



Competencies Tool for Program Directors

OF EARLY CHILDHOOD AND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMS

KNOWLEDGE AREA 1: Child and Youth Development

In guiding program staff, Program Directors need a strong understanding of how children and youth develop, various factors that influence child development, and how individual children's development varies.

COMPETENCIES	NEW	EMERGING	SOLID	COMMENTS
1.1	Identifies the biological, environmental, cultural, and social influences affecting children's growth and development from pre-natal through early adolescence.			
1.2	Identifies the milestones of children's physical, cognitive, language, aesthetic, social and emotional development.			
1.3	Designs and implements written policies for using appropriate positive child/youth guidance.			
1.4	Is responsive to the impact of biological and environmental influences on children's development.			
1.5	Assists staff in recognizing and responding to differences in children's temperament, developmental level and learning style.			

KNOWLEDGE AREA 2: Families and Communities

Programs need partnerships with families and with members of the community. Directors must know their families, advocate on their behalf, and build alliances to ensure that children and families have the opportunities they need to be successful.

COMPETENCIES		NEW	EMERGING	SOLID	COMMENTS
2.1	Identifies community services available to children and families, including education, health, mental health, nutrition, social services, and family support and can assist families in accessing these services.				
2.2	Develops collaborations with agencies and community resources to meet the needs of children and families.				
2.3	Maintains oversight of consultants, specialists, and community teams working on behalf of enrolled children and families.				
2.4	Provides comprehensive services that incorporate the cultural diversity of the community.				
2.5	Designs and use multiple strategies to involve families in the program.				
2.6	Explores key issues, barriers, and resources for working with families and local schools to develop school readiness and transition strategies.				
2.7	Models effective communication techniques and selects appropriate methods to build trusting relationships with children, staff and families.				
2.8	Implements administrative practices that promote the inclusion of children with special needs.				

KNOWLEDGE AREA 3: Teaching and Learning / Curriculum and Learning Environments

Directors must implement and sustain a culturally sensitive, non-discriminatory and inclusive learning environment based on principles of child and youth development and professional standards.

COMPETENCIES		NEW	EMERGING	SOLID	COMMENTS
3.1	Selects and implements curriculum based on principles of child development, best practices, and early learning and afterschool standards.				
3.2	Evaluates the implementation of curriculum by staff and volunteers.				
3.3	Selects appropriate informal and formal child/youth assessments and guides staff in their use.				
3.4	Uses child/youth assessments to guide and inform curriculum implementation.				
3.5	Plans and evaluates indoor and outdoor learning environments.				
3.6	Manages the purchase and maintenance of supplies, materials, and equipment.				
3.7	Establishes and maintains learning environments that are responsive to and meets the needs of children at different ages and developmental levels.				

KNOWLEDGE AREA 4: Healthy and Safe Environments

Keeping children and staff safe and healthy is a fundamental requirement of any facility. Directors must ensure that policies designed to promote sound health, safety, nutrition, and exercise practices are effectively implemented.

COMPETENCIES		NEW	EMERGING	SOLID	COMMENTS
4.1	Evaluates the facility and equipment for meeting county, state, and national standards of health and safety.				
4.2	Adheres to health and safety requirements and maintains necessary records as defined by state codes and regulations for children and staff.				
4.3	Develops and implement written policies and procedures to ensure a healthy and safe environment for children and staff.				
4.4	Develops and implements an emergency preparedness plan to include policies and procedures that address staff training, maintenance of emergency supplies and equipment, and the continuation of services.				
4.5	Develops procedures to ensure that state and federally mandated Child Abuse and Neglect regulations are followed.				
4.6	Assures that food served by the program provides variety and complies with nutritional standards and regulations.				
4.7	Plans and monitors a system for sanitary preparation and food service in compliance with all health regulations.				
4.8	Plans and monitors a system to ensure regular physical activity for all children.				

KNOWLEDGE AREA 5: Professionalism and Program Organization

Directors need a solid foundation in the principles of organizational management, including how to establish systems for smooth program functioning and how to manage staff to carry out the mission of the program.

