



NAEYC's Position Statements References to Professional Development*

Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria

Program Standard 10: The program effectively implements policies, procedures, and systems that support stable staff and strong personnel, fiscal, and program management so all children, families, and staff have high-quality experiences.

Topic Area: Personnel Policies

10.E.10 An individual professional development plan is generated from the staff-evaluation process and is updated at least annually and ongoing as needed.

10.E.11 The program has an implementation plan for professional development, including orientations for new staff. Credit-bearing course work is included in the professional development plan whenever possible. The plan improves staff credentials and competencies. It is updated at least annually or as needed based on the evaluation process, the need to keep staff's knowledge current, or other identified needs.

10.E.12 The program's professional development plan

- a) is based on needs identified through staff evaluation and from other information from program evaluation processes.
- b) is written and shared with staff.
- c) includes mentoring, coaching, and other professional development opportunities for all staff.
- d) includes discussions of ethical issues.
- e) includes training in the policies and procedures of the program.
- f) includes training in skills for building positive relationships, all aspects of the curriculum, teaching practices, skills for partnering with families and communities, and skills for collaborating and participating as a member of a team.

DRAFT NAEYC Professional Preparation Standards

Standard 1. Promoting Child Development and Learning

Students prepared in early childhood degree programs are grounded in a child development knowledge base. They use their understanding of young children's characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children's development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child.

Standard 2. Building Family and Community Relationships

Students prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children's families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children's families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children's development and learning.

Standard 3. Observing, Documenting, and Assessing to Support Young Children and Families

Students prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that child observation, documentation, and other forms of assessment are central to the practice of all early childhood professionals. They know about and understand the goals, benefits, and uses of assessment. They know about and use systematic observations, documentation, and other effective assessment strategies in a responsible way, in partnership with families and other professionals, to positively influence the development of every child.

Standard 4. Using Developmentally Effective Approaches to Connect with Children and Families

Students prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children's ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Students know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child's development and learning.

These methods include:

- Fostering oral language and communication
- Making the most of the environment and routines
- Capitalizing on incidental teaching
- Focusing on children's characteristics, needs, and interests
- Linking children's language and culture to the early childhood program
- Teaching through social interactions
- Creating support for play
- Addressing children's challenging behaviors
- Supporting learning through technology
- Using integrative approaches to curriculum

Standard 5. Using Content Knowledge to Build Meaningful Curriculum

Students prepared in early childhood degree programs use their knowledge of academic disciplines to design, implement, and evaluate experiences that promote positive development and learning for each and every young child. Students understand the importance of developmental domains and academic (or content) disciplines in early childhood curriculum. They know the essential concepts, inquiry tools, and structure of content areas, including academic subjects, and can identify resources to deepen their understanding. Students use their own knowledge and other resources to design, implement, and evaluate meaningful, challenging curriculum that promotes comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes for every young child.

Early Childhood curriculum content includes:

- Learning goals, experiences and assessment in academic disciplines or content areas including: language and literacy; the arts—music, creative movement, dance, drama, and visual arts; mathematics; science; physical activity, physical education, health and safety; and social studies
- Comprehensive developmental and learning outcomes: security and self-regulation; problem-solving and thinking skills; academic and social competence

Standard 6. Becoming a Professional

Students prepared in associate degree programs identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.

Code of Ethical Conduct

Ethical Responsibilities to Colleagues

- Ideal 3A.3—To support co-workers in meeting their professional needs and in their professional development.

Ethical Responsibilities to Employees

- Principle 3C.2—We shall provide staff members with safe and supportive working conditions that honor confidences and permit them to carry out their responsibilities through fair performance evaluation, written grievance procedures, constructive feedback, and opportunities for continuing professional development and advancement.

Ethical Responsibilities to Community & Society

- Ideal 4.8—To further the professional development of the field of early childhood care and education and to strengthen its commitment to realizing its core values as reflected in this Code.

Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Adult Educators (joint supplement by NAEYC, NAECTE, & ACCESS)

Ethical Responsibilities to Adult Learners

Our work is always guided by the core values of the field of early care and education, including our commitment to ensuring the welfare of children. From that perspective we prioritize the unique commitments of early childhood adult educators and acknowledge that our day-to-day responsibilities focus primarily on the professional development of adult learners.

