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# VERMONT'S KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES FOR INSTRUCTORS

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*Working with Early Childhood  
and Afterschool Professionals*

*June 2015*



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**Vermont Child Development Division  
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**Vermont Northern Lights  
Career Development Center**



# **Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors**

working with early childhood and afterschool professionals

## **Knowledge Areas and *Subheadings***

### **I. Professionalism and Ethics**

The instructor conducts herself professionally and ethically in the service of the early childhood and afterschool workforce.

#### **Subheadings**

- A. Professionalism*
- B. Ethics*

### **II. Standards, Systems and Resources**

The instructor understands current standards, systems and resources pertaining to the early childhood and afterschool workforce, and applies this knowledge when instructing adults.

#### **Subheadings**

- A. Standards*
- B. Systems*
- C. Resources*

### **III. Planning and Design**

The instructor plans and designs relevant and meaningful professional learning activities, using own expertise in specific content areas, as well as knowledge of adult learning principles and methods of instruction.

#### **Subheadings**

- A. Planning*
- B. Design*

### **IV. Instruction**

The instructor applies a variety of instructional methods to engage diverse populations of adult learners in achieving planned learning objectives.

#### **Subheadings**

- A. Methods*
- B. Facilitation*

### **V. Assessment and Evaluation**

The instructor uses information derived from a variety of assessment and evaluation activities in an ongoing fashion to improve own practice.

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This document is in effect as of June 2015 and remains in effect until further notice. This full document and additional, related resources can be downloaded at no cost from the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>. The Knowledge and Competency tables as well as the IPDP format, Observation/Planning Tool, Instructional Design Outline and Common Training Evaluation Form can be downloaded separately from the website page under INSTRUCTORS.

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Connecting Professional Development for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals  
Generously supported by the Vermont Child Development Division, Department for Children  
and Families in the Vermont Agency of Human Services.

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## Overview

Professionals need to engage in ongoing professional development in order to develop skills and knowledge in their work, and to continue to be effective. Instructors of adults influence the development of the professionals they teach. In turn, professionals working with children and families have a profound effect on the quality of experiences, and the development of the children and families they serve.



courses, a workshop series or a one-time training event. Instructors are defined here as teaching groups of adults, face-to-face, though many of the skills and knowledge listed here may also apply to teaching adults online.

This booklet is about the skills and knowledge needed by instructors teaching adults; in particular, teaching those working in the Vermont early childhood or afterschool fields as caregivers, teachers, consultants, administrators or home visitors.

### What is an instructor?

In this booklet, an instructor is an adult teaching other professionals. Instructors may teach college

### What is instruction?

Adult instruction is similar to but different from instruction of children. It even has its own name: Andragogy. This term is generally defined as the theory and practice of engaging adult learners using teaching strategies focused on adults. There are a number of principles of adult learning. Below is a summary of six core adult learning principles from two major theorists, Jane Vella and Malcolm Knowles:

### Six Core Principles of Adult Learning

*(Malcolm Knowles)*

1. **Respect**

The instructor's actions show respect for the experience and knowledge adults bring to the learning event. This is observed and felt by the learners.

2. **Immediacy**

"How soon can I use this?" during the learning event, and in the learners own setting.

3. **Relevance**

People will learn faster and more permanently that which is significant to them and to their present lives.

*(Jane Vella)*

4. **Safety**

People need to feel safe *and* challenged.

5. **Engagement**

People learn more when they are actively involved, DOING what they are learning.

6. **Inclusion**

Without inclusion, a learning group is fragmented. With inclusion, a learner is moved to collaborate and open to learning.

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# Introduction

## **What is *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* and what is its purpose?**

This booklet defines the knowledge, skills and dispositions of instructors teaching early childhood and afterschool professionals and students. Developed from national research and evidence-based models, Vermont recognizes them as best practices.

The knowledge and competencies provide a framework for the instructor's self-assessment and ongoing professional growth. They promote instruction that is well-planned, well-organized, and professionally implemented. We know the quality of instruction provided can impact the skills and knowledge of the participating professionals and students. When those professionals work with children in Vermont, they impact the welfare of the children and families in our state.

*"You maybe up there talking, but if they're not learning, you're not teaching."*

## **How can *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* be used?**

Instructors can use the competencies to promote reflection, identify areas for their own development, and plan how to become a more effective instructor. They can be used by individuals, by instructors observing each other, or in groups. They are relevant for both new and experienced instructors.

This booklet also includes two related tools derived from *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors*:

- **Instructor Observation/Planning Tool**

This is a subset of the full *Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* document. Only competencies which can be observed while an instructor is teaching are included in this observation tool. This tool can also be used for planning and evaluation.

- **Individual Professional Development Plan Format**

This tool places the five Instructor Knowledge areas into the Vermont early childhood and afterschool Individual Professional Development Plan format. This is useful after instructors complete the *Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* as a self-assessment, and want to create an individual action plan for professional growth.

See the Table of Contents to find these tools in this document. Before each of these documents is an introduction with ideas of how they might be used and by whom. These documents can also be downloaded separately on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website:

<http://northernlightscdc.org>

*Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* are part of a larger professional development system that supports the early childhood and afterschool workforce in meeting the diverse needs of children and families.

## **How are they organized?**

The Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors are organized into five Knowledge Areas. Each Knowledge Area is then divided into subheadings. Within the subheadings are the specific competencies or indicators of the knowledge or skill. For example:

### **KNOWLEDGE AREA I. *Professionalism and Ethics***

#### **Subheading A: *Professionalism***

**Competency 6: *Uses respectful and professional communication at all times***

There is some redundancy among the competency statements. This is deliberate because some of the competencies overlap into more than one Knowledge Area or subheading. For example, adult learning principles are referenced both under Professionalism and Ethics (Professionalism #8) and Planning and Design (Planning #4).

The competencies can be either demonstrated or observed when the instructor is planning and preparing the training, during the time the instructor is teaching adults, or after the instruction is done.

## What is the Vermont Instructor Registry?

The Vermont Instructor Registry is a searchable online database of approved instructors teaching adults in the early childhood and afterschool fields. It has three purposes:

- a) to recognize qualified instructors;
- b) to develop new instructors; and
- c) to enable sponsors to find instructors teaching early childhood and afterschool professionals.

The Instructor Registry is part of the Vermont Instructor Qualification System. This system is a pathway for professionals seeking to be instructors, and for those working as instructors of adults in the early childhood and afterschool fields.

Two factors determine the level of an Instructor applicant in the Registry: completed education and credentials, and amount of previous experience teaching adults. Topics they teach must relate to one or more of the Vermont Core Knowledge and Competencies (See Core Knowledge and Competencies in the glossary).



Professionals apply on line and the review committee uses a consistent approval process to determine the individual's level on the Registry. All applicants must have formal instruction in adult learning principles and practices before they renew their Instructor Registry application. Current or former faculty of a higher education institution use a streamlined application and are not required to complete formal training in adult instruction. Once approved, an instructor may choose to have their application become their public profile in the Registry.

There are over 400 instructors in the Registry. They come from many different disciplines, work all over the state, and live in Vermont and adjoining states. They may be generalists, such as an early childhood educator or afterschool program director, or specialists such as a nurse or therapist.

Generalists may be either at an entry level (Affiliate I, II) or a more experienced level (Certified or Master). The more experienced instructors can instruct independently. Because one purpose of the

Registry is to help develop instructors, those at Affiliate I or II choose an instructor at the Certified or Master level to serve as their Supporting Instructor.

Specialists are either at entry level (Specialist I) or have more instructional experience (Specialist II). Specialist I instructors choose a Specialist II, Master or Certified Instructor as their supporting instructor. All approved instructors need to renew their application every three years to stay in the Registry.

Sponsors of training use the online Instructor Registry profiles to find instructors. The Instructor Registry is part of the Vermont professional development system. Northern Lights Career Development Center manages the Instructor Registry.

