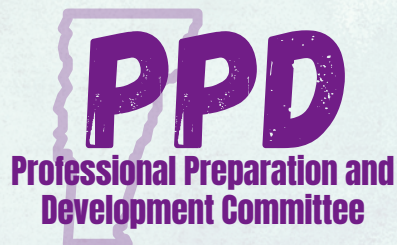




# Professional Development Recommendations 2023-2025



# Why Professional Preparation and Development?

Professional preparation and ongoing professional development is essential to providing high-quality early childhood and afterschool learning experiences. Professional preparation, also referred to as "preservice", refers to education and training a person engages in prior to beginning a position in the early childhood or afterschool workforce. Ongoing professional development or "in-service" refers to the education and training a person engages in to enhance their skills and knowledge related to their practice as a member of the early childhood or afterschool field.<sup>1</sup>

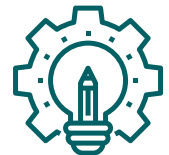
Professional development is a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work. These opportunities lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of early childhood and afterschool professionals.<sup>2</sup>

## Effective Professional Development

Effective professional development can be defined as "structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes." Based on an extensive literature review, the Learning Policy Institute identified seven features of effective professional development.<sup>3</sup>

### EFFECTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

- **IS CONTENT FOCUSED**
- **INCORPORATES ACTIVE LEARNING**
- **SUPPORTS COLLABORATION**
- **USES MODELS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE**
- **PROVIDES COACHING AND EXPERT SUPPORT**
- **OFFERS FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION**
- **IS OF SUSTAINED DURATION**



### References:

1. Early Childhood Education Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance Glossary (2011) Retrieved from: [https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/glossarytraining\\_ta.pdf](https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/glossarytraining_ta.pdf)
2. Retrieved from: <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pd>
3. Effective Teacher Professional Development (2017) Retrieved from: [https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Effective\\_Teacher\\_Professional\\_Development\\_REPORT.pdf](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Effective_Teacher_Professional_Development_REPORT.pdf)

# Creating Effective Professional Development

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.

## **FOCUS ON CONTENT**

Use research-based or research-informed content. Actively link content to the Vermont Early Learning Standards. Highlight the value of linking pedagogy to practice. Prioritize implementation of developmentally appropriate practice. Focus on the importance of play.

## **INCORPORATE ACTIVE LEARNING**

Use adult learning principles to engage participants directly in designing and trying out teaching strategies. Use interactive activities and leverage participants' existing knowledge to provide highly contextualized learning.

## **SUPPORT COLLABORATION**

Create space for participants to share ideas and collaborate in their learning. Embed strategies like communities of practice to facilitate collective learning. Think carefully about the needs of your audience so participants can engage effectively. Consider the time, location, cost, modality, and individual learning needs of participants.

## **USE MODELS OF EFFECTIVE PRACTICE**

Embed examples of high quality curriculum and instruction into learning opportunities. Include sample student work, observations of peers, and video or written reflections.

## **PROVIDE COACHING AND EXPERT SUPPORT**

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.

Consider consulting with professionals in your community as instructors or special guests for professional development opportunities. These may include early childhood mental health clinicians, Strong Families Vermont professionals and more.

## **OFFER FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION**

Ensure opportunities provide space for regular reflection. Create opportunities for participants to receive feedback on their work with an eye toward improving practice.

## **OFFER OPPORTUNITIES OF SUSTAINED DURATION**

Educators are more likely to embed their learning into practice when they have adequate time to practice and embed the learning. Think about how you can scaffold content and prioritize training series' or communities of practice to promote change in practice.

# 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

## Usage in Vermont

AOE Early Childhood Education Competencies	↔	Educators licensed by AOE
Early Intervention / Early Childhood Special Education Standards	↔	Early Interventionists Early Childhood Special Educators
NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators	↔	Early Childhood Educators working in public or private settings
NAA Core Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals	↔	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.

## Linking Professional Standards to Learning Standards



In Vermont, the learning standards for children birth through age 8 are the Vermont Early Learning Standards. They include the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for young children at various ages and developmental stages. These standards are relevant in all early education and a majority of regulated afterschool settings.

<b>VELS I: DEVELOPING SELF</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approaches to Learning</li><li>• Social and Emotional Learning and Development</li><li>• Growing, Moving, and Being Healthy</li></ul>
<b>VELS II: COMMUNICATION AND EXPRESSION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Language Development</li><li>• Literacy Development</li><li>• Creative Arts and Expression</li></ul>
<b>VELS III: LEARNING ABOUT THE WORLD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mathematics</li><li>• Science</li><li>• Social Studies</li></ul>

The BBF PPD Committee recommends professional development opportunities are available at multiple levels (introductory, intermediate, and advanced) and in multiple content areas. The following content recommendations are organized by Unified Core Knowledge Area and any that link to the VELs are noted as such.

