

Relationship-Based Competencies to Support Family Engagement

A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals Who Work with Children in Group Settings



NATIONAL CENTER ON

Parent, Family and Community Engagement

This document was developed with funds from Grant #90HC0014 for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, and Office of Child Care, by the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. This resource may be duplicated for noncommercial uses without permission.

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Suggested citation: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. (2018). *Relationship-based competencies to support family engagement: A guide for early childhood professionals who work with children in group settings.*



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NATIONAL CENTER ON
Parent, Family and Community Engagement

Relationship-Based Competencies to Support Family Engagement: A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals Who Work with Children in Group Settings



The Relationship-Based Competencies to Support Family Engagement: A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals Who Work with Children in Group Settings

describes the knowledge, skills, and individual practices that teachers, child care providers, and other professionals who teach and care for children in group settings need to engage with parents and families. This resource can help early childhood professionals build on their skills and further develop their professional practice.

These relationship-based competencies (RBCs) and examples of how they can be put into practice are provided to guide teachers and child care providers as they build goal-directed partnerships with families. Ongoing, positive interactions and effective partnerships support the development and well-being of infants, young children, and families.

A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals Who Work with Children in Group Settings is one of a set of four resources (see diagram below). To get the most benefit, pair this guide with **Relationship-Based Competencies to Support Family Engagement: Overview for Early Childhood Professionals**. Family engagement is everyone's business.

Relationship-Based Competencies to Support Family Engagement

All early childhood professionals can use knowledge, skills, and practices to support family engagement. This set of resources defines the RBCs for all early childhood professionals and for those in the roles shown below.



What are the Relationship-Based Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals Who Work with Children in Group Settings?

Relationship-based competencies for teachers and child care providers are the knowledge, skills, and practices they use to engage families effectively in positive, goal-oriented relationships. Such relationships with families support their progress and encourage the strong parent-child relationships that contribute to family well-being and better outcomes for children. The RBCs are relevant to teachers and child care providers who work in Head Start and Early Head Start, center-based care, and family care.

Specific RBCs for teachers and child care providers are listed in a set of tables in this resource. Each competency is defined and followed by a list of the knowledge, skills, and individual practices that inform professional practice. The ways to use each RBC will depend on the following:

- teacher’s or child care provider’s role in the program
- size of the program
- community in which the program is located
- strengths and challenges of individual families
- resources available to the program.

In Head Start and Early Head Start programs, for example, teachers share responsibility with other staff for supporting families. In some child care programs, teachers may have fewer resources to address broader family support services and may focus mostly on the RBCs that fit within their own areas of expertise. Family child care providers are solely responsible for all services, though networks, consultants, and coaches may be able to provide assistance. Because they serve a smaller number of families, family child care providers may have more flexibility in meeting families’ individual scheduling and payment needs. Larger, center-based programs may have more staff availability for communications. Examples include parent-teacher/child care provider conferences, regular written communications, or phone calls to check in with family members who come to the center infrequently.

Supervisors, coaches, and consultants can use these RBCs to provide reflective practice and help build teachers’ and child care providers’ family engagement knowledge and skills. The RBCs can guide program leaders as they develop and implement policies, infrastructure, and governance structures that support the use of the RBCs. State, district, and county child care administrators can use this resource to guide the design of policies and professional development content. (See pages 24-25 for additional guidance about using the RBCs in everyday leadership work).

For ease of reading, this resource refers to “early childhood professionals who work with children in group settings” as “teachers and child care providers”.

A Special Note to Family Child Care Providers

Professionals in family child care settings or in very small programs may find that these RBCs for teachers, child care providers, and supervisors are beneficial in their settings. Some RBCs may seem especially challenging or not applicable. Professionals in these settings may still find the examples helpful to reflect on and useful to spark new ideas for strengthening family engagement.

Why is Family Engagement Important for Teachers and Child Care Providers?

Knowing about the hopes, dreams, values, customs, and beliefs of each family allows teachers and child care providers to adapt children's learning environments to reflect each family's unique experiences. Through close connections with families, teachers and child care providers become better able to understand children's reactions and behaviors in group settings.

Clear communication and trusting parent-teacher/child care provider relationships

- provide continuity between home and group settings and ease transitions between these settings,
- prevent misunderstandings,
- reduce child behaviors considered challenging,
- increase the likelihood that families will stay in the program,
- improve teacher and child care provider work satisfaction
- reduce teacher and child care provider turnover, and
- improve continuity of services for families and programs.



First, though, families need to trust teachers and child care providers to feel confident about leaving their young children in early care settings. This is especially true for parents of infants and toddlers who may be entrusting their children to non-relative caregivers for the first time. Parents may also struggle with separation from their baby or young child. Or parents may feel conflicted about having their young child in care outside of their home. When relationships between families and teachers/child care providers are positive and collaborative, they build this trust together, and parents can more easily overcome their concerns about sharing the care of their children with early childhood professionals.

Trusting relationships reinforce the role of parents and families as experts on their own children, as well as the role of teachers and child care providers as parents' allies in supporting children's development and learning. Families and parents may also see teachers and child care providers as trustworthy partners in goal-setting and in working together to identify, prioritize, plan, and reach a family's aspirations. Family-centered goals include family's hopes for their children's learning and development and for their family's well-being.

Effective family engagement promotes families' abilities to build on their strengths and passions to make progress toward goals for their children and family. Successful family engagement also increases families' abilities to overcome risks and challenges and to be the sensitive and responsive caregivers and educators they want to be for their children (NCPFCE, 2013; 2014).

Key Terms Related to the Relationship-Based Competencies and Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

A **Relationship-Based Competency**¹ is a set of knowledge, skills, individual practices, and other characteristics, including attributes, behaviors, and actions, that are necessary to be effective in one's family engagement work.

Professional practice is a combination of knowledge, skills, and individual practices that are measurable or observable and describe what a person needs to know and how to do the work successfully. Specifically:

- **Knowledge** refers to what early childhood professionals need to know.
- **Skills** refer to what early childhood professionals need to apply their knowledge.
- **Individual practices** include key examples of what early childhood professionals do.

Family engagement is an interactive process through which early childhood (EC) providers and other EC professionals, family members, and their children build positive and goal-oriented relationships. It is a shared responsibility of families and professionals that requires mutual respect for the roles and strengths each has to offer. Family engagement means doing with—not doing to or for—families. At the program level, family engagement involves parents' engagement with their children and with providers as they work together toward the goals that families choose for themselves and their children. EC providers work together with families, other professionals, and community partners in ways that promote equity, inclusiveness, and cultural and linguistic responsiveness.

Parent and family. These terms are used interchangeably throughout this document. The terms may be viewed differently from the lenses of different cultures. However, the use of **parent** and **family** refers to all adults who interact with early childhood programs and systems in support of children in their care. This would include biological, adoptive, and foster parents and step-parents, grandparents and other caregiving kin, and legal and informal guardians. This could also include parents who do not live with the child. When practicing relationship-based family engagement, professionals should keep in mind that families also include siblings, cousins, and other family members living in the household.

Strengths-based perspective.² An approach to working with families that focuses on their interests, abilities, motivations, and resources. Instead of focusing on problems and needs, a strengths-based point of view sees families as agents capable of making their own change as they work to achieve their goals. Early childhood professionals who use a strengths-based approach support families as they realize their own potential.

¹ U.S. Office of Personnel Management. (n.d.). *Assessment and selection: Competencies*. Retrieved from <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/assessment-and-selection/competencies/>; Office of Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (n.d.). *Establishing a competency-based management framework*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Retrieved from <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/human-resources/article/establishing-competency-based-management-framework>

² Saleebey, D. (2009). *The strengths perspective in social work practice*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

How Do Teachers and Child Care Providers Engage with Families?

