
CORE COMPETENCIES

for Afterschool Professionals

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The Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals are effective on February 1, 2007 and remain in effect until further notice. To ensure continued quality and relevance, this document will be reviewed before or during August 2008.

The Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals

Background

The Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals were created by a diverse group of Vermont professionals, a Committee that was brought together through the State of Vermont's Child Development Division in July, 2005 to work toward a common goal of developing a framework of professional development specifically targeted to meet the needs of afterschool professionals. The complete framework shall contain a set of core competencies that outline the desired skills and knowledge areas that are important for success as an afterschool professional, as well as resources for education, professional development opportunities, and further learning around the state.

The Committee starts from a place that understands afterschool services are based in and arise from community needs and is working to develop partnerships and learning consortiums that reach Vermont's many distinct communities. We seek to legitimize the importance and social pertinence of the work of afterschool professionals and to support their continued learning and professional growth through opportunities which offer many pathways for learning. The Committee was motivated by the work of Vermont's Northern Lights Career Development Center, and drew upon its *Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals* when designing the *Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals*. Our intention is not to create multiple systems but rather, to expand and

build upon each other's work in hopes of improving the daily quality of education, care and services to Vermont's children and youth.

What is Afterschool?

Afterschool is now nationally recognized as a generic term used to reference the collective range of supervised settings for age appropriate activities and programs that school-age children, approximately ages 5-18, engage in during their out-of-school time. Examples include such settings as regulated school age child care, youth development organizations, recreation programs, school-sponsored activities and other special interest programs.

Who Are Afterschool Professionals?

Afterschool Professional refers to any individual working with school age children and/or youth in any context. An afterschool professional may be just entering the field, or may have years of experience working with children and youth. They may work with children and youth one day per week or full-time.

What Are the Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals?

The Core Competencies are the foundation of a professional development system. Core competencies refer to the observable, concrete skills that underscore the development and delivery of high

Our intention is not to create multiple systems but rather, to expand and build upon each other's work in hopes of improving the daily quality of education, care and services to Vermont's children and youth.

The tool is intended to serve as a general guideline for individual reflection and assessment, rather than as a rigid and categorical way of evaluating professional performance.

quality services and programs; they establish standards of practice and strengthen the afterschool field. The Competencies reflect the diversity of the afterschool field itself and are flexible in nature. They are designed to serve individuals in determining their learning and professional needs. They are relevant to any position - teacher, assistant, program administrator, program coordinator, volunteer, provider, paraprofessional, and more. And they are relevant for any setting where afterschool services take place: schools, community-based organizations, homes, recreation centers, faith-based organizations, etc. They are also intended to support high quality programming and services regardless of whether a program is required to be licensed or not.

How Do the Core Competencies Serve As A Professional Development Tool?

Individualized competency-based learning can occur at all levels of the professional development continuum, and can be supported through a supervisory process, as well. This document acknowledges that individuals possess competencies at different levels among the core knowledge areas depending on their background, position and life experience. While the Core Competencies clearly set forth standards, it should be understood that professionals using the document have different needs. The tool is intended to serve as a general guideline for individual reflection and assessment, rather than as a rigid and categorical way of evaluating professional performance. *The Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals* can be used to assess one's learning needs, develop education and training curriculum, and as a tool for supervision and mentoring support. Accordingly, the Core Competencies lend

themselves to being an active resource in the following ways:

Assessing individual learning needs: Professionals may use the Competencies to self-assess their own skills and knowledge in the areas outlined in the Competencies. Administrators may use the Competencies to assess the learning needs of staff. The grid-like format of the document's layout is designed so that users can measure where they are in their learning within each particular competency area and related skill area.

Developing education and training curriculum: Trainers, instructors, organizations, and other institutions of learning can use the Competencies to design and evaluate courses and other professional development opportunities.

Supporting supervision and mentoring: On an individual level, the Core Competencies assist afterschool professionals in developing Individualized Professional Development Plans (IPDP) which in some instances, is also a component of their supervisory relationship. On an organizational level, the Competencies are a starting point from which organizations can design and deliver training and orientation programs to groups of staff with common learning needs.

How are the Core Competencies Organized?

The Core Competencies consist of five knowledge areas: (1) *Child and Youth Development*; (2) *Families and Communities*; (3) *Curriculum and Learning Environ-*

ment; (4) Health and Safety; and, (5) Professionalism and Program Organization. Inside each competency area, there are 3 Levels that measure progress and learning needs.