## How do the *Vermont Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* connect to the Instructor Registry?

The *Vermont Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* is a tool to support instructors considering becoming an instructor, those already in the Registry, as well as sponsors of professional development.

It can be used by Supporting Instructors when they observe and guide Affiliate or Specialist I instructors in the Registry. It is a resource in a course on adult instruction. Northern Lights offers such a course, which meets a requirement for instructors in the Registry.

The *Vermont Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* can be used when sponsors of training or other instructors observe instructors teaching. It can be used as part of the Instructor Registry renewal process.

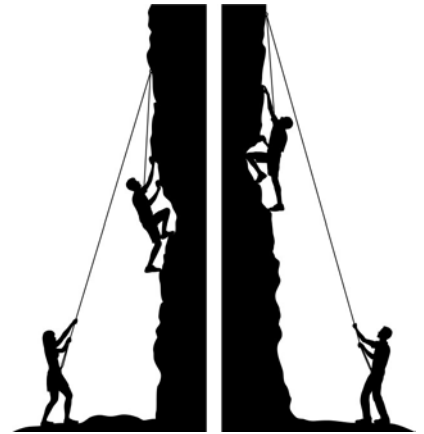
Meeting the Instructor Competencies is not a requirement to be in the Instructor Registry at this time. How they are used will continue to evolve. The *Vermont Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* provides a foundation for determining, promoting, and assessing how well Vermont meets its goal to provide quality instruction of adults working in the fields of early childhood and afterschool services.

# How to Use *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors*

There are many ways to use this tool. Professionals in a range of roles may use it in different ways.

## *Instructors*

- **Instructors** may use *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* as a self-assessment tool to identify areas for ongoing professional growth. It can be used to create a list of areas of strength and areas for growth, which is the first step in developing an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP). See the IPDP format in this document.
- **Instructors who teach coursework on adult instructional practices** may use *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* to generate learning objectives and as a resource for their students of adult learning.



**Supporting Instructors** may use it to guide developing instructors as they review together the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of effective instructors as outlined in this document.

*"I must confess that my design-centric approach can sometimes become as 'teacher-centered' as the worst lecture or death-by-PowerPoint presentation. I have to continually fight the temptation to over-structure the learning process, or to stick too rigidly to my learning design in the face of an emerging learning need or time management issue. I need to cultivate the practice of leaving lots of 'white space' in the design and to adapt to the flow of the learning process on the floor. After all, it's not about my design, it's about learning."*

Dwayne Hodgson in *Finding the Sweet Spot: Creating Learning-Centered Workshops*  
Global Learning Partners: <http://www.globallearningpartners.com/>

## *Sponsors of professional development activities*

- **Sponsors who hire instructors** may use it to outline expectations, frame a job description or structure a performance evaluation.
- **Sponsors** may share it with instructors as a general informational resource.

## *Individuals*

- **Professionals** considering becoming instructors of adults in the early childhood or afterschool fields may study *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* to get an in-depth view of the tasks and skills involved in teaching adults.

## ***Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors***

### **Knowledge Area I: Professionalism and Ethics**

The instructor conducts herself professionally and ethically in the service of the early childhood and afterschool workforce.

*\* indicates competencies that are included in the Instructor Observation/Planning Tool*

| <b>A. Professionalism</b>  | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|--|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 1 Plans and implements strategies for own ongoing professional growth, and promotes ongoing professional development for others.   |           |                  |             |
| 2 Seeks and learns about current, evidence-based research and best practices in the content areas taught.  |           |                  |             |
| 3 Seeks and develops own knowledge of community, regional, state, and national resources.  |           |                  |             |
| 4 Establishes and demonstrates credibility as a professional, and avoids self-promotion for personal gain while instructing.   |           |                  |             |
| 5* Practices timeliness, responsibility, and accountability with the sponsor and participants.   |           |                  |             |
| 6* Uses respectful and professional communication at all times.  |           |                  |             |
| 7* Supports goals, policies, and procedures of sponsoring organization(s).   |           |                  |             |
| 8 Provides learning experiences that are consistent with adult learning principles, and that explicitly account for the needs, learning styles, cultures, and stages of development of adult learners. |           |                  |             |

Comments:

| <b>B. Ethics</b>  | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|---|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 1* Uses the Code of Ethical Conduct (NAEYC, 2011) to assist early childhood and afterschool professionals in making sound decisions concerning their work with children and families. |           |                  |             |
| 2* Describes and models ethical practices as expressed in the Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators (NAEYC, 2004).                                  |           |                  |             |
| 3* Honors confidentiality and guards the privacy of the adult learners and the sponsoring organization.   |           |                  |             |
| 4* Adheres to F.E.R.P.A. standards when teaching in an institution of higher education.   |           |                  |             |

Comments:

### **Knowledge Area II: Standards, Systems and Resources**

The instructor understands current standards, systems and resources pertaining to the early childhood and afterschool workforce, and applies this knowledge when instructing adults.

| <b>A. Standards</b>   | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|---|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 1* Understands the contexts in which early childhood and afterschool professionals work including their local communities, and diverse work settings.   |           |                  |             |
| 2* References and promotes practices that meet or exceed Vermont and national regulations, standards and guidance as appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For programs: Vermont child care program licensing regulations, Vermont Step Ahead Recognition System (STARS) program quality standards, national program accreditation standards, national health and safety guidelines</li> <li>For children: Common Core and Vermont Early Learning Standards</li> <li>For staff: educator licensing standards, Council for Professional Recognition (CDA) competency standards, Northern Lights Early Childhood and Afterschool Knowledge and Competencies, Northern Lights Program Director Knowledge and Competencies, etc.</li> </ul> |           |                  |             |

Comments:

| <b>B. Systems</b>  | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|--|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 1* Uses and promotes statewide and national systems, agencies, and organizations that help determine standards and enhance quality for programs and professionals. |           |                  |             |
| 2* Works with the sponsor of the learning activity to ensure that documentation, timelines and other requirements are met for the sponsor and the participants.    |           |                  |             |

Comments:

| <b>C. Resources</b>  | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|--|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 1* Requests information from participants about the relevant resources they use, and incorporates this information into instruction.       |           |                  |             |
| 2* References and promotes relevant regional, statewide, and national resources that support program quality and professional development. |           |                  |             |

Comments:

### **Knowledge Area III: Planning and Design**

The instructor plans and designs relevant and meaningful professional learning activities using own expertise in specific content areas as well as knowledge of adult learning principles and methods of instruction.

| <b>A. Planning</b>  | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|---|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 1* Determines and addresses the desired purpose and goals of the training or course according to the sponsoring organization.               |           |                  |             |
| 2* Closely aligns relevant and specific training content to the Vermont early childhood and/or afterschool Core Knowledge and Competencies. |           |                  |             |

| <b>A. Planning (continued)</b> |  |                  |             |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------|-------------|
|                                | New Skill  | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
| 3*                             | Considers training content based on current and effective practices, theories, and research. |                  |             |
| 4                              | Applies knowledge of adult learning principles.  |                  |             |