Teachers and child care providers spend most of their time interacting directly with children, and they also play important roles in supporting strong parent-child relationships and family well-being. At the core of the RBCs for teachers and child care providers is the shared understanding that parent-child relationships and parent-teacher/child care provider relationships influence children's early development and well-being.



Most interactions between teachers or child care providers and families occur in brief periods at the beginning and end of the day, at times of separations and reunions. These interactions, although sometimes rushed (and sometimes not possible, when children come to school by bus), can provide important opportunities to engage families and build on relationships. These are times to share observations and stories about the child, exchange practical information, and connect about daily activities and routines. Longer, planned meetings, such as parent-teacher/child care provider conferences, also play a role in supporting family engagement in early childhood programs. By making sure that families feel welcome and are actively involved in decision-making, teachers and child care providers can engage with families as true partners.

In these partnerships, professionals can individualize services and communication strategies to be responsive to each child's family living situation, cultures, languages, beliefs, values, practices, traditions, and strengths. These personal aspects shape families' goals, the ways they understand and interact with their children, their children's learning and development and their engagement in early childhood programs.

When their relationships are mutually respectful and trusting, teachers and child care providers can learn with parents about how family well-being is affecting their children's ability to feel safe, secure, and interested in learning. For example, when a child is hungry because of food insecurity or not well-rested due to homelessness, or when the child is adjusting to a new sibling or a change in the parent's work schedule, professionals can work with families to understand and respond to the impact of these experiences on the child's learning and development.

Effective family engagement means taking a strengths-based perspective that identifies and builds on the abilities and positive qualities of each family. Depending on the program in which they work, teachers and child care providers may collaborate with parents to identify family strengths and resources to meet challenges and reach family goals. These resources may be available in their family, social network, neighborhood, or community, and may include parent-led organizations and resource centers.

A Special Note to Supervisors and Administrators

Family engagement requires both time and commitment from teachers and child care providers to connect with the families of the children in their care. It is important for teachers and child care providers to work in an environment that values relationships and assigns manageable workloads. When teachers and child care providers have adequate time to get to know families, they can build partnerships and work toward shared goals for the child. This is, in part, why guidelines are created to specify the minimum teacher/child care provider to child ratios and maximum classroom size.

Research shows that low teacher to child ratios and large classroom size limit professionals' ability to offer services that work for each child and their family. These two factors also lead to high rates of staff burnout and turnover (Howes, Phillips, & Whitebook, 1992). When teachers and child care providers have manageable workloads, they have time to engage with children and their families and learn about each family's experiences and cultures. They also stay in their positions longer and are better able to address challenges that arise. These benefits lead to more positive outcomes for both children and their families.

Key Terms Related to Professional Development

Coaching.³ A form of professional development in which an individual with knowledge and experience in the skill being coached enters into a partnership with a professional. The coaching professional observes the professional's work, encourages reflection, offers feedback, and supports goal-setting to help the professional master and implement effective practices.

Organizational culture.⁴ The shared assumptions, beliefs, values, and goals that guide staff interactions and the functioning of an organization.

Parallel process. The process that occurs when an individual's behaviors and practices are similar to the behaviors, practices, or interactions of others working in parallel. It is also the process that occurs when similar practices are mirrored in different parts of an organization, community, or system.

Professional boundaries.⁵ The limits of professional responsibility and role. The RBCs encourage positive relationships with families. Boundaries identify the lines to be respected and not to be crossed in interactions with others. Early childhood professionals carefully consider the difference between personal and professional relationships and turn to supervisors for guidance and support in assessing their relationships with families. Ethical guidelines about relationship boundaries are offered by various early childhood education, home visiting, and family services organizations.

Reflective practice.⁶ Taking time to think about what has happened, what is happening, and what should happen next. Reflection informs our professional practice and improves our ability to communicate with children and families, colleagues, and professionals more effectively.

Reflective supervision.⁷ A collaborative relationship to support professional growth. Supervisors facilitate reflection by the professionals by offering time for dialogue about performance and by asking them to evaluate themselves. The process of reflective supervision helps identify professionals' strengths and challenges, and it addresses their needs for training or support.

³ The National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning. (2014). *Practice-based coaching: Collaborative partnerships*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. Retrieved from <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/docs/pbc-handout.pdf>

⁴ Heathfield, S. M. (2016). *Culture: Your environment for people at work*. Retrieved from The Balance: <https://www.thebalance.com/culture-your-environment-for-people-at-work-1918809>

⁵ Early Head Start National Resource Center. (n.d.). *Professional boundaries in work with expectant families and infants and toddlers and their families*. Retrieved from: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/ehsnrc/docs/professional-boundaries-materials.pdf>

⁶ National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. (2017). *Parent, family, and community engagement professional development guide: Reflective practice*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. Retrieved from <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/pdguide>

⁷ Office of Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. (n.d.). *Tips on becoming a reflective supervisor and a reflective supervisee*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. Retrieved from <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/human-resources/article/tips-becoming-reflective-supervisor-reflective-supervisee>

Relationship-Based Competencies to Support Family Engagement

The RBCs guide professional practice that supports and extends family engagement efforts. Individual competencies may be used differently, depending on the strengths, interests, and challenges of families and resources within the program and community.

Professionals can strengthen their abilities to use the RBCs through daily work with children, families, and colleagues, reflective practice and supervision, and professional development opportunities. The RBCs are most effective when professionals and programs have an ongoing commitment to family engagement practices that are responsive to each family’s cultures and languages.

RELATIONSHIP-BASED COMPETENCIES TO SUPPORT FAMILY ENGAGEMENT	
COMPETENCY	PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE
1. Positive, Goal-Oriented Relationships	Engages in mutually respectful, positive, goal-oriented partnerships with families to promote positive child and family outcomes
2. Self-Aware and Culturally Responsive Relationships	Respects and responds to the cultures, languages, values, and family structures of each family
3. Family Well-Being and Families as Learners	Supports families’ reflections on and planning for their safety, health, education, well-being, and life goals
4. Parent-Child Relationships and Families as Lifelong Educators	Partners with families to build strong parent-child relationships and supports parents as the first and lifelong educators of their children
5. Family Connections to Peers and Community	Works with families to strengthen their support networks and connections with other parents and community members who can address families’ strengths, interests, and challenges
6. Family Access to Community Resources	Supports families’ use of community resources to make progress toward positive child and family outcomes
7. Leadership and Advocacy	Works alongside parents to build on their strengths as advocates for their families and as leaders in the program and community
8. Coordinated, Integrated, and Comprehensive Services	Works with other professionals and agencies to support coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive services for families across the organization, community, and system
9. Data-Driven Services and Continuous Improvement	Collects information with families and reflects with them to inform goal-setting, planning, and implementation to effect progress and outcomes for families, children, programs, and communities
10. Professional Growth	Shows professionalism and participates actively in opportunities for ongoing professional development related to family engagement

Relationship-Based Competencies for Teachers and Child Care Providers

1. Positive, Goal-Oriented Relationships

Engages in mutually respectful, positive, goal-oriented partnerships with families to promote positive child and family outcomes