## 1 Child Development and Learning

- Social and Emotional Learning and Development (VELS I)
- Motor Development and Coordination (VELS I)
- Language Development (VELS II)
- Trauma Informed Practices including Responding to Challenging Behaviors
- Attachment and Co-Regulation

## 2 Family and Community Partnerships

- Strengthening Families Framework and Strengths-Based Family Partnerships
- Basic Specialized Care and Advanced Specialized Care topics
- Supporting Families Experiencing Homelessness
- Supporting Families Impacted by Substance Use Disorders

## 3 Developmentally Appropriate and Inclusive Practices

- Approaches to Learning (VELS I)
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice
- Advancing Equity; Anti-Bias and Cultural Competency
- Supporting Children with Diverse Needs
- Pyramid Model and Early Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
- Strategies for Working with Multi-Age Groups of Children

## 4 Curriculum and Learning Environments

- Literacy Development (VELS II)
- Creative Arts and Expression (VELS II)
- Mathematics, Science, Social Studies (VELS III)
- Nature-Based Learning
- Supporting High Quality Play and Play Theory
- Approaches and Curricula including Reggio Emilia, Montessori, Waldorf, Froebel
- Program for Infant Toddler Care (PITC) or Resources for Infant Educators (RIE)

## 5 Observation and Assessment

- Child Observation and Assessment
- Program Assessment and Continuous Quality Improvement
- Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) and ASQ: Social Emotional (ASQ:SE-2)
- Teaching Strategies GOLD
- Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT)
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

## 6 Professionalism and Ethical Practice

- Professionalism and Ethics
- Reflective Practice and Reflective Supervision
- Effective Partnership and Collaboration
- Mentoring, Advising, Coaching, Consulting (MATCH)
- Understanding Explicit and Implicit Bias

## 7 Youth Engagement, Voice, and Choice

## 8 Safety and Wellness

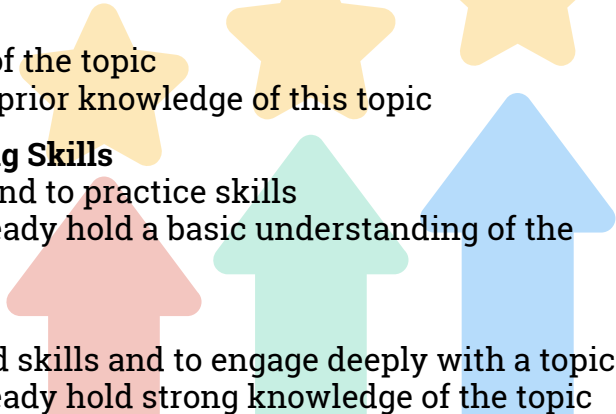
- Health and Safety Practices (VELS I)
- First Aid and CPR, Medication Administration, Emergency Preparedness
- Nutrition and Physical Activity including Farm to Early Care and Education Programming
- Social Determinants of Health

## 9 Program Planning and Development

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

## 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
- 

## Additional Resources

- [Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education.](#)
- [Northern Lights Resource Advisors.](#)
- Program Standards, Professional Standards, Learning Standards (see page 7)
- [Strong Families Vermont.](#)
- [Vermont Advanced Specialized Care Criteria.](#)
- [Vermont's Guiding Principles for Supporting Each and Every Young Child and Family's Full and Equitable Participation.](#)

# Types of Standards



## Program Standards

Program Standards are requirements early childhood or afterschool 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 and afterschool settings.

## Standards Frequently Used in Vermont

### PROGRAM STANDARDS

- [Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations.](#)
- [Head Start Program Performance Standards.](#)
- [Vermont Education Quality Standards.](#)
- [Individuals with Disabilities Act, Part B and Part C.](#)
- [Vermont Prekindergarten Education Rules.](#)
- [STep Ahead Recognition System \(STARS\) Standards.](#)

### PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- [Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators.](#)
- [Core Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals.](#)
- [Early Interventionist / Early Childhood Special Educator Standards.](#)
- Under Development: Agency of Education Early Childhood Education Competencies

### PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

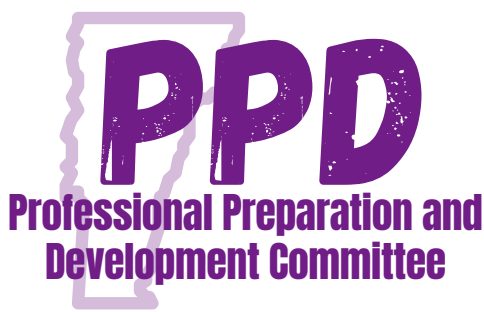
- [Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework.](#)
- [Vermont Early Learning Standards.](#)

# About This Document

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.

Draft recommendations were created in 2023 based on national and Vermont-specific data and reports and were reviewed and vetted by stakeholders in May and June 2023. Stakeholder feedback was reviewed by members of the BBF PPD Committee and incorporated into the final recommendations.

All BBF PPD Committee meetings are open to the public. For more information about upcoming meetings and past documents and meeting notes, visit:  
<https://northernlightscv.org/resources/vermonts-ecpd-system/ppd/>



## MISSION

Created July, 2005  
Revised March 2012

The mission of the Building Bright Futures Professional Preparation and Development Committee is to develop, coordinate, and promote a comprehensive system of quality learning opportunities for current and prospective early childhood and afterschool professionals.

The BBF PPD Committee

- Aligns professional development initiatives into a coordinated system
- Advocates for resources and improvements to the system
- Uses the Guiding Principles for Vermont's Early Childhood Professional Development System (ECPDS) to guide operations

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Vermont's professional development system for the early childhood and afterschool workforce is:

1. Clear and known
2. Supportive of professional growth
3. Research-based and relevant
4. Integrated and aligned
5. Accessible
6. Financially supported
7. Evaluated on all of the above criteria