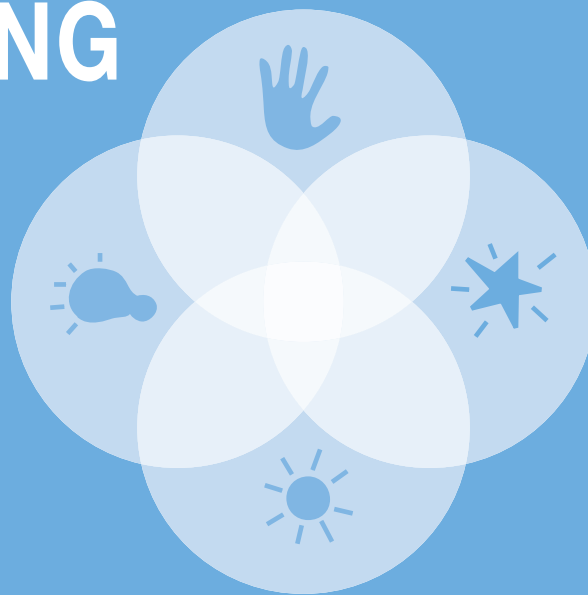


EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM GUIDELINES



Ohio

Ted Strickland, Governor

**Department
of Education**

Deborah S. Delisle,
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Office of Early Learning and School Readiness



**all children are
born ready to learn**



**relationships
are influential**



**environments
matter**



**communication
is critical**

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Early Learning Program Guidelines
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*We ought to try to reach what is beyond
our grasp*

— E. Eisner, 1998

Quality early education and care programs are part of the hope of families for a brighter future. Therefore, we have an obligation to provide the very best for our children and their families. UNICEF's millennium publication, *For Every Child*, admonishes readers through a child's voice, "Understand that all children are precious. Pick us up if we fall down, and if we are lost, lend us your hand. Give us the things we need to make us happy and strong, and always do your best for us whenever we are in your care."





Ohio's Early Learning Program Guidelines have been crafted to assist early childhood education leaders and teachers in meeting the conditions considered essential for children's healthy development and preparedness for school. The desired outcomes are grounded in research and evaluation studies of the components of a quality education, care and health system.

The goals have been developed out of the wisdom of practicing teachers and the guidance of experts at the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPS) section, and the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC). All program outcomes and goals align to the Head Start Performance Standards, NAEYC program accreditation criteria and Ohio's quality rating system.

Ohio's Early Learning Program Guidelines serve as an operational framework and set of standards for early education programs. In an article titled "Standards at the Heart of Educational Equity," Barbara Bowman wrote, "Standards can help us as educators to clarify where we want to go and give us a yardstick for measuring our success in getting there." (Bowman, 2006)

The decisions, choices and judgments made by leaders and educators create a strong foundation for children's healthy development and contribute to their growing intellectual and social abilities and their motivation for learning. The investment we make in children not only matters right now, in the present, but lays the foundation to shape all of our futures.

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Introduction

Ohio's Early Learning Program Guidelines serve as the foundation for all programs funded or administered by the Ohio Department of Education, Office of Early Learning and School Readiness. The guidelines address the outcomes and goals considered essential for the healthy development and intellectual, social and emotional success of children.

These guidelines are constructed with the following beliefs:

- All children are competent and resourceful learners;
- All children can and do make meaning of complex ideas and concepts;
- All children want to and do contribute to their own learning;
- All learning takes place through social interaction;
- All learning experiences can be tailored for different periods in a child's life;
- All learning experiences can contribute to the intellectual and social foundation considered essential for success in school and life;
- All learning experiences can take place in the context of play as well as through structured activities in the hands of competent teachers;
- All families have the right to participate in their children's educational journeys;
- All families desire to be competent;
- All families have a right to educational experiences that recognize cultural, linguistic and racial identity;
- All teachers hold a position of power and by sharing that power contribute to the learning of all;
- All teachers grow in confidence and competence through relationships and connections with children, families and their peers; and
- All teachers, by virtue of their positions, have an obligation to do the very best for children within their care.

The Office of Early Learning and School Readiness looks forward to working with early childhood leaders and teachers to understand how, together, we can offer the very best to our most precious resource, our children.

Neither loving children nor teaching them is, in and of itself, sufficient for optimal development; thinking and feeling work in tandem.

National Academy of Sciences, Eager to Learn



Definitions of Key Terms

This *Early Learning Program Guidelines* publication is organized much like an outline. First users will find broad outcomes, followed by goals, performance indicators and compliance requirements. The terms used in this document are defined as follows:

Outcome: The desired result, effect or condition for children, families and programs.

Goal: An objective toward which the work is directed to achieve the outcome.

Performance indicator: Interim measure of the quantity or quality of the service or activity.

Compliance requirement: The service or activity a program must fulfill. Compliance requirements also may provide a framework for public reporting.

Developing a Program Plan

Program plan development is best constructed through a leadership team made up of program administrators, education leaders, classroom teachers, community providers and families. Creating a team will assure that multiple perspectives are informing the plan, developing the plan, and using evidence to adjust and refine the plan.

The goal of any working team is collaboration. “Collaboration involves parties who see different aspects of a problem. They engage in a process through which they constructively explore their differences and search for (and implement) solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible.” (Gray, 1989). Becoming a collaborative working team requires communication, contribution, coordination and cooperation. These four elements also may become part of the overall plan so each team member understands and values the role and responsibility he or she has in reaching the outcomes for children and families.

The four elements of collaboration are defined as follows:

Communication: The exchange of information and meaning. Communication is a crucial part of any productive relationship.

Contribution: An informal relationship (often called mutual support) through which parties help each other by providing some of the resources and support needed to reach their independent goals.

Coordination: A deliberate, joint, often formalized relationship among parties involving communication, planning and division of roles, and longer term goals. Coordination also embodies sharing of resources, risks and rewards for efficiency and effectiveness in achieving the complementary goals of the parties. Authority rests with individual parties.

Cooperation: A relationship in which parties with similar interests plan together, negotiate mutual roles and share resources to achieve joint goals. Each party maintains its own identity.

(Adapted from Evaluating Collaboratives, University of Wisconsin Extension, July 1998).

Section I: All Children Are Born Ready to Learn

Development and learning are inextricably tied to the health and well-being of children. Risk factors such as low birth weight, chronic health conditions, inadequate nutrition, poor oral health, and inconsistent social and emotional support can be detrimental to children's development and learning. The early detection of risk factors through health and developmental screenings can improve outcomes, may reduce special education placement, and, in the long term, reduce costs to society.

