of early childhood development and learning.	Applies knowledge of quality curriculum to identify high quality resources (including books, web site resources and commercially-prepared curricula).	Analyzes and evaluates a variety of curriculum resources and ensures that the resources used contribute to the development of an effective program environment.

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# Family Child Care Educator Domain 5: Assessment

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Last Updated 2/25/2013

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Assessment is a critical component of an effective program that supports children's development and learning. Effective assessment practices help family child care educators to plan and adapt the environment and curriculum to meet group and individual needs.

It is important that family child care educators have a strong knowledge of early childhood assessment methods and are able to effectively plan for and conduct developmentally appropriate authentic assessments (e.g. ongoing, natural settings, meaningful activities). It is also important that family child care educators understand the role of standardized screening and assessment practices in evaluating the development and learning needs of young children and are able to support their effective use.

Family child care educators must practice responsible assessment and ensure that information is used to support children rather than to exclude them. They recognize the need to gather assessment data from multiple sources using a variety of methods when seeking to describe what children know and are able to do. Additionally, early childhood teachers effectively organize and document the data they gather. Finally, they know how to share child assessment data with families and other professionals in an appropriate and confidential manner.

**DOMAIN 5: ASSESSMENT**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>A1: Knowledge of Early Childhood Assessment</b>	Understands that assessment data should be used to monitor a child’s growth and development, share information with families and others, identify children that might benefit from special services, and inform curriculum planning.	Understands that responsible assessment is guided by sound professional standards.  Understands that assessment is ongoing and should be integrated into daily curriculum.  Has a basic knowledge of the importance of observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment methods and strategies in early childhood programs.	Understands that observation, documentation, and other appropriate assessment tools and strategies are used to guide individualized instructional planning.  Has a working knowledge of the variety of assessment methods that are appropriate for use with young children.  Understands the relationship between assessment plans and the learning goals of the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards.  Understands how the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards guide or inform assessment plans within the context of curriculum and individualized planning.	Understands the purposes and appropriateness of various developmental screening and assessment procedures and instruments.  Understands the strengths and weaknesses of various assessment methodologies and makes appropriate choices for various populations and situations.
<b>A2: Implementing a Comprehensive Assessment Plan and Conducting Developmentally Appropriate Authentic Assessments (ongoing, natural settings, meaningful activities)</b>	Understands the importance of gathering data via observation about children over time, in natural settings, while children are engaged in meaningful activities and interactions.	Identifies opportunities within the learning environment and begins to collect assessment data.  Understands that some standardized tools can be used to assess the developmental and learning needs of young children.	Gathers data across all aspects of children’s learning and development over time, in natural settings (home or program) while children are engaged in meaningful activities and interactions.	Develops and implements a comprehensive assessment plan that is tied to the RIELDS and integrates developmentally appropriate assessment methods into daily practice.

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>A2: Implementing a Comprehensive Assessment Plan (cont'd)</b>			<p>Understands that assessment methods and tools must be used for purposes for which they are intended and only be administered by trained individuals.</p> <p>Seeks guidance on the appropriate use and interpretation of assessment methods and tools.</p>	<p>If standardized assessments are used, attempts to implement tools reliably and with fidelity (or seeks trained professionals to conduct assessment), and understands results.</p> <p>Understands the role of standardized assessments in relation to the overall classroom assessment plan</p>
<b>A3: Practicing Responsible Assessment</b>	Recognizes that assessment data must be objectively collected.	<p>Understands the difference between being subjective and objective when recording observations.</p> <p>Understands that language and/or culture (of the educator and/or the child) can influence the assessment process and results.</p> <p>Understands that environmental factors may influence assessment process and results, such as length of assessment, time of day, environmental distractions, etc.</p>	<p>Evaluates assessment data for objectivity.</p> <p>Utilizes assessment data to support children rather than to exclude them.</p>	<p>Implements responsible assessment processes to ensure that data accurately reflect what children know and are able to do</p> <p>Evaluates current practice to determine if assessment practices are effective, adequate, and culturally and linguistically sensitive.</p> <p>Designs methods for improving assessment practices based upon a review of data collected.</p>