Comments:

| <b>B. Design</b> |  |                  |             |
|------------------|--|------------------|-------------|
|                  | New Skill  | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
| 1*               | Develops clear learning objectives linked to the Vermont early childhood and/or afterschool Core Knowledge and Competencies that are achievable during the learning event.   |                  |             |
| 2*               | Designs a process to learn about the context, expectations, and current conditions of the participants that will impact their learning on the topic, before the instruction begins.  |                  |             |
| 3*               | Creates a detailed written instructional design.<br>(See sample <i>Instructional Design Outline in this document</i> )   |                  |             |
| 4*               | Introduces new and relevant content, building from the familiar context of the participants.   |                  |             |
| 5*               | Creates engaging and relevant learning tasks aligned to the learning objectives, and sequences them into one or more learning cycles that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Initially establishes a welcoming climate of mutual trust and clarifies mutual expectations</li> <li>b. Engages participants to explore, practice, problem-solve and receive feedback</li> <li>c. Invites participants to reflect on and analyze the new information and content shared</li> <li>d. Engages participants to reflect on and plan how they will apply the new learning to their professional context outside of the session</li> </ul> (See <i>Learning Cycle and Learning Cycle in Practice example in this document</i> ) |                  |             |
| 6*               | Develops open-ended questions linked to each learning task to promote critical thinking and invite positive, strengths-based dialogue among participants.  |                  |             |

| <b>B. Design (continued)</b>  | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|---|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 7* Integrates content and examples throughout the training design that are authentic, relevant, and model effective practices.  |           |                  |             |
| 8* Incorporates various strategies in the instructional design to assess the learning by participants. <u>Examples:</u> participants demonstrate, present, teach, or create models; instructor observes participant reflections and discussions; instructor asks questions or implements short pre and post assessments, etc. |           |                  |             |
| 9* Determines and adapts the physical layout of the learning environment to support the flow of the planned activities, as well as the engagement, comfort and learning needs of participants.  |           |                  |             |
| 10* Allocates sufficient time for each learning task that fits within the total time available.   |           |                  |             |

Comments:

### **Knowledge Area IV: Instruction**

The instructor applies a variety of instructional methods to engage diverse populations of adult learners in achieving planned learning objectives.

| <b>A. Methods of Instruction</b>   | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|--|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 1* Carries out the instructional design, adjusting it based on regular observation and solicited feedback from participants.   |           |                  |             |
| 2* Presents learning objectives, purpose, and agenda clearly, and references them throughout the session.  |           |                  |             |
| 3* Implements introductory activities based on participants' current knowledge, experience, and context and continues to build from this context throughout the learning experience. |           |                  |             |

| A. | Methods of Instruction (continued)  | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|----|---|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 4* | Provides opportunities and encourages purposeful, hands-on, interactive learning experiences. <u>Examples:</u> small and large group discussions, problem-solving, demonstrations, model building, structured analysis, role-playing, etc.  |           |                  |             |
| 5* | Uses a variety of effective methods and materials of instruction to address the various learning styles and preferences of the participants over time. <u>Examples:</u> materials that provide visual, auditory and/or kinesthetic interactions; individual reflection time; group engagement, etc. |           |                  |             |
| 6* | Uses effective transitions between learning tasks that smoothly connect experiences while providing opportunities for interaction, reflection, and change.  |           |                  |             |
| 7* | Uses technology effectively and when appropriate to provide information and engage learners.  |           |                  |             |

Comments:

| B. | Facilitation  | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|----|---|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 1* | Creates an environment that builds trust and accommodates a diverse population of learners.   |           |                  |             |
| 2* | Keeps training focused and on schedule, while achieving the learning objectives.  |           |                  |             |
| 3* | Uses open-ended questions, active listening, relevant examples, and other techniques to engage participants in learning, reflection, and application. |           |                  |             |
| 4* | Effectively manages unforeseen situations such as conflict, the impact of sensitive material, disruptions, etc.                                       |           |                  |             |
| 5* | Engages participants in constructive dialogue that supports prior experience, new information and varying points of view.                             |           |                  |             |

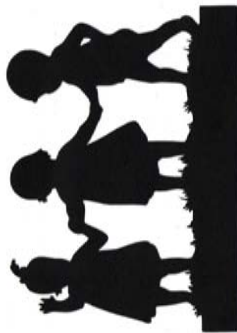
Comments:

### **Knowledge Area V: Assessment and Evaluation**

The instructor uses information derived from a variety of assessment and evaluation activities in an ongoing fashion to improve own practice.

|    | Assessment and Evaluation  | New Skill | Developing Skill | Solid Skill |
|----|--|-----------|------------------|-------------|
| 1* | Checks learning by participants throughout the session.  |           |                  |             |
| 2  | Assesses effectiveness of training design periodically throughout the session, and after completion.<br>(See sample <i>Instructional Design Outline</i> in this document)                                |           |                  |             |
| 3* | Asks learners to evaluate whether as a result of the training there is an increase in their knowledge and skill, planned application to practice, satisfaction, and if the learning objectives were met. |           |                  |             |
| 4  | Schedules another effective instructor to observe own instructional practice periodically and to provide supportive feedback.<br>(See <i>Instructor Observation/Planning Tool</i> in this document)      |           |                  |             |
| 5  | Reflects on own behavior and uses feedback from participants and others to improve instructional practices.  |           |                  |             |

Comments:



# Instructor Observation/Planning Tool

## Ways to use the Instructor Observation/Planning Tool

This tool is a subset of the larger *Vermont Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* document. It only includes the *competencies that can be clearly observed while the person is instructing adults*. The items in parentheses ( ) after each competency statement reference the competency(s) in the larger *Vermont Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* document. Conversely, the \* statements in the *Vermont Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* document indicate which items are also in this Instructor Observation/Planning Tool.

This tool can be used as a planning tool, a self-assessment tool, or as a framework for observation or evaluation. It is especially useful for Supporting Instructors and those they support, in the Instructor Registry.

*“My supporting instructor filled out the observation tool, as she watched me teach the group. After the training, I filled one out too, and then we compared and discussed the two together. It was helpful to have a common framework for our discussion. It was easy to find where I had done well and we agreed on areas I could continue to develop.”*

There are many ways to use this tool. Here are some ideas:

- **Instructors** may use it as a planning tool.
- **Instructors** may use it as a reflection tool to assess themselves after they have completed a training.
- **Instructors supporting other instructors** may use it first as a planning tool to determine together what needs to be covered in the training process. The supporting instructor may then use it to frame their observation of the instructor teaching. Next, the supporting instructor asks the novice instructor to also complete the tool, this time as self-reflection. Finally, both instructors review the results together and use it as a framework for discussion.
- **Instructors who are colleagues** may use the tool as a framework for observing their colleagues teach, after which they can provide specific supportive feedback.
- **Sponsors or monitors of training activities** can use it to observe instructors in order to assess effectiveness and to provide feedback to the instructor.



## Instructor Observation/Planning Tool

a subset of the *Vermont Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors*

This tool is designed for instruction of adults in a group, using a face-to-face format. It can be used as a planning tool, a self-assessment tool, or as a framework for observation or evaluation. It is especially useful for Supporting Instructors and those they support in the Vermont Instructor Registry. *Items in ( ) reference the Vermont Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors knowledge areas, subheadings and competency numbers.*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Topic of Instruction: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of training: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of observation: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_ Observer: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Used as self-assessment ☐ Used by an observer ☐ Used for instructional planning

|  | Observation<br>competence met | Self-<br>Assessment |   |
|--|-------------------------------|---------------------|---|
|  | little<br>1                   | 2                   | 3 |
| <b>1. SET UP AND INTRODUCTION</b>  |                               |                     |   |
| a. Sets up the room to facilitate comfort, interaction, flow, and engagement in the planned activities.<br>(III-B.9)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                               |                     |   |
| b. Establishes a personally welcoming climate of safety, trust and inclusiveness.<br>(III-B.5; IV-B.1)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                               |                     |   |
| c. Learns about participants' experience and interests in relationship to this topic.<br>(III-B.2)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                               |                     |   |
| d. Presents agenda with clear and achievable learning objectives based on knowledge and skills in the early childhood and/or afterschool fields.<br>(III-B.1; III-B.5; IV-A.2)<br><i>Comments:</i> |                               |                     |   |