“Early prevention is better and less expensive than later remediation. Healthcare services, early intervention programs, and preschools should ensure that they provide early hearing, vision, language, cognitive, and behavioral screenings, and link children to necessary services” (Thompson, 2008). Quality early learning programs can protect young children by linking families to medical services for well-child visits and by providing a systematic review of developmental milestones.

This first section of *Ohio's Early Learning Program Guidelines* outlines the outcomes and goals considered necessary for children's healthy development.



*How wonderful it is that nobody need wait
a single moment before starting to improve
the world.*

– Anne Frank





Section I: All Children Are Born Ready to Learn

OUTCOME 1: The early education and care program facilitates and supports the healthy development of the children it serves.

GOAL 1: Health and developmental screenings of all children occur within 60 business days of their entrance into the program.

INDICATOR

1.1: The health screening of children includes:

- Vision;
- Dental;
- Height and weight;
- Hearing;
- Blood lead; and
- Hemoglobin.



INDICATORS

- 1.2:** All health screenings are conducted by the appropriate personnel, such as family pediatrician, community health clinic personnel, program nurse or nurse practitioner.
- 1.3:** The developmental screening is age-appropriate with normed scores relevant to the population. The developmental screening includes:
- Speech/language;
 - Cognitive;
 - Gross and fine motor skills; and
 - Social, emotional, behavioral development.
- 1.4:** All developmental screenings are conducted by individuals trained to administer, score and use the instrument appropriately.
- 1.5:** The results of health and developmental screenings are documented and shared with families.
- 1.6:** Health and developmental screening results are shared with families and staff for use in planning appropriate educational experiences and support services.
- 1.7:** Families are informed of any missing health information.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT:

All children receive health and developmental screenings within 60 business days of entrance into the program.

GOAL 2: Children with health or developmental needs will be referred within 90 days of identification through a follow-up process determined by the program.

INDICATORS

- 2.1:** Children are referred to the appropriate health care and/or developmental professionals in full partnership with the family, based on screening results.
- 2.2:** Each child's record contains written documentation of the date(s) of referral, all follow-up services provided, and communication with the service provider and family.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: All referrals are completed within 90 days of identification of need, as determined by the appropriate professionals.

GOAL 3: Families have a primary health care provider for well-child care.

INDICATORS

- 3.1:** Program leaders counsel families when needed regarding the importance of health and developmental screenings and well-child care.
- 3.2:** Program leaders provide families with the necessary information and linkages to social services to help them connect to family or child services, when needed.



GOAL 4: Programs will contribute to children’s health and physical development.

INDICATORS

- 4.1:** The early education and care program provides a nutritious breakfast, lunch and/or snack that meets USDA guidelines.

- 4.2:** The early education and care program provides families with information and guidance regarding nutrition, physical health, safety, fitness and healthy lifestyles.

- 4.3:** The early education and care program provides children with daily activities to promote physical fitness and healthy habits.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Programs will meet all licensing requirements regarding children’s health, physical and nutritional needs.

Additional Tools

Healthy Young Children, A Manual for Programs
Susan S. Aronson, MD, FAAP, Editor
2002 Edition
National Association for the Education of Young Children
www.naeyc.org

Developmental Screening in Early Childhood
Samuel J. Meisels and Sally Atkins-Burnett
5th edition, 2005
National Association for the Education of Young Children

Questions for consideration in developing a plan

OUTCOME 1: The early education and care program facilitates and supports the health and well-being of the young children it serves.

GOAL 1: Health and developmental screenings of all children occur within 60 business days of each child's entrance into the program.

- What is the plan to conduct health and developmental screenings in the required time frame?
- What community providers are needed to assist with or conduct screenings?
- How does the program track the screening process?
- How was the screening instrument selected? How is the staff educated to use the instrument?
- What assurances are in place for the reliability of administration by different teachers and administrators?
- What are the primary languages of the children? How is the screening administered in their languages? Who communicates the information to family members in the language of the family?

GOAL 2: Children with health or developmental needs will be referred within 90 days of identification through a follow-up process determined by the program.

- Who provides screening and referral information to families?
- Who is responsible for getting permission for referrals for follow-up?
- What is the process for meeting the 90-day time frame?
- What is the process for making referrals, tracking the information and reporting back to the provider?
- Who is responsible for the referrals and community linkages?
- What mechanisms are in place to support communication among staff, families and community providers to assure that follow-up services are received?

GOAL 3: Families have a primary health care provider for well-child care.

- How are children in need of a primary health care provider identified?
- How do program leaders work with community resources (Medicaid, CHIP, Healthy Start/Healthy Families) to access a primary health care provider?
- How do program leaders involve families and assist them in obtaining a primary health care provider?



GOAL 4: Programs will contribute to children’s physical development.

- How do the program leaders assure that USDA guidelines are met?
- Who plans the menus for providing nutritious meals and snacks?
- How does the program staff accommodate individual needs (cultural and ethnic, food allergies, special diets)?
- How do the program leaders help families access nutritional resources (WIC, Food Stamps, food banks, summer programs)?
- What nutrition, health, safety and fitness education is provided to families?
- Who is responsible for planning for children’s physical health and nutrition daily, weekly and monthly?
- Who is responsible for organizing children’s physical/health activities?



Section II: Environments Matter

The Education in the New Global Economy (EDGE) subcommittee of the State Board of Education identified through research the top 10 skills that graduating students will need in 2020. The foundation for these skills begins in the early years, when “the young mind is astonishingly active, capable, and self-organizing” (Thompson, 2008). Critical thinking and problem-solving skills, the effective use of written and oral communication skills, team learning, personal responsibility and the global awareness of others are important skills, knowledge and behaviors for the future (PRIMER, 2008).

The child, no matter how young, has many skills and abilities and is a thinking, feeling person who is a powerful and active contributor to his or her own learning. Children, along with the people around them, build their knowledge and understanding through their interactions and experiences with the social and physical world (New South Wales Department of Community Services, Office of Child Care).

Children who are “school ready” demonstrate confidence, curiosity and self-control; relate well to and cooperate with others; and have a desire and ability to exchange ideas, feelings and information with others, all of which are elements of 21st-century skills (adapted from the Zero to Three Center for Program Excellence, 2003).

The educational opportunities and experiences afforded children in the early years make a difference. Curriculum experiences must be rich with problems to solve; provide reasons and opportunities for children to use language and expand their vocabulary; engage children’s intellectual abilities; and teach children ways to manage and regulate their own behavior. These experiences must be well-planned and organized and instructional strategies must be designed with intention; that is, “teachers must act with specific outcomes or goals in mind for children’s development and learning” (Epstein, Exchange January/February 2009).





