



## Ohio Professional Development Network

Career resources for early childhood & afterschool professionals

# Uses of Core Knowledge

The Core Knowledge and Competencies document defines what all adults who work with young children need to know, understand and be able to do in order to ensure that children have the best possible environments, experiences and relationships in which to grow and learn. Core Knowledge is based upon all that we currently know about young children's development, care and learning through research as well as the combined wisdom of leaders in our field.

## Core Knowledge can be useful to many people in many ways, including:

### Early Childhood Professionals

- Self-assessment; identify knowledge or competencies to acquire
- Create a plan for developing as a professional

### Program Administrators

- Clarify knowledge and skills required of staff positions
- Identify training and staff development needs and staff development plan
- Assess current staff to identify gaps and target areas of higher competency in recruiting new staff
- Tie level of competency to pay scale

### Developers and Providers of Training

- Organize and identify training using Core Knowledge areas and levels
- Assess current availability of training across all content areas and all levels of competency
- Use as framework for developing comprehensive system of training

### Higher Education

- Use framework to facilitate articulation between institutions
- Assess current program content to guide course development
- Prepare early childhood professionals for roles and settings in addition to classroom settings

### State and Local Agencies

- Develop policy, initiatives and funding decisions that will increase the level of competency of early childhood professionals
- Identify common goals to improve inter-agency coordination

### Early Childhood Advocates

- Educate parents, policymakers and general public about the areas of professional practice in early childhood and the need for competent professionals
- Reinforce the concept and language of professionalism for the field of early childhood

## Uses of Core Knowledge Continued

### Parents

- Assess potential or current caregivers and teachers of their children

### Others

- Make informed decision about entering the field of early childhood
- Appreciate the degree of knowledge and skill required for professional competency in early childhood
- Support public and private investments, incentives and initiatives that encourage and facilitate professional competency

## Core Knowledge Content Area Definitions:

### Child Growth and Development:

Early childhood professionals base their practice on an understanding of all of the ways that children change over time, including expected patterns of development as well as the many ways that individual children can differ.

### Family & Community Relations:

Early childhood professionals understand how important it is that they know the family, culture, and community context in which each child lives. They also appreciate that developing strong, positive connections to families and community resources benefit children.

### Health, Safety and Nutrition:

Early childhood professionals realize the importance of children's physical well-being as a basic and necessary foundation for their growth, development and learning, and they understand the many ways of fostering it.

### Child Observation & Assessment:

Early childhood professionals are able to continually improve each child's care and learning experiences because they understand that every child follows a unique path of growth and development. For this reason, they will gather and apply information about each child's progress as part of their regular practice.

### Professional Development:

Early childhood professionals see themselves as members of a larger professional community and accept the responsibilities that go along with being a positive reflection on the profession and a positive contributor to the profession.

### Learning Experiences & Environments:

Early childhood professionals appreciate their role as a designer and builder of the world in which each child lives while in an early childhood program. They also understand the interplay between children's experiences, environments and relationships and their well-being, development and learning.

Copies of Ohio's Early Childhood Core Knowledge and Competencies can be downloaded from the OPDN website at <http://www.ohpdnetwork.org/?wid=14>



Ohio Child Care  
Resource & Referral  
Association