The Levels are:

- **Level 1** outlines the common set of knowledge and skills that are expected of all afterschool professionals. Level 1 is the “common denominator,” a baseline for ensuring quality services reach children and youth regardless of program setting.
- **Level 2** includes Level 1 requirements and expands upon the skills required of afterschool professionals in the areas of program planning, supervision and collaboration.
- **Level 3** includes Levels 1 and 2, and further explores the areas of leadership, administrative responsibility and community outreach, as related to a career in afterschool education.

Additionally, the document includes four Indicators that are a way to help further focus the competency-based assessment process - whether individualized or as a part of formal supervision. Indicators are descriptive words that correlate to stages of learning and depending on the individual, may or may not directly correlate to the Levels. For example, a professional may determine she/he is at Level 2 all-around, but that there are a few points where they are still developing awareness.

The 4 Indicators are:

- **Awareness** is the first stage in a process of learning during which a professional will be exposed to subjects integral to their jobs and professional growth. For example, indi-

viduals will be expected to identify theories of child development.

- **Development** is a learning phase where earlier learning is expanded and directly integrated into professional life. Pursuing specialty certification may also be a component of the Development phase. An example of the Development phase of learning is when a professional describes the ways that the social environment contributes to a child or youth’s development.

- **Achievement** is a phase of learning in which the afterschool professional consistently demonstrates application of the core competencies within his/her position. The ability to teach and demonstrate learning is a hallmark of the Achievement phase. An example is when a professional works with a colleague to develop activities that support an individual child/youth’s strengths and interests.

- **N/A (not applicable)** refers to items in the Core Competencies that given the diversity of the afterschool field, may not apply to some. For example, a volunteer art teacher may check N/A for the learning point: Conducts, documents, and interprets observations, as needed.

A SAMPLE: USING THE COMPETENCIES FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

The following is an example of how the Core Competencies can be used as both a self-assessment tool, and as part of a supervisory relationship. The sample below was filled out by an afterschool staff person who is completing his first 6-months of work as an Afterschool Services Program Assistant with the Vermont Network of Communities and Families,

Indicators are descriptive words that correlate to stages of learning and depending on the individual, may or may not directly correlate to the Levels.

COMPETENCY AREA: FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

COMPETENCIES/ REQUIREMENTS	LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Relationships		Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Acknowledges the importance of building strong relationships with families.	1,2,3	✓			
2. Maintains professional boundaries with families.	1,2,3		✓		
3. Identifies assets and challenges of individuals and families.	2,3		✓		
4. Supports and values families as active decision-makers and educators.	2,3	✓			
5. Involves children/youth and families in planning and implementing learning experiences.	2,3	✓			
6. Facilitates opportunities to increase parents' knowledge about child/youth behavior and development.	3	✓			
7. Facilitates opportunities for families to interact with one another and the greater community.	3				✓

“Building strong relationships with families” by seeing how my workplace can bring parents and their children together.

an organization that provides afterschool services in communities around the state. As Program Assistant, he is responsible for designing and directly delivering programs for children and youth ages 8-13 years. He came to this current job after working for two years as a co-coordinator in a middle school’s enrichment program. His previous experience provided him with a lot of direct involvement with children and youth, but not so much with families. His supervisor has asked him to complete a self-assessment as part of his 6-month evaluation using the Core Competencies as a framework for their discussion. Here are his ideas, as they pertain to the Families & Communities section of the Competencies.

Summary:

When I filled this out, I realized a few things about where I am now and where

I want to focus. I am respectful of the families connected to our programs and I strive to understand the children I work with as individuals, as well as part of a distinct family. I’ve definitely seen this in terms of some cultural differences. And while I feel I am respectful of our families, I am not so sure about how to actually get them involved as co-educators in our programs. One idea I have is that I want to continue

developing my awareness of the first point listed above, “*building strong relationships with families*” by seeing how my workplace can bring parents and their children together. Maybe this will be a special event or a workshop or a series on topics proposed by families and their children- I’d like my supervisor’s input on this. I also realized that I’m not satisfied with where I am in the area “*identifying assets and challenges of individuals and families.*” This is a goal I set in my IPDP when I began my job, and I really want to gain more competency in this area, and to learn about specific ways of determining strengths and challenges. I want to know what the families in our program need and how I can respectfully work with them to do this. I will talk to my supervisor about finding a course or workshop on this topic. That’s a first step. I will also access the Bright Futures Information System to see if any workshops are

coming up in my area or nearby. Because my job does not formally include community outreach with families, I checked N/A for “*facilitates opportunities for families to interact in the greater community.*” It is my understanding that my role is to focus on connecting families to our programs, and that community outreach is someone else’s responsibility. However, even though this point does not directly apply to my current position, I would like to know more about other positions in this organization that include community outreach because I enjoyed that aspect of work when I have done it in the past and it’s an area in which I’d like some further knowledge.