Section II: Environments Matter

OUTCOME 1: The learning environment is organized to support and facilitate young children's thinking abilities, learning processes, social competencies and general well-being.

GOAL 1: The learning environment is safe, clean, attractively arranged and meets all licensing specifications.

INDICATORS

1.1: The learning environment is organized to support and facilitate:

- Large and small group experiences;
- Individual explorations; and
- Quiet contemplation in private spaces when children need to be alone.

1.2: The organization of the classroom helps children develop self-management, conflict resolution and social interaction skills.

1.3: A variety of age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate materials and equipment are available indoors and outdoors. At a minimum they include:

- Dramatic play equipment and props;
- Sensory materials;
- Materials that support learning goals in all content areas: language and literacy, mathematics, science, social studies and the arts; and
- Gross motor equipment for activities such as climbing, balancing, pushing, pulling and riding.

1.4: The weekly schedule reflects a balance of adult-guided and child-guided learning.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Programs will meet all annual licensing elements required for a safe, clean and organized environment.



GOAL 2: A comprehensive early childhood curriculum is employed that addresses child development objectives and Ohio’s Early Learning Content Standards.

INDICATORS

- 2.1:** The curriculum includes goals for motor, social, emotional, language/cognitive, general-knowledge and skills development.

- 2.2:** The curriculum is aligned to Ohio’s Early Learning Content Standards.

- 2.3:** Program leaders have a documented process for helping teachers and assistant teachers understand how to align standards and indicators to learning experiences.

INDICATORS

- 2.4:** Educators intentionally plan educational experiences and deliver instruction using a variety of teaching strategies to meet the diverse learning abilities of all children.

- 2.5:** The curriculum provides guidance on the appropriate use of whole-group experiences to support children’s developing sense of community, as well as use of small-group and one-on-one time for targeted instructional strategies.

- 2.6:** The curriculum provides educators information and guidance to develop children’s understanding of diversity of culture, family composition, differing abilities, language and gender.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Program leaders have adopted a written, evidence-based, comprehensive curriculum that includes a companion curriculum-based assessment, both of which are available for review annually.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Program leaders demonstrate evidence that teachers annually receive instruction and/or participate in professional development seminars that address standards, curriculum, assessment and the alignment process using an ODE-approved tool.

GOAL 3: Assessments are used to make, adjust and refine instructional decisions and to evaluate child progress.

INDICATORS

- 3.1:** The curriculum-based assessment includes goals and a process to measure the progress of motor, social, emotional, language and cognitive development and the acquisition of general knowledge and skills.
- 3.2:** Educators use curriculum-based assessment to select goals for learning and teaching strategies and to make adjustments in the daily schedule and learning experiences.
- 3.3:** Educators use formal and informal assessment evidence and data, including information from families, to plan, differentiate and adjust instructional practices to support learning.
- 3.4:** Educators use screening and assessment data to help determine individualized educational experiences.
- 3.5:** Families are provided multiple opportunities to: (1) understand the assessment processes used and data collected; (2) review and contribute to their child's education plan; and (3) share information about their child's progress toward learning goals.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Educators administer state-required child assessments to all enrolled children, as prescribed by ODE.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Program leaders report assessment results to the state within ODE-specified deadlines.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Educators assess child progress using a curriculum-based assessment at least two times per year and document progress through the curriculum-based assessment process and/or through portfolios, work samples and other informal methods of recording progress.



OUTCOME 2: Educators have the knowledge and skills necessary to support children’s learning and development.

GOAL 1: Early childhood educators demonstrate the competencies necessary to provide high quality instruction.

INDICATORS

1.1: Educators demonstrate their understanding of child development by:

- Planning experiences that reflect knowledge of the universal stages of development and developmental milestones;
- Adjusting experiences to meet the uniqueness of all children (i.e., stage of development, temperament, ways of engaging);
- Carefully crafting a daily schedule that addresses all developmental domains (i.e., time for gross motor play; opportunities for oral language and social interactions – peer to peer, adult to child and child to adult; and exploration, investigation and creative expression);
- Acknowledging the social and emotional feelings of children; and
- Incorporating knowledge of each child’s social and cultural influences and how they affect development and learning.

1.2: Educators advance children’s learning by:

- Providing a physically and emotionally safe environment for learning;
- Providing opportunities for children to explore their interests through play and free choice;
- Planning interest centers and learning experiences that reflect the continuum of skill development;
- Practicing the three Ns: notice, nudge and narrate, to help children learn to attend to and follow directions.

1.3: Educators have a working knowledge of standards-based education, early learning content and pedagogy by demonstrating:

- The application of evidence-based instructional strategies;
- How to sequence activities and experiences to help children build knowledge and skills;
- Implementation of culturally and linguistically relevant learning activities;

- ☑ Engagement in instructional conversation techniques;
- ☑ Use of teaching strategies to extend children’s learning, thinking and problem-solving skills;
- ☑ Use of assessment information to inform instruction;
- ☑ Explicit teaching of key concepts and learning processes, when needed, in developmentally appropriate ways;
- ☑ Provision of educational support through play by serving as play partners, interjecting teaching strategies for language, math and inquiry skills when appropriate; and
- ☑ A balanced daily/weekly schedule that includes time to teach new skills, content and learning processes; time for independent choice to practice newly learned skills; and time to access materials that support problem solving and inquiry.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: All lead teachers will have at least a two-year degree in early childhood education or an approved related field, as required by ODE.

GOAL 2: Educators demonstrate nurturing and supportive relationships with children to promote self-assurance and competence.

INDICATORS

- 2.1:** Educators demonstrate respect for children through their actions and language (e.g., meeting/teaching them at eye level, listening to them and demonstrating guidance strategies).
- 2.2:** Educators evaluate and adjust their actions to respond to differing abilities, temperaments, activity levels and developmental abilities.
- 2.3:** Educators help children understand how to engage in positive social interactions, use language for conflict resolution and develop self-regulation skills through modeling problem solving with children and use of developmentally appropriate guidance strategies.
- 2.4:** The classroom climate is one of respect, encouragement, trust and emotional security.



GOAL 3: Educators demonstrate reflective teaching practices.**INDICATORS**

- 3.1:** Educators meet regularly to reflect on children’s experiences and to share curriculum ideas and teaching strategies.
- 3.2:** Educators do not work in isolation, but within a teaching team or with a teaching peer and/or coach-mentor to support their professional growth.
- 3.3:** Educators engage in a continuous improvement process, such as:
- On-going, job-embedded professional development;
 - Peer reviews;
 - Advanced degree programs;
 - National program accreditation; and /or
 - National teaching credential.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Lead teachers will annually complete a state-approved, self-assessment instrument to help them advance their teaching practices.