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands effective relationship-building practices with parents, families, children, and professionals • Understands the importance of cultures and languages when working with all children and families • Understands the importance of teachers and child care providers working in partnership with families by sharing planning and decision-making to support children’s learning and development and family well-being • Understands the need to get to know each family • Understands the importance of positive relationships between families and teachers and child care providers to identify, encourage, and celebrate children’s development and learning • Is familiar with professional ethical standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands effective relationship-building practices with parents, families, children, and professionals • Understands the importance of cultures and languages when working with all children, families, and professionals • Understands the specific competencies, goals, and processes for teachers and child care providers working with families in early childhood programs • Understands how reflection and being respectful of teachers and child care providers supports their respectful partnerships with families and other professionals (parallel process) • Understands the importance of supporting the well-being of teachers and child care providers, including helping them identify support services (for example, physical health and mental health) if needed • Knows professional ethical standards and how to share them with teachers and child care providers
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps families feel welcome and encouraged to participate in and observe all aspects of the educational and care services provided for their children • Helps families feel safe and respected by building mutually trusting relationships over time • Shows respect for each family’s cultures, values, and life situation • Uses effective, responsive communication skills with families. Examples include paying attention to both verbal and nonverbal messages, listening carefully without interrupting, and repeating what the other person said to make sure she or he is understood. • Creates opportunities for parents to identify their goals for their children and themselves and regularly follows up on progress. Examples include learning, parent-child interactions, health and mental health, nutrition, safety, family literacy, bi-lingual or multi-lingual abilities, financial literacy, and basic needs. • Tailors conversations with families to support their goals • Plans and implements learning activities and opportunities that support family’s goals for their child’s learning and development • Reflects on interactions and experiences with families to enhance skills on an ongoing basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guides teachers and child care providers to enhance their ability to welcome and encourage families to participate in and observe all aspects of the educational and care services provided • Offers training, learning activities, and other opportunities that support teachers’ and child care providers’ ability to plan and deliver learning activities and opportunities that support the family’s goals for their child’s learning and development • Models the use of relationship-based competencies in working with other professionals through collaborative and respectful relationships (parallel process) • Uses active listening skills that demonstrate cultural sensitivity and openness to feedback from teachers and child care providers • Uses reflective practices in coaching and supervision to support teachers’ and child care providers’ work and their relationships with families • Creates opportunities for staff to identify goals and develop professional practices and follows up on progress regularly • Guides teachers and child care providers as they build relationship-based competencies • Provides structured opportunities for teachers and child care providers to learn from individual families and other professionals to design and implement activities based on the family’s goals

1. Positive, Goal-Oriented Relationships, cont.

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes all families, promoting and valuing diversity across family structures, cultures, languages, perspectives, and values • Helps families feel comfortable and safe leaving their children in the early childhood setting • Greets children and families by name during morning arrival, develops routines with parents for drop-off, and is available to help if the separation is difficult for the child or parent • Provides opportunities for sharing information from home during morning arrival or end of day reunion • Has an open-door policy for parents to come into the classroom or family child care home at any time • Creates time for open communication with families • Invites families to bring items/pictures into the classroom or family child care home • Meets with families when they first enroll to learn about family situation and goals • Conducts parent-teacher/child care provider conferences and home visits to review child's progress and update the family's goals • Acts in ways that are consistent with ethical standards for teachers and child care providers 	<p>SUPERVISORY PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guides teachers and child care providers to welcome all families, promoting and valuing diversity across family structures, cultures, languages, perspectives, and values • Offers coaching and training to teachers and child care providers about creating a welcoming environment—during enrollment and throughout participation in the program • Helps teachers and child care providers contribute in meaningful ways to families' goals for themselves and their children • Coaches teachers and child care providers in reflective listening and other communication skills that are culturally responsive • Orients new teachers and child care providers to the philosophy, services, and organizational culture of the program that support positive, goal-oriented relationships • Helps teachers and child care providers develop strong, positive, and effective relationships with families, including families experiencing crises • Offers training for teachers and child care providers about the relationship-based competencies, including goal-setting and planning with families <p>LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a positive organizational culture and climate that promotes relationship-based practices and staff wellness • Provides professional development opportunities that increase staff knowledge and skill to integrate families' cultures, languages, values, and traditions into daily practices throughout the organization • Enacts policies and processes that provide time for communication between professionals and parents daily • Enacts policies, to the extent possible, that support teachers and child care providers to work with the same family over time (for example, primary caregiving, family child care, and mixed-age groupings) • Ensures that all teachers and child care providers understand their responsibilities and priorities • Ensures that all teachers and child care providers and managers know how and where to get additional support for families as needed from others in the program or community • Ensures that program-wide services respond to the strengths, challenges, and needs of families (for example, tailoring hours of group settings, accommodating family work schedules) • Implements appropriate classroom ratios to ensure professionals can build strong relationships with children and families • Ensures that professionals have enough time to plan and work one-on-one with families regularly in all program settings (for example, home-based, center-based, family child care) • Provides guidance to teachers and child care providers about policies, guidelines, procedures, and expectations related to confidentiality, privacy, and professional ethical standards • Ensures that all program policies adhere to professional ethical standards

2. Self-Aware and Culturally Responsive Relationships

Respects and responds to the cultures, languages, values, and family structures of each family

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands that each family has unique strengths and resilience Understands how families' cultures influence caregiving practices and shape children's early development Understands and respects variations in families' cultures, experiences, expectations, and child-rearing beliefs and practices Understands one's own beliefs, values, experiences, ethics, and biases to increase self-awareness about how they may affect work with children and families Understands how to help parents navigate differences in cultures between home and school Knows that despite best efforts from everyone, there may be misunderstandings due to different cultural beliefs, values, and viewpoints and knows how to navigate these misunderstandings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Views professionals and families as having unique strengths and resilience with diverse values, temperaments, and learning styles Understands how families' cultures influence caregiving, children's development, family life, and relationships between teachers/child care providers and parents Understands and respects variations in families' cultures, languages, experiences, expectations, and child-rearing beliefs and practices Understands one's own beliefs, values, experiences, ethics, and biases and how they may affect work with children and families Understands how to support teachers and child care providers to bridge differences in cultures between home and school
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds positive relationships with each family Reflects on one's own beliefs, values, experiences, ethics, and biases to increase self-awareness Seeks information about the strengths, cultures, languages, beliefs, values, and circumstances of each family Engages in relationships that are responsive to families' cultures, languages, and values Shows respect for the contributions of home languages and cultures and works with families to create shared understandings Discusses with families that the purpose of learning about family traditions, living situation, cultures, languages, and values is to better support relationships between children and their families and to better support the child in the early childhood setting Develops skills to engage in cross-cultural conversations that respect families' beliefs, opinions, and caregiving practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds positive and supportive relationships with each teacher and child care provider Identifies and reflects on personal values, experiences, ethics, and biases and uses this information to become more self-aware and more effective in working with a wide range of individuals. Considers issues related to gender, race, ethnicity, cultures, educational and ability level, and/or socio-economic class. Shows respectful interest in learning about the cultures and languages of professionals and families Engages teachers and child care providers in regular discussions about the purpose of learning about family traditions, living situation, cultures, languages, and values to better support relationships between families and their children Creates opportunities for teachers and child care providers to reflect on personal values, beliefs, experiences, ethics, and biases that may arise when working with families Creates opportunities for teachers and child care providers to problem solve instances in which they feel that family cultural beliefs differ from program policies