|   | Observation<br>competence met       | Self-<br>Assessment    |     |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----|
|   | little<br>1<br>—<br>2<br>fully<br>3 | Priority for<br>growth | N/A |
| <b>2. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION</b>  |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>a. Uses a variety of instructional methods and materials to address all learning styles and preferences</b> auditory, visual, kinesthetic, individual, small and large group, etc.<br>(IV-A.6)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>b. Engages learnings in purposeful, hands-on interactions</b> problem-solving, modeling, experimentation, demonstration, analysis, application etc.<br>(IV-A.4)<br><i>Comments:</i>  |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>c. Implements a cycle of connected learning tasks to develop, generate, and deepen learning over time</b> from concrete experience, to new content, to exploration and problem-solving, reflection and planning for application.<br>(II-B.5; IV-A.1; IV-A.3)<br><i>Comments:</i> |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>d. Uses smooth transitions to effectively and logically connect experiences.</b><br>(IV-A.7)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>e. Uses technology effectively to engage the learner.</b><br>(IV-A.8)<br><i>Comments:</i>  |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>f. Uses open-ended questions, active listening, relevant examples, and constructive dialogue.</b><br>(III-B.6; III-B.7; IV-B.3; IV-B.5)<br><i>Comments:</i>  |                                     |                        |     |

|   | Observation<br>competence met       | Self-<br>Assessment    |     |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----|
|   | little<br>1<br>—<br>2<br>fully<br>3 | Priority for<br>growth | N/A |
| <b>2. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION (continued)</b>  |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>g. Adjusts instructional design to the actual session and accommodates unforeseen circumstances.</b><br>(IV-A.1; IV-B.4)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>3. SESSION CONTENT</b>   |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>a. Connects content to participants' experiences, context and interests with relevant materials, examples, scenarios etc.</b><br>(II-A.1; II-C.1; III-B.4; III-B.7; IV-A.4)<br><i>Comments:</i>                              |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>b. Addresses the sponsor's goals and the defined learning objectives throughout the session posting and referencing them, etc.</b><br>(I-A.7; III-A.1; III-B.1; IV-B.2)<br><i>Comments:</i>                                  |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>c. Provides the learners with relevant resources and sources of support in the region, state and nationally.</b><br>(II-B.1; II-C.2)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>d. Aligns training content with VT Core Knowledge and Competencies for early childhood and afterschool professionals and, as appropriate, other professional standards.</b><br>(I-A.2; III-A.2; III-B.1)<br><i>Comments:</i> |                                     |                        |     |

|   | Observation<br>competence met       | Self-<br>Assessment    |     |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-----|
|   | little<br>1<br>—<br>2<br>fully<br>3 | Priority for<br>growth | N/A |
| <b>3. SESSION CONTENT (continued)</b>   |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>e. Introduces new information based on current, effective practices/research and standards.</b><br>(I-B.1; II-C.2; II-A.3; IV-B.4)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>f. Checks for participants' learning throughout the session and achievement of the learning objectives by observing participants discussing, demonstrating, modeling, teaching, applying, and completing a written evaluation of the session.</b><br>(III-B.8; IV-A.2; V-1; V-3)<br><i>Comments:</i> |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>4. THE INSTRUCTOR AS A PROFESSIONAL</b>  |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>a. Arrives promptly, begins on time, is engaged for the entire session, and ends on time.</b><br>(I-A.5; III-B.10; IV-B.2)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>b. Uses respectful and professional communication and behavior.</b><br>(I-A.6; I-B.2; I-B.3; I-B.4)<br><i>Comments:</i>  |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>c. Is well-prepared and organized.</b><br>(I-A.5; III-B.3)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                                     |                        |     |
| <b>d. Uses and follows professional development documentation protocol.</b><br>(II-B.2)<br><i>Comments:</i>   |                                     |                        |     |

We have reviewed and discussed the content of this observation/planning tool.

Instructor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Supporting)  
Instructor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Next steps:** Identify priorities, strategies, timeline... (See also Individual Professional Development Plan format)

**Notes:**



# Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) for Instructors

## How to use the Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) Format based on *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors*

An Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) is an action plan written by a professional to guide his or her future professional development. Each IPDP has the professional's name and the date written. An IPDP has four parts:

- 1) a self-assessment with areas of strength and areas to grow;
- 2) specific goals based on the areas for growth;
- 3) strategies and resources to meet each goal; and
- 4) a timeline of when each goal will be met.

Successful IPDPs show reflection by the writer and describe a pathway for the professional over time. Individual professional development plans should be current, guiding the individual to continuously improve.



There are different ways to categorize the knowledge areas in the self-assessment section. There are already IPDP formats using the early childhood and afterschool Core Knowledge Areas, the Program Director Knowledge areas, and others. For guidance, examples, and sample IPDP formats go to the Northern Lights Career Development Center website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

*I am so glad to finally have an action plan format just for me as an instructor. I used the first page to summarize what I learned from doing the self-assessment using Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors. Now I can step back, figure out my goals, and organize my action steps onto page 2 of the plan. I do so many things, I like having the instructor side of my work brought into focus this way.*

This tool is organized by the knowledge areas of *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors*. It may be used by professionals in various roles. Here are some ideas:

**Instructors** may use it to frame their IPDP. Start with *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* as a self-assessment tool. Then select key competencies or subheadings in each knowledge area which are strengths, and areas for growth. Use this information to complete the first page of the IPDP form. The second column, "I plan to increase my knowledge and skills," helps define achievable goals for your instructor action plan on page two of the IPDP.

**Supporting Instructors** may use this format to structure a conversation with the instructor they support: what are your strengths, what are your areas for growth and how can you create a roadmap for how to develop new skills (In the Instructor Registry, this would be a tool introduced by the Supporting Instructor).

**Students** taking a course in adult instruction could complete the IPDP format and share results together. This would identify common areas for growth, who in the class might be a resource based on areas of strength, and generate a full list of potential resources to meet their IPDP goals. The results could be used to structure the rest of the course to best meet the needs of the participants. Completing an IPDP like this could be an assignment in the course

## *Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)*

1. SELF-ASSESSMENT      Name: \_\_\_\_\_      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

|   | What do I already know and what skills do I have?  | I plan to increase my knowledge or skills in each of these areas:   |
|---|--|---|
| Example:<br><u>Standards, Systems and Resources</u> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know about family child care and center-based program contexts and regulations</li> <li>• Know about state and national resources and standards related to professional development, programs, and learning standards for children</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn more about afterschool settings and regulations</li> <li>• Learn more about new learning standards</li> <li>• Seek information from participants in my trainings about the resources they use</li> </ul> |
| <u>Professionalism and Ethics</u>                   |  |   |
| <u>Standards, Systems and Resources</u>             |  |   |
| <u>Planning and Design</u>                          |  |   |
| <u>Instruction</u>                                  |  |   |
| <u>Assessment and Evaluation</u>                    |  |   |

**2. GOALS, STRATEGIES, TIMELINE**    **Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

What you plan to learn, based on the areas you identified on page 1: Self-Assessment