Indicators of School Readiness

- 👉 Has confidence
- 👉 Is friendly
- 👉 Develops relationships with peers and teachers
- 👉 Communicates well with teachers and peers
- 👉 Concentrates on tasks
- 👉 Persists at challenging tasks
- 👉 Effectively communicates emotions
- 👉 Listens to and responds to instruction
- 👉 Pays attention

Source: Whole Child Leon, <http://devsource.net/wholechild/?id=government>

Additional Tools

Designs for Living and Learning
 Transforming Early Childhood Environments
 Deb Curtis and Margie Carter
 2003
 Redleaf Press
 450 N. Syndicate, Suite 5
 St. Paul MN 55104
www.redleafpress.org

Increasing the Power of Instruction
 Integration of Language, Literacy, and Math Across the Preschool Day
 Judith A. Schickendanz
 National Association for the Education of Young Children
www.naeyc.org

Early Language and Literacy Reflection Tool
 Creating Language-Rich Opportunities and a Literacy-Rich Environment
 Ohio Department of Education
www.education.ohio.gov

Questions for consideration in developing a plan

OUTCOME 1: The learning environment is organized to support and facilitate young children’s thinking abilities, learning processes, social competencies and general well-being.

GOAL 1: The learning environment is safe, clean, attractively arranged and meets all licensing specifications.

- Are learning spaces designed to encourage exploration, experimentation and discovery?
- By what process are materials and resources reviewed to reflect children’s growing competence in problem solving and language skills?
- How do children and families contribute to the environment to reflect their culture, values, interests and traditions?
- How are problem solving, creativity and new connections to learning planned and documented?
- How are spaces designed to help children learn more about each other, make connections and promote interaction?
- What spaces and materials foster independence?
- How is technology used to promote children’s and teachers’ learning?
- How are children provided access and adequate time to appropriately use technology in learning?



- How is time monitored to assure flexibility for learning and interests?
- How are daily routines and transitions used to maximize learning, conversation and socialization?
- How does the daily schedule provide predictability, flexibility and responsiveness to individual needs; indoor and outdoor experiences; balance between rest and activity; and time for large-group, small-group and child-initiated activity?
- How does the schedule accommodate teachers' learning from each other about time use?
- How are families involved in the selection and use of the materials for learning?

GOAL 2: A comprehensive early childhood curriculum is employed that addresses child development objectives and Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards.

- By what process was the curriculum selected and evaluated? Who was involved?
- What opportunities are provided to families to participate in the selection and evaluation of the curriculum?
- How often is the curriculum reviewed to determine fidelity to current research?
- Does the curriculum align with the program's philosophy and vision?
- Does the philosophy and vision speak to and/or include the changing demographics of the community?
- What is the professional development plan for teachers regarding the use of the curriculum?
- What and who determines the agency and individual professional development plans?
- Does the curriculum address diversity of culture and ability?
- What process is used to assure that learning experiences reflect the essential content and processes of Ohio's Early Learning Content?
- Who is involved in the process?
- How does staff receive training on the needs of individual learners?
- Who guides teachers to adjust, modify and enhance curriculum to address the ethnicity, culture, language and family traditions of children?
- How do teachers support children's play? What strategies do teachers use to infuse newly learned skills and content into the children's play?

GOAL 3: State-required assessments are used to make, adjust and refine instructional decisions and to evaluate child progress.

- What is the plan for teachers to understand and administer state-required assessments (e.g., Get It, Got It, Go (GGG))?
- What is the plan for educators and administrators to review and use the data to adjust and refine instruction?
- How are self-assessment data used to inform program practices and policies?
- How are assessment strategies such as observations, checklists, rating scales, portfolios and work samples reviewed and used to adjust and refine learning experiences?
- What evidence is required of educators to demonstrate that the learning experiences reflect the content and processes of Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards?
- What is the plan for educators and administrators to use and review curriculum-based assessment information to adjust teaching strategies and plan for learning experiences?
- How is child progress documented in meeting learning goals?
- How do teachers and administrators demonstrate evidence of focused teaching strategies, such as the structuring of learning and enhanced experiences to support children's complex thinking abilities?
- How do educators assess children's approaches to learning and thinking skills?
- How do educators use information to extend learning?
- How do programs involve families in understanding and participating in the assessment process?

OUTCOME 2: Educators have the knowledge and skills necessary to support children's learning and development.

GOAL 1: Early childhood educators demonstrate the competencies necessary to provide high quality instruction.

- What are the plans to assist educators who may want to continue their study?
- If needed, how do program leaders help staff meet requirements?
- How do programs ensure that educators know and understand the meaning and use of Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards to inform instruction?
- How does staff engage in dialogue and activities regarding curriculum experiences, indicators and instruction?
- How does the program ensure that educators are knowledgeable about child development and the ways in which young children learn?



GOAL 2: Educators demonstrate nurturing and supportive relationships with children to promote self-assurance and competence.

- When are educators observed and provided feedback and support to assure that their interactions with children are positive and respectful?
- How and when do educators invite feedback from families related to classroom climate?
- How do educators use feedback from families?
- Is the classroom culture positive and nurturing for all members? How do you know this to be true?
- Are experiences designed to provide support and challenge at the same time? How do you know this to be true?
- What evidence is there that educators collaborate, express differences, resolve conflicts and respect other cultures, interests and individual needs for learning?
- What evidence is there that educators help children learn to collaborate, resolve conflicts, and respect other cultures, interests and individual needs?
- How do leaders provide regular observation and feedback for all educators?
- How do leaders use the results of observations to support educator practices and professional development?
- How and when are families asked to provide feedback on the classroom climate?

GOAL 3: Educators demonstrate reflective teaching practices.

- How do program leaders ensure that teachers have time for regular, systematic child observations?
- What assurances do educators have for planning time?
- How are educators supported to study and research their practices?



Section III: Relationships Are Influential

Children’s intellectual and linguistic development and motivation for learning is tied to their social and emotional relationships with the adults in their lives. Young children develop in an environment of relationships. They flourish when their interactions with family and other significant adults provide security, trust and support.

Research continues to support the role of families in the education system. Successful parent and education programs involve families in a range of activities that include governing board representation, family involvement plans and home visiting schedules. According to the Best Start Expert Panel on Early Learning, “Family involvement practice in early childhood programs needs to go beyond whether parents are involved and focus on how they are involved and what happens as a result” (2006).