2. Self-Aware and Culturally Responsive Relationships, cont.

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a variety of communication strategies to reach families • Uses approaches with parents that show sensitivity and respect for their cultures and languages • Ensures there is an individual in the classroom, program, or family child care home who can communicate with the children in their home languages, to the extent possible • Ensures that the learning environment includes music, images, books and stories, and other materials representing children’s home languages, cultures, and living situation • Creates opportunities during learning activities for families to share their cultures, values, experiences, ethics, languages, and strengths • Welcomes conversations about parenting and each family’s cultures, languages, values, experiences, ethics, and strengths • Seeks information or consultation about specific cultural values and practices when necessary • Assesses policies and procedures for opportunities to ensure they reflect cultural perspectives of families in the program 	<p>SUPERVISORY PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers coaching and training to increase teachers’ and child care providers’ skills for engaging in culturally and linguistically responsive relationships with families • Offers coaching and training to support use of a variety of communication strategies to reach families • Ensures that teachers and child care providers speak with families in their preferred language and use skilled interpreters when this is not possible • Ensures that program materials for families and signs in centers and classrooms are culturally and linguistically applicable and appropriate • Shares reflections with teachers and child care providers about one’s own strengths and limitations • Seeks information or consultation about specific cultural values and practices when necessary <p>LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomes all families, promoting and valuing diversity across family structures, cultures, languages, perspectives, and values • Works with program management to ensure that the program shows respect for families’ languages and cultures • Integrates different cultural perspectives into policies and procedures and shares with teachers and child care providers • Provides professional development and self-care opportunities that increase self-awareness and responsiveness to families • Ensures budget allocation for resources to support home language learning in the program (for example, interpreters, translators, web-based technology, and materials)



3. Family Well-Being and Families as Learners

Supports families’ reflections on and planning for their safety, health, education, well-being, and life goals

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows how to recognize family resilience, strengths and resources, and unique gifts and talents, and what families already do to maintain family well-being and cope with challenges • Understands that children’s healthy development is related to family well-being and family goals for themselves and their children • Knows the signs of depression, trauma, substance use, homelessness, domestic violence, child maltreatment, food insecurity, mental illness, and other challenges to family well-being • Knows about laws and regulations that support and protect children and families • Knows what steps to take and who to talk with if child or family safety may be threatened • Knows about resources in the community to support families’ safety, health, mental health, financial stability, economic mobility, and educational growth and asks others for referral information when needed • Understands the importance of asking for support from their supervisor or colleagues about issues that are beyond their current professional skills and knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows how to help teachers and child care providers recognize family resilience, strengths and resources, and unique gifts and talents, and to recognize what families already do to maintain family well-being and cope with challenges • Recognizes the emotional effects on teachers and child care providers who work with families experiencing trauma, depression, substance use disorders, other mental illness, homelessness, domestic violence, food insecurity, and other challenges to family well-being • Knows that all teachers and child care providers need current information about laws and regulations to support and protect families and their children • Understands what steps teachers and child care providers need to take to ensure that children and families are safe when their safety may be threatened • Knows about resources in the community that can help teachers and child care providers support families’ safety, health, mental health, financial stability, economic mobility, and educational growth • Understands ways that teachers and child care providers can offer assistance to families coping with stress and daily challenges
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applies information about families’ strengths, talents, cultures, languages, aspirations, resources, challenges, needs, and goals to work with children and their families • Uses a supportive and non-judgmental approach to talk with parents about difficult or sensitive topics • Recognizes the importance of taking time for self-care, for one’s own well-being and for others, especially when supporting families in crisis • Expresses kindness, warmth, and compassion when families are overwhelmed by demanding challenges, trauma, or stress • Seeks support from their supervisor or colleagues about how to be successful in conversations that are difficult to have with families • Provides information about and connects families with community and cultural resources that offer opportunities to use and build on their strengths, and support family safety, economic mobility, educational growth, health, and other aspects of family well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invites teachers and child care providers to identify their own strengths, gifts, resources, and social supports that help them cope with work challenges • Works with teachers and child care providers to enhance their skills in crisis management • Offers coaching and training for teachers and child care providers about how to effectively support families in crisis while maintaining self-care, and adjusting workloads and work conditions when possible • Builds connections between program and community networks that provide families with opportunities to use and build on their strengths and offer services that families identify as needed to support their safety, economic mobility, health, nutrition, and other aspects of family well-being • Supports teachers and child care providers in ongoing learning about community resources • Helps teachers and child care providers when they need to work with families about issues that are beyond their current professional skills and knowledge • Models skills that prevent and address conflict among professionals in the program and between professionals and families • Monitors and addresses teachers’ and child care providers’ stress when working with families who are experiencing serious challenges • Maintains a current list of community resources in the program • Works with teachers and child care providers to identify available opportunities for families related to education, training, and employment

3. Family Well-Being and Families as Learners, cont.

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checks in with families when separating from their children at morning arrival and at their reunion at the end of the day to see how they are doing • Talks with parents about their well-being and short- and long-term goals and offers resources or referrals, if appropriate • Checks in with parents about child’s reactions to current family well-being and partners with parents to respond to any concerns • Follows up with families to check if resources or referrals were helpful • Consults with their supervisor, coach, or colleagues about appropriate resources or referrals to share with families experiencing serious challenges • Follows policies, guidelines, and expectations related to confidentiality, privacy, and ethical practice 	<p>LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements clear policies regarding the safety and well-being of children, families, and professionals • Ensures all professionals are trained about mandated reporting procedures and how to work with families when child or family safety may be threatened • Ensures that teachers and child care providers have time to complete required forms and meet reporting requirements • Establishes policies to ensure coaching and/or reflective supervision for all teachers and child care providers, especially those working with families in crisis • Ensures that teachers and child care providers adhere to program policies, guidelines, and expectations related to confidentiality, privacy, and ethical standards in work to promote family well-being and families as learners



4. Parent-Child Relationships and Families as Lifelong Educators

Partners with families to build strong parent-child relationships and supports parents as the first and lifelong educators of their children

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands that children’s early family relationships serve as a foundation for later development and learning Understands that families’ cultures, languages, and history shape the way that parents raise their children and the way that family members relate to each other Knows how children learn in their everyday interactions with their parents Understands the importance of parents and children enjoying their interactions with each other Understands the value of focusing on a child’s developmental strengths—what children can do—and what parents already do to foster growth, and uses these strengths as a foundation for communication with families Understands the value of focusing on family strengths— what families already do to build strong parent-child relationships, and supports each family member’s development and learning Knows expected child development milestones, patterns of developmental change, and cultural variations in these, and has strategies for sharing news with families in a supportive manner about the child’s progress or potential concerns Knows about resources to support families of children who are learning more than one language, have exceptional potential, and/or have specific needs including behaviors considered challenging, disability, or developmental delay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands that children’s early family relationships serve as a foundation for later development and learning Understands that families’ cultures, languages, and history shape the way that parents raise their children and the ways that family members relate to each other Understands the value of focusing on child development strengths—what children can do and what parents and professionals already do with them—to promote and encourage effective communication about children’s development Understands the value of focusing on family strengths—what families already do to build parent-child relationships and to support each family member’s development and learning Understands human development, especially the central role of parent-child relationships in social-emotional development from childhood to adulthood Knows about resources to support families of children who are learning more than one language, have exceptional potential, and/or have specific needs including behaviors considered challenging, disability, or developmental delay
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports children’s attachment and relationships with their parents and other caregivers Communicates with families about child progress in ways that deepen trust and build relationships with families Focuses on child and family strengths in discussions with parents about their children Prepares parents to anticipate new behaviors and skills by providing information about the developmental progression of learning Communicates with parents about transitions that might be challenging for their child, and works with parents to develop strategies that can help the child Notifies and describes to parents positive parenting interactions, especially those that support children’s security, confidence, exploration, interests, and learning Guides or connects parents with resources to address developmental concerns, including how to manage behaviors considered challenging in positive, developmentally appropriate, inclusive ways Partners with parents and other program professionals or experts to identify and support ongoing learning opportunities for parents to enjoy with their children at home and in the community Talks with families about opportunities to support their children’s school readiness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports teachers and child care providers in building skills to promote positive parent-child interactions Offers coaching and training to enhance teachers’ and child care providers’ skills for supporting parent-child relationships and families as lifelong educators Compiles resources to support families of children who are learning more than one language, have exceptional potential, and/or have specific needs including behaviors considered challenging, disability, or developmental delay