Some Frequently Asked Questions

1. Are the Core Competencies to be used only by Afterschool Professionals?

No. They are adaptable to any relevant environment and many audiences. Although the primary audience for their use is professionals working in all facets of the afterschool field, they contain useful information for others, as well. These Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals can benefit parents, policy makers, educators of many sorts, and communities. For instance, parents and guardians who are looking into options for afterschool programs for their children can refer to the Competencies to determine the kinds of skills and qualifications that are suggested as professional and program standards. Community organizations can refer to them during the hiring and screening process of potential employees. Policy makers can also refer to the document when considering systemic changes and the impact their decisions have on Vermont communities, and how to better the quality of life for the State’s children and youth. Essentially, the document is envisioned as educational and helpful to anyone work-

ing with children and youth and anyone working on their behalf in the public and/or private sector.

2. How do the Competencies relate to an Afterschool credential for professionals?

At the time of writing (September 2007), there is not a national credential for afterschool professionals and no credential or formal professional acknowledgement exists for afterschool professionals living and working in the State of Vermont. However, the Competencies are intended to serve as the foundation for the development of courses and trainings that are, or will be, available throughout the State and all of this learning will eventually be connected to obtaining a credential of some type. At this time, the Committee is exploring several options with respect to a credential and how it can best be implemented in Vermont. For instance, like other states, we are working to create linkages between the fields of afterschool and youth development and looking into how a credential could satisfy professionals in each field. The role of Vermont’s higher education institutions is an integral part of how multiple options for learners can be delivered throughout the state, and we are working with them to create a palette of options that will reach learners in their communities through on-line and on-site classroom and community modalities.

3. How are the Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals different from the Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals?

The main difference between the two sets of Competencies is that the *Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals* articulate standards for individuals working with children and youth ages 5-18 whereas the *Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals* focus on defining standards



for professionals working with infants, toddlers, and young children up to the age of 6 years. Indeed, there are many standards that apply to each field, but it is also important to acknowledge that often, afterschool work focuses on meeting the needs of pre-adolescents and adolescents with different developmental needs.

4. How do I find out about career and learning options as an Afterschool Professional?

Information about current trainings in Vermont can be found on the Bright Futures Information System (www.brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us). It can also be accessed through the Northern Lights Career De-

velopment Center's web-site (www.northernlights.vsc.edu) and then clicking on the Resources option. Through these two sites, searches can be done for specific courses and the entire course calendar for Vermont is also available for viewing. Courses are coded according to competency areas so that professionals can easily see what areas and specifications they are meeting. Sometimes, courses will be specific to afterschool professionals, and sometimes an overlap exists between afterschool professionals early childhood professionals. The list of on-line and print Resources at the end of this document also contains reference information that is helpful for afterschool professionals.



If you have any questions about the Vermont Northern Lights Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals, please write or call us:

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CORE COMPETENCIES FOR AFTERSCHOOL PROFESSIONALS

Competency Area: Child & Youth Development

Afterschool professionals have an understanding of how children and youth develop physically, cognitively, socially, and emotionally, as well as how children improve and use language skills and other forms of communication. In addition, professionals need to know about various factors that influence child development, and how individual children’s development varies.

COMPETENCY INDICATORS	LEVEL	INDICATORS		
		Awareness	Development	Achievement
1. Describes principles of growth and development.	1,2,3			N/A
2. Identifies and defines developmental domains: physical, cognitive, social, emotional.	1,2,3			
3. Identifies developmental milestones of children, kindergarten through adolescence.	1,2,3			
4. Recognizes how children are different from adults in learning, behavior, abilities, and needs.	1,2,3			
5. Recognizes the impact of biological and environmental influences on a child’s development.	1,2,3			
6. Recognizes the importance of observing and documenting children and youth development, begins to keep anecdotal records, and communicates with others about the observations.	1,2,3			
7. Identifies major theories and theorists of child and youth development.	2,3			
8. Recognizes the crucial role of asset building in child/youth development.	2,3			
9. Recognizes when to seek the help of others in understanding and addressing children/youth’s individual special needs.	2,3			
10. Identifies resources for acquiring information about identified special needs.	2,3			
11. Conducts, documents, and interprets observations, as needed.	3			