Therefore, it matters greatly who our children spend time with. Children deserve to be connected with adults who nurture their self-worth and support their growing abilities to demonstrate self-regulation skills such as controlling impulses, cooperating, sharing, taking turns and managing one’s feelings.

“Working with young children and their families is demanding intellectually when it is done well. Professionals working in children’s services must have a strong drive to know more, regardless of experience or current knowledge and skills. In other words, they must see themselves as lifelong learners” (New South Wales Department of Community Services).

Section III addresses the desired outcomes and goals that assure that children, parents and educators enjoy the benefit of environments that intentionally promote supportive relationships that lead to personal and professional success.





Seven Essential Transactions for Caregivers with Young Children

- 👉 Encourage exploration
- 👉 Mentor in basic skills
- 👉 Celebrate developmental advances
- 👉 Rehearse and extend new skills
- 👉 Protect from inappropriate disapproval, teasing and punishment
- 👉 Communicate richly and responsively
- 👉 Guide and limit behavior

Source: Ramey & Ramey, Early Childhood Experiences and Developmental Competence, 2000

Section III: Relationships Are Influential

OUTCOME 1: Educators receive supportive supervision and participate in ongoing professional development to ensure their knowledge and skills reflect the profession's expanding knowledge base.

GOAL 1: Program administrators identify a leadership team made up of teachers, teaching assistants, administrators, other stakeholders and families.

INDICATOR

1.1: Administrators have a process for selecting individuals whose leadership will contribute to program quality.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Administrators will identify a leadership team that includes a minimum of one administrator and one lead teacher.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Program leaders will engage the leadership team at least once per year to review the program plan, outcomes and results.

GOAL 2: Program leaders provide for the continuous learning of all staff members.

INDICATORS

2.1: Program leaders assure that educators do not work in isolation, but as members of teaching teams or with a teaching peer and/or coach-mentor to support each learner.

2.2: Program leaders establish an organizational structure and climate to foster relationships, teamwork and collaboration. This may include staff meetings, study groups, and/or peer-to-peer time to discuss child progress, teaching and assessment strategies.

2.3: Program leaders create a schedule that accommodates and supports teachers meeting on a regular basis to reflect on children's experiences and to share curriculum ideas and teaching strategies.

2.4: All programs will meet staff licensing requirements outlined by ODE or the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS).

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Program leaders will develop and review an agency-wide professional development plan annually.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Program leaders will observe each lead teacher a minimum of one time per year to support continuous improvement.

GOAL 3: Program leaders will ensure that all educators participate in ongoing professional development opportunities that address current research and evidence-based practices.

INDICATORS

3.1: Program leaders will assist educators in completing the required number of ODE-approved professional development hours.

3.2: Assistant teachers will have a written professional development plan.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Every lead teacher will have a written professional development plan that is reviewed annually.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Lead teachers will complete the state minimum number of hours of ODE-approved professional development per biennium.

OUTCOME 2: Children’s development and learning are enhanced when the program establishes and maintains relationships with their families.

GOAL 1: Families have multiple and varying opportunities to participate in their children’s educations.

INDICATORS

- 1.1:** Educators have a working knowledge of children’s home and cultural experiences.
- 1.2:** Educators engage with families to share and receive information about their children.
- 1.3:** Educators assist families in supporting their children’s learning and development.
- 1.4:** Educators provide opportunities for families to increase their knowledge of child development and to enhance their parenting skills.
- 1.5:** All programs will meet licensing requirements related to child information; policies and procedures; and behavior management and discipline.

Additional Tools

The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning
www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel

Social and Emotional Development: Connecting Science and Practice in Early Childhood Settings
Dave Riley, Robert R. San Juan, Joan Klinkner, Ann Rammingner
National Association for the Education of Young Children
2008

Questions for consideration in developing a plan

OUTCOME 1: Educators receive supportive supervision and participate in ongoing professional development to ensure their knowledge and skills reflect the profession's expanding knowledge base.

GOAL 1: Program administrators identify a leadership team made up of teachers, teaching assistants, administrators, and other stakeholders and families.

- What is the process used to identify a leadership team?
- What opportunities are provided to participate in and demonstrate leadership skills?

GOAL 2: Program leaders provide for the continuous learning of all staff members.

- How are the ongoing needs of the educators assessed?
- How does the leadership team communicate information to the staff?
- How are coaching and mentoring provided to meet educator needs?
- How do leaders or administrators determine costs and allocate resources to implement the plan?
- How does the leadership team and administration use the results of teacher observations to determine and meet professional development needs?
- What mechanisms are in place to provide opportunities for interactions among educators that promote problem solving, professional growth and knowledge sharing?
- How does the leadership team support and promote creativity and encourage innovation?
- How does the leadership team foster the safe exchange of ideas among staff members?

GOAL 3: Program leaders will ensure that all educators participate in ongoing professional development opportunities that address current research and evidence-based practices.

- How do educators work with leadership to identify professional development goals with timelines?
- How do program leaders ensure that the course content and teaching strategies are relevant to classroom practices?
- How are educators provided opportunities to regularly meet, plan and solve problems in order to put knowledge into practice?

OUTCOME 2: Children's development and learning are enhanced when the program establishes and maintains relationships with their families.

GOAL 1: Families have multiple and varying opportunities to participate in their children's educations.

- How is the program designed to be welcoming, accessible and respectful of children and their families?
- What mechanisms are in place to receive information from families?
- How do program leaders gather information from families about children's interests, developmental needs, and family concerns and goals?
- How is staff kept current with research on diversity of culture, language and abilities and implications for children's education and development?
- How are families assisted in supporting their children's learning?
- What communication strategies are in place to keep families current with the selected curriculum, teaching strategies, and guidance for social and emotional health and nutrition?



Seven Critical Social-Emotional Skills to Support School Readiness

Confidence is a sense of control and mastery of one's body, behavior and world. Children feel likely to succeed at their undertakings and expect adults to be helpful.

Curiosity is the sense of that finding out about things is positive and leads to pleasure.

Intentionality is the desire and ability to have an impact, and the determination to act on that desire with persistence. That internal drive or emotion is expressed outwardly through an action or communication. Intentionality is related to feeling competent and effective.

Self-control is the ability to modulate and control one's own actions in age-appropriate ways. This is a sense of inner control.

Relatedness is the ability to engage with others based on the sense of understanding and being understood by others.

Capacity to communicate is the desire and ability to exchange ideas, feelings and information with others verbally or otherwise. This skill is related to feeling trust in others and pleasure in engaging with others including adults.

Cooperativeness is the ability to balance one's own needs with those of others in a group activity.