	COMPETENCIES	NEW	EMERGING	SOLID	COMMENTS
5A	PROFESSIONALISM				
5A.1	Creates an inclusive, bias-free, and diverse environment that values respect, reflective thinking and an open exchange of professional ideas.				
5A.2	Establishes and follows effective communication and decision-making structures with program staff and stakeholders.				
5A.3	Employs effective skills in group process, team building, and conflict resolution.				
5A.4	Conducts ongoing program evaluations and includes input from families and staff.				
5A.5	Develops a strategic plan for the program and implements goals and objectives into daily practice.				
5A.6	Models and integrates the national code of ethical conduct into policies and practices.				
5A.7	Uses safe and effective technology for communications and program management.				
5A.8	Develops effective marketing strategies and materials using a variety of media.				
5A.9	Seeks out and engages in ongoing professional development and learning.				

KNOWLEDGE AREA 5: Professionalism and Program Organization (cont'd)

	COMPETENCIES	NEW	EMERGING	SOLID	COMMENTS
5B	FISCAL MANAGEMENT				
5B.1	Develops written fiscal policies and procedures following generally accepted business practices and basic accounting principles and assures compliance with applicable guidelines.				
5B.2	Develops and operates within a balanced budget.				
5B.3	Prepares and presents budget and business reports to appropriate entities.				
5B.4	Applies concepts of budgetary projection, including enrollment, tuition and late fee policies.				
5B.5	Develops a compensation structure and manages payroll.				
5B.6	Manages the purchase and maintenance of supplies, materials, and equipment.				
5B.7	Manages county, state, and federal reimbursement funds.				
5B.8	Identifies available financial resources at federal, state, and regional levels.				
5B.9	Engages in effective grant writing, grant management, and fiscal evaluation.				
5B.10	Develops and implements a fundraising plan driven by program needs and philosophy.				

KNOWLEDGE AREA 5: Professionalism and Program Organization (cont'd)

	COMPETENCIES	NEW	EMERGING	SOLID	COMMENTS
5C	LEGAL ISSUES				
5C.1	Adheres to all applicable federal, state, and county laws, codes, and regulations as they relate to: family law; child custody; confidentiality; child neglect and abuse; non-discriminatory practices; classroom ratios and class size; labor laws, Americans with Disabilities Act; Occupational Safety and Health Administration; IDEA, etc.				
5C.2	Complies with program policy, liability, and licensing regulations.				
5C.3	Implements strategies for working cooperatively with regulatory agencies.				

	COMPETENCIES	NEW	EMERGING	SOLID	COMMENTS
5D	PERSONNEL				
5D.1	Develops and implements written personnel policies that comply with applicable laws and regulations and align with best practices.				
5D.2	Develops and maintains staffing patterns that provide consistency and continuity of care.				
5D.3	Develops a system to manage and maintain personnel records.				
5D.4	Writes effective job descriptions using core competencies and uses these in recruiting, hiring, supervising, and evaluating personnel.				
5D.6	Creates a positive and proactive work environment that supports staff and volunteers.				
5D.7	Implements policies and procedures for recruiting, hiring, evaluating, and terminating staff.				
5D.8	Engages staff in developing and supporting the program's mission and philosophy.				
5D.9	Provides program orientation and ongoing professional development opportunities for staff and volunteers.				

KNOWLEDGE AREA 5: Professionalism and Program Organization (cont'd)

	COMPETENCIES	NEW	EMERGING	SOLID	COMMENTS
5E	LEADERSHIP				
5E.1	Articulates the program's vision, mission, and values, and create a culture built on norms of diversity, continuous improvement, and ethical conduct.				
5E.2	Defines problems, gathers data to inform decisions, and applies necessary skills to solve problems.				
5E.3	Engages in self-assessment, sets personal and professional goals, and models life-long learning				
5E.4	Participates in professional organizations at the local, state and national level.				
5E.5	Demonstrates leadership in self-selected initiatives at the local, state and national level.				
5E.6	Expands sphere of influence to bring needed change to the program, the community, and the profession.				
5E.7	Implements strategies to influence public policy on behalf of children/youth and families.				