4. Parent-Child Relationships and Families as Lifelong Educators, cont.

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learns from parents about how to recognize their child’s verbal and nonverbal cues and what they may mean • Observes parent-child interactions, and provides encouragement for parent to respond to child’s interests and needs • Shares child progress that is meaningful and understandable to families • Ensures that families’ desires and goals for their children drive learning activities and routines • Ensures that families drive development of goals • Engages actively with families and their children in responsive, language-rich interactions in ways that are culturally responsive • Creates learning opportunities for parents and children to enjoy together • Supports playful and mutually enjoyable interactions between parents and children • Partners with parents to identify and respond to children’s emotions, communication, interests, and basic needs by talking with parents about observed or potential parent-child interactions • Invites parents to observe, participate, and volunteer in the classroom or family child care home • Documents and shares summaries with families of child’s activities and experiences during the program day • Partners with families to identify opportunities to learn and practice skills to achieve goals, including sharing information about how program activities can be included in experiences at home • Individualizes child and family learning resources and informational materials to each family’s unique experiences, languages, and cultures • Reflects with parents about ways to manage children’s behaviors to support their growth in the classroom or child care and at home • Helps families plan for children’s transitions into other early childhood settings • Welcomes opportunities to connect with other professionals who work with families (for example, early intervention or school personnel) 	<p>SUPERVISORY PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with teachers and child care providers to partner with parents as they set goals for themselves and their children, and as they make plans to work toward those goals • Offers coaching and training for teachers and child care providers about how adults learn and change and for professionals and families about parenting behaviors that support child development and learning • Guides teachers and child care providers in reflective practice about their work to support parent-child relationships in ways that are culturally responsive • Works with program management and teachers and child care providers to ensure that families have information about their children’s progress • Works with program leadership and teachers and child care providers to ensure that families drive the development of their goals for their children (including participation in the Individual Family Service Plan [IFSP]⁸ and Individualized Educational Plan [IEP]⁹) • Works with teachers and child care providers to develop steps to support transitions of all children and families to and from other early learning settings or to kindergarten <p>LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that schedules of teachers and child care providers provide adequate time to work with families • Creates procedures to ensure child progress data is meaningful and understandable to families and is shared regularly • Connects teachers and child care providers with resources to support families of children who are learning more than one language, have exceptional potential, and/or have specific needs including challenging behaviors, disability, or developmental delay • Ensures budget allocation for resources to engage parents in supporting child development (for example, web-based technology, materials, transportation)

⁸ A written plan for early intervention services for an infant or toddler, age 0–3 years, with an identified disability. (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, Office of Special Education Programs. Individualized Family Service Plan. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/speced/reg/idea/part-c/model-form-ifsp.pdf>)

⁹ A written education plan for each child age 3–21 who receives special education and related services. (U.S. Department of Education. A Guide to the Individualized Education Program. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/parents/needs/speced/iepguide/index.html>)

5. Family Connections to Peers and Community

Works with families to strengthen their support networks and connections with other parents and community members who can address families' strengths, interests, and challenges

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the importance of social support networks for families, especially for those with children of similar age Knows the resources available in the community and early childhood field that may support families' strengths, interests, and challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the importance of social support networks for families and professionals Knows the resources and opportunities available in the community for both professionals and families Knows and shares effective strategies for facilitating social interactions among parents
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourages families to identify, develop, and use informal and formal social support networks. Examples include family-led organizations, family support networks, neighborhood groups, faith/spiritual communities, civic organizations, and other social groups. Facilitates parent-to-parent interactions and connections at the beginning or end of day, and in group gatherings for families. Examples include family nights, potluck dinners, parent education events, and family outings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides teachers and child care providers regular peer learning opportunities to share ideas and enhance practice Provides opportunities for teachers and child care providers to learn about and understand the services offered by community organizations and to build relationships with community peers and leaders
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners with parents in planning stages of programming so that they can share their skills, cultures, and other talents in the classroom or at group gatherings Supports parents' interests to contribute, volunteer, and collaborate in the family child care setting or classroom, program, and community Connects families with resources and events available in the community. Examples include recreational facilities, libraries, museums, parks, and other outdoor activity resources, and civic organizations. 	<p>SUPERVISORY PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes awareness of community groups, learning, and volunteer opportunities for families Shares information about community educational resources and events with teachers and child care providers Helps to develop and promote communication and coordination among community agencies Uses effective group facilitation in meetings with staff and community partners <p>LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes parents as active participants and leaders in groups and training so they can share skills, cultures, languages, and talents Enacts program policies that allow teachers and child care providers to implement and evaluate family group events Ensures resource allocation for costs of approved peer-to-peer networking activities for families and professionals

6. Family Access to Community Resources

Supports families' use of community resources to make progress toward positive child and family outcomes

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands that families and family networks offer social support and are resources for other families Knows about local social service and community resources available to families including how to access information that addresses unique goals and needs. Examples include health, mental health, nutrition, parenting, financial literacy, education, enrichment, recreation, job training, and employment. Understands how to partner with families to identify which local services and resources best match their interests, cultures, languages, values, needs, and goals Understands the importance of learning from families' experiences related to community resources to increase knowledge about beneficial services Understands when to ask their supervisor, experts, coaches, or peers for help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands that families and family networks offer social support and are community resources for other families Learns regularly about community resources that offer services to enhance family well-being and children's learning and development Understands how to help teachers and child care providers partner with families to match community and program resources with family strengths, interests, challenges, and goals
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners with families to identify services and resources that might be helpful in reaching their goals Recognizes when immediate assistance or support is needed for a family, especially when there are signs of possible developmental delays or family concerns related to food insecurity, family and child safety, environmental toxins (for example, lead in the water supply or building), or a need for emergency shelter Supports partnerships with schools and community service providers to serve families more effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers or participates in professional development community events to promote connections between community organizations and teachers and child care providers Offers coaching and training to support teachers and child care providers to recognize and address situations where immediate assistance or support is needed for the family Provides appropriate supervision when teachers and child care providers need support to respond to challenging situations Builds relationships with schools and community service professionals to serve families in more comprehensive ways
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds with information and support to families' expressed strengths, interests, challenges, or needs about the services in the community that can help them reach their goals Coordinates with families and other professionals that offer services to children, such as early intervention or infant mental health practitioners Checks in with families regularly to ask if they are receiving services that meet their expressed interests, challenges, or needs Consults with their supervisor, coaches, experts, or peers to find information to address family challenges, needs, and goals, where necessary 	<p>SUPERVISORY PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops strong relationships with community, state, and/or national groups to support teachers' and child care providers' work with families Provides opportunities for representatives of trusted community organizations to meet and present information about their services to teachers, child care providers, and families. Examples include libraries, food banks, transportation, and local businesses. <p>LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enacts policies that support teachers, child care providers, and/or supervisors time to build and nurture relationships with community partners Exercises leadership to advocate for resources in the community that meet families' expressed interests or needs Uses community assessment data and families' feedback to form relationships with community agencies and improve access to resources Evaluates effectiveness of community partnerships specifically to guide and support involvement of teachers and child care providers

7. Leadership and Advocacy

Works alongside parents to build on their strengths as advocates for their families and as leaders in the program and community