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>A4: Collects Assessment Data from Multiple Sources Using a Variety of Methods</b>	Understands that assessment data is collected from a variety of sources (families, other teachers, health care providers and specialists).	Understands the benefits of using a variety of assessment strategies (observation, interview, work samples, standardized tests).  Identifies opportunities and begins to collect multiple sources of assessment data for children in the program.	Routinely incorporates assessment data from a variety of sources (families, other teachers, health care providers, and specialists) when seeking to describe what children know and are able to do.  Applies a variety of assessment strategies to gather meaningful and objective information about each child's development.  Collects assessment data from multiple sources which objectively illustrate what children know and are able to do in relation to RIELDS goals.	Consistently collects assessment data from a variety of sources.  Consistently collects assessment data which reliably illustrates children's interests and learning styles.  Consistently collects assessment data which reliably illustrates what children know and are able to do in relation to RIELDS.  Consistently utilizes a variety of assessment strategies to gather meaningful and objective data about each child's development.
<b>A5: Documenting and Organizing Assessment Data</b>	Understands the importance of documenting and organizing assessment data.	Begins to document and organize assessment data.	Documents and organizes assessment data which is linked to RIELDS goals, is objective and specific, and includes enough detail to give a third party a complete understanding of the assessment event.	Consistently documents assessment data which is linked to RIELDS goals, is objective and specific, and includes enough detail to give a third party a complete understanding of the assessment event.

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>A5: Documenting and Organizing Assessment Data (cont'd)</b>				Consistently uses a system to organize assessment data that allows for easy access to specific child information, evaluation of most recent assessment documentation, and clear presentation of assessment data to others.
<b>A6: Using Assessment Data in Curriculum Planning (including for use in planned interventions and referral for special services)</b>	Understands the link between curriculum and assessment.	Understands the importance of utilizing child assessment data when planning curriculum.	<p>Demonstrates ability to conduct basic analysis of assessment data.</p> <p>Utilizes assessment data to plan developmentally appropriate experiences.</p> <p>Analyzes assessment data to determine whether further evaluation by other professionals is warranted.</p>	<p>Utilizes assessment data from a variety of sources to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and refine curriculum.</li> <li>• Develop experiences for individuals, small groups, and large groups of children.</li> <li>• Establish goals and objectives for individual children.</li> </ul> <p>Aggregates and analyzes assessment data from the group of children in her/his program.</p>
<b>A7: Communicating Assessment Data to Others (families, other professionals)</b>	Maintains confidentiality of children's assessment data.	Understands the purpose and value of sharing child assessment data with families and other professionals.	Explains to families the importance of collecting, using, and sharing assessment data and the strategies used to collect data.	Continually improves strategies for the communication of assessment data to meet the needs of all families (including those with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds).

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>A7: Communicating Assessment Data to Others (cont'd)</b>			Determines when child assessment data should be shared with other professionals to enhance services to children.	Regularly exchanges complete and unbiased assessment data in a supportive manner with families about a child's strengths and needs.

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# Family Child Care Core Educator Competency Domain 6: Professionalism

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Last Updated 2/25/2013

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Family child care educators identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession inclusive of all settings serving children birth through age eight<sup>6</sup>. They understand that a research-based body of core knowledge and competencies serves as a foundation for the profession and that these knowledge and competencies are used in all aspects of professional involvement with children, families, and colleagues.

There are also certain expectations for behavior. Family child care educators must know and use ethical guidelines such as the NAFCC Code of Ethics and other professional standards related to early childhood as they implement strategies in a program, and work closely with children, families, colleagues, and the community. They also value the diversity of lifestyles, languages, beliefs, and cultural backgrounds that can be found in all aspects of our society and utilize teaching strategies which are free of bias and responsive to the differences in the needs of children.

Family child care educators show a commitment to ongoing professional development and learning by engaging in and utilizing a wide variety of professional development resources to improve their practice. This includes participating in collaborative learning experiences and being supported or mentored by others in the field. Then, as educators advance in their careers, they begin to share their knowledge in the greater community and start mentoring others in their professional growth.

Finally, every family child care educator must be able to advocate on behalf of children, families, and the profession. For the purposes of this document, we define advocacy in the broadest possible way, ranging from advocating for an individual child to advocating for changes at a systems level. This advocacy is built on the knowledge and competencies described within this document. Effective advocates use their knowledge of early child development, along with their knowledge of resources and policy, to advocate for children, families, and the profession.

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<sup>6</sup> Please note that the field defines early childhood as birth to age eight. However, this document is articulating competencies educators working with children from birth to age five.

