

Priorities for Professional Development Offered to Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals in Vermont 2

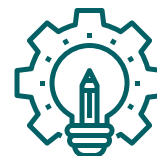
This document provides recommendations from the Building Bright Futures Professional Preparation and Development (BBF PPD) Committee about professional development opportunities in 2023-2025. The BBF PPD Committee encourages all organizations and groups who provide professional development to early childhood and afterschool professionals in Vermont to use these recommendations to inform their decisions.

1. OPPORTUNITIES ARE ACCESSIBLE IN CONTENT AND DELIVERY

Ensure professional development opportunities are accessible in both content and delivery. Consider the time, location, cost, modality, individual learning needs of participants, etc.

2. PRIORITIZE ADVANCED-LEVEL OPPORTUNITIES

Consider offering more professional development opportunities appropriate for experienced professionals, and explicitly identifying which opportunities are advanced. This may include offering trainings that assume prerequisite knowledge on a particular topic or pre-work completed in advance so the learning time can be focused on the advanced level.



3. PRIORITIZE MEETING ADVANCED SPECIALIZED CARE CRITERIA

Many professionals working in regulated early childhood and afterschool programs need at least six hours of professional development each year that meet the Advanced Specialized Care (ASC) criteria. Carefully review trainings you plan to offer and be sure to mark them as ASC if appropriate.

4. CONSIDER EMBEDDING COACHING OR COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE



Coaching, mentoring, and communities of practice offer a chance to practice new skills so participants can improve their practice. Embedding these wherever possible improves the value of the learning experience. Explore methods like Practice-Based Coaching.

5. EMBED DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION PRINCIPLES

Carefully review Vermont's Guiding Principles for the Full Participation of Each and Every Young Child and their Family and work with instructors to embed these concepts into professional development offerings. Ask instructors you hire how they incorporated the Guiding Principles into their trainings. Encourage instructors you hire to attend trainings related to embedding the Guiding Principles and diversity, equity, and inclusion principles into their professional development opportunities.

6. EMBED KEY CONCEPTS AND PRACTICES INTO OFFERINGS



- Using Research-based or research-informed training content
- The value of linking pedagogy to practice
- The value of developmentally appropriate practice
- The importance of play



7. ENSURE ALIGNMENT WITH SYSTEMS AND STANDARDS

Carefully review state systems and relevant standards for the participants of your professional development opportunities. Ensure your design aligns well with program standards, professional standards, and learning standards. See Appendix A for a list of the most common standards used in Vermont.



Program Standards

Program Standards are requirements early childhood programs must meet that help create environments where children are more likely to learn. They include standards like group size, staff-child ratios, and educator qualifications.



Professional Standards

Professional Standards are the essential knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practices required of professionals working with children birth through age 8 in early learning settings.



Learning Standards

Learning Standards are the knowledge, skills, and dispositions children gain through quality early childhood experiences, across all early learning settings.

8. COORDINATE WITH OTHER SPONSORS AND INSTRUCTORS

All sponsors are strongly encouraged to participate in the annual Professional Development Summit hosted by Northern Lights at CCV each summer. Consider partnering with other sponsors and public schools in your area to collectively hold professional development opportunities during identified professional development days.

9. CONSULT WITH YOUR NORTHERN LIGHTS RESOURCE ADVISOR

Northern Lights Resource Advisors can support sponsors and instructors with ensuring your professional development meets all criteria to count toward child care licensing requirements, determining if your training meets ASC criteria, and much more.

10. ENCOURAGE PARTICIPANTS TO CONTACT NORTHERN LIGHTS

Northern Lights Resource Advisors are available to provide career support, connect individuals working in the early childhood field to available resources, provide technical assistance with understanding professional development systems, and much more.

Training Levels

The BBF PPD Committee recommends professional development opportunities are available at multiple levels and in multiple content areas.