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes that parents lead, make decisions, and advocate for their interests and may have experiences in formal leadership and advocacy roles Understands the importance of working together with parents in problem-solving and reaching solutions Is aware of advocacy and leadership opportunities for parents in the program and community Understands the barriers that may impede a family's ability to exercise their power and advocate effectively (for example, in the IEP and IFSP process) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands how professionals can support parent leadership and advocacy in the program and the community Knows what changes are needed in the program to uplift parent advocacy and leadership Understands the barriers that may impede a family's ability to exercise their power and advocate for their family effectively (for example, in the IEP and IFSP process)
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes families in decision-making, planning, implementing, and evaluating change at different levels of the organization Includes families in planning and implementing classroom curricula and enrichment activities at home Listens to families' ideas and encourages them to move their ideas forward Encourages parents to participate in leadership and advocacy opportunities that exist in the program and community Encourages parents to work together to advance policy change in the program, family child care, or community Supports families in developing skills and confidence to be effective leaders and advocates for their children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supports teachers and child care providers in developing skills and confidence to be effective leaders and advocates so they can support families as leaders and advocates (parallel process) Offers skills-based training for teachers and child care providers in engaging and supporting families to be leaders and advocates in the program and community
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Works with families to plan how to advocate for their children's development and family well-being in other early childhood and family services settings Invites families to contribute input about curricula and activities in the classroom and follows through to apply these ideas Supports parents' interests in volunteering in the program and the community Creates opportunities for families to develop and lead projects in the classroom and the program Partners with families to identify opportunities in the program or community that promote parent leadership and advocacy. Examples include parent committees, local and state early childhood advisory boards, and agency boards for input. 	<p>SUPERVISORY PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Builds parent input, advocacy, and leadership into all aspects of the program Promotes opportunities for parent advocacy, input, and volunteering into all aspects of programming Invites families to share about their experiences serving on parent committees or in program governance Shares input from families with program management about the effectiveness of parent committees <p>LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides resources to enable families to participate in program decision-making and governance. Examples include stipends, child care, transportation, and food. Enacts policies and processes that engage families in planning, implementing, and evaluating change at the program level as part of program decision-making and governance Prioritizes community partnerships that support pathways for parent leadership and advocacy, such as family-led organizations or family support networks

8. Coordinated, Integrated, and Comprehensive Services

Works with other professionals and agencies to support coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive services for families across the organization, community, and system

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the importance of teachers and child care providers coordinating with other professionals about child development, health, mental health, education, social, and other services Knows the resources and systems available in the community and how a family can access services needed to advance their strengths and talents or address their concerns and needs Is aware of and understands policies, guidelines, and expectations related to confidentiality, privacy, and ethical practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands how the roles of all professionals support coordinated, systemic, integrated, and comprehensive family engagement to promote child development and family well-being Knows the professionals, resources, and systems available in their program and community, and how a family can access the comprehensive services needed to advance their strengths and talents, and address their challenges and needs Understands policies, guidelines, and expectations related to confidentiality, privacy, and ethical practice
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discusses with families the importance of coordinating health, social, and educational services for supporting children’s ongoing learning and development Reaches out to other professionals to facilitate coordination and integration of services for families Partners with their supervisor, parents, staff, and other experts or peers to find information when needed Supports families’ capacity to communicate effectively with other service providers Shares only information with parental consent within programs and with outside agencies that will improve services for children and families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers coaching and training about outreach and partnering with professionals to facilitate coordination and integration of services for families. Examples include family services professionals, consultants, other teachers, or experts in the community. Ensures that all teachers and child care providers are aware of and comply with policies, guidelines, and expectations related to confidentiality, privacy, and ethical practice Ensures that teachers and child care providers share only information with parental consent within programs and with outside agencies to improve services for children and families
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refers families to services in the community Obtains permission from families before sharing confidential information with other service professionals, and respects families’ wishes if they choose not to share information Shares only essential, relevant information about families with colleagues and other professionals Connects and collaborates with community partners who can play a role in supporting families to reach their goals Coordinates with families and other professionals, especially those offering services to children, such as early interventionists or infant mental health practitioners 	<p>SUPERVISORY PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shares information about services in the program and community with teachers and child care providers. Examples include health, mental health, special needs and child development. Helps ensure that coordination happens at all levels in the program <p>LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates a positive organizational culture and climate that promotes coordinated, integrated, and comprehensive services Enacts policies that provide time for teachers and child care providers to build partnerships with agencies and programs that provide services to families and children Enacts policies that provide time for teachers and child care providers to participate in multi-agency team planning meetings to coordinate support for children and families Ensures information about resources and opportunities in the community are compiled and available to support families’ safety, health, mental health, financial stability, economic mobility, and educational growth Shares aggregated information about groups of children and families that facilitates communication among professionals within and outside the organization in order to improve service delivery Ensures that policies, guidelines, and expectations are in place to protect the confidentiality and privacy of families

9. Data Driven Services and Continuous Improvement

Collects information with families and reflects with them to inform goal-setting, planning, and implementation to effect progress and outcomes for families, children, programs, and communities

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the best ways to gather information about individual child progress, including the importance of input from parents in addition to observation and ongoing child assessment Understands policies and procedures for securing family input for continuous program improvement Understands how to partner with parents to share and use information to improve services Understands program policies, guidelines, and expectations related to confidentiality, privacy, and ethical practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands the importance of using data for ongoing child assessment and ways to share data with families Understands the policies and procedures for engaging families in continuous program improvement and the specific role of teachers and child care providers in these processes Understands how to partner with teachers, child care providers, and parents and families to share and use information about children, families, programs, and communities to improve services Knows how the program's information management systems can be used to inform planning and goal-setting for parent, family, and community engagement for individual families and the program Understands program policies, guidelines, and expectations related to confidentiality, privacy, and ethical practice in using data for continuous program improvement
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engages parents in discussions about individual child progress and development and implications for current and future planning, including when developmental issues or concerns arise Begins conversations about child assessment by asking families to share their perspectives Asks each family about what they know and feel is important to share about their child and family, as well as the program and their community Engages families as active participants in collecting and analyzing information to enhance and individualize services. Examples include surveys, observations, or other information from families. Applies information about child development and family well-being to individualize services, decision-making, and practices Stores, retrieves, and uses information for planning purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers coaching and training about how to discuss child progress and development and implications for current and future planning with parents, especially when developmental issues or concerns arise Works with program leaders and teachers and child care providers to ensure that families have information about their child that is understandable and meaningful Ensures that data collected with families and about program quality are meaningful and used to help professionals and families work together to reach family and program goals Provides materials, training, and coaching to enable teachers and child care providers to prepare and accurately use tools to collect, analyze, and share information from families (for example, surveys, observation, or informal conversations about their ideas and experiences) Guides teachers and child care providers in using research along with information about child development and family well-being to reflect on their practices and change their approach when necessary Assists teachers and child care providers in accurately interpreting information collected about children, families, and services Encourages teachers and child care providers to engage families in the preparation, collection, analysis, and use of information Uses ongoing program monitoring and review when working with families to collect, aggregate, and analyze data about child and family services and family engagement

9. Data Driven Services and Continuous Improvement, cont.

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partners with families in gathering information about children’s development and about family context, including values, cultures, and languages Expects and responds to emotions that surface while discussing child development and well-being Tracks information about individual child progress over time to guide planning, individualization, and communication with parents Uses information provided by families to plan activities that engage parents in supporting their children’s development Asks for parents’ reflection and feedback about children’s experiences in the classroom and uses the information to guide curriculum planning and classroom activities Maintains the policies, guidelines, and expectations that are in place to protect the confidentiality and privacy of families 	<p>SUPERVISORY PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses data with teachers and child care providers in coaching and reflective supervision Trains teachers and child care providers to prepare and use data collection tools (for example, surveys, interviews, observation, and child assessment tools) and to analyze and use information gathered Works with program leaders, teachers, and child care providers to ensure that families have information about their child that is understandable and meaningful <p>LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulates and implements program policy defining the role of family engagement in continuous program learning and improvement Shares data related to family engagement with program staff to improve program systems and services Reviews and analyzes program data to develop ideas for program improvement in partnership with program staff and family representatives Shares information from program data sources with stakeholders. Examples include family services professionals, parents, committees, and community partners. Ensures that program policies, guidelines, and expectations are in place related to confidentiality, privacy, and ethical standards



