

USER GUIDE

Applying Cross-Disciplinary Early Childhood Practice

Promoting Learning and Teaming



Early Childhood Personnel Center

www.ecpcta.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	_____	3
Case Studies	_____	4
<i>Module One</i>	▶ Exploring the Stories _____	5
<i>Module Two</i>	▶ Deepening the Learning _____	8
<i>Module Three</i>	▶ Reflecting _____	11
<i>Module Four</i>	▶ Crosswalking _____	14
<i>Module Five</i>	▶ Building Leadership _____	17
Conclusion	_____	20

INTRODUCTION

After a thorough search, analysis, and crosswalk of resources from seven early childhood professional organizations, four cross-disciplinary early childhood competences were identified and endorsed as core best practices.

National organizational representatives worked in teams to develop case scenarios highlighting the [four cross-disciplinary early childhood competencies](#).

This user guide was developed in response to service provider feedback after the case studies were shared at several national early childhood conferences.

The purpose of this guide is for the reader to enhance one's early childhood knowledge and practices through the application of the identified core cross-disciplinary competencies. The intended users of the guide include educators, practitioners, students, and families. It can be used for state team training, professional development, and higher education.





These case studies illustrate the cross-disciplinary competencies for use by Higher Education faculty and Professional development staff. It can be used for state team trainings, professional development, and higher education.

[Case Study Maria - Professionalism](#)

[Case Study Aiden - Coordination Collaboration](#)

[Case Study Antonia - Family Centered Practice](#)

[Case Study Robert - Evidence Based Intervention](#)

MODULE ONE

Exploring the Four Cross-Disciplinary Competency Areas

Exploring the Four Cross-Disciplinary Competency Areas

01

Log your reflections as you read each of the four case stories.

02

Answer the probing questions that follow each story.

03

Discuss your answers in small groups with other providers or students. What practice successes and challenges can you identify?

04

Compare/contrast the answers collected by team and by discipline. Can you find any patterns in the responses? Do the answers shift based on level of provider experience, by region, or other criteria?

Exploring the Four Cross-Disciplinary Competency Areas

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY EARLY CHILDHOOD PRACTICE
Log your reflections

CASE STUDY

Maria

Robert

Aiden

Antonia

MODULE TWO

Exploring the Stories for Deeper Context and Meaning

Exploring the Stories for Deeper Context and Meaning

01

Review the discussion and resources column of the four stories.

02

Compare/contrast your answers and comments from Module One with those in the discussion and resources column. What new information unfolded? Were you aware of some of the suggested resources?

03

Discuss your answers and comments in small groups with other providers and/or students. What is the level of agreement with the comments in the groups?

04

Discuss the four stories in terms of authenticity. How do these stories compare with your own experiences?

05

Explore some of the links offered as comments in the discussion and resources column. What opportunities exist to share such resources with other stakeholders? Identify and discuss a resource that may influence the answers and decisions the group previously discussed.

Exploring the Stories for Deeper Context and Meaning

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY EARLY CHILDHOOD PRACTICE

Do you believe that the stories present an accurate portrayal of current team practices—why or why not? Compare/contrast the answers collected by team and by discipline. Can you find any patterns in the responses? Do the answers shift, based on level of provider experience, by region, or other criteria?

Compare/Contrast	Patterns	Comments

MODULE THREE

Reflecting from Multiple Perspectives

Reflecting from Multiple Perspectives

01

On a scale of 1-5, rate your baseline knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the various team members. (i.e., OT, PT, SLP, Family, and Educators). You should rate each team member separately.

02

Read the case studies from each team member's specific point of view.

03

Explore the [websites](#) of each of the seven National Professional Associations engaged in the cross-disciplinary competency work.

04

Read the article published in the *Infants and Young Children* journal written by representatives of each of the National Professional Associations. [Link to article](#)

05

Conduct a five-minute interview with one stakeholder outside of your own profession. Include this question in your interview, "What distinct value does your profession/role bring to the early childhood team?"

06

Revisit each of the four case studies by listing actions conducted by the various team members. How do these actions reflect the roles and responsibilities listed in the articles and discussed during the interview?

07

Compare your answers with others in small groups or teams. Compare/contrast the answers collected by team and by discipline. Can you find any patterns in the responses? Do the answers shift, based on level of provider experience, by region, or other criteria?

08

On a scale of 1-5, rank your knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the various team members for a second time. Has the score changed—why or why not?

