



Core Cross Disciplinary Early Childhood Competency Areas

The Early Childhood Personnel Center (ECPC) was funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) at the U.S. Department of Education to provide technical assistance to state systems of early childhood intervention and Institutions of Higher Education (IHE) on issues related to personnel development. One initiative of the ECPC has been to collaborate with professional organizations to identify core cross disciplinary competencies for all personnel serving infants and young children age birth to five with disabilities and their families.

Over the past four years the seven national organizations representing disciplines providing services in early childhood have been participating in this initiative: the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA); the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA); the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA); the Council of Exceptional Children (CEC) and the Division of Early Childhood (DEC), the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC); and ZERO TO THREE.

Each of these organizations provided the most recent description(s) of their personnel standards or competency areas (specific to their discipline) to the ECPC. A comparison was done across each of these documents (see **Appendix A**) to identify common areas of competence across all disciplines.

Collaboration and Coordination Family Centered Practice Interventions as Informed by Evidence Professionalism and Ethics

The frequency of all competencies across the core early childhood competency areas is on **Table 1**, and sample items that appeared in at least two discipline documents are listed on **Table 2**.

Representatives from each of the seven professional organizations reviewed the competency areas and sub-areas and will be presenting these core early childhood competency areas for approval to each of their respective organizations.

The ECPC will create guides and exemplars of practice to demonstrate the core cross disciplinary early childhood competency areas for use by professional organizations, Institutions of Higher Education and State Systems of Early Childhood Personnel Development.

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TABLE 1. Personnel Standards by Cross Disciplinary Early Childhood Personnel Competency Areas

Organization	Number of Items	Cross Disciplinary Personnel Competency Areas			
		Collaboration & Coordination	Family Centered Practice	Instruction/ Intervention	Professionalism
Total	752	98 (13%)	149 (29%)	406(54%)	99 (13%)
AOTA	40	6	1	20	13
APTA	40	11	8	17	4
ASHA	263	36	42	163	22
CEC	35	4	4	21	6
DEC	80	10	12	50	8
NAEYC	24	0	4	12	8
ZTT	270	31	78	123	38

TABLE 2. Cross Disciplinary Early Childhood Personnel Competency Areas and Sub-Areas

COORDINATION & COLLABORATION	FAMILY CENTERED PRACTICE	INTERVENTION AS INFORMED BY EVIDENCE	PROFESSIONALISM
Effective Communication	Communicating with Families	Accommodations & Adaptations	Administrative Leadership
General Teaming	Cultural, Linguistic and Socioeconomic Competency	Assessment	Advocacy/Public Awareness
Leading a Team	Family Involvement in Assessment	Communicating & Interpreting Assessment Results	Ethics
Medical Home	Family Systems Theory	Evidence Based Practice	Knowledge of the Field
Problem Solving	Laws & Policies	Health & Safety	Laws, Policies & Practice Standards
Resource & Referral	Parent Education in Child Development & Interventions	IEP/IFSP Intervention	Professional Development & Self-Reflection
Role as a Consultant	Parent Partnership, Advocacy & Help-Giving	Knowledge of Risk Factors & Atypical Child	Supervision
Teaming with Families	Parent/Caregiver Social Emotional/Attachment	Development Knowledge of Typical Child Development & Behavior	
Transitions	Stress, Trauma, & Safety	Progress Monitoring	
	Supporting Home Language Development	Service Delivery Models	



Appendix A: Source Documents

- AOTA American Occupational Therapy Association. (2015). Standards of practice for occupational therapy. *American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 69(Suppl.3), 6913410057.
- APTA Chiarello, L., & Effgen, S.K. (2006). Updated competencies for physical therapists working in early intervention. *Pediatric Physical Therapy*, 18(2), 148-67.
- ASHA American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (2008). *Core knowledge and skills in early intervention speech-language pathology practice* [Knowledge and Skills]. Available from www.asha.org/policy
- ASHA American Speech-Language Hearing Association. (2006). *Roles, knowledge, and skills: Audiologists providing clinical services to infants and young children birth to 5 years of age* [Knowledge and Skills]. Available from www.asha.org/policy.
- CEC Council for Exceptional Children. (2014). *Initial preparation standards*. Available from <https://www.cec.sped.org/Standards/Special-Educator-Professional-Preparation-Standards>
- DEC Division of Early Childhood. (2014). *Personnel standards for early intervention and early childhood special education, specialty set: Initial early childhood and early intervention special education*. Available from [http://www.dec-sped.org/About_DEC/Personnel Standards for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education](http://www.dec-sped.org/About_DEC/Personnel_Standards_for_Early_Intervention_and_Early_Childhood_Special_Education)
- NAEYC National Association for the Education of Young Children. (2009). *Standards for early childhood professional preparation*. Available from <http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/ProfPrepStandards09.pdf>
- ZERO TO THREE Dean, A., LeMonie, S., & Mayoral, M. (2016). *ZERO TO THREE Critical competencies for infant-toddler educators*. Washington, DC: ZERO TO THREE.
- ZERO TO THREE ZERO TO THREE. (2005). *Cross-sector core competencies for the prenatal to age 5 field*. Los Angeles: Author.