Adapted from Rebecca Parlakian (The Zero to Three Center for Program Excellence, 2003), Before the ABC's

Section IV: Communication Is Critical

The heart of any organization is its people. The values, vision, norms and expectations that staff bring to the work ultimately become the culture of the organization. Quality early education programs foster inquiry, dialogue and an exchange of ideas through a sustainable communication system among all members of the education and service community. These are demonstrated by:

- Shared leadership and responsibility for the work and the outcomes;
- Shared institutional values and high expectations;
- A commitment to continuous research and learning to build competence, enhance knowledge and refine skills; and
- An organizational structure that supports the vision and goals through time and staff support.

Professionals who are trusted with the care and education of young children have an enormous responsibility to families, colleagues and the community. Empathy, respect, perseverance, thoughtfulness and trust are qualities that exemplify the professional working with children and families and, in turn, contribute to the culture of the organization.

The outcomes in Section IV describe the features and responsibility of leaders to assure that our programs are meeting the needs of children, families, staff and the community.





The intentional teacher...

- 👉 Creates clearly-defined learning objectives when planning a lesson for her children;
- 👉 Assesses their progress and modifies activities as needed (Epstein, 2007);
- 👉 Develops clear communication objectives regarding her program, child development in general, and the child's progress;
- 👉 Provides this information in such a way that parents can understand and access it easily; and
- 👉 Assesses periodically whether the communication system or materials are effectively being used by the parents and modifies, if needed.

Source: Jody Martin,
Using the Principles of Intentional Teaching,
to Communicate Effectively with Parents.

Section IV: Communication is Critical

OUTCOME 1: Program leaders communicate with families, school administrators and community organizations to ensure coordination and continuity of services.

GOAL 1: Communication among community agencies, schools, organizations and families benefits children.

INDICATORS

- 1.1:** Written agreements with community partners are used to achieve child and family outcomes.
- 1.2:** Formal and informal networks with community partners are established for the mutual benefit of the program, families and the community.

GOAL 2: A transition process is implemented to assure educational and service continuity for children.

INDICATORS

- 2.1:** The program plan includes a written transition plan that addresses strategies for:
 - Transition from home and out-of-home care programs;
 - Transition from program to program;
 - Transition from preschool to kindergarten;
 - Preparing children for transitions;
 - Communication between early childhood programs and kindergarten staff;
 - Involving parents in transition;
 - Reaching into the community;
 - Delineating responsibilities; and
 - Evaluation.
- 2.2:** The program ensures that children who are age-eligible are enrolled in kindergarten upon leaving the early childhood program.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Program leaders have documentation of a transition plan for children moving from preschool to kindergarten.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Program leaders provide an annual report or update of transition activities to families and outreach personnel as part of continuous improvement strategies.

OUTCOME 2: Program leaders and staff demonstrate responsibility for their obligations to their children, families and communities.

GOAL 1: A governing body has the responsibility and a process to establish policies and procedures for program oversight.

INDICATORS

- 1.1:** Program leaders provide new staff orientation on a regular or as-needed basis.
- 1.2:** The parent handbook includes information about program features, family requirements, opportunities for family involvement, and policies and procedures, including a grievance policy.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: The program has a governing body and its members are disclosed to families annually.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: A parent handbook is provided to each family upon its child's enrollment.

GOAL 2: Programs will demonstrate fiscal accountability and management through effective administrative practices.

INDICATORS

- 2.1:** Internal controls are established to demonstrate fiscal accountability.
- 2.2:** The program has a qualified fiscal officer to ensure fiscal accountability and management.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Audits will be completed in accordance with state and federal regulations.

GOAL 3: Data from multiple sources are systematically used to assess conditions, practices, policies and program performance.

INDICATORS

3.1: The governing body has a process for gathering input from families, stakeholders and the community about the continuous improvement strategies and quality of the program.

3.2: The governing body and leadership team conduct an annual self-assessment with identified stakeholders and community partners to evaluate accomplishment of program goals and objectives. At a minimum, sources include information from:

- Data reported to ODE;
- Child progress data;
- Program licensure report;
- Family input and feedback;
- Complaint records;
- fiscal reports;
- Transition services; and
- Community.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Program leaders conduct a family survey at least every two years.

COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT: Program leaders annually review the program plan, the progress made, and child and family outcomes.

Additional Tools

Circle of Influence: Implementing Shared Decision Making and Participative Management

Paula Jorde Bloom

2000

New Horizons

P.O. Box 863

Lake Forest, Illinois 60045-0863

Program Administration Scale: Measuring Early Childhood Leadership and Management

Teri N. Talan

Paula Jorde Bloom

2004

Teachers College Press

Questions for consideration in developing a plan

OUTCOME 1: Program leaders communicate with families, school administrators and community organizations to ensure coordination and continuity of services.

GOAL 1: Communication among community agencies, schools, organizations and families benefits children.

- What is the plan to develop agreements, memoranda of understanding and systematic communication among community partners and professionals?
- What is the referral process for children who may be suspected of having a disability to obtain the required assessments?
- How do program leaders evaluate the success of the process in terms of collaboration, communication and linkages?

GOAL 2: A transition process is implemented to assure educational and service continuity for children.

- Who develops the transition plan, and how is it evaluated and revised based on data analysis of child success and family satisfaction?
- What is the process for providing general information on enrollment procedures and practices, visiting opportunities and program options?
- Who is responsible for developing and implementing procedures to share child and family information and to transfer records?
- What process will be developed to facilitate the transfer of information among professionals, programs and providers?
- What are the cross-agency opportunities for professional development?

OUTCOME 2: Program leaders and educators demonstrate responsibility for their obligations to their children, families and communities.

GOAL 1: A governing body has the responsibility and a process to establish policies and procedures for program oversight.

- What is the structure and representation of the governing body?
- How does the governing body develop and implement personnel policies?
- How are policies made known to staff?
- How does the governing body receive input from stakeholders, which include families and community members?
- What are the procedures for dispute and conflict resolution?

GOAL 2: Programs will demonstrate fiscal accountability and management through effective administrative practices.

- What financial policies and procedures are implemented to provide evidence of sound fiscal accountability (e.g., bank reconciliations, operating budgets, balance sheets)?
- How does the program demonstrate standard accounting practices?
- What are the credentials of the fiscal officer?
- What process is in place to evaluate the fiscal officer's performance?
- How was the auditing firm selected?
- What is the length of time of the contract with the auditing firm and why?
- How will the leadership team and governing body communicate and share program accountability and financial information?

GOAL 3: Data from multiple sources are systematically used to assess conditions, practices, policies and program performance on a regular basis.

