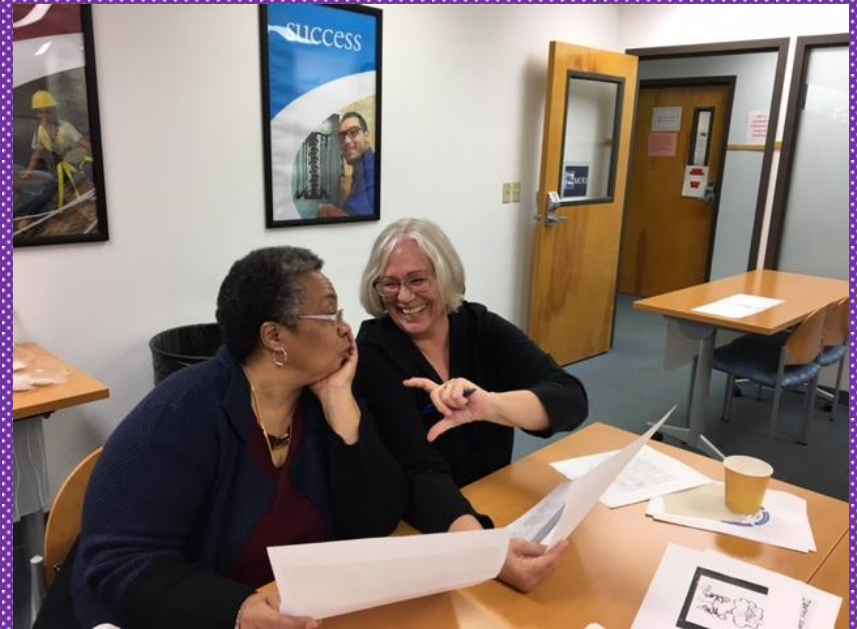
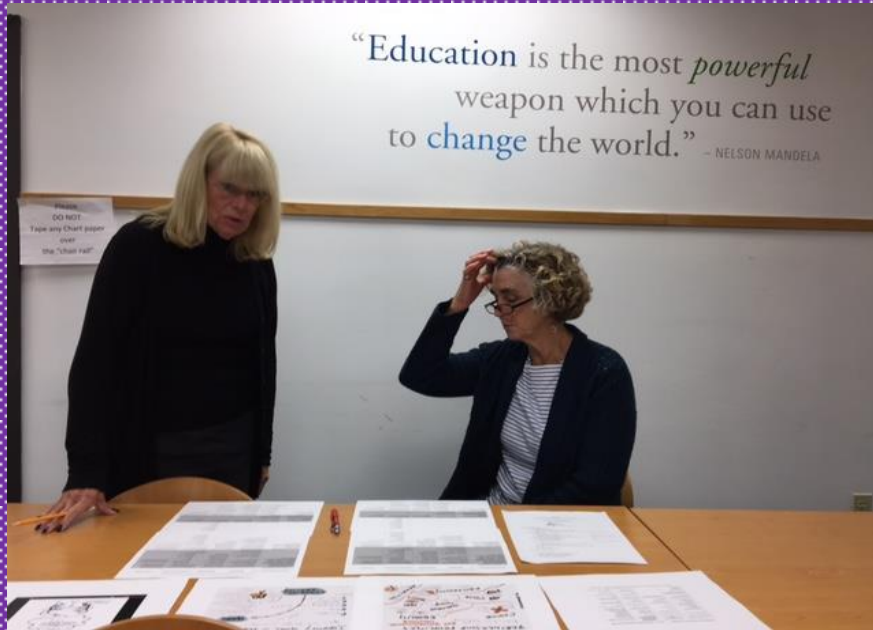




Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood



The Connecticut Core Knowledge and Competency Framework for Technical Assistance Providers that Support Adults who Work with Young Children and Families



2017

Special thanks to: Peg Oliveira, an independent consultant who facilitated conversations with the technical assistance provider core knowledge workgroup and authored drafts of this Framework.

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The Connecticut Core Knowledge and Competency Framework for Technical Assistance Providers that Support Adults who Work with Young Children and Families

Those closest to young children and their families influence the trajectory of growth and development. Technical assistance providers; coaches, consultants, mentors, trainers (inclusive of higher education faculty), bear a great responsibility for providing the adults who support children and families with access to up- to- date knowledge and current resources. Current studies point to the need for consistency of professional learning across roles and systems and a support system for technical assistance providers to both enhance and deliver their best work. The Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the National Research Council (NRC) lists thirteen recommendations for transforming the early childhood workforce; many of which directly impact technical assistance systems, knowledge, and practices. Recommendations pertaining to technical assistance include¹:

- build a better knowledge base to inform workforce development and professional learning services and systems;
- support the consistent quality and coherence of professional learning supports during ongoing practice for professionals working with children and families birth through age 8; and
- build an interdisciplinary foundation in higher education for child development.

The Connecticut Core Knowledge and Competency Framework for Technical Assistance Providers (TA CKCs) was influenced by the IOM & NRC recommendations and draws upon the concept of a “shared core” across roles introduced in the *CT Core Knowledge and Competency Framework for Professionals Working with Young Children and Their Families*. The TA CKCs represents a shared core set of competencies common across each role; coach, consultant, mentor, and trainer (inclusive of higher education faculty). In addition, the TA CKCs include definitions and competencies unique to each role.

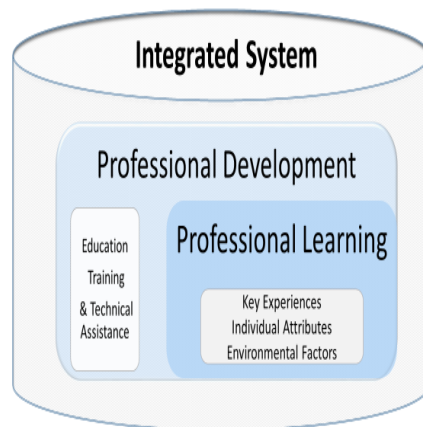
Expectations for ongoing professional learning need to be more consistent across professional roles, and systems and incentives need to be strengthened so that standards and best practices will be adopted and implemented more consistently and rigorously in available professional learning activities.