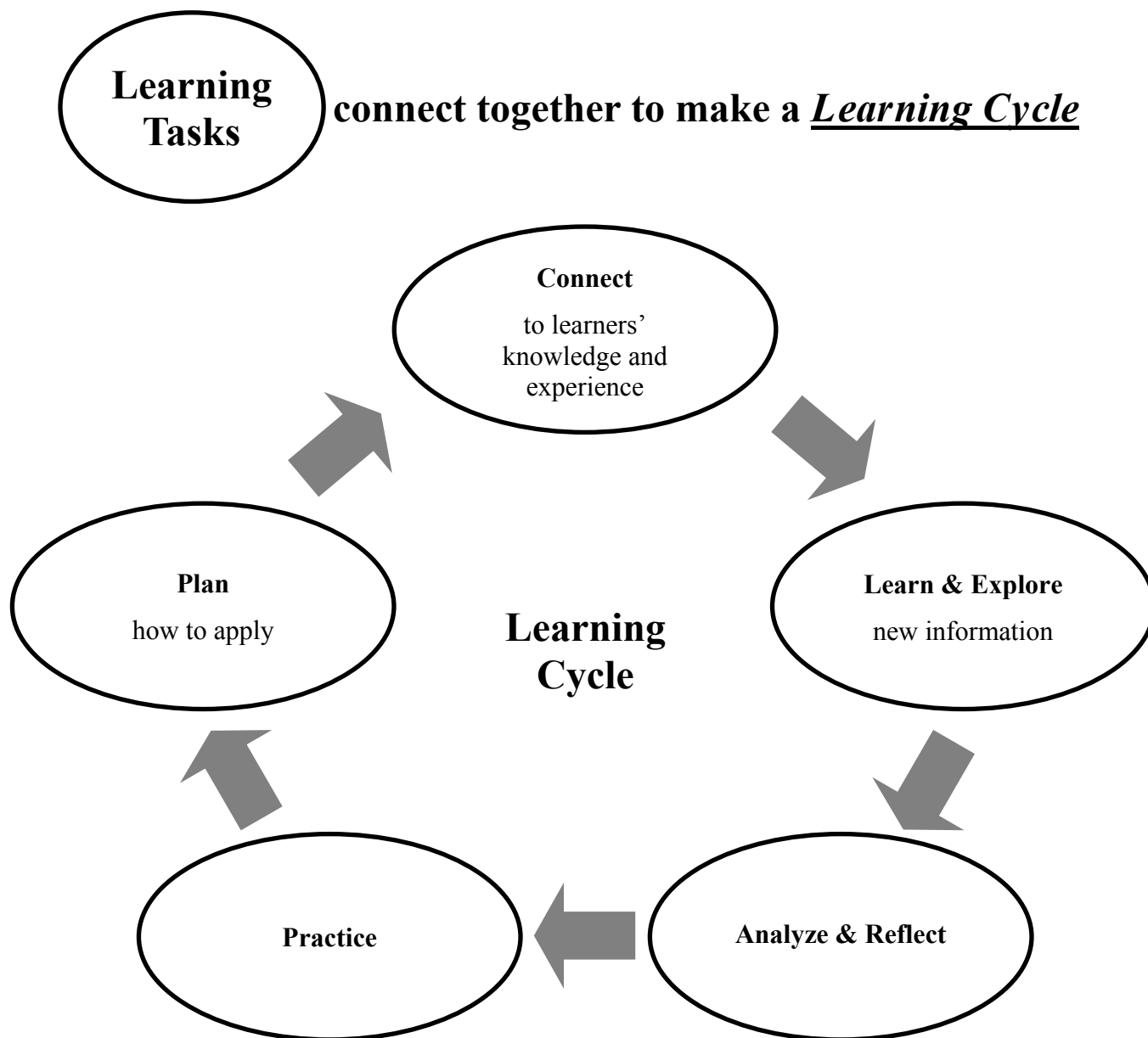
**Goals:** specific, doable; you know when you have achieved them.

**Strategies:** to achieve your goals, like gather materials, make calls, be observed, interview specific people.

**Resources:** like materials, websites, funding sources, planning time.

**Timeline:** specify a month and year when you expect to complete your goal or check progress.

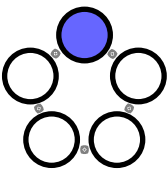
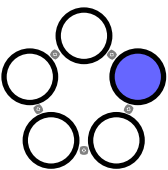
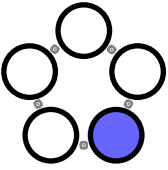
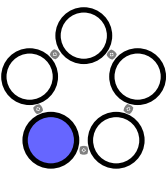
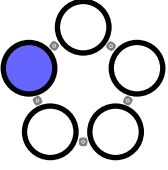
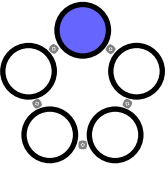
| Goal  | Strategies to accomplish this goal   | What do I need to accomplish my goal?<br>(Resources)   | Timeline      |
|---|--|--|---------------|
| <i>Example:</i><br>I will include learner knowledge of resources into my training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add question in learner assessment about resources they know and use the results in my training</li> <li>• Invite master instructor to observe me do this and discuss with him</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify master instructor</li> <li>• Add to instructional design planning</li> </ul> | December 2015 |
| 1.  |  |  |               |
| 2.  |  |  |               |
| 3.  |  |  |               |



**The cycle is continuous. A training or course may include multiple learning cycles.**

There are many models of learning cycles. This one is based on ideas in Dialogue Education (Jane Vella) and the Experiential Learning Cycle (David Kolb).

## A Learning Cycle in Practice

| A Learning Cycle is made up of Learning Tasks                                       | Learning Tasks in order  | <b>Example:</b> 2 hour workshop<br><b>Topic:</b> Learning environments for infants in groups<br><br><b>Learning Objective:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze and design learning environments for infants in groups, using standard criteria for the best environments.</li> </ul>  |
|---|--|--|
|    | <b>1: Connect</b><br>to learners' knowledge and experience           | The instructor learns that the participants have a range of experiences working with infants and toddlers in groups in different settings. She learns what individuals want to address in this training related to this topic, and incorporates it. The instructor asks participants to draw the infant environment they currently work in and share the drawing with others. "Which parts of your room work well, which do not, and why?"         |
|   | <b>2: Learn &amp; Explore</b><br>new information                     | The instructor shows slides of various infant toddler group settings for participants to react to. "What stands out to you in these settings as positive or negative? Why?" The instructor shares standards for infant toddler group settings: safety, durability, adaptability, age and developmentally-appropriate, eco-friendly. She shares criteria to use that best engage infants' learning. "Which ones do you think you could apply? Why?" |
|  | <b>3: Analyze &amp; Reflect</b>                                      | Individually and in small groups, participants share their reactions to the information and how it applies to their current settings. "Given your current space(s) and if money was not a barrier, what is one thing you might change? Add? Take away? How would you make a case for this change?"   |
|  | <b>4: Practice</b>   | Individually and/or in pairs, participants design and draw/create a learning space using the ideas and information presented. They share the results with others at the session.   |
|  | <b>5: Plan</b><br>how to apply                                       | Each participant makes a short action plan describing what they will do over time to implement the changes they are considering, and how they will explain their learning to others.   |
|  | <b>Connect</b> again to learner's knowledge and a new learning cycle | Instructor connects the new learning to the next topic: identifying and using resources to help you change your environment.   |

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## History



Vermont's Instructor Qualification System began in 2006, with the development of a statewide Instructor Registry. It was one of the tasks on the original list of duties charged to Northern Lights Career Development Center when it began in 2005. The Instructor Registry is a web-based, searchable database of approved instructors who teach adults about the early childhood and afterschool fields. It includes both developing and seasoned instructors. Once approved, early childhood and afterschool instructors are listed and recognized in a public registry. Sponsors of professional development use the Instructor Registry to locate instructors.

In 2011, Vermont outlined seven *Principles of Vermont's Professional Development System*. These provide a framework for developing and evaluating Vermont's Professional Development System for early childhood and afterschool professionals. Effective and qualified instructors are key to building and maintaining an effective professional development system.

The Instructor Qualifications System provides a pathway to develop and recognize qualified instructors. When it was developed, however there were no common knowledge and competencies underlying instructor qualifications.

Starting in 2014, a small group of instructors volunteered to work with Northern Lights to research and develop the knowledge and competencies that would provide the foundation for Vermont's Instructor Qualification System. Research-based national and state-wide models were resources for this work.

The Professional Preparation and Development Committee, a work group of the Building Bright Futures State Council, and the Professional Development Think Tank group both provided invaluable feedback and guidance between 2013 and 2015 on the development of these competencies and related documents. Additional feedback was provided by students who completed the Northern Lights workshop on adult learning and instructional practices, and the Vermont Agency of Education, Adult Education and Literacy Professional Development Coordinator, Kate Nicolet.

*"One of the great notions of John Dewey is that learning is meaningful to the degree that we can connect it to the concrete experiences of our students' lives. So adult learners bring a rich array of life learning and life experiences to the classroom. And good teaching for adult learners needs to first assess who they are and then needs to connect the classroom material to that rich archive of their life learning. There's a triad of adult learning: who the students are—their knowledge and background and situation; what we have to offer them — the knowledge base; and what they are going to use the knowledge for — the job they're going to do."*

Laura Donnelly-Smith, *A Conversation with L. Lee Knefelkamp*  
Association of American Colleges and Universities, Winter 2011, Vol. 13, No. 1

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## Resources and Credits

The following documents and individuals informed and guided the development of *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors*. Resources on adult instruction of early childhood and afterschool professionals were researched and used to ensure both fields were fully included.