**DOMAIN 6: PROFESSIONALISM**

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>P1: Identifying and Involving Oneself with the Early Childhood Profession</b>	Understands that family child care is a profession.	<p>Understands that the profession has a research-based core of knowledge as its foundation.</p> <p>Understands that there is a connection between the core base of knowledge and regulations, written policies, and professional standards.</p> <p>Understands that early childhood practice is impacted by emerging research, current issues, and advances in the field.</p>	<p>Consistently seeks new information on research, current issues, and advances in the early childhood profession.</p> <p>Accesses resources offered and participates in activities offered by professional organizations that benefit young children, their families, and the early childhood profession. .</p> <p>Maintains active membership in one or more professional organizations that benefit young children, their families, and the early childhood profession.</p>	<p>Applies information from related fields such as health, mental health, etc., to develop a holistic approach to early childhood education and development.</p> <p>Articulates a personal philosophy of early childhood and identity as an educator based on core knowledge and experience.</p>
<b>P2: Ethical Standards and Professional Guidelines</b>	Is aware of and complies with ethical standards, including the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) code of ethics that pertain to professional conduct.	Identifies and values ethical and professional guidelines established by the early childhood profession.	Utilizes professional code of ethics in making professional decisions regarding all children in the program.	<p>Identifies potential conflicts of interest<sup>7</sup> and ethical dilemmas and proactively seeks support in resolving emerging ethical issues.</p> <p>Ensures that ethical and professional guidelines are followed by all adults working in the program.</p>

<sup>7</sup> See the College of Early Childhood Educators' 2011 *Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice* pg. 27 (<http://www.aecce.ca/ece/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/CECE-Code-of-Ethics-and-Standards-of-Practice-Feb-2011.pdf>) for a comprehensive explanation of conflict of interest within an early childhood setting.

	<b>LEVEL 1</b>	<b>LEVEL 2</b> (all skills in Level 1 plus)	<b>LEVEL 3</b> (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	<b>LEVEL 4</b> (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>P2: Ethical Standards and Professional Guidelines (cont'd)</b>	<p>Knows and obeys relevant laws such as those pertaining to child abuse and the rights of children with disabilities.</p> <p>Establishes and maintains appropriate professional boundaries.</p> <p>Protects the privacy and confidentiality of family information.</p>	<p>Is aware of and complies with licensing and written policies that pertain to professional conduct, where applicable.</p> <p>Recognizes potentially unethical practices; understands and uses appropriate reporting procedures.</p>		<p>Uses the ethical and professional guidelines established by the early childhood profession when solving dilemmas in working with children and their families.</p>
<b>P3: Valuing Diversity</b>	<p>Acknowledges that bias exists.</p> <p>Understands that diversity goes beyond race, ethnicity, and language and encompasses differences in lifestyles, languages, beliefs, cultural, and economic backgrounds among children, family, and colleagues.</p> <p>Views diversity as an asset to the learning environment.</p>	<p>Begins to reflect on one's own biases.</p> <p>Is aware of and models respect for differences in lifestyles, languages, beliefs, abilities, and socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds among children, family, and colleagues.</p>	<p>Plans curriculum which respects and responds to the cultural diversity among all children and families.</p>	<p>Collaborates with families, colleagues, and community members to respect each family's values, attitudes, and expectations, and honor and celebrate the diversity of languages, customs, and traditions in the family of each child.</p> <p>Supports children in identifying and challenging bias.</p>
<b>P4: Advocating for Children, Families and the Profession</b>	<p>Has knowledge of resources available to support children and families.</p>	<p>Supports advocacy by understanding the relationship between the family child care educator and family philosophy and the daily curriculum.</p>	<p>Begins to communicate to others the relationship between the family child care program philosophy and the daily curriculum.</p>	<p>Clearly articulates the relationship between family child care program philosophy, daily curriculum, RIELDS, and child outcomes.</p>

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2 (all skills in Level 1 plus)	LEVEL 3 (all skills in Level 1 and 2 plus)	LEVEL 4 (all skills in Level 1, 2 and 3 plus)
<b>P4: Advocating for Children, Families and the Profession (cont'd)</b>		<p>Understands that national, state, and local legislation along with public policy affects children, families, providers, and the early childhood profession.</p> <p>Understands the impact that certain environmental and social factors have on children and families.</p> <p>Discusses child development (birth to 8) and the value of early childhood programs with families.</p>	<p>Advocates for individual children.</p>	<p>Maintains awareness of legislative changes that affect children, families, and the early childhood field.</p> <p>Plays a leadership role in advocating for children.</p>
<b>P5: Commitment to Ongoing Professional Development</b>	<p>Understands the importance of ongoing professional development.</p> <p>Seeks out professional development opportunities.</p> <p>Seeks out and uses constructive feedback to improve performance.</p>	<p>Develops and carries out a personal professional development plan.</p> <p>Values reflection as a tool for professional development and begins to reflect on own performance to modify and improve work with children, families, and colleagues.</p> <p>Seeks out professional development opportunities that are specific to own personal development plan.</p> <p>Develops professional networks with family child care providers and other support services to share common goals and concerns.</p>	<p>Utilizes reflection to modify and improve work with children, families, and colleagues.</p> <p>Engages in continuous learning to inform practice.</p> <p>Seeks out professional development opportunities that are specific to the unique needs of the children and families in the program.</p>	<p>Mentors others in their professional growth.</p> <p>Shares knowledge and expertise with colleagues and families in the community.</p> <p>Routinely engages in reflection of teaching practices and the behavior of children and revises practice as necessary.</p> <p>Utilizes aggregate child assessment data to identify ongoing professional development goals.</p>