- **Introductory: Building Knowledge**
 - Provides an overview or basic understanding of the topic
 - Content is appropriate for individuals with no prior knowledge of this topic
- **Intermediate: Expanding Knowledge and Practicing Skills**
 - Provides opportunities to expand knowledge and to practice skills
 - Content is appropriate for individuals who already hold a basic understanding of the topic
- **Advanced: Applying Knowledge and Skills**
 - Provides opportunities to apply knowledge and skills and to engage deeply with a topic
 - Content is appropriate for individuals who already hold strong knowledge of the topic

Unified Core Knowledge Areas

Professionals working in early childhood and afterschool settings in Vermont use different sets of professional standards to guide their work. Northern Lights at CCV explored the various professional standards documents used by early childhood and afterschool professionals in Vermont. The professional standards documents used most regularly in Vermont include:

Professional Standards Documents

- AOE Early Childhood Education Competencies
- Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education Standards
- NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators
- NAA Core Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals

Usage in Vermont

- ◆ Educators licensed by AOE
- ◆ Early Interventionists
Early Childhood Special Educators
- ◆ Early Childhood Educators working in public or private settings
- ◆ Afterschool Professionals

Northern Lights at CCV used the core knowledge areas and standards outlined in these professional standards documents to establish Vermont's Unified Core Knowledge Areas.

1 Child Development and Learning

2 Family and Community Partnerships

3 Developmentally Appropriate and Inclusive Practices

4 Curriculum and Learning Environments

5 Observation and Assessment

6 Professionalism and Ethical Practice

7 Youth Engagement, Voice, and Choice

8 Safety and Wellness

9 Program Planning and Development

The supplemental core knowledge areas above are included in the professional standards for afterschool professionals. These knowledge areas may also be relevant to early childhood professionals depending on their role, but are not included in the early childhood standards referenced above.

1 Child Development and Learning

- Early Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- Supporting Children with Diverse Needs including Inclusion
- Adverse Childhood Experiences and Brain Development
- Social-Emotional Development and Learning
- Trauma Informed Practice including responding to challenging behaviors
- Attachment

2 Family and Community Partnerships

- Basic Specialized Care
- Strengths-Based Family Partnerships
- Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse
- Supporting Families Impacted by SUD
- Strengthening Families Framework
- Working with Families Experiencing Homelessness

3 Developmentally Appropriate and Inclusive Practices

- Anti-Bias and Cultural Competency
- Working with Multi-age Groups of Children
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- Advancing Equity

4 Curriculum and Learning Environments

- STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Mathematics)
- Vermont Early Learning Standards
- PITC or RIE
- Nature-Based Learning
- Play Theory, Supporting High Quality Play
- Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Waldorf, Froebel

5 Observation and Assessment

- Child Observation
- ASQ, ASQ-SE
- TPOT
- Teaching Strategies GOLD

6 Professionalism and Ethical Practice

- Effective Partnership and Collaboration
- Leadership and Advocacy
- Mentoring, Coaching, Consulting
- Understanding explicit and implicit bias
- Professionalism and Ethics (NAEYC Code of Ethical Practice)
- Reflective Practice
- Reflective Supervision

7 Youth Engagement, Voice, and Choice

- Workforce Development
- Other

8 Safety and Wellness

- Emergency Preparedness
- First Aid and CPR
- Medication Administration
- Nutrition and Physical Activity
- Farm to ECE
- Social Determinants of Health

9 Program Planning and Development

- Effective Business Practices
- Staff Supervision and Support
- CQI and Program Improvement Planning
- Balancing Work and Family
- Grant Writing
- Planning with Data

Additional Suggestions and Considerations:

- Compare what is Federally required re: health and safety before finalizing this document
- Opportunities to learn from EC Mental Health Clinicians (screening tools, practices, internships)
- There are many ways of referring to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work and the terminology is frequently changing. Are there recommendations for the most user-friendly and appropriate language to use in this document?
- Ensure connection to STARS and PDG
- Include recommendation around scaffolding content / prioritizing training series' rather than "one and done"
- NAEYC Advancing Equity work
- The need for TA / follow up support after a training
- Any additional PD-related recommendations we might make related preventing suspension and expulsion