- National Afterschool Association: Core Competencies for Afterschool Trainers
- Pennsylvania Adult Teacher Competencies
- U.S. Department of Education: Instructor Competencies Assessment Instrument
- Florida Trainer Competencies and Training Standards
- Vermont's MATCH Competencies
- Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators ( NAEYC, 2004)
- Dialogue Education principles and practices (Jane Vella)  
<http://www.globallearningpartners.com/about/about-dialogue-education>
- Experiential Learning Cycle (David Kolb) <http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/experience.htm>
- Principles of Vermont's Professional Development System (2011)

The following individuals and groups were key developers and reviewers of this document:

Maureen Young  
Nancy Sugarman  
Sue Ryan  
Kim Buxton  
Sharon Adams  
Dianne Carter  
Doumina Noonan  
John Everest  
Kate Nicolet  
Sue Grenier  
Brenda Buzzell

Students in the *Voices of Learning: An interactive approach to adult learning and instructional design* class

Review Committees:

The Vermont Professional Preparation and Development Committee, the Vermont Think Tank

*"All training is strengthened by trusting and respectful interactions. Participants value each other as resources for learning, in addition to the training serving in the official leadership role."*

NAEYC early childhood education professional development: training, technical assistance, and adult education glossary (2012)



## Appendices

|  |             |
|--|-------------|
| Appendix A<br><i>Glossary of Terms</i>                   | pages 26-30 |
| Appendix B<br><i>Instructional Design Outline</i>        | pages 31-32 |
| Appendix C<br><i>Sample Instructional Design Outline</i> | pages 33-34 |
| Appendix D<br><i>Common Training Evaluation Form</i>     | page 35     |

*“The goal of any training session is to change the trainee’s on-the-job behavior. That goal is only met when the trainees have successfully mastered the knowledge and skills introduced and practiced during the training session.”*

Sharon Bergen *Best Practices for Training Early Childhood Professionals*  
Red Leaf Press (2009)

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## Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

### **Adult Instruction** (training, workshops, coursework)

Adult Instruction is a planned, documented, and interactive learning experience among adults. It is led by a qualified instructor to engage adults in meeting specific learning objectives. Adult instruction should use adult learning principles to be responsive to the needs and interests of the learners. The content of instruction should be based on current best practices and evidence-based research.

### **Adult Learning Principles**

Malcolm Knowles (1913-1997) was a pioneer in adult learning. He identified six basic adult learning principles:

1. Adults are autonomous and self-directed. They like to direct their own learning, to be actively involved in learning and work around their specific interests and personal goals.
2. Adults bring life experiences and knowledge to learning experiences. This may include work-related activities, family responsibilities, and previous education.
3. Adults are goal-oriented.
4. Adults are relevancy-oriented. They need to see a reason for learning something. When they see the applicability they also see the value in the experience. Theory needs to be related to practical experiences.
5. Adults are practical. They like to be able to apply their knowledge.
6. Adult learners like to be respected. They like to be treated as equals, to voice their own opinions and to have a role in directing their own learning.

### **Afterschool Professionals**

Afterschool professionals work with children and youth ages 5-21 in programs held before and after school as well as during the summer. Roles are diverse and can include educators, volunteers, students, artists, community members, sports coaches and others.

### **Andragogy**

This term is commonly defined as the methods used to teach adults. While there is not one set of characteristics that describe this term, it is useful to consider the unique needs of the adult learner. Although there are commonalities in how children and adults learn, the years of experience that adults bring to the classroom require their instructor to have additional knowledge and skills to be effective.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is the process of gathering and using information from multiple and diverse sources to determine the effectiveness or impact of an activity. Results of the assessment are used to understand and improve practices. In this document, assessment refers to an ongoing process the instructor uses to review feedback and reflect on his or her instruction, both while she is instructing and when it is over. In this document it is also referred to as evaluation.

### **Code of Ethical Conduct**

Professionals are expected to follow national standards for behavior and conduct for their field. The code is a written document that identifies the core values and principles, and serves as an ethical guide. There are two primary codes of ethical conduct referenced in this booklet, both created by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). They can be found on their website: [http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ethical\\_conduct](http://www.naeyc.org/positionstatements/ethical_conduct)

- Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment (NAEYC, 2011)
- Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators (NAEYC, 2004)

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## **Common Training Evaluation Form**

The Vermont Child Development Division with its partners created a common workshop evaluation form to help determine the impact of training and instructors on attendees. Results may be collated and submitted into a common, state-wide online data system which enables sponsors of training and funders to analyze the results. Participants in workshops complete this common evaluation form at the end of the training. The results are then shared with the instructor and entered into the database.

## **Competencies and Standards**

Professional competencies and standards are the commonly agreed on skills and knowledge required by those working in the early childhood and afterschool fields. They are the foundation of quality in a professional development system. They are relevant to many positions such as teacher, director, assistant, home visitor, coordinator, volunteer, provider, home visitor, or paraprofessional. They apply to those working in schools, child care centers, community-based organizations, child care homes, recreation programs and more. See Northern Lights Core Knowledge and Competencies, Vermont Agency of Education teacher and administrator standards, and standards for other professionals that work in the early childhood or afterschool fields.

## **Confidential**

Confidential information is private and has limits on how and when it can be disclosed to a third party. Maintaining confidentiality requires not disclosing information either overtly or inadvertently that can lead to the identification of an individual or disclosure of protected information about the person. There are legal definitions, policies and practices that inform and enforce confidentiality with children, families, colleagues, and individuals. (see Knowledge Area: Professionalism and Ethics in this document)

## **Core Competencies**

Core competencies are statements that define what professionals should know and do in a field. They detail the observable skills, knowledge and attitudes needed by professionals in order to provide high quality services. Competency statements are grouped into subheadings. The subheadings fall under Knowledge Areas.

## **Core Knowledge Areas**

There are five early childhood and afterschool Core Knowledge Areas that encompass Vermont's core competencies for early childhood and afterschool professionals:

1. Child and Youth Development
2. Families and Communities
3. Teaching and Learning/Curriculum and Learning Environments
4. Healthy and Safe Environments
5. Professionalism & Program Organization

The Core Knowledge Areas are the foundation for other knowledge areas & competencies. The early childhood and afterschool Core Knowledge and Competencies are on the Northern Lights website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

## **Dispositions**

Dispositions are usually defined as a person's character or tendency. In the field of education, the definition is expanded to include "a pattern of behavior that is directed toward a broad goal: habits of mind, rather than mindless habits" (Lillian Katz). Dispositions reflect a person's values, commitments and professional ethics and influence their behavior toward others, as well as their personal growth, learning and development. (National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education)

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## Early Childhood Professionals

Early childhood professionals include individuals who work with or on behalf of young children (from birth through age 8) and their families. It may include those who provide direct services, administer programs, or provide professional development. They share a mission of supporting children's development and learning in the context of the child's family. Roles may include home visitor, consultant, teacher, child care provider, early interventionist, college faculty, health and mental health provider, social workers, etc.

## Facilitation

Facilitation is a process of guiding and leading groups of adults to work collaboratively in order to accomplish their goals. A skilled facilitator has specific knowledge and competency to provide this service.

## F.E.R.P.A. Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

F.E.R.P.A. is a federal law that deals with privacy in schools. The law describes the rights afforded to students, including those in college, with respect to their educational records. These include the right to inspect and review their educational records, request amendment of records, and the right to limit disclosure of information from the records.

## Individual Professional Development Plan

An Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) is an action plan written by a professional to guide his or her future professional development. It has four parts:

- 1) a self-assessment with areas of strength and areas to grow;
- 2) specific goals based on the areas for growth;
- 3) strategies and resources to meet each goal; and
- 4) a timeline when each goal will be met.