## APPENDIX A: 2012-2013 Family Child Care Work Group Members

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Leslie Gell	Ready to Learn Providence
Bryna Hebert	The Providence Center Early Childhood Institute
Amy Henderson	Rhode Island Department of Human Services
Lisa Hildebrand	Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children/BrightStars
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Sara Mickelson	Rhode Island Department of Education
Indira Prado	Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families
Tania Quezada	Ready to Learn Providence
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Emma Villa	Family Child Care Provider
Laura Mason Zeisler	Explorations Unlimited, LLC
Kristin Lehoullier	Facilitator

*The contents of this document were developed under a Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge grant from the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.*

## APPENDIX B: Glossary of Terms

**Attachment Theory** – A theory that describes the dynamics of long-term relationships between humans and emphasizes the important tenet that an infant needs to develop a relationship with at least one primary caregiver for healthy development to occur.

**Authentic Assessment** –The process of observing, recording and otherwise documenting the work children do and how they do it as a basis for a variety of educational decisions that affect the child. Authentic assessment is grounded in accurate, valid, information obtained in a variety of ways in the actual situations in which a child plays, works, and learns and is continuous and integrated into the ongoing life of the classroom.

**Career Pathway** - A Career Pathway is a framework for how an individual can advance in a specific occupation over time through a combination of formal education, work experience and professional development.

**Co-constructing - learning** or working collaboratively with another person on a problem or task.

**Commercially-Prepared Curricula:** Curricula that is designed by a commercial vendor and packaged to sell widely.

**Core Knowledge and Competencies** - the essential skills and knowledge that educators who work with young children in a classroom setting need to know, understand, and be able to do to promote young children's healthy development and learning.

**Cultural Competence** – Awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of children and their families (National Education Association).

**Developmentally appropriate** – Programs, activities, and environments that are designed on the basis of: knowledge of how children develop and learn; knowledge of the strengths, needs, and interests of individual children; and knowledge of the social and cultural contexts in which children live.

**Developmental Milestones** - A developmental milestone is an ability that is achieved by most children by a certain age. Developmental milestones can involve physical, social, emotional, cognitive and communication skills such as walking, sharing with others, expressing emotions, recognizing familiar sounds and talking. There are four basic categories for developmental milestones: 1) physical milestones, 2) cognitive milestones, 3) social and emotional milestones, and 4) communication milestones. While most of these milestones typically take place during a certain window of time, each child is unique. These developmental abilities also tend to build on one another. More advanced skills such as walking usually occur after simpler abilities such as crawling and sitting up have already been achieved.

**Developmental Delay** – a delay in development developmental that is measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures in one or more of the following areas: Physical development, cognitive development, communication development, social or emotional development, or adaptive development.

**Disability** - a broad term, covering impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Impairment is a problem in body function or structure; an activity limitation is a difficulty encountered by an individual in executing a task or action; while a participation restriction is a problem experienced by an individual in involvement in life situations. A disability may be physical, cognitive, mental, sensory, emotional, and developmental or some combination of these. A disability may be present from birth, or occur during a person's lifetime.

**Early Intervention** – A comprehensive home visiting, assessment and educational program for young children birth to age 3 who are at risk or who have been identified as having a disability or developmental delay; services takes place in the child’s natural environment.

**Early Learning and Development Standards** - Expectations about learning and development of young children.

**Emergency Plans** – All plans designed or undertaken to minimize the effects of a hazard upon people, to deal with the immediate emergency conditions that would be caused by the hazard, and to repair or restore vital utilities or facilities destroyed or damaged by the hazard.

**Ethical Dilemma** - A moral conflict that involves determining appropriate conduct when an individual faces conflicting professional values and responsibilities.

**Facilitating** – offer short-term assistance to help a child achieve the next level of functioning.

**Family** – Members of a unit who see themselves as a family, including individuals who are related by blood or marriage as well as those who have made a commitment to share their lives.

**Family Engagement** – A meaningful family-program partnership that is reciprocal, strengths-based, and actively supports children’s development and learning across settings.