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
B. Influences on Child & Youth Development			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Describes the importance of transitions in child/youth development		1,2,3				
2. Describes the importance of seeing the child/youth in the context of his/her family and culture, including the community.		1,2,3				
3. Describes the importance of youths' interactions and relationships with peers and adults.		1,2,3				
4. Recognizes physical or behavior changes that may indicate the presence of stress in children's/youth's lives.		2,3				
5. Identifies the impact of youth and child/youth health on their behavior and ability to interact and learn.		2,3				
6. Describes factors influencing resiliency in children and youth.		2,3				
7. Uses preventative strategies that influence and optimize healthy development..		3				
8. Understands how society influences development (for example, poverty, trauma, homelessness, violence, and social biases) and affects the needs of individual children.		3				
9. Analyzes the role of media in child and youth development and behavior.		3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
C. Individual Variance			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Recognizes that children and youth have different temperaments, needs, rates of development, and learning styles.		1,2,3				
2. Recognizes that stress resulting from trauma, abuse, neglect, poverty, and other factors such as current events impacts children's development and behavior in individual ways.		1,2,3				
3. Recognizes the special needs of children and youth.		1,2,3				
4. Recognizes physical or behavior changes that may indicate the presence of stress.		2,3				
5. Identifies temperament and individual differences in children/youth and their impact on development and behavior.		2,3				
6. Identifies and discusses issues in child development arising from individual differences.		2,3				
7. Employs a variety of strategies to help youth cope with stress, conflict, and other developmental challenges.		3				
8. Develops strategies to support each youth's individual assets, needs, and interests.		3				

Competency Area: Families and Communities

Afterschool professionals understand that children and youth are members of a family and a community. Afterschool professionals also work respectfully in partnership with families and communities. They value the diversity of and their unique relationships with children and youth, families, and communities. They also share information and resources with children and youth and their families that support their well-being.

COMPETENCY INDICATORS	LEVEL	INDICATORS		
		Awareness	Development	Achievement
1. Acknowledges the importance of building strong relationships with families.	1,2,3			N/A
2. Maintains professional boundaries with families.	1,2,3			
3. Identifies assets and challenges of individuals and families.	2,3			
4. Supports and values families as active decision-makers and educators.	2,3			
5. Involves children/youth and families in planning and implementing learning experiences.	2,3			
6. Facilitates opportunities to increase parents' knowledge about child/youth behavior and development.	3			
7. Facilitates opportunities for families to interact with one another and the greater community.	3			

COMPETENCY INDICATORS	LEVEL	INDICATORS		
		Awareness	Development	Achievement
1. Identifies different types of communication (verbal, non-verbal).	1,2,3			N/A
2. Uses "release of information" protocol appropriately.	1,2,3			
3. Utilizes a variety of strategies with families that encourage feedback and evaluation.	2,3			
4. Understands a variety of communication techniques, including conflict resolution and active listening and selects appropriate methods to support and build trusting relationships with families and youth.	2,3			
5. Integrates children's home cultures and languages into the program.	3			

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Community Involvement and Resources			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Identifies resources that support children and families.		1,2,3				
2. Identifies state and national resources that support children and families.		1,2,3				
3. Assists families to make their own referrals and requests for services.		2,3				
4. Collaborates with community service providers to ensure access to services for children and families.		2,3				

Competency Area: Curriculum and Learning Environment

After school professionals understand that learning occurs through the combination of interactions, structures and experiences in children's and youth's daily lives. A balanced program that promotes life skills and enhances cognitive, social, emotional and physical development. A variety of strategies are needed to match children's and youth's interests and unique approaches to learning.