10. Professional Growth

Shows professionalism and participates actively in opportunities for ongoing professional development related to family engagement

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the importance of ongoing reflective practice (self-reflection) to enhance work with families • Understands the importance of ongoing coaching and reflective supervision for personal and professional growth • Understands the importance of healthy self-care habits for one's own well-being and to enhance the ability to build responsive relationships with children and families • Understands the importance of ongoing professional development related to engaging families • Understands that children's development, health, and learning is an ongoing process and is essential to share with families as part of the engagement process • Understands legal and professional ethical standards related to confidentiality and privacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knows the importance of, and techniques for, reflective practice and supervision, and coaching • Understands the importance of healthy self-care habits for one's own well-being and to enhance knows the ability to build responsive relationships with others, and the benefit of modeling this to support teachers' and child care providers' self-care efforts • Understands the importance of facilitating teachers' and child care providers' development to support professional growth on an ongoing basis • Understands legal and professional ethical standards pertaining to confidentiality and privacy and how to help teachers and child care providers apply these standards to their work with families
SKILLS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages in reflective practice (self-reflection) to gain insights to enhance one's work with children and families • Asks for help when needed • Maintains healthy self-care habits for one's own well-being and to enhance the ability to build responsive relationships with others • Seeks opportunities to learn and apply new knowledge about strengths-based, culturally and linguistically responsive family engagement • Uses information learned through formal and informal professional development to enhance practices for engaging families in children's learning • Maintains professional boundaries with other teachers and child care providers, children, and families • Maintains professional boundaries by recognizing any tendencies to do things for families which can interfere with each family's efforts to determine their own goals and develop their own capacities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commits to one's own professional development by setting goals to strengthen knowledge and understanding of supervision practices • Maintains and models healthy self-care habits for one's own well-being and to enhance the ability to build responsive relationships with others • Uses coaching and reflective supervision techniques with teachers and child care providers • Works with teachers and child care providers to understand the connection between self-care and the ability to build effective and rewarding relationships with families and colleagues • Recognizes and builds on teachers' and child care providers' strengths and helps them to set goals and create professional development plans • Communicates expectations and tracks progress toward goals using written materials and ongoing interactions with teachers and child care providers. Examples include job descriptions, initial orientation, supervision, professional development plans, and regular performance evaluations. • Helps teachers and child care providers connect with the broader community of professionals who work with children and families • Works with teachers and child care providers on maintaining professional boundaries, including those that support family's efforts to determine their own goals and develop their own capacities • Maintains and models professional boundaries with teachers and child care providers, children, and families

10. Professional Growth, cont.

	Teachers and Child Care Providers	Supervisors of Teachers and Child Care Providers
PRACTICES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in reflective supervision to gain new insight and knowledge about working with children and their families Creates and follows through on individual professional development plans to strengthen professional practice related to family engagement Tracks progress toward one's own professional development plans for advancement with their supervisor or coach Participates in peer learning opportunities to share ideas and to enhance practice Advocates for advances in family engagement practices in the program and community, and in the field of early childhood 	<p>SUPERVISORY PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops and offers a professional development program for teachers and child care providers designed to enhance knowledge and skill development over time Ensures teachers and child care providers have opportunities to advance through training or educational experiences Provides regular coaching and/or reflective supervision to teachers and child care providers to advance family engagement Partners with teachers and child care providers to identify accomplishments, strengths, challenges, needs, and goals, specifying activities for growth and indicators of improvement Provides teachers and child care providers regular peer learning opportunities to share ideas and enhance practice <p>LEADERSHIP PRACTICES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensures protected time for coaching and reflective supervision during teachers', child care providers', and supervisors' work schedules Enacts policies and allocates resources to support teachers and child care providers to meet the goals of their individualized professional development plans for advancement Ensures that all staff members receive the support they need to address personal mental health concerns or excess stress Ensures that teachers and child care providers know how to apply program policies, guidelines, and expectations related to confidentiality, privacy, and ethical standards to their work



How Can Early Childhood Professionals Use the Relationship-Based Competencies for Teachers and Child Care Providers?

All early childhood professionals can integrate the RBCs for teachers and child care providers into their work with children and families. The RBCs can guide the work of supervisors, program leaders, consultants, coaches, and specialists who support center-based or family child care professionals. The RBCs can support state and county administrators and institutions of higher education that help prepare early childhood professionals for careers working with children and families. See examples below of how to use the RBCs for teachers and child care providers.

Teachers and child care providers can:

- Become familiar with the **RBCs to Support Family Engagement Overview** and the **RBCs For Early Childhood Professionals Who Work with Children in Group Settings**
- Consider those RBCs they feel confident about, those they need more information about, and those that they need time to practice
- Talk and reflect with their supervisor, education manager, coach, mentor, or peer support network about training needs and areas of professional practice to develop now and in the future
- Look for professional development opportunities through the Office of Head Start and the Office of Child Care Training and Technical Assistance, affiliates of the National Association for the Education of Young Children or the National Association for Family Child Care, community colleges and universities, family child care network, provider association, child care resource and referral (CCR&R) agencies, training and technical assistance resources, other early childhood programs in their community, websites and webinars, books, videos, and other available resources. (See the National Center resources, including the Individual Career Development page, on the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) and the Child Care Technical Assistance (CCTA) website).
- Practice the RBCs during their everyday encounters with parents. Examples include at times of enrollment, separation and reunion, sending and responding to messages, conferences, home visits, and making time for reflective practice about applying the RBCs in encounters with families.

Supervisors, coaches, and consultants who support teachers and child care providers can:

- Become familiar with the RBCs for teachers and child care providers as well as the RBCs for supervisors
- Talk with teachers and child care providers about the RBCs
- Provide opportunities for teachers and child care providers to use an individualized self-assessment and discuss the results with them as part of their individual supervision
- Create professional development opportunities or connect teachers and child care providers to existing opportunities that will help them develop a better understanding of the RBCs and learn more skills to support their professional practice
- Identify resources available for professionals to continue learning about the RBCs

How Can Early Childhood Professionals Use the Relationship-Based Competencies for Teachers and Child Care Providers?, cont.

- Most importantly, engage in coaching and reflective supervision. Use everyday encounters with teachers and child care providers as a positive, intentional opportunity to create a parallel process. Model ways of reflecting and relating that teachers and child care providers can use in their interactions with families.