**Family Systems Theory** - A framework that emphasizes the notion that everything that happens to any family member affects all other family members.

**Formal Assessment** – Assessment strategies which meet established criteria for reliability and validity and are characterized by administration under controlled conditions by trained examiners. Standardized tests are one type of formal assessment.

**Fidelity (in the context of assessment)** - Accurately using an observation or assessment based upon specific protocol and criteria.

**Formal Assessment** – Assessment strategies which meet established criteria for reliability and validity. Formal assessments are most commonly administered under controlled conditions by trained professionals. Standardized tests are one type of formal assessment.

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP)** - A written plan/program for special education services for children with developmental delays or disabilities. The plan is developed by a district or school’s special education team with input from the parents and other providers that specifies learning goals and the

method to obtain these goals. The plan also identifies transition arrangements.

**Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)** – A written plan/program for special services for young children with developmental delays. An IFSP only applies to children from birth to three years of age. Once a child turns three, an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is put into place through the child's Local Education Agency.

**Inclusive Philosophy** - The values, beliefs, program policies, and practices that support the right of every child, regardless of ability, to participate in a broad range of activities and contexts as full members of families, communities, and society (adapted from the definition of early childhood inclusion from the Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

**Intentional Learning Experiences** - A learning experience designed with knowledge and purpose to ensure that young children acquire the knowledge and skills (content) they need to succeed in school and life. Intentional learning experiences integrate and promote learning in all domains using both child-guided and adult-guided experiences.

**Learning Environment** – All of the physical surroundings and social and cultural conditions that physically and/or emotionally affect children and their ability to learn, grow, develop and survive.

**Mandated Reporter** - Anyone who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been abused or neglected. A report is required when: A person has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been abused or neglected or a physician or nurse practitioner has cause to suspect that a child brought to them for treatment is an abused or neglected child, or he or she determines that a child under age 12 is suffering from any sexually transmitted disease.

**Mentor** - A knowledgeable and experienced individual who provides guidance to beginning and experienced professionals to develop skills and reflection of practice. Various strategies of the mentor may include observation and feedback, demonstration of skills, conferencing, and resource provider.

**Modeling** – Displaying for children a skill or desirable way of behaving in the classroom, through actions only or with cues, prompts, or other forms of coaching.

**Multi-Disciplinary Team: (MDT)** – A team or group consisting of representatives from several different professional backgrounds who all have different areas of expertise, this may include, a Special Educator, Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Service Coordinator and/or the Parent/Guardian.

**National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC):** The National Association for Family Child Care is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting quality child care by strengthening the profession of family child care.

**Objective Assessment** – Assessment based on observable facts.

**Observation** - Gathering information through one or more of the five senses for the basic purpose of determining a child's developmental level, interests and learning style.

**Open-ended materials** - Materials that can be used in multiple ways and allow for children's construction, concrete solving of problems, imagination and creativity.

**Role Model**— any person who serves as an example, whose behavior is emulated by other.

**Sudden Infant Death Syndrome** - is the sudden death of an infant under one year of age which remains unexplained after a thorough case investigation, including performance of a complete autopsy, examination of the death scene, and review of the clinical history. (*Willinger et al, 1991*).

**Screening** - A brief procedure to determine whether a child requires further and more comprehensive evaluation.

**Separation Anxiety** - The process of a young child's sensory interpretation of noticing a prime care giver or parent's leaving or is out of sight, causing the child to experience anxiety and insecurity.

**Special Health Needs** - Children with special health care needs are defined by the Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (MCHB) as "those who have or are at increased risk for a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally.

**Standardized Tests** – Standardized tests are tests with high levels of reliability and validity that have prescribed methods for administration where scoring is based on comparisons with other children or groups of children. This standard administration is necessary to obtain valid results; therefore, the skill of the examiner is of particular importance when using this type of assessment. Standardized test scores allow for fair comparisons among individual or groups of test takers.

**Subjective Assessment** – Assessment that is influenced by that emotions or personal biases.

**Universal Precautions** - Universal precautions is the term used for the guidelines that were developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the 1980s to reduce the spread of infection to health care providers and patients in health care settings.

## **APPENDIX C: Additional Resources**

*2005 Quality Standards for the National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation,*

[http://nafcc.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=289&Itemid=325](http://nafcc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=289&Itemid=325)

*Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards,*

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/EarlyChildhoodEducation/EarlyLearningStandards.aspx/>

*Rhode Island Workforce Knowledge and Competencies for Classroom-based Teachers and Teacher Assistants,*

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/InstructionAssessment/EarlyChildhoodEducation/Workforce.aspx>