Reflecting from Multiple Perspectives

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY EARLY CHILDHOOD PRACTICE
Interview

Five-minute interview





“What distinct value does your
profession/role bring to the early
childhood team?”

MODULE FOUR

Crosswalking Each Case Study and Competency Area

Crosswalking Each Case Study and Competency Area

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY EARLY CHILDHOOD PRACTICE

	 Family Centered	 Evidence Informed	 Coordination & Collaboration	 Professionalism
CASE STUDY Maria	Family sociocultural needs are explored	Ongoing data collection and progress monitoring are used to assess performance	Reflection and problem solving are conducted during team meetings	Professional development is offered to build team knowledge and understanding.
Robert	The IFSP goals reflect family desires and priorities	A baseline of the family's strengths and concerns includes interviews and validated, standardized assessments.	Together, the team discusses and agrees on a service plan	The team responds quickly to meet the family's changing priorities.
Aiden	Meetings are held at a location convenient for the caregiver to best meet the needs.	In accordance with policy and best practice, transition timeline is identified as a key area to be addressed.	The team meets regularly with different disciplines and coordinates with agencies.	The team responds respectfully to conversations that present different points of view.
Antonia	Services are offered in a variety of environments to accommodate the specific preferences of the caregiver.	There can be investigation of the research and practice associated with a specific condition such as cerebral palsy	A chart is developed to coordinate family priorities, interventions, and outcomes	A trusting relationship develops between provider(s) and caregiver.

Crosswalking Each Case Study and Cross-Disciplinary Competency Area

01

Review the chart that crosswalks all four core competencies across the four case studies.

02

Find additional actions embedded in each of the four case studies that illustrate the four cross-disciplinary competencies.

03

Compare your answers with others in small groups or teams. Compare/contrast the answers collected by team and by discipline. Can you find any patterns in the responses? Do the answers shift based on level of provider experience, by region, or other criteria?

04

Is it realistic that each case study demonstrates all four cross-disciplinary competency areas? Why or why not?

MODULE FIVE

Building Leadership

Building Leadership

01

Complete the Building Leadership chart with actionable steps to strengthen your application of the four cross-disciplinary early childhood core competencies.

02

Develop a timeline to predict the launch of the steps. Consider the support necessary for implementation (i.e., cost, time, staff input).

03

Discuss your plan with your team. How can the team collaborate to institute the steps? Do you predict that the steps could benefit families directly? What specific family outcomes might be enhanced through this effort?

04





Keep a log and measure your progress in each of the four cross-disciplinary areas.

05

Discuss your efforts with the team. What innovations can be offered at your setting to institute the four cross-disciplinary competencies with more frequency and regularity?

Building Leadership

CROSS-DISCIPLINARY EARLY CHILDHOOD PRACTICE

	 Family Centered	 Evidence Informed	 Coordination & Collaboration	 Professionalism
CASE STUDY				
IFSP Team Actions				
Your Individual Actions				
A Family Story				

CONCLUSION

Individuals providing services in early childhood require the knowledge to demonstrate professional and ethical behavior; collaborate with families, caregivers, and team members; be family centered; and implement evidence-based interventions. This guide is a resource to enhance one's early childhood knowledge and practices through the application of the identified core cross-disciplinary competencies. These areas contribute to the implementation of an interdisciplinary model of intervention for all infants, children, and families.

ECPC provides numerous resources and materials relating to the cross-disciplinary competency areas and continuing professional development activities. The ECPC will continue to create guides and exemplars of practice surrounding the core cross-disciplinary competencies.

Resources:

[Cross-Disciplinary Competencies](#)

[ECPC Cross-Disciplinary Competency Areas and Indicators Table](#)

[Finding a Common Lens: Competencies Across Professional Disciplines Providing Early Childhood Intervention](#)

[The Development of Core Cross Disciplinary Early Childhood Competency Areas](#)

Professional Organizations:

[American Occupational Therapy Association \(AOTA\)](#)

[American Physical Therapy Association \(APTA\)](#)

[American Speech-Language-Hearing Association \(ASHA\)](#)

[Council of Exceptional Children \(CEC\)](#)

[Division for Early Childhood \(DEC\)](#)

[National Association for the Education of Young Children \(NAEYC\)](#)

[ZERO TO THREE](#)

Early Childhood Personnel Center (ECPC)

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