(IOM/NRC, 2015)

¹ Institute of Medicine (IOM) and National Research Council (NRC). 2015. *Transforming the workforce for children birth through age 8: A unifying foundation*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. Available from <http://www.nap.edu/catalog/19401/transforming-the-workforce-for-children-birth-through-age-8-a>

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Equally important as agreement on a shared core across technical assistance provider roles and what is unique to each role, is an understanding of the differences between professional learning and professional development. While the terms are often used interchangeably there are distinct conceptual differences. Professional learning is a system comprised of three components that must be addressed as a whole to maximize learning effectiveness. The three components are: **environmental factors** that support challenge through timely and focused feedback; **key experiences** designed to elicit reflection in context of the participants' work; and consideration for **individual attributes** such as motivation and self-regulation for goal setting and responsibility for learning². An understanding of how to support adults in the professional learning process while engaged in professional development activities is critical to their success. Early childhood professional development represents a variety of activities delivered on a continuum. Such activities includes education, training, and technical assistance³.

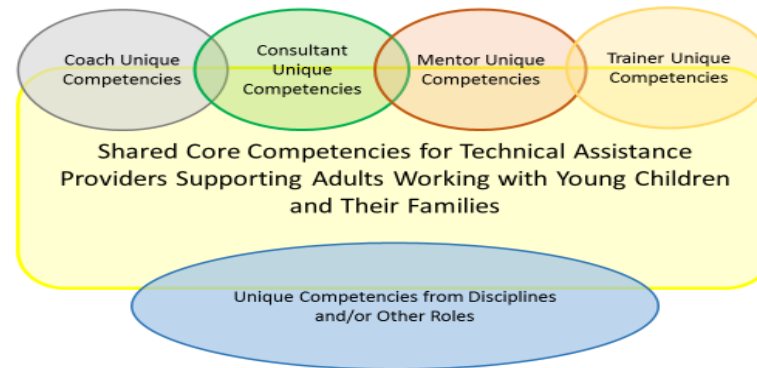


Connecticut's vision is that all who work with young children and families, no matter the setting, will be individuals who are able to confidently and competently support each child's growth and development. This means that technical assistance providers must have an understanding of how to utilize best practices in adult learning that support the learning needs of those who work most closely with children and families, and of families themselves. To understand the multiple contexts where children are cared for and educated, which includes the home setting, is critical. The alignment of our education, training and technical assistance systems is critical to cultivating a great early childhood workforce, inclusive of a two-generational approach. The core knowledge and competencies outlined in this document can be used across technical assistant roles and setting such as: coaches, consultants, and mentors in early childhood settings; higher education faculty and in-service trainers; Birth to Three interventionists; mental health consultants; and home visitors. They were intentionally developed by a workgroup with representation from multiple settings, sectors, and disciplines for use across roles and settings.

² Trio Model: accessed August 1, 2016 at <http://adult.education.uconn.edu/overview-2/>

³ Training and Technical Assistance Glossary. Copyright 2011 National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies.

What foundational competencies about technical assistance are shared across technical assistance provider roles and what competencies are unique in any given role?



The cross-discipline and cross-role workgroup reviewed documents from many states and the literature on the role of coaches, consultants, mentors and trainers for discussion in the context of early childhood today and for the future of the profession. A shared set of core competencies that celebrates the commonalities of technical assistance provider work, such as, relationship-based practices, understanding adult learners, and knowing the landscape of systems, sectors, and settings are a few areas that are commonly shared and should be recognized as a core from which to build. The TA CKCs shared competencies will:

- Create a common language across disciplines and roles.
- Create a common thread of professional development expectations for competency growth.
- Better serve those who work directly with children and families.
- Provide a guide for interdisciplinary and integrated training approaches across higher education institutions and professional development designers.

This model mirrors the model outlined in the Connecticut Core Knowledge and Competency Framework for Professionals Working with Young Children and Their Families. All technical assistance providers must know and be able to use the CKC Framework for Professionals in their work across early childhood settings.

This document addresses a shared set of core competencies and dispositions for technical assistance providers that support individuals in any setting where children are cared for and/or there is interaction with children ages birth to eight and their families. Specific to the state-funded program sector that serves young children and their families, there exists an extensive research base documenting the relationship between qualified teachers, program quality, and children's ongoing academic success (Barnett, 2003), where most teachers can benefit greatly from technical assistance designed to enhance the practices that influence child outcomes associated with high-quality programs.

To improve outcomes for children in Connecticut, regardless of the setting in which children are served, multiple government agencies, organizations, institutions, and independent contractors provide technical assistance. The purpose of developing the TA CKCs is to describe the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for technical assistance providers to address the learning and practice needs of individuals in any setting where children and their families engage with one another and with adults other than family members.

More specifically, a defined set of Technical Assistance CKC's and dispositions can be used for:

- A foundation for technical assistance provider approval to assist in designing and implementing state professional development initiatives.
- An alignment resource for higher education institution course content and guide for delivery strategies with an interdisciplinary lens.
- A foundation to build credentialing.
- A baseline for establishing professional standards for specific disciplines.
- A resource for program directors in choosing qualified technical assistance providers.
- A framework to support reciprocal relationships between sectors, states and systems.
- A professional development tool for programs and initiatives that employ coaches.
- A self-assessment tool to review and strengthen skills and dispositions.
- A tool for promoting technical assistance as a profession.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guiding principles that informed the development of the TA CKCs were partly adopted and modified from the *NAEYC and NACCRA Early Childhood Education Profession Development Training and Technical Assistance Glossary* and the *Region 1 Office of Child Care and the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative Guide to Effective Consultation with Settings Serving Infants, Toddlers and Their Families: Core Knowledge, Competencies, and Dispositions*.

