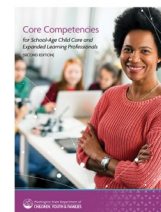


Using the Core Competencies

Washington state has Core Competencies for [early care](#) and [school-age](#) professionals.

The competencies are important because they:

- Define what professionals need to know and do
- Serve as foundation for decisions and practices
- Establish a set of standards for professionalism



Why Are They Important to Trainers?

All professionals need in-service hours to complete professional development requirements for their role. By using the core competencies, trainers make sure that they are choosing topics that build knowledge and skills to support quality care for children and youth.

The core competencies tell participants what the training will cover and help them make informed choices about their learning.

How Are the Core Competencies Organized?

The [Core Competencies](#) are separated into [Content Areas](#). Here is an example of the early learning content areas:



The school-age competencies have similar content areas, with two additional areas related to Racial Equity and Cultural Responsiveness and Youth Empowerment.

Some Core Competencies Have Subcategories. They are used to organize knowledge and skills in content areas that cover many different topics.

All Core Competencies Are Leveled. The levels range from basic to advanced, and they are designed to build on one another. All of the levels have indicators that capture the knowledge and skills that professionals should develop.

VII PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Program Planning and Evaluation

LEVEL 1

- a. Behaves as a responsible staff member and participates in the program team.
- b. Keeps appropriate records.
- c. Complies with program policies and state child care licensing rules and laws.

LEVEL 2

- a. Supports the program mission statement.
- b. Organizes plans, keeps records, and communicates with families and staff effectively.
- c. Develops unit plans and curriculum for the classroom.
- d. Selects appropriate equipment and material for practice.
- e. Writes objectives and goals for activities.
- f. Uses available resources to ensure an effective operation.
- g. Assists in gathering information for evaluation.

LEVEL 3

- a. Verbalizes the relationship between the program's philosophy and daily practice.
- b. Plans parent orientations and education programs.
- c. Plans and acquires appropriate equipment and materials for the program.
- d. Participates in strategic planning and goal setting for the program.
- e. Conducts program observations.
- f. Recognizes the importance of evaluation, assisting in evaluating program's effectiveness.

LEVEL 4

- a. Applies knowledge of federal, state, and local legislation, regulations, and professional standards to provide healthy and safe practices for infants and toddlers.*
- b. Develops curriculum for program.
- c. Manages program resources (financial, personnel, time) effectively.
- d. Demonstrates the ability to organize and operate various types of early care and education programs.
- e. Communicates effectively with board/advisory groups.
- f. Identifies evaluation methods and understands their limitations.



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How to Select the Appropriate Core Competency for the Training

You can use this step-by-step process to identify the appropriate core competency content areas(s) and level for your training. A training can cover multiple core competency content

areas. In order for a core competency to be assigned, the training content must be a minimum of one hour.

1. Identify your training audience and learning objectives
2. Select the appropriate core competency document ([early learning](#); [school-age](#))
3. Review the descriptions of the content areas and select a match
4. Go to those sections and find which sub-category(ies) connect with your objectives
5. Review the indicators and select the level(s) that connect with your objectives
6. Use these competency areas and levels when you enter the training template in MERIT

Tip for Entering Training in MERIT

Make sure that you have permission to train in the content area(s) and level before you enter information into the training template. You can only train in the core competency areas and levels you are approved in. You can find this information on the state-approved trainer tab in MERIT.

Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the Professional Development Team at training@dcyf.wa.gov.