Ethical Responsibilities to Practicum Sites

Some knowledge and skills needed by early childhood educators can only be acquired through direct experience in early childhood settings. Therefore, early childhood adult educators rely heavily on placements in programs (practicum sites) in which students can apply what they have learned, get feedback from children and adults, and reflect on what they have learned from their experience.

Ethical Obligations to Institutions of Higher Learning and Agencies Providing Training

Our primary responsibility to our employers is the development of knowledge and skill in adult learners. This work is intended to further our ultimate commitment to the welfare and development of young children.

Ethical Responsibilities Regarding Colleagues

The work of the early childhood adult educator involves interaction and collaboration with colleagues. Our professional responsibility to colleagues is to maintain positive and productive working relationships

Ethical Responsibilities to Children and Families

Because those we train have a direct impact on children's lives, early childhood adult educators have some additional responsibilities to children and families above and beyond what is set forth in the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

Ethical Responsibilities to Community, Society, and the Field of Early Childhood Education

Early childhood adult educators have extensive knowledge, expertise, and education and often have a profound impact on the field of early childhood education in their communities. Because of this leadership role they have responsibilities to community, society, and the field of early childhood education above and beyond what is expected of those who work in programs serving young children.

Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Program Administrators

Ethical responsibilities to personnel

Early childhood program administrators are managers with the responsibility for providing oversight for all program operations, as well as serving as leaders in early care and education programs. They are responsible for creating and maintaining a caring, cooperative workplace that respects human dignity, promotes professional satisfaction, and models positive relationships. Administrators must exemplify the highest possible standards of professional practice both within and beyond the program. Ethical responsibilities to personnel include those that are related to working with staff they supervise and/or employ as well as the unions or groups that represent these staff.

- Ideal 3.3—To coach and mentor staff, helping them realize their potential within the field of early care and education.
- Ideal 3.4—To strive to secure adequate and equitable compensation (salary and benefits) for those who work with or on behalf of young children.
- Ideal 3.5—To encourage and support continual development of staff in becoming more skilled and knowledgeable practitioners.
- Principle 3.8—We shall work to ensure that ongoing training is available and accessible, represents current understandings of best practice, and is relevant to staff members' responsibilities.
- Principle 3.9—We shall inform staff whose performance does not meet program expectations of areas of concern and, when possible, assist in improving their performance. (P-3C.4)
- Principle 3.10—We shall provide guidance, additional professional development, and coaching for staff whose practices are not appropriate. In instances in which a staff member cannot satisfy reasonable expectations for practice, we shall counsel the staff member to pursue a more appropriate position.

Early Learning Standards (joint position statement with NAECS/SDE)

- Significant expansion of professional development is essential if all early childhood teachers and administrators are to gain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to implement early learning standards.
- The K–12 experience has shown that even the best-designed standards have minimal benefit when there is minimal investment in professional development, high-quality assessment tools, program or school resources, and a well-financed education system.
- Efforts to create early learning standards must be accompanied by in-depth professional development, coaching, and mentoring for teachers, administrators, and teacher educators—not just about the standards themselves, but also about the appropriate curriculum, teaching strategies, relationships, and assessment tools that together make up a systematic approach to improving outcomes for all children.

Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation (joint position statement with NAECS/SDE)