- Who analyzes data to determine progress, identify areas of improvement, develop corrective action plans and develop a report for dissemination?
- What systems are in place for communication across all levels of the program (families, community leaders, stakeholders)?
- What tool is used for a community assessment?
- With whom does the program collaborate to conduct a community assessment?

Resources

Ohio's Early Learning Program Guidelines

Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards

Early Language and Literacy Reflection Tool

Kindergarten Readiness Assessment-Literacy Implementation Guide

Strong Beginnings, Smooth Transitions, Continuous Learning

Head Start Program Performance Standards

NAEYC Accreditation

Step Up to Quality

Get It, Got It, Go! Score Interpretation Workbook



Glossary of Terms

Accountability

The systematic collection and analysis of information that holds schools, educators and others responsible for student outcomes. Standards-based accountability refers to collecting and reporting information related to student progress on achieving established standards. (Armstrong, J. (2002) What is an accountability model? Education Commission of the States, www.ecs.org.)

Administrator

The person(s) responsible for supervision, oversight and ongoing operation of the program.

Alignment

The coherence and correlation of products, processes and services to meet a desired end result. In a standards-based education system, alignment refers to the coherence across standards (end result), curriculum (product), assessment (process) and professional development (service).

Assessment

The process of gathering information about children from several forms of evidence and organizing and interpreting that information (see formative assessment).

Assessment System

A system that allows for decisions to be made about curriculum, special interventions, behavioral supports, eligibility for services and program improvement. A well-designed assessment system provides educators with information needed to make decisions.

Authentic Assessments

Natural or authentic real-life tasks, examples of children's work, observations of children in naturalistic settings and ratings of children's everyday behaviors provide accurate reflections of their abilities. Authentic assessments of children occur in the regular classroom using tasks similar to those they are accustomed to, administered by individuals with whom they are familiar.

Benchmark

A specific component of the knowledge or skills of academic content, performance or operational standards. A benchmark can be declarative, procedural or contextual in the type of knowledge it describes.

Child-centered Program

A program that is designed to meet the individual needs of children. A child-centered program promotes the well-being of children by addressing their development and learning and the supportive services that may be needed or desired by families.

CHIP see **SCHIP**

Coaching

Coaching usually involves the guidance of a veteran educator to assist teachers and other educators in building skills. Coaching, like teaching, is not a routine activity. It must be focused on instructional goals and must be planned for and responsive to the needs of the learners and the exigencies of specific classroom situations. Successful coaches not only develop teachers' knowledge and skills, but also help develop programs' professional cultures.

Cognition/Cognitive

The mental process by which knowledge is acquired; or information that comes to be known through reasoning and perception.

Collaboration

A relationship between individuals or organizations that enables them to work together toward an undertaking.

Collaborative Team

A team comprised of individuals working together to explore different aspects of an issue and search for solutions. Becoming a collaborative team requires communication, contribution, coordination and cooperation.



Communication

The process based on the exchange of information and meaning. Communication is a crucial part of any productive relationship.

Compliance Requirement

The service or activity that a program must fulfill. Compliance requirements may provide a framework for public reporting.

Content Standards

Standards describing the knowledge and skills students should attain – often called the “what” of “what students should know and be able to do.” Content standards indicate ways of thinking, working, communicating, reasoning and investigating the important and enduring ideas, concepts, issues, dilemmas and knowledge essential to the discipline (see Early Learning Content Standards).

Continuous Improvement Planning

The process of continuous improvement includes planning, acting upon the plan, studying the results of the actions and, when necessary, revising those actions.

Contribution

An informal relationship (often called mutual support) through which parties help each other by providing some of the resources and support needed to reach their independent goals.

Coordination

A deliberate, joint, often formalized relationship among parties involving communication, planning and division of roles, and longer-term goals. Coordination also includes sharing of resources, risks and rewards for efficiency and effectiveness in achieving the complementary goals of the parties. Authority rests with individual parties.

Cooperation

A relationship in which parties with similar interests plan together, negotiate mutual roles and share resources to achieve joint goals. Each party maintains its own identity.



Curriculum

An organized framework that (1) provides for guiding developmentally appropriate, learning-environment activities in the developmental areas that foster a child's success; (2) delineates the content that children are to learn; (3) delineates the processes through which children achieve goals; and (4) describes what teachers do to help children achieve these goals.

Curriculum-based Assessment

A method of assessment that is integrated within the curriculum. The teacher assesses the children using the classroom activity itself; the assessment is not a separate procedure.

Data

Information organized for analysis.

Documentation

For administrators, documentation includes formal written records of action, policies and procedures that are maintained as a part of the program's ongoing operation. For teachers, documentation refers to information gathered about children; academic documentation may include children's work samples and teacher observations.

Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS)

A standardized tool used to measure the quality of the classroom environment. ECERS covers 37 quality aspects divided into two parts: provisions for learning, and teaching and interactions.

Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO)

A standardized observation tool used to describe the extent to which classrooms provide children support for their language and literacy development. The ELLCO consists of three components: literacy environment checklist; classroom observation; and teacher interaction and literacy activities rating scale.

Early Learning Content Standards

Ohio's Early Learning Content Standards describe essential concepts and skills for young children. Based on research, these achievable indicators emerge as a result of early learning experiences.

Early Learning Program Guidelines

The Ohio Early Learning Program Guidelines are a framework for program operation. The guidelines describe desirable outcomes and goals for early learning programs.

Educators

The term used for all adults working with children, regardless of the level of formal qualifications held. The use of the term is based on the philosophy that all adults who work with children contribute to their learning.

Efficacy

The power or capacity to produce a desired effect; or effectiveness.

Entrance

The first day that children attend an education and care program.

Evaluation

A process by which one carefully examines and judges the program and services. The evaluation system of an early learning program consists of three parts: child assessment, program assessment and progress monitoring.

Evidence-based

The curriculum must articulate a theoretical and/or research base for the approach and clearly demonstrate how the curriculum uses the theory or research as a basis for making decisions about experiences provided for children. The curriculum also may have empirical evidence regarding its effectiveness collected with sound research methodology.

Family Literacy

Family literacy encompasses parents', children's and extended family members' use of literacy at home, at work, at school and in their community lives.



Formal Assessments

Assessments used for reporting to others. Formal assessments often use standardized procedures for all children, follow a specific format or use a specific instrument.

Formative Assessment

An assessment is formative to the extent that information from the assessment is used, during the instructional segment in which the assessment occurred, to adjust instruction with the intent of better meeting the needs of the students assessed (Popham, 2006).

Get it, Got it, Go!