Program leaders who oversee programs that serve children can:

- Establish policies that contribute to a program climate in which the RBCs are part of everyday practices with families and other professionals
- Structure program services and staffing patterns to maintain professional-child ratios that provide time for teachers and child care providers to implement the RBCs
- Incorporate the RBCs in position descriptions, hiring protocols, and performance reviews
- Support supervisors' development and use of the RBCs
- Plan budgets, create protected time, and offer other resources to facilitate professional development of the RBCs
- Look for opportunities to collaborate with other professionals, programs, and organizations to learn more about the RBCs

Head Start and Early Head Start, state, district, and county child care administrators who oversee early childhood education programs, early intervention programs, child and family policy, and workforce development initiatives that include teachers and child care providers can:

- Become familiar with the **RBCs for Early Childhood Professionals Who Work with Children in Group Settings**
- Ensure alignment between the RBCs and state guidance, licensing, credentialing, and accreditation requirements
- Provide professional development opportunities for teachers and child care providers at all levels, including community, state, regional, and national T/TA networks, to learn about and apply the RBCs to their everyday work
- Use the RBCs to influence policy and fiscal conversations at the state and federal levels

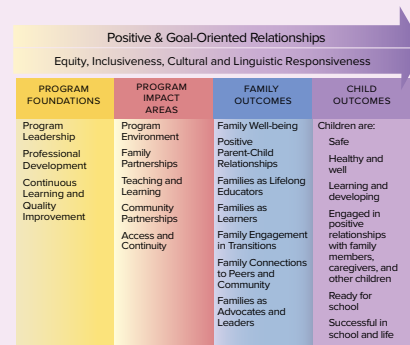
Higher education and professional associations that train or credential early childhood professionals can:

- Share information at conferences, workshops, and professional learning communities to motivate teachers and child care providers to use the RBCs in their everyday work with children and their families
- Apply the RBCs as guides for developing and refining certification and accreditation for teachers and child care providers
- Develop and refine curricula for professional preparation, pre-service training, and in-service training based on current RBCs, family engagement research, and practical applications for working in a diverse society
- Conduct research to evaluate the RBCs in response to training and in relation to family engagement and child and family outcomes
- Develop and use measures of the RBCs and family engagement outcomes to direct training content

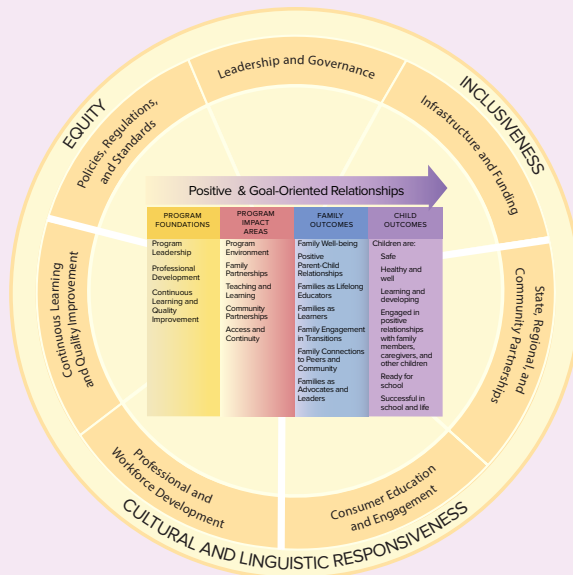
Relationship-Based Competencies and the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework

The RBCs are a critical tool for use in implementing the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework and the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework for Early Childhood Systems. The PFCE Framework is a visual guide for understanding how professionals, programs, and systems can work together to promote positive, enduring outcomes for children, families, and communities.

Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework



Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework for Early Childhood Systems



A Note to Head Start and Early Head Start Programs

As you explore the RBCs, it may be helpful to see how they relate to the Head Start PFCE Framework. See the table below for the most relevant and immediate connections between the RBCs and the PFCE Framework Elements and Outcomes. As you apply the RBCs to your professional practice, you may find different or additional connections that are more specific to your work.

Relationship-Based Competencies	PFCE Framework Elements								Family Outcomes						
	Program Foundations			Program Impact Areas											
	Program Leadership	Professional Development	Continuous Learning and Quality Improvement	Program Environment	Family Partnerships	Teaching and Learning	Community Partnerships	Access and Continuity	Family Well-being	Positive Parent-Child Relationships	Families as Lifelong Educators	Families as Learners	Family Engagement and Transitions	Family Connections to Peers and Communities	Families as Advocates and Leaders
1. Positive, Goal-Oriented Relationships	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x		
2. Self-Aware and Culturally Responsive Relationships	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	
3. Family Well-Being and Families as Learners	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	
4. Parent-Child Relationships and Families as Lifelong Educators	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x		x	x	x
5. Family Connections to Peers and Community	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
6. Family Access to Community Resources	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x
7. Leadership and Advocacy	x	x	x		x	x	x	x				x	x	x	x
8. Coordinated, Integrated, and Comprehensive Services	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
9. Data-Driven Services and Continuous Improvement	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
10. Professional Growth	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Related Head Start Program Performance Standards

- § 1301.3 (b) Policy council and public committee; Composition
- § 1301.4 (a-b) Parent committees
- § 1302.11 Determining community strengths, needs, and resources
- § 1302.16 Attendance
- § 1302.17 Suspension and expulsion
- § 1302.30 Purpose
- § 1302.31 Teaching and the learning environment
- § 1302.33 Child screenings and assessment
- § 1302.34 Parent and family engagement in education and child development services
- § 1302.35 Education in home-based programs
- § 1302.36 Tribal language preservation and revitalization
- § 1302.41 Collaboration and communication with parents
- § 1302.42 (a-c) Child health status and care
- § 1302.44 (a)(2)(viii) Child nutrition, promote breastfeeding
- § 1302.45 Child mental health and social and emotional well-being
- § 1302.46 Family support services for health, nutrition and mental health
- § 1302.47 (b)(4) Safety Training (5) Safety practices
- § 1302.50 Family engagement
- § 1302.51 Parent activities to promote child learning and development
- § 1302.52 Family partnership services
- § 1302.53 Community partnerships and coordination with other early childhood and education programs
- § 1302.61 (b-c) Additional services for children [with disabilities]
- § 1302.62 Additional services for parents
- § 1302.63 (c) Coordination and collaboration with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA [parent request for IFSP or IEP]
- § 1302.70 (a-c) Transitions from Early Head Start
- § 1302.71 (b-c) Transitions from Head Start to kindergarten
- § 1302.72 Transitions between programs
- § 1302.80 Enrolled pregnant women
- § 1302.81 Prenatal and postpartum information, education, and services

Related Head Start Program Performance Standards, cont.

§ 1302.82 Family partnership services for enrolled pregnant women

§ 1302.90 (b-d) Personnel policies

§ 1302.91 (d-e) Staff qualifications and competency requirements

§ 1302.92 (a-c) Training and professional development

§ 1302.101 (b) Management system: Coordinated approaches

§ 1302.102 Achieving program goals

§ 1302.103 Implementation of program performance standards

§ 1304.11 (b)(2) Basis for determining whether a Head Start agency will be subject to an open competition

§ 1304.20 (c) Selection among applicants

§ 1304.41 (a) Head Start Fellows program [qualifications]

Related 2016 Child Care and Development Fund Final Rule Requirements

§ 98.1 Purposes

§ 98.15 Assurances and certifications

§ 98.16 Plan provisions

§ 98.18 Approval and disapproval of Plans and Plan amendments

§ 98.30 Parental choice

§ 98.31 Parental access

§ 98.32 Parental complaints

§ 98.33 Consumer and provider education

§ 98.41 Health and safety requirements

§ 98.44 Training and professional development

§ 98.46 Priority for child care services

§ 98.51 Services for children experiencing homelessness

§ 98.52 Child care resource and referral system

§ 98.53 Activities to improve the quality of child care

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Related Resources

Explore these related resources on the Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) and the Child Care Technical Assistance (CCTA) website:

- Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework
- Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework for Early Childhood Systems
- Relationship-Based Competencies to Support Family Engagement:
 - Overview for Early Childhood Professionals
 - A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals Who Work with Families
 - A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals Who Work with Children in Group Settings
 - A Guide for Early Childhood Professionals Who Make Home Visits
- Measuring What Matters: Using Data to Support Family Progress



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