- Use evidence-based best practices
- Align adult learning principles and structure TA to promote links among research, theory, and practice
- Build upon work previously done locally, regionally and nationally
- Support collaborative multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary practice
- Reflect individual, social, economic and cultural diversity
- Promote and support culturally responsive practice
- Promote and support linguistic diversity
- Define the knowledge and skills necessary for promoting the development and well-being of infant and toddler, Pre-K and school-age children regardless of an individual's discipline
- Stay relationship based and family sensitive
- Maintain a client focus
- Reflect the knowledge, skills and dispositions essential for all TA providers working with Infant/Toddlers, Pre-K and school-age children, their families and practitioners in any capacity, setting or sector.
- Align with existing standards (including The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), The National Association for Child Care Resource Referral Agencies (NACCRRRA), CT Core Knowledge and Competencies for Professionals, Learning Forward, Region 1 Office of Child Care and the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative Guide to Effective Consultation with Settings Serving Infants, Toddlers and Their Families: Core Knowledge, Competencies, and Dispositions, selected state 's professional development system documents, etc.

Existing resources from states and national entities provided a rich foundation for cross-sector and cross-discipline conversations in Connecticut. In particular, the work of the Region 1 Office of Child Care through the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative produced *A Guide to Effective Consultation with Settings Serving Infants, Toddlers and Their Families: Core Knowledge, Competencies, and Dispositions*. Connecticut chose to adopt the dispositions set forth in the Region 1 document.

Effective technical assistance providers should manifest a set of attributes, called dispositions. The Connecticut workgroup decided not to include specific dispositions within the individual domains to follow, but rather agreed that dispositions should pervade all domains. Technical assistance providers should be **caring, communicative, creative, critical/reflective, and professional** and strive to demonstrate these dispositions in their work.

Caring Dispositions: Technical assistance providers with this set of dispositions value and appreciate all aspects of the well-being of children with an emphasis on children birth through age 8, practitioners, families, colleagues and program administrators. The following list comprises many, but not all, of the qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors that characterize a set of caring dispositions.

Caring Dispositions	
Empathic	Identifies with and sees things from the perspective of others.
Compassionate	Sympathizes, often with a desire to understand and help improve the conditions of others' lives.
Understanding	Develops appropriate relationships.
Respectful	Shows appropriate regard for the needs, ideas, and experiences of others.
Passionate	Demonstrates excitement, enthusiasm, and optimism for the people, content, and context of the consulting-teaching-learning process.
Culturally Competent	Appreciates and capitalizes upon diversity; is aware of and acts to reduce one's own biases; employs culturally sensitive pedagogy.

Communicative Dispositions: Technical assistance providers with this set of dispositions are sensitive to and skilled in the various aspects of human activity. They have effective interpersonal relationship skills and attitudes that foster collaborative enterprises useful in enhancing the teaching-learning process. The following list comprises many, but not all, of the qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors that characterize a set of communicative dispositions.

Communicative Dispositions	
Present	Is keenly engaged in interactions and observations.
Responsive	Is inclined to act as best meets the needs, subtle as well as obvious, of others and their circumstances. Responsiveness can be demonstrated quickly in a conversation or over time by, for example, providing follow up resources as needed.
Attentive	Pays attention to all aspects of communication and applies active listening techniques such as paraphrasing what the other person has said to ensure clear understanding.
Collaborative	Involves and works with others in planning, problem solving, and implementing effective practices.
Vocal	Is willing to openly engage and respond to peers, practitioners, administrators and community.

Creative Dispositions: TA providers with this set of dispositions display the capacity to envision and craft things in novel and meaningful ways. The following list comprises many, but not all, of the consultant qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors that characterize a set of creative dispositions.

Creative Dispositions	
Flexible	Adapts, adjusts, and modifies practices to meet the needs of those with whom she/he is consulting; thinks on his/her feet; is comfortable with change.
Inventive	Uses the interests, preferences, and needs of infants, toddlers, families and practitioners to collaboratively design multiple strategies to support the child's successful participation in natural learning opportunities; creates, reviews, problem solves and revises intervention strategies practitioners can successfully implement throughout typical routines and activities; visualizes and can support implementation of novel ideas and practices.
Resourceful	Identifies and uses resources in effective ways; adapts practices to unforeseen challenges; helps practitioners find and use resources and informal supports.
Resilient	Endures stress and maintains stability in the face of disruption and chaos; recovers poise or spirit that enables moving forward in an effective manner.

Critical/Reflective Dispositions: Technical assistance providers with this set of dispositions have the ability to examine closely, to critique, and to ask questions. They do not accept the status quo at face value but employ higher level thinking skills to evaluate, analyze, and synthesize. Self-evaluation and reflection characterize individuals with this set of dispositions. The following list comprises many, but not all, of the qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors that characterize a set of critical dispositions.

Critical/Reflective Dispositions	
Reflective	Takes time consistently to evaluate effectiveness of consultation and behavior in terms of the larger goals of consultation; nurtures reflectivity in practitioners; reflects on own growth and accountability.
Enterprising	Exhibits a willingness to pursue solutions to problems or questions; gathers relevant data and persistently seeks to improve situations or areas of need.
Open-Minded	Exhibits an ability to look at different sides of an issue; recognizes the possibility of error in one’s own beliefs and practices; does not display or act upon prejudices against people or ideas.
Effective	Nurtures high expectations; demonstrates self-direction and confidence; encourages others to display their own skills and strengths.
Modest	Places the needs of the learner and/or learning ask above own ego; reflects on own growth and accountability.

Professional Dispositions: These are general expected qualities and practices of all professionals.

Professional Dispositions	
Professional	Meets the standards expected of a professional, such as appropriateness of dress, grooming, demeanor, punctuality, tact, discretion, courtesy, etc.
Ethical and Principled in Person and Profession	Adheres strongly to personal and professional morals, principles and ethical standards established by the profession, for example the NAEYC Code of Ethics; evidences integrity.
Responsible and Reliable	Conducts work and related tasks in a reliable, thorough and efficient manner; has strong work ethic.
Discreet	Complies with Federal, State and program policies relating to confidentiality.
Objective	Fosters and enhances the teaching and learning process while exercising judgment about personal and professional boundaries; displays genuineness.

The TA CKCs are organized by domains with categories and indicators. The Connecticut workgroup reviewed national documents and state documents from Colorado, Georgia, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Washington and Wisconsin in order to make informed decisions about the domains, categories and indicators.