Get it, Got it, Go!, also referred to as GGG, is a literacy screen used to (1) monitor child progress, and (2) monitor teacher interventions; both related to early reading skills.

Goal

A goal is an objective toward which work is directed.

Governing Body

The entity responsible for program and fiscal oversight and for coordinating program and community services.

Head Start Performance Standards (HSPS)

The Head Start Performance Standards are the mandatory regulations that grantees and delegate agencies must implement to operate a Head Start program.

Indicator

A checkpoint to monitor progress toward the benchmark or goal.

Informal Assessments

Information collected by teachers strictly for use in making instructional decisions.

Intentional Teaching

Describes strategies that may address specific skills and knowledge needed by some or all students. Intentional teaching is the collection of directed, designed and rich interactions between children and teachers in which teachers purposefully challenge, structure and extend learning to promote attainment and mastery of children's skills.

Interagency Agreement

A formal, written document between two or more entities that describes the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved. The purpose of such an agreement is to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

Leadership Team

The collection of designated program staff responsible for assisting educators in meeting the educational goals of children and the professional development needs of the teaching staff.

Learning Environment

Includes the physical environment, teacher-children interactions, curriculum, assessment and materials.

Medicaid

The U.S. health program for individuals and families with low incomes and resources. Medicaid is an entitlement program jointly funded by the states and federal government and is managed by the states.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

A formal, written document between two or more entities that describes the roles and responsibilities of those parties.

Mentor

If teachers are to become skilled at independently identifying and addressing the idiosyncratic learning problems of their students, they must learn to reflect critically on student work as well as on their own teaching practices. For beginning teachers who have not developed the habit of reflecting on their own teaching, the veteran or mentor may model the process, identifying a problem and proposing and analyzing a variety of solutions for the beginner.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

A nationally recognized organization whose mission is to serve and act on behalf of the needs, rights and well-being of all young children, with primary focus on providing educational and developmental services and resources.

Norm-referenced

An individual's performance on a test compared to other individuals tested, rather than against a set of criteria, as with criterion-referenced.

Obligation

A binding course of action, duty or promise, or a social or moral contract.

Outcome

An intended result, effect or condition for children, families and programs.

Partnerships

A formal or informal contract entered into by two or more parties seeking a mutual goal, outcome or benefit. Partnerships are developed through a process that identifies shared goals to benefit all partners.

Pedagogy

Pedagogy is the art and science of teaching. Good pedagogy always requires a certain level of knowledge about a subject area (content) and the application of that knowledge.

Performance Indicator

A measure of the quality of the performance of a service or activity.

Portfolio Assessments

Portfolios containing student work reflecting their accomplishments toward significant curriculum goals, particularly those that require complex thinking and the use of multiple resources. Because the assessment of student performance on these tasks can provide evidence of students' accomplishments and thereby serve as a tool to support the instructional process, portfolio assessments can bolster teachers' efficacy, encouraging them to consider how students are progressing. In addition, portfolios invite students to reflect on and take responsibility for their own progress, the assessment process, and, ultimately, their own learning. Finally, portfolios provide parents and the wider community with credible evidence of student achievement and inform policy and practice at every level of the educational system.

Primary Health Care Provider

The main medical professional that a family sees for health needs.

Professional Development

The continuing education process beyond the initial degree or training. Teachers need a wide variety of experiences and opportunities to help further their knowledge and skills about the art of teaching and learning. Job-embedded professional development is often the most valuable and rewarding. In this type of professional development, educators use their work environment as an active laboratory for problem solving through actual situations that affect the children and families that they serve.

Program Evaluation

A process that examines factors related to the quality of the classroom or other care settings. These factors might include available equipment and supplies, teacher qualifications, adult-to-child interactions, adult-to-child ratios, parent and community involvement, child progress data and child referrals.

Referral

The recommendation that a child receive further diagnostic evaluation; or the act of seeking outside services from another entity on behalf of a child and or the child's family.

Reflective Teaching Practice

The systemic inquiry into one's teaching practice and deliberate attention to one's experience. More specifically, reflective practice is a conscious, systematic, deliberate process of framing and re-framing classroom practice in light of the consequences of actions, democratic principles, educational beliefs, and the values and visions teachers bring to the teaching and learning process.

Research-based

Rigorous, systematic, objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge about education activities and programs.

SCHIP

The State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) is a U.S. government program that gives matching funds to states to provide health insurance to families with children. The program was designed to cover uninsured children in families with incomes that are modest but too high to qualify for Medicaid.



School Readiness

Children who are school ready are physically healthy; have engaged in positive social experiences with other children; are learning to manage their feelings; have good communication skills; and are enthusiastic and curious about learning. It is through home, early learning and child-care experiences and the support of their communities that children enter kindergarten ready for success.



Screening

A procedure to determine children's skills, abilities, and/or health and nutritional needs at any point in time. Screenings usually are conducted using standardized instruments that indicate whether children may need further assessment, additional instructional supports, intervention, or health related or family support services. The screening process usually consists of vision, hearing, speech, general development, health, mental health and social development.

Stakeholders

Individuals or organizations, public or private, that have an interest in the program's actions and successes.

Standards-based Education

A framework for planning, delivering, monitoring and improving academic programs. In standards-based education, student learning is the focus. Standards-based education aims for high expectations for all and a deep level of student understanding of content that goes beyond traditional textbook-based or lesson-based instruction.

Teachers (Lead)

Lead teachers are responsible for helping children meet their educational objectives through well-designed learning experiences.

Teaching Teams

Term used to describe a teacher and an assistant teacher or teachers who form peer support groups for sharing instructional strategies and best practices.

Transition

The process of changing from one form, state, activity or place to another. In early learning programs, the goal of transition is to facilitate connections and stable relationships among the various areas in which competence develops: families, classrooms, teachers, schools and communities.

USDA

The United States Department of Agriculture, the federal agency that governs the Food Stamp, School Lunch, School Breakfast and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) programs administered by the states.

Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

A USDA program administered by the Ohio Department of Health to safeguard the health of low-income women, infants and children up to age 5 who are at nutrition risk, by providing nutritious foods to supplement diets, information on healthy eating and referrals to health care.



Components of Successful Parent Education Programs

- ⊙ Voluntary
- ⊙ Intensive
- ⊙ Flexible
- ⊙ Accessible
- ⊙ Culturally sensitive
- ⊙ Respectful
- ⊙ Responsive
- ⊙ Comprehensive

Source: Elizabeth Steif,
The Role of Parent Education in
Achieving School Readiness, 1993

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 **All children are born ready to learn**

 **Relationships are influential**

 **Environments matter**

 **Communication is critical**