COMPETENCY INDICATORS	LEVEL	INDICATORS			
		Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
Interactions					
1. Builds positive, respectful, and trusting interactions with children and youth.	1,2,3				
2. Supervises children and youth using positive and age appropriate guidance strategies.	1,2,3				
3. Encourages and supports children and youth to actively participate in a variety of activities.	1,2,3				
4. Acknowledges feelings and emotional expression.	1,2,3				
5. Responds to children and youth in ways that demonstrate understanding of their individual needs, abilities and interests.	2,3				
6. Promotes positive relationships among children and youth and helps all children and youth feel accepted in the group.	2,3				
7. Models empathy and mutual respect toward others.	2,3				
8. Guides children and youth to resolve conflicts and solve problems.	2,3				
9. Provides individual, large and small group activities.	2,3				
10. Provides child/youth directed and staff directed activities.	2,3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Environment			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Recognizes the elements of a supportive, healthy and enriching learning environment.		1,2,3				
2. Maintains a predictable schedule that can be flexible.		1,2,3				
3. Offers children and youth program choices based on their interests.		1,2,3				
4. Uses technology (television, videos, computers, video games) and adaptive technologies in appropriate and meaningful ways.		1,2,3				
5. Uses participant input to create the learning environment.		2,3				
6. Provides materials and activities that reflect diversity.		2,3				
7. Develops strategies for facilitating smooth transitions.		2,3				
8. Plans indoor and outdoor program choices that are safe and engaging.		2,3				
9. Designs the learning environment and curriculum in ways that will promote positive behaviors and cooperative interactions.		2,3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Curriculum and Enrichment			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Demonstrates awareness of best and promising practices for state and nationally recognized standards.		1,2,3				
2. Chooses activities that are appropriate for the cognitive, social, emotional and physical developmental level of the children and youth.		1,2,3				
3. Observes and integrates children's and youth's interests when planning learning opportunities.		1,2,3				
4. Recognizes the opportunities for learning in all program choices.		1,2,3				
5. Recognizes the importance for children and youth to develop new skills		1,2,3				
6. Selects activities that promote literacy.		1,2,3				
7. Encourages the development of children's and youth's creative expression by offering programs in the arts.		1,2,3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Assessment			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Provides written feedback about children and youth's participation and progress.		2,3				
2. Develops a plan for tracking children's and youth's participation and progress and communicates conclusions with families and staff, as needed.		2,3				
3. Responds to the individual special needs of children and youth.		3				
4. Identifies and documents eligibility guidelines and referral processes for identified special needs and services.		3				

Competency Area: Healthy and Safe Environments

Afterschool professionals use practices that protect children’s and youth’s health, safety, and development. This includes having knowledge of good nutrition, the importance of regular physical activity, personal decision-making, and relationship-building.

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Healthy Environments and Health Needs			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Summarizes and follows applicable health and safety licensing regulations.		1,2,3				
2. Identifies and follows procedures to avoid the spread of infectious illnesses.		1,2,3				
3. Responds to injuries and other health issues using appropriate documentation, communication, and treatment protocols.		1,2,3				
4. Identifies and implements sanitation procedures.		1,2,3				
5. Identifies, documents, and reports suspected emotional and physical abuse or neglect immediately.		1,2,3				
6. Identifies and encourages self-care activities, such as good hygiene and stress management to foster healthy development.		1,2,3				
7. Observes the overall health status of children or youth, and notes changes, concerns, or problems.		2,3				
8. Identifies local health care professionals, health services, and health resources available to children, youth, and their families.		2,3				
9. Develops and implements policies regarding exclusion and readmission of sick children and youth.		3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Safe Environments			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Adapts the indoor and outdoor environments to maximize the safety and independence of all children/youth.		1,2,3				
2. Selects and maintains indoor and outdoor equipment and materials.		1,2,3				
3. Identifies potential safety hazards and acts to prevent and/or remove them.		1,2,3				
4. Teaches simple safety precautions and rules to children/youth and enforces them consistently.		1,2,3				
5. Conducts periodic safety assessments of the program environment and makes recommendations for appropriate modifications.		2,3				
6. Follows emergency evacuation policies and procedures.		1,2,3				
7. Considers safety and preparedness issues when planning all on and off-site programs.		1,2,3				
8. Develops protocols and emergency evacuation policies for on and off site programs.						

COMPETENCY INDICATORS		LEVEL	INDICATORS			
Nutrition & Physical Activity			Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Follows applicable regulations to ensure proper nutrition, food preparation and service.		1,2,3				
2. Recognizes and avoids health hazards in meals and snacks (choking, allergens, burns).		1,2,3				
3. Provides meals and snacks for children or youth with special dietary needs as instructed.		1,2,3				
4. Provides meals and snacks that are appropriately portioned.		1,2,3				
5. Teaches children and youth about healthy food choices.		1,2,3				
6. Involves children and youth in menu planning and snack preparation.		1,2,3				
7. Models good health, nutrition and hygiene habits for children and youth.		1,2,3				
8. Provides time and space for active play and/or regular aerobic activity.		1,2,3				
9. Informs families about appropriate clothing for program activities.		1,2,3				
10. Recognizes the long-term health risks of extended periods of screen media and other passive activities.		1,2,3				
11. Communicates with children/youth and families about good nutrition and hygiene habits.		2,3				
12. Plans and evaluates menus to