Professionalism

- A. Ethical standards, professional guidelines and legal requirements
- B. Ongoing reflections and self-assessment of knowledge and skills
- C. Professional development and individualized learning plans
- D. Social justice and equity



Relationship Based Practice

- A. Trusting and respectful relationships
- B. Diversity and cultural responsiveness
- C. Roles and boundaries
- D. Conflicts and challenges



Content Knowledge

- A. Relevant local, state, federal and national standards and frameworks
- B. Personal knowledge and experience



Supporting Adult Learners

- A. Adult learning theory, principles and characteristics
- B. Adult learning process
- C. Applying adult learning theory, principles and practices in the design, delivery and evaluation of coaching, consultation, mentoring, training and/or coursework design



Evaluating Outcomes

- A. Methods of assessing technical assistance outcomes
- B. Use of data to inform continuous improvement



Systems, Sectors and Settings

- A. Policies and quality initiatives to support best practice
- B. Cross-system and cross-sector collaborations and partnerships

Unique Competencies by Role: Coach, Consultant, Mentor and Trainer

**SHARED CORE
DOMAINS AND INDICATORS**

1. Professionalism

Professionalism

Technical assistance providers use the highest standards of professionalism and accountability. Adults providing early care, intervention, consultation, coaching, and education must take advantage of opportunities to grow professionally, evolve a conscious philosophy, adhere to standards of ethical behavior and a professional conduct as well as identify and embrace discipline specific professional and ethical guidelines such as the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct (http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/image/public_policy/Ethics%20Position%20Statement2011_09202013update.pdf). A technical assistance provider models professional and ethical behaviors for the clients they serve.

Professionals demonstrate knowledge of legal requirements, understanding of ethical practice and involvement in advocacy for all early childhood learning environments and those practices identified by their disciplines or roles. Importantly, technical assistance providers must express and demonstrate value for diversity for all family and caregiver’s cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Another NAEYC document, Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators, references those involved in “mentoring” and provides specific direction that “everything we do in our role as educators of adults is intended to further this ultimate commitment” to the healthy development and welfare of young children. The core values include to “respect the critical role of a knowledgeable, competent, and diverse early childhood education workforce in supporting the development and learning of young children” and to “base practice on current and accurate knowledge of early childhood education, child learning and development, adult development and learning, as well as other relevant disciplines.” The Supplement outlines ethical responsibilities to adult learners. (http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/image/public_policy/ethics04_09202013update.pdf)

Category: TA.1.A Ethical standards, professional guidelines and legal requirements

TA.1.A.1 Maintains a professional demeanor and appropriate conduct in different venues (fact to face, online, and through social media) and settings.
TA.1.A.2 Identifies when conflicts of interest arise and determines appropriate follow-up action.
TA.1.A.3 Establishes clear expectations and sets boundaries about roles and relationships.
TA.1.A.4 Maintains expectations around confidentiality.
TA.1.A.5 Creates channels of communication between client and self.
TA.1.A.6 Reaches clarity and agreement on scope of work, communication protocols, and anticipated outcomes before providing technical assistance.

Category: TA.1.B On-going reflection and self-assessment of knowledge and skills

TA.1.B.1 Engages in self-reflection to evaluate one's own ethical and professional practice.

TA.1.B.2 Recognizes personal limitations in content knowledge and experience and refers assignments beyond one's expertise to others.

TA.1.B.3 Reflects on feedback and data, as well as conducts self-assessments to evaluate own professional abilities and content knowledge.

TA.1.B.4 Continuously evaluates own practice and seeks growth in areas of limited knowledge and/or practice.

TA.1.B.5 Gathers feedback and examines self-assessments results to evaluate own professional abilities and content knowledge.

TA.1.B.6 Recognizes self as an adult learner and reflects on methods used for instruction and facilitation to broaden repertoire of delivery methods that meet the needs of learners, not necessarily the comfort zone of the one providing the assistance.

Category: TA.1.C Professional development and individualized learning plans

TA.1.C.1 Establishes an individualized professional development plan for self and seeks growth in areas of limited knowledge and/or practice.

TA.1.C.2 Engages in ongoing professional learning to meet goals and increase depth of understanding of critical concepts, theories, processes, principles, systems and research.

Category: TA.1.D Social justice and equity

TA.1.C.1 Advocates for equitable practice.

TA.1.C.2 Presents sensitive materials fairly.

TA.1.C.3 Identifies own biases and share when appropriate as model of self- reflection.

2. Relationship Based Practice

Relationship Based Practice

Technical assistance providers recognize that learning happens in the context of relationships; that relationships are critical to the learning process for children, families and adults. They have the ability to promote a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust.

Successful relationships focus on the strengths of the participant and/or client (families, staff, trainees, etc.) and a shared commitment to the child's well-being and success. As relationships between caregivers and families are strengthened, mutually respectful partnerships are built. Strong partnerships with families contribute to positive and lasting change for families, staff and children.

Technical assistance providers recognize the role of relationships in their own practice and understand that participants and/or clients are more likely to build knowledge and skills when those relationships are trusting and respectful. Positive goal-oriented relationships are based on mutual respect and trust and are developed over time, through a series of interactions.

Technical assistance providers must also be culturally competent and responsive, which includes understanding and being respectful of each individual's unique characteristics and context. They must also understand the importance of defining clear roles and boundaries in their practice and establishing and reinforcing these throughout the experience. Furthermore, they must recognize that conflicts and challenges may arise with or among participants and possess the skills to manage these situations.

Category: TA.2.A Trusting and respectful relationships

TA.2.A.1 Uses interpersonal skills (e.g. humor, empathy, body language and rapport building) to deliver instruction and support.

TA.2.A.2 Shares background knowledge and experience.

TA.2.A.3 Communicates expectations and goals at the outset and consistently throughout the professional development experience.

TA.2.A.4 Demonstrates respectful, receptive and active listening to establish effective two-way communication.

TA.2.A.5 Engages in collaborative problem-solving.

TA.2.A.6 Uses participant's experiences as the foundation for transferring new knowledge and understanding to practice.

Category: TA.2.B Diversity and cultural responsiveness

TA.2.B.1 Shows respect for and interest in the individual and collective abilities and experiences of participants and responds to client's contributions with respectful feedback.

TA.2.B.2 Focuses on identifying participants' strengths, learning styles, culture, language, needs and preferences and builds upon them to establish respect and mutual trust.

TA.2.B.3 Creates a safe and supportive learning environment that encourages discussions about cultural similarities and differences.

TA.2.B.4 Respects the background of the individual: culture, language, demographics and the context and culture of the organization and community in which he/she is working.

Category: TA.2.C Roles and boundaries

TA.2.C.1 Establishes and adheres to appropriate confidentiality protocols.

TA.2.C.2 Models appropriate behavior by explicitly stating own practices around confidentiality.

TA.2.C.3 Explicitly states own role as well as the roles of participants/students, and supports participants in adhering to roles and boundaries.

TA.2.C.4 Establishes ground rules for a productive professional learning environment.

Category: TA.2.D Conflicts and challenges

TA.2.A.1 Follows organization's and institution's policies regarding managing conflict and change.

TA.2.A.2 Uses effective negotiation, facilitation, conflict management and consensus building skills.

TA.2.A.3 Responds to conflict and challenges directly, respectfully and productively with goal of seeking resolution.

3. Content Knowledge

Content Knowledge

Technical assistance providers must have a depth of understanding about child development and be knowledgeable about specific content pertinent to their practice. For example, coaches engaged with programs that accept state funds must have an understanding of the CT Early Learning and Development Standards as well as other state initiatives and documents. All technical assistance providers must understand how to apply the shared core outlined in this document and their specific content knowledge in all settings relevant to participants. It is necessary that technical assistance providers understand the CT Core Knowledge and Competency Framework for Professionals Working with Young Children and Their Families, the CT Early Learning and Development Standards as appropriate, and other state and federal standards and regulations appropriate to the discipline, to inform their own understanding and alignment of their work.

Category: TA.3.A Relevant local, state, federal and national standards and frameworks

TA.3.A.1 Aligns content with the CT Core Knowledge and Competencies for Professionals by identifying in design of the work.

TA.3.A.2 Identifies specific connections to standards relevant to discipline and role.

TA.3.A.3 Clearly communicates content connections to participants and/or clients in the delivery of services as appropriate to role.

Category: TA.3.B Personal knowledge and experience

TA.3.B.1 Demonstrates understanding of content related to topics clients request for professional learning and/or are able to refer the client to individuals with such content expertise or utilize such individuals in the development of learning experiences with the client.

TA.3.B.2 Possess expertise relevant to specific technical assistance appropriate for the context in which the service will be provided.

TA.3.B.3 Demonstrates knowledge of applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

TA.3.B.4 Demonstrates knowledge of varying philosophies and theories, research-based practices and professional trends in the early care and education field and other disciplines as appropriate.

TA.3.B.5 Regularly review and revise all content to ensure technical assistance delivery is based on current philosophies and theories, principles of child development, research and promising practice appropriate to discipline.

TA.3.B.6 Knows the systems, sectors and settings that serve children, age birth through eight, and their families.

4. Supporting Adult Learners

Supporting Adult Learners

Technical assistance providers must understand adult learning principles and be attuned to the characteristics of adult learners. They demonstrate respect for adult learners by keeping these principles and characteristics in mind at all times. Effective technical assistance providers use instructional methods and facilitation skills to assist participants and/or clients in achieving the goals of the intended assistance and meet learning needs. They maintain an up-to-date knowledge base on effective instructional methods, including the growing knowledge base around digital (blended, e-learning, online) learning and the role of technology in learning. They demonstrate respect for adult learners by applying these principles in their provision of the technical assistance.

Category: TA.4.A Adult learning theory, principles and characteristics

TA.4.A.1 Understands adult learning theory, principles and characteristics of adult learners, including but not limited to: Understand that adults:

- Need to participate in the design and implementation of their learning experience.
- Are internally motivated and self-directed.
- Are capable of broadening the complexity of their mental model of their current practice.
- Need opportunities to draw upon their own lived experiences and knowledge.
- Are goal oriented, relevancy-oriented and practical.

Category: TA.4.B Adult learning process

TA.4.B.1 Understands adult learning process. Adult learning process is:

- An experience-based process.
- An active, constructive process.
- A social process.
- A developmental process.
- Both an unlearning and relearning process.

TA.4.B.2 Understands change process and contributing factors (attitudes, dispositions, motivations, contextual culture and climate, etc.)

Category: TA.4.C Applying adult learning theory, principles and practices in the design, delivery and evaluation of coaching, consultation, mentoring, training and/or coursework design

TA.4.C.1 Assesses the needs and readiness for learning as well as the current depth of understanding of content in which the participants and/or clients will be engaged.
TA.4.C.2 Builds on the experiences and knowledge of participants and/or clients.
TA.4.C.3 Designs experiences and assignments that focus on learning objectives and adjusts strategies as needed to accomplish goals.
TA.4.C.4 Uses a variety of instructional and facilitation methods and formats to deliver technical assistance including modeling, demonstration, co-teaching, technology based tools, peer learning, learning communities, training modules, etc.
TA.4.C.5 Adapts strategies, materials, timelines, workflow, and resources based on participant’s learning style, culture, language, needs, preferences and diverse work contexts.
TA.4.C.6 Provides participants with opportunities to connect new knowledge with prior knowledge and apply it to their practice.
TA.4.C.7. Engages and motivates participants toward active learning and personal goal setting.

5. Evaluating Outcomes

Evaluating Outcomes

A cycle of intentional data gathering is a critical component of determining whether the planned experiences for adults and children are effective. Technical assistance providers must value this process. They understand appropriate and effective methods for assessing outcomes of their technical assistance processes and partnerships. They establish and carry out effective evaluation plans in order to measure the success of their practice in achieving positive outcomes. To eliminate bias, a third party evaluation of the technical assistance process and overall system of delivery is recommended, however, formative types of assessment and assessment that can be conducted with identity protection is routine. They organize and carefully evaluate data to inform and modify their design and delivery, as well as identify strengths and gaps in their practice. They use findings from the analysis of data to improve their own knowledge and skills. They assist technical assistance recipients to understand this cycle of intention reflection within the technical assistance process and support them to advocate for adjustments in the process so that they can reach their self-determined outcomes.

Category: TA.5.A Methods of assessing technical assistance outcomes and plan for use

TA.5.A.1 Establishes and utilizes a plan for assessing learning outcomes, at a minimum includes:

- Questions that prompt reflection on learning, the degree to which change has occurred, and open-ended response.
- The use of a variety of methods and opportunities for feedback and measurement of impact, such as; during sessions, after sessions, use of feedback forms, satisfaction surveys, rating scales, third party administration of assessment, national instruments, observation of self by a peer reviewer, etc.
- Selects or designs culturally appropriate assessment strategies and tools.
- A plan for data collection, analysis and data collection method. Inclusion of the participant when appropriate.
- A plan for reflection on the data and modification of technical assistance practices.

Category: 5.B Use of data to inform continuous improvement

TA.5.B.1 Uses assessment data and participant feedback to assess the effectiveness of and inform revisions to:

- Objectives
- Content
- Scope and sequence
- Delivery methods
- Assessment approaches and timelines

TA.5.B.2 Seeks opportunities to collect input from a broad array of relevant stakeholders.

TA.5.B.3 Works with client to develop specific TA expectations, and outcomes, and uses formative information to establish appropriate benchmarks and to assess progress over time.

TA.5.B.4 Uses assessment data and client feedback to guide own professional improvement, growth and development

TA.5.B.5 Maintains records of client's growth over time.

TA.5.B.6 Regularly seeks formative feedback from participants/client to determine efficacy in meeting needs and to inform continuous improvement.

6. Systems, Sectors and Settings

Systems, Sectors, and Settings

Technical assistance providers understand, use and share current information about resources that help participants and/or clients connect to the services they need. They are able to point to resources that would be helpful but may also be outside the realm of what the technical assistance provider is able to address. The technical assistance provider aims to take a holistic approach to assisting participants and/or clients with all needs, even those that fall outside the realm of the assistance planned. Knowing and understanding the state and local systems for resources and referral, as well as the various funding sources and settings where children and families engage, is critical to helping staff and families obtain what they need to be successful.

Category: TA.6.A Policies and quality initiatives to support best practice

TA.6.A.1 Knows state and local systems of resource and referral.

TA.6.A.2 Assists client in locating and understanding needed resources and materials to support the technical assistance process.

TA.6.A.3 Shares information on how to access appropriate resources and assists with the referral process to support improvement.

TA.6.A.4 Recognizes and uses appropriate protocols to address unsafe, unhealthy, and questionable practices, and reinforces developmentally appropriate, evidence-based practice.

TA.6.A.5 Customizes TA to best meet the needs of systems, sectors, and settings in which TA is provided.

TA.6.A.6 Supports client in assessing and complying to quality standards based on health, safety, licensing, and learning standards; Caring for Our Children; QRIS standards; national accreditation standards; or other standards and benchmarks specific to the setting and discipline.

Category: TA.6.B Cross-system and cross-sector collaborations and partnerships

TA.6.B.1 Engages in the larger field of early childhood care and education and relevant fields associated with discipline, e.g. actively participating in professional organizations.

TA.6.B.2 Collaborates across agencies to deliver holistic technical assistance.

TA.6.B.3 Collaborates to research and integrate practices that support quality education and care that promotes the inclusion, health and well-being of all children, families, and clients.

TA.6.B.4 Effectively creates and maintains working partnerships with service networks and other technical assistance providers.

TA.6.B.5 Strives to facilitate effective communication among across systems, sectors and settings.

Connecticut's approach to addressing the body of work related to identifying the core knowledge and competencies needed to serve children, families, and the early childhood workforce at large is both interdisciplinary and integrated. Drawing from disciplines such as education, social work, intervention, health, and mental health provided the lens for developing an integrated set of knowledge and competencies that, perhaps, can unify the field in thinking about placing children and families at the center of all our work at the same time using a more holistic and inclusive lens. The shared core in both the CKCs for Professionals Working with Young Children and Their Families and this set of TA CKCs outlines this integrated approach. This section focuses on what is unique about roles identified as technical assistance provider. While the NAEYC and NACCRRRA Training and Technical Assistance Glossary provided the basis for defining these roles, recent literature and emerging practices and models informed the development of the knowledge and competencies outlined in this section.

COACH: The term is used across many fields and is ill-defined as a role but categorized as a process. The basic definition of a coach is someone who supports the learning of someone else, works towards goals, and provides guidance in the learning process. Coaching is not directive, but helpful in bringing about an awareness of strengths and needs in order for learners to develop a plan for ongoing learning.

To begin to understand a coaching process, the NAEYC and NACCRRRA definition offers:

Coaching is a relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning knowledge and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s). Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal-setting and achievement for an individual or a group (pg. 11).

Building from this basic definition of a coaching process, Connecticut has adopted the five key coaching characteristics from Rush & Shelden (2011) as core principles of the coaching process regardless of what models or frameworks any specific setting or agency may use. Coaching models or frameworks are varied in their roots of theoretical origin and may vary in focus and intended context for their use. The definition of coaching and the five key characteristics of coaching that Rush & Shelden (2011) researched resonates with Connecticut's focus on supporting adult learners, relationship-based practices, and reflection as shared core competencies for all technical assistance providers. According to Rush & Shelden (2011), coaching as an evidence-based practice may be defined as:

An adult learning strategy in which the coach promotes the learner's ability to reflect on his or her actions as a means to determine the effectiveness of an action or practice and develop a plan for refinement and use of the action in immediate and future situations (pg. 8).

Taking the above definitions into practice, technical assistance providers who define their role as a coach should know and be able to:

CH1 Represent the dispositions and knowledge and skills outlined in domains one through six of the shared core.
CH2 Hold a working knowledge of the five key characteristics of coaching as outlined by Rush & Shelden (2011): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint planning- Agreement by both coach and learner on the actions to be taken by the coach and/or learner or the opportunities to practice between coaching visits.• Observation- Examination of another person's actions or practices to be used to develop new skills, strategies, or ideas.• Action- Spontaneous or planned events that occur within the context of a real-life situation that provide the learner with opportunities to practice, refine, or analyze new or existing skills.• Reflection- Analysis of existing strategies to determine how the strategies are consistent with evidence-based practice and may need to be implemented without change or modified to obtain the intended outcome(s).• Feedback- Information provided by the coach based on direct observations of the learner by the coach, actions reported by the learner, or information shared by the learner to expand the learner's current level of understanding about a specific evidence-based practice.
CH3 Have an awareness of a variety of coaching models or frameworks, the context for use and differences in process.
CH4 Understands coaching as a relationship-based practice.
CH5 Understands development and implementation of a coaching contract from a business perspective, as appropriate.

CONSULTANT: Just like the term “coach”, consultant is used across many fields and is ill-defined as a role but categorized as a process. The basic definition of a consultant is a professional who provides expert advice in a particular area.

To begin to understand a consulting process, the NAEYC and NACCRRRA definition offers:

Consultation is a collaborative, problem-solving process between an external consultant with specific expertise and adult learning knowledge and skills and an individual or group from one program or organization. Consultation facilitates the assessment and resolution of an issue-specific concern – a program/organizational, staff or child/family-related issue – or addresses a specific topic (pg. 12).

A distinguishing factor between coaching and consulting is that consultation is more direct in the approach to addressing an issue. In some instances, consultation is in response to a regulatory finding or funding standard whereby the individual or program may need targeted advice to become compliant. The focus is on a specific concern whereby the consultant assists in building the capacity of the recipient to utilize effective processes that will help resolve the concern.

Taking the above definition into practice, technical assistance providers who define their role as a consultant should know and be able to:

CT1 Represent the dispositions and knowledge and skills outlined in domains one through six of the shared core.
CT2 Understand the difference between coaching and consultation.
CT3 Knows a variety of strategies to match the appropriate solution to the area of concern (when a coach is or isn't needed, professional learning strategies, resources for exploration, assessment tools, etc.).
CT4 Performs a summary evaluation to measure effectiveness of the consultation.
CT5 Understands development and implementation of a consulting contract from a business perspective, as appropriate.

MENTOR: To begin to understand a mentoring process, the NAEYC and NACCRRA definition offers:

Mentoring is a relationship-based process between colleagues in similar professional roles, with a more-experienced individual with adult learning knowledge and skills, the mentor, providing guidance and example to the less-experienced protégé or mentee. Mentoring is intended to increase and individual's personal or professional capacity, resulting in greater professional effectiveness (pg. 10).

The mentor and the mentee establish and maintain a positive, trusting, and respectful relationship that is long term. A mentor is a colleague that is generally a choice by a mentee but can be assigned or can volunteer to mentor. Mentors are guides, a source of wisdom and support, not instructors. Supervisors are generally not mentors, but if need be, should distinguish the role of supervisor from the role of mentor. Mentorship is not used as a method of evaluating job performance.

Taking the above definition into practice, technical assistance providers who support mentors or who find themselves as mentors to others should know and be able to:

M1 Represent the dispositions and knowledge and skills outlined in domains one through six of the shared core.

M2 Understand that the mentor role is a relationship focused on holistic professional growth of a colleague.

M3 Acts as a reflective listener.

M4 Utilize coaching skills, when appropriate, to challenge thinking.

TRAINER: To begin to understand the role of a trainer, the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators offers this definition:

A professional who teaches early childhood educators in an institution of higher education (includes adjunct faculty) and those who conduct not-for-credit training for the early care and education workforce (pg. 2).

Trainers embrace a central commitment of the field to the healthy development and welfare of young children. In doing so, balancing the nurturing of adult learners and the obligation of trainers to provide caring and competent professionals to work with young children and families, becomes an ethical dilemma.

Taking the above definition into practice, technical assistance providers who define their role as a trainer should know and be able to:

T1 Represent the dispositions and knowledge and skills outlined in domains one through six of the shared core.
T2 Remain current with content knowledge, research and best practices on the topic(s) requested and/or designed for delivery. Example: training on social and emotional development would require child development content and models such as Pyramid Model.
T3 Instructional design is based on adult learning practices. Including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates room arrangement that is comfortable for adults and supports social learning.• Objectives are aligned with CKCs and/or standards of relevance and transparent to the participants.• Agenda offers flexibility for adjustments.• Plans experiences for engagement.• Plans for pre-post and during session reflection opportunities, including formative and summative assessment.
T4 Implements training based on adult learning practices. Including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respects the diversity of participants and creates a climate of cultural sensitivity .• Gains an understanding of prior knowledge through: conversation, questions, game techniques, charting, etc.• Experiences provide for both guided and independent learning opportunities, utilizes a variety of learning modalities, and incorporates participant control of learning by way of choice options.• Arranges content in manageable, measurable chunks.• Provides clear and accurate instructions and demonstrations.• Uses a variety of materials to support learning, including technology• Checks understanding throughout, allows time for reflection, provides summary of content chunks.
T5 Implements both formative and summative measurement strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uses a variety of methods to check understanding throughout learning experience (levels of reflective questions and activities, scaffolding, feedback opportunities, monitors group activities, charting, etc.).• Provides opportunities for summary learning (projects, problem-solving scenarios, feedback about learning process, etc.).
T6 Reflects upon content, design, implementation, and measurement strategies to inform shifts in training practices and personal knowledge growth.