- Professional development is key to effective child assessment.
- To assess young children’s strengths, progress, and needs, use assessment methods that are developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive, tied to children’s daily activities, supported by professional development, inclusive of families, and connected to specific, beneficial purposes: (1) making sound decisions about teaching and learning, (2) identifying significant concerns that may require focused intervention for individual children, and (3) helping programs improve their educational and developmental interventions.
- Provide the support, professional development, and other resources to allow staff in early childhood programs to implement high-quality curriculum, assessment, and program evaluation practices and to connect those practices with well-defined early learning standards and program standards.
- Extended professional development, often with coaching or mentoring, is a key to effective curriculum implementation.
- Although not replacing formal education, ongoing professional development is another key to helping staff implement evidence-based, effective curriculum and assessment systems for all children, responding to children’s diverse needs, cultures, languages, and life situations.
- All staff—paraprofessionals as well as teachers and administrators—need access to professional development and to professional time and opportunities for collaboration that enable them to develop, select, implement, and engage in ongoing critique of curriculum and assessment practices that meet young children’s learning and developmental needs.
- Even well-qualified staff need ongoing, job-embedded professional development to help them better understand the curriculum, adapt curriculum to meet the learning needs of culturally and linguistically diverse children and children with disabilities, and design more effective approaches to working with all children.
- Resources beyond early education settings (for example, community cultural and civic resources such as arts organizations and libraries) can be tapped to supplement and enrich staff professional development opportunities.
- For administrators, intensive and ongoing professional development is essential—often participating in the same training provided to staff to create a shared frame of reference. This professional development needs to address administrators’ varied backgrounds, work settings, and needs.

Supplement on Screening and Assessment of Young English-Language Learners

- Resources should be invested to expand the knowledge base; develop more and better assessments; increase the number of bilingual, bicultural professionals; and create professional development opportunities in effective assessment of young English-language learners.
- Early childhood professionals, including program administrators, receive ongoing opportunities for professional development and support in the area of assessing young English language learners.
- Resources should be invested to ensure rapid progress on several fronts: [including] creating professional development opportunities for administrators, supervisors, practitioners, and other stakeholders in effective assessment of young English-language learners.
- Early childhood professionals, including program administrators, [should] receive ongoing opportunities for professional development and support in the area of assessing young English-language learners. Professional development opportunities in the form of workshops, conference sessions, college courses, and distance-learning activities should be developed, widely accessible, and linked to incentives for participation.

Early Childhood Mathematics: Promoting Good Beginnings (joint position statement with NCTM)

- To support high-quality mathematics education, institutions, program developers, and policymakers should create more effective early childhood teacher preparation and continuing professional development in mathematics. ...both pre service education and continuing professional development experiences need to place greater emphasis on encouraging teachers' own enjoyment and confidence, building positive mathematical attitudes and dispositions.
- Credit hours or yearly training requirements do little or nothing unless the content and delivery of professional development are designed to produce desired outcomes for teachers and children.
- Effective professional development, whether preservice or inservice, should also model the kind of flexible, interactive teaching styles that work well with children.
- Preservice and inservice professional development presents somewhat differing challenges. In preservice education, the major challenge is to build a sound, well-integrated knowledge base about mathematics, young children's development and learning, and classroom practices. ...inservice professional development needs to move beyond the one-time workshop to deeper exploration of key mathematical topics as they connect with young children's thinking and with classroom practices.
- Inservice professional development in mathematics appears to have the greatest impact on teacher learning if it incorporates six features: teacher networking or study groups; sustained, intensive programs; collective participation of staff who work in similar settings; content focused both on what and how to teach; active learning techniques; and professional development as part of a coherent program of teacher learning. Innovative and effective professional development models may use a variety of research-based approaches.
- Innovative and effective professional development models may use a variety of research-based approaches. In addition, classroom-based inquiry, team teaching by mathematics and early childhood education specialists, discussion of case studies, and analysis of young children's work samples tend to strengthen teachers' confidence and engagement in early childhood mathematics.

- School-district-sponsored professional development activities that include participants from community child care centers, family child care, and Head Start programs along with public school kindergarten/primary teachers would build coherence and continuity for teachers and for children's mathematical experiences.

Learning to Read and Write (joint position statement with IRA)

- IRA and NAEYC strongly recommend that the following policies be developed and adequately funded at the appropriate state or local levels: A comprehensive, consistent system of early childhood professional preparation and ongoing professional development.
- [A] literacy focus should be embedded within a systematic approach to all aspects of professional development for everyone who works with young children.

Responding to Linguistic and Cultural Diversity

- Competence is further enhanced by professional development in language acquisition, working with diverse families, cross-cultural communication, and other critical content.

* Note: All NAEYC position statements, including the Standards for Professional Preparation Programs, can be downloaded from the NAEYC Website: <http://www.naeyc.org/about/positions.asp>. The NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria are available online at: <http://www.naeyc.org/academy/standards/>.