Successful IPDPs show reflection by the writer and a pathway for professional development. There are different ways to categorize the knowledge and skills in the self-assessment section. Individual Professional Development Plans should be current, guiding the professional to continuously improve. IPDPs are a requirement of staff working in regulated early childhood and afterschool programs, and most professional roles also require a professional development plan. In Vermont, IPDPs are also a requirement in STARS (Step Ahead Recognition System for program quality), for individuals receiving a grant from the Child Development Division, or earning a certificate or credential from Northern Lights Career Development Center. Guidance, examples and IPDP forms can be found on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

## Instructors

Instructors teach groups of adults working with or on behalf of children, using content that is relevant to the early childhood or afterschool fields. In Vermont this content is in one or more of the five Core Knowledge Areas. Instructors have education and experience in the content they teach, knowledge and skills in adult learning and instructional design, and experience teaching adults.

## Instructor Levels

Instructors are approved to join the Instructor Registry at different levels. The levels are determined by completed education and amount of experience teaching adults in content areas relevant to early childhood and afterschool professionals. Formal training in adult learning and instructional design is also a requirement to stay in the Registry.

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## Instructor Qualification System

An Instructor Qualification System ensures that quality instruction is available statewide to individuals working with or on behalf of children in early childhood or afterschool programs. It has levels in order to both support new instructors and recognize current instructors.

## Instructor Registry

The Vermont Instructor Registry is a searchable online database of approved instructors teaching adults about the early childhood and afterschool fields. Its purpose is to:

- a) recognize qualified instructors;
- b) develop new instructors; and
- c) enable sponsors to find instructors teaching early childhood and afterschool professionals.

The Instructor Registry has levels determined by an individual's completed education and amount of experience teaching adults. Professionals apply on line and the review committee uses a consistent approval process to determine the individual's level on the Registry. The Instructor Registry is part of the Vermont Instructor Qualification System and the professional development system.

*"This (booklet) helps folks to understand the value of adult knowledge when they are preparing trainings and courses. It is helpful for an instructor who may be a visual learner to structure training that is relevant to guide learning."*

*- Instructor Approval Panel member*

## Learning Cycle

A learning cycle is a series of learning tasks designed by an instructor to meet one or more learning objectives. There are a number of different models of learning cycles, each of which describes a process that enables adults to learn and change. The elements of the cycle often include an infusion of new content or perspectives, an opportunity to interact and problem-solve, analysis of the new material or information, and consideration of how to apply the new learning in context outside of the session.

## Learning Objectives

Learning objectives are statements that include a verb, describing the action that the instructor wants the participants to achieve during the educational experience. Learning objectives most often begin with the words: "as a result of this training/course the participant will..." See the Northern Lights Career Development Center website for guidance and examples on writing achievable learning objectives: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

## Learning Task

A learning task is an activity planned by an instructor using different methods to maximize learning. It guides learners to reflect on their own experience; actively engage with the content; and practice applying it. The instructor considers and designs the learning task to the learner's own context.

## Methods of Instruction

There are many different methods of instruction used to meet the learning objectives. Instructors choose the most suitable methods based on the content, level of learner engagement and flow of the learning process. Instructors should use a combination of methods. Some common methods of instruction include lecture, discussion, demonstration, debate, role-playing, brainstorming, case study, problem-solving, etc.

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## **Principles of Vermont's Professional Development System**

The guiding principles of Vermont's professional development system were created by a broad group of early childhood and afterschool professionals in Vermont and adopted in 2011. They provide a framework for developing as well as evaluating Vermont's Professional Development System for early childhood and afterschool professionals. All the principles, and especially the second one, inform the development of the Instructor Qualification System, including the Instructor Registry and this document.

- Clear and Known
- Supportive of Professional Growth
- Research-based and Relevant
- Integrated and Aligned
- Accessible
- Financially Supported
- Evaluated on all of the above criteria

More information about the seven principles and how to use them is on the Northern Lights website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

## **Professional Development**

Professional development is a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare new professionals and to develop experienced professionals as they work with and on behalf of young children and their families. These opportunities lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of early childhood and afterschool professionals. Training or coursework is one form of professional development.

## **Sponsoring Organization**

The organization or individual that hires the instructor, hosts and/or promotes the training event or course.

## **Supporting Instructors**

Supporting Instructors are in the Vermont Instructor Registry at a level where they can instruct independently. Supporting Instructors are selected by emerging or less experienced instructors in the Instructor Registry to provide mentoring until the supported instructor meets the criteria for instructing independently. Supporting instructors provide guidance to other instructors by:

- a) reviewing and supporting the design of the training;
- b) observing instruction; and
- c) providing supportive feedback to the instructor after the training activity.

This process is repeated and adapted as the instructor being supported gains experience instructing adults.

## **Vermont's Common Training Evaluation Form**

Vermont's Common Training Evaluation Form is part of a statewide process to assess the quality of the trainings offered and the quality of the instruction. Sponsors of professional development for early childhood and afterschool professionals, and particularly those who receive funding from the Child Development Division are expected to use the common evaluation tool to evaluate their trainings. The results are shared with instructors. Sponsors collate the data into an online format which generates aggregated data that is used by sponsors and funders to assess the impact of instruction on learners and consider trends.

(see sample in this booklet)

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## Appendix B: Instructional Design Outline

This outline is designed for a single, face-to-face workshop. Additional information would be added if the training part was of a series or a course. Also find this outline on the Northern Lights Career Development Center website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

**Title of workshop:**

**Description:** *(As you would promote this training: who it is for, why they would be interested. You may include the learning objectives in this description)*

**Learning objectives:** *(Statement starting with an observable action, to be achieved within the time of the workshop; average 1 per hour of workshop)*

As a result of this workshop participants will:

| Materials | Setup of Room |
|-----------|---------------|
|           |               |

**Pre-Assessment of learner:**

*(Information you will collect from participants to learn about who they are and what they bring to and/or want from the training. Can be done as they walk in or before the training.)*

[illegible]

## Appendix C: Sample Instructional Design Outline

**Title of workshop:** Your Professional Development Journey

**Description:** Your professional development is a journey, and you need to know the lay of the land. If your roadmap isn't clear, then this workshop is for you! This workshop is for early childhood and afterschool professionals at all levels of experience and education. By the end of this workshop you will identify where you are in the professional development system and what your next steps might be. You will also be able to describe useful professional development resources and where to find them. Then you will be better prepared to take the next step in your road map - and to help others.

**Learning objectives:** As a result of this workshop participants will:

- Identify where they are in the professional development system and what their next steps might be
- Describe useful professional development resources and where to find them

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Materials</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easel, pad, markers, post-its</li> <li>• Easel paper with pre-assessment questions</li> <li>• Easel paper with Question 1</li> <li>• Easel paper with learning objectives posted</li> <li>• Resources booklets</li> <li>• NAEYC code of ethical conduct booklet</li> <li>• VELS booklet</li> </ul> Copies of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tree diagram</li> <li>• Website Table of Contents</li> <li>• Career ladder page and fact sheets</li> <li>• Copies of applications for career levels</li> <li>• Resource grid and financial resource table</li> </ul> | <b>Setup of Room</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small group tables</li> <li>• At each table: Intro page with learning objectives and definition of a professional, post-its and paper/pencils, candy at each table</li> <li>• Easel and paper</li> <li>• Pre-assessment by door</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

### Pre Assessment of learner:

Easel paper and marker for each person to mark as they walk in:

- Workplace settings (mark: afterschool, family child care, center-based, public school, other: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Role (mark: director, teacher, owner, other: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Years working in the field (# range from less than one to more than 10)

| Time / Objective | Activity  | Materials   | How Evaluate                        |
|------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| 15<br>Obj. 1     | <u>Welcome</u><br>Reflect with them on their answers to pre-assessment<br>Review learning objectives and agenda<br>Solicit the questions they want answered by this workshop<br>“What is a professional?” (See IPDP booklet inside cover) “Share with the person next to you, your answer to this question: I see myself as a professional because (or if not, why not)”<br>Recognize key questions and highlight important musings about this term. Reflect on booklets that provide the standards and guidance for the field. | Easel papers:<br>Learning objectives and question<br><br>Reference booklets | Level of participation & engagement |

| Time / Objective | Activity  | Materials   | How Evaluate  |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| 15<br>Obj. 1     | <p><u>Who are you as a professional:</u> tree diagram page</p> <p>If you as a professional are a tree:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is in your soil, what helped you grow? Brief discussion and then personal reflection, share in twos</li> <li>2. What got you started in this field? What was the seed?</li> <li>3. What successes have you had? How did you know you were being successful? (continue drawing tree as it grows; recognize that the soil and the seed are what helps you keep going and growing)</li> <li>4. What are your hopes and wishes for yourself as a professional — a future position?</li> </ol> <p>Share tree diagrams in twos. Connect to IPDP and definition of a professional on the initial sheet.</p>  | <p>Tree diagram handout and on easel</p> <p>Easel and paper</p> <p>IPDP booklet</p> | Engagement & participation  |
| 20<br>Obj. 1,2   | <p><u>What do you need to know and do in order to do your job?</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brainstorm individually, then call out</li> <li>• Sort into 5 competency areas (&amp; dispositions) as write on easel</li> <li>• Review the Core Knowledge Areas</li> <li>• Draw structure with subdomains and levels</li> <li>• Reflect on the importance of continuous learning in order to be effective as a professional</li> </ul> <p>“Consider your knowledge and skills in these five areas, and draw your own circle or shape showing where you think you have more or less knowledge and skills in each of the five areas.”</p> <p>“Which core knowledge area does this workshop fall into?”</p> <p>Introduce the Core Competency booklets; give time to review individually</p> | <p>Easel paper, individual paper</p> <p>Core comp booklets</p>                      | <p>Participation and sharing of circle drawings</p> <p>Written reflection: one thing I want to do with this information is: _____</p> |
| 30<br>Obj. 1,2   | <p><u>Career Pathways</u></p> <p>Walk through the early childhood and afterschool career pathways</p> <p>Introduce Career Advising Guide (CAG) as a resource, see the sections</p> <p>Address their questions</p> <p>Connect to the tree drawing — where they are and where they might go next</p>  | Career ladder fill in CAG   | Fill in sheet to ID where they are on Career Ladder and next level for them; or ID page in CAG  |
| 30<br>Obj. 2     | <p><u>What resources do you use? Need? To do what?</u></p> <p>(could do in groups and round robin report out and fill in needed resources)</p> <p>Financial</p> <p>Other professionals in the same job</p> <p>Information about how to apply for a credential</p> <p>Career advising help</p> <p>Share and describe where to find resources</p>   | NL website home page  | <p>Written resources</p> <p>Completed grid with</p> <p>a) resource</p> <p>b) for what</p>   |
| 10<br>Obj. 1,2   | <p><u>Reflection/Evaluation:</u></p> <p>“What are some resources you gained that you did not have before? How will you use them? What will you do with this information How would you explain the career pathways to others?”</p> <p>Assess meeting learning objectives. “Can you find Core Knowledge Areas on the documentation sheet you get at the end of this workshop?”</p>  |   | <p>Add to the reflection sheet: the learning objectives</p>   |

# Appendix D: Common Training Evaluation Form

## Vermont's Professional Development System for Early Childhood and Afterschool

Title of Training: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor Name(s) : \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

| <b>Please let us know how much you agree with the following statements regarding this training:</b> | <b>Disagree</b>                   | <b>Partially Agree</b> | <b>Fully Agree</b> |
|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| I gained new knowledge and/or perspective by attending this training.                               |                                   |                        |                    |
| I will apply what I learned in this training in my program.   |                                   |                        |                    |
| The instructor was clear about the objectives of the training.                                      |                                   |                        |                    |
| I would attend another training provided by this instructor.  |                                   |                        |                    |
| <b>Please rate how well each of the following training objectives were met:</b>                     | <b>Slightly Met or Not At All</b> | <b>Partially Met</b>   | <b>Fully Met</b>   |
| <i>As a result of this training, participants will:</i><br><i>Fill in Learning Objective 1:</i>     |                                   |                        |                    |
| <i>As a result of this training, participants will:</i><br><i>Fill in Learning Objective 2:</i>     |                                   |                        |                    |
| <b>Please let us know how much you agree with the following statements:</b>                         | <b>Disagree</b>                   | <b>Partially Agree</b> | <b>Fully Agree</b> |
| Overall, I liked this training.   |                                   |                        |                    |
| Attending this training was well worth my time and effort.  |                                   |                        |                    |

**As a result of this training, what is one thing you plan to do new or differently in your program?**

**Other comments, observations, suggestions? Please use the back of this form as needed.**

*Thank you for your feedback!*

# Vermont Instructor Qualifications and Registry

## for instructors of early childhood and afterschool professionals

The Instructor Qualification system is a pathway for professionals working as instructors, or seeking to be instructors of adults working in the early childhood and afterschool fields. The Instructor Registry lists approved Instructors in an online, searchable database. Instructors apply online to join the Registry. Applicant Levels in the Instructor Registry are based on:

- a. completed education, and how it relates to the Knowledge and Competencies<sup>2</sup>
- b. hours of experience teaching adults in Knowledge and Competency<sup>2</sup> topics

All instructors must have formal training in adult learning and instructional practices before they renew their Instructor Application (higher education faculty are an exception). Current or former faculty of a higher education institution use a streamlined application process.

| Type of Instructor   | Required Educational Background <sup>1</sup>   | Required Instructional Experience   | Function within the Instructor Registry   |
|----------------------|--|---|---|
| <b>Affiliate I</b>   | <sup>1</sup> Any level of completed education or related coursework in early childhood education, afterschool services or a related field  | 24 hours or less of adult instruction in the last 3 years   | Works with the support of a Master or Certified Instructor                                    |
| <b>Affiliate II</b>  | Associate Degree in early childhood education, afterschool services or a related field.<br><b>OR</b> Associate Degree in an unrelated field with a minimum of 9 related college credits and three years of experience in early childhood education or afterschool services.<br><b>OR</b> 21 related college credits and 3 years of experience in early childhood education or afterschool services | 25 hours or more of adult instruction in the last 3 years   | Works with the support of a Master or Certified Instructor                                    |
| <b>Certified</b>     | Bachelor Degree or above in early childhood education, afterschool services, or a related field.<br><b>OR</b> Bachelor Degree in an unrelated field with a minimum of 15 college credits and three years of experience in early childhood education or afterschool services.   | 25 hours or more of adult instruction in the last 3 years   | Offers instruction alone.<br>Supports Affiliate I, Affiliate II, and Specialist I Instructors |
| <b>Master</b>        | Master or Doctoral Degree in early childhood education, afterschool services or a related field  | 45 hours or more of adult instruction in the last 3 years<br><b>OR</b><br>45 hours or more teaching at an institution of higher education at any time | Offers instruction alone.<br>Supports Affiliate I, Affiliate II and Specialist I Instructors  |
| <b>Specialist I</b>  | Any level of education in a non-related field with specialization in a specific knowledge area   | 9 or fewer hours of adult instruction in the last 2 years   | Works with the support of a Master, Certified or Specialist II Instructor                     |
| <b>Specialist II</b> | Any level of education in a non-related field with specialization in a specific knowledge area   | 10 hours or more of adult instruction in the last 2 years   | Offers instruction alone  |

1. Minimum of a High School Diploma
2. Knowledge Areas: child or youth development; families and communities; healthy and safe environments; teaching and learning/curriculum; professionalism and program organization

Find the Instructor Registry: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

# **Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors**

*Working with Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals*

June 2015

A component of Vermont's Unified  
Professional Development System

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