Adult Learning – a cognitive process which occurs in a teaching-learning transaction. Adult learning theory maintains that adult learners 1) need to be involved in their planning and evaluation of their instruction; 2) learn based on their experience, including mistakes; 3) are most interested in learning what has immediate relevance and impact to their job or personal life; 4) prefer problem-centered rather than content-oriented instruction; and 5) are internally motivated. (Arizona 2016 Early Childhood Professional Development Instructor and Technical Assistance Provider Standards)

Cultural Competence - Cultural competence is having an awareness of one's own cultural identity and views about difference, and the ability to learn and build on the varying cultural and community norms of students and their families. It encompasses the ability to respect and value the differences seen in other people, including but not limited to, customs, thoughts, behaviors, communication styles, values, traditions, abilities, economic status, and institutions. Cultural competence includes the ability to learn from and relate respectfully to other cultural backgrounds, heritages, and traditions. This understanding informs and expands teaching practices in the culturally competent educator's classroom. *National Education Association (NEA) 2013 definition*; further defined at: <http://www.nea.org/home/39783.htm>

Culturally Responsive Practice - Culturally responsive practice is intended to ensure that all groups are benefitting equally from instruction and classroom management practices. It is often applied for race and ethnicity, but should be considered whenever there is a group that is not benefitting in an educational environment. It involves a set of congruent educator/stakeholder behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system that works for all students. At the classroom level, a culturally responsive approach means being aware of cultural differences, examining teaching materials and practice, and adapting programs and interventions, as appropriate, to respond to different student needs. On an institutional level, culturally responsive practice involves monitoring the effects of programs and interventions for all students, especially those from groups that have been historically marginalized. At its heart, cultural responsiveness involves self-reflection, continuous examination of data, raising difficult and sometimes awkward questions about why some students succeed and others do not, and making adjustments that can improve the instructional/disciplinary match for all groups of students. <https://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/culturally-responsive> Indiana University Bloomington: Center on Education and Lifelong Learning.

Diversity- Diversity is inclusive of individual differences (e.g., personality, interests, learning modalities, and life experiences), and group differences (e.g., race, ethnicity, ability, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, nationality, language, religion, political affiliation, and socioeconomic background). CCSSO InTASC Standards, 2011

Evidence-based- are programs that have been validated by documented and scientific research and the evidence has gone through a peer review process. Evidence is established through scientific research that has had a comparison between an intervention group and a control group where the intervention group has had a significant impact. Peer review means that someone external to the program or research team has reviewed the methodology and the findings to determine if standards were met. (Arizona 2016 Early Childhood Professional Development Instructor and Technical Assistance Provider Standards)

Evidence-informed- is a program or service that has a clearly articulated theory of change (logic model) and has had some evaluation of the outcomes. This can be based on one program or service model that has been evaluated in multiple settings. An evidence informed program cannot be based on the evaluation of a program in only one setting, even if it has been done for many years in a community and everyone likes it. (Arizona 2016 Early Childhood Professional Development Instructor and Technical Assistance Provider Standards)

Higher Education Faculty – refers to all individuals including site supervisor, adjunct faculty, and others that are employed full or part time by colleges or universities to provide professional development to prepare or provide on-going support to an early childhood workforce.

Integrated Early Childhood Professional Development System - refers to a comprehensive system of preparation and ongoing development and support for all early childhood education professionals working with and on behalf of young children from birth through age 8. An integrated professional development system crosses the sectors, settings, and roles providing early care and education for children from birth through age 8. Such roles may be in Head Start, for-profit and nonprofit child care programs in centers and homes, state pre-K programs in community-based and school settings, early grades in public and private schools, early intervention and special education services, resource and referral agencies, higher education institutions, and state departments related to early childhood education (e.g., education, licensing, health, etc.). This resource refers repeatedly to the core sectors, settings, and roles that are essential to the delivery of early childhood education; however, this list does not preclude states from including additional sectors, settings, and roles. http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/Build%20It%20Better_For%20Web.pdf NAEYC, 2016, Build It Better: Indicators of Progress to Support Integrated Early Childhood Professional Development Systems.

Professional Development - includes both professional preparation and ongoing professional development. It includes training, education, and technical assistance. It can take the form of university/college credit-bearing coursework, preservice and in-service training sessions, observation with feedback from a colleague; peer learning communities; and mentoring, coaching, and other forms of job-related technical assistance. High-quality professional development includes an opportunity for the learner to participate in planning his professional development as well as access to credit-bearing course work, valued credentials, and instructors with appropriate knowledge and experience in early childhood education and principles of adult learning (NAEYC & NACCRRRA 2011; NAEYC & The Alliance for Early Childhood Teacher Educators 2011). http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/Build%20It%20Better_For%20Web.pdf NAEYC, 2016, Build It Better: Indicators of Progress to Support Integrated Early Childhood Professional Development Systems.

Professional Learning Communities- are groups of educators engaging to improve their skills and knowledge through collaborative study, expertise exchange, and professional dialogue. They also see to improve the education aspirations, achievement, and attainment of their students through stronger leadership and teaching. (Arizona 2016 Early Childhood Professional Development Instructor and Technical Assistance Provider Standards)

Sector- is generally associated with a funding source, such as; state-funded programs, federally-funded programs, private funded, non-profit, and public or private sector, etc.

Setting- is generally referred to as where children are served, such as: family home providers, center-based programs, public schools, homes, etc.

Technical Assistance is the provision of targeted and customized supports by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills needed to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients (NAEYC & NACCRRRA, 2011). Technical assistance includes roles such as coach, consultant, mentor, and trainer (inclusive of higher education faculty).

Two-Generational Approach – focuses on creating opportunities for addressing the needs of vulnerable children and their parent(s) together. The efforts are outcomes-focused, integrated and family-centered.

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TA CKC Workgroup

This Framework is a product of thoughtful collaboration between representatives of multiple agencies and entities that design and implement professional development opportunities for the early childhood workforce at large as well as those who receive professional development from such entities. The time dedicated to the conceptualization, content development, review and editing by a cross-section of the early childhood professional development workforce and state personnel is a testament to the commitment Connecticut has for setting the foundation of excellence for professional learning and development.

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Early Childhood Consultation Network
Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECCP)
Enfield Public Schools
Granby Public Schools
Head Start Training and Technical Assistance
Housatonic Community College
Post University
Regional Education Resource Centers (RESCs) LEARN, ACES, EASTCONN
State Education Resource Center (SERC)
Trinity College Community Child Care Center
UConn Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities
Women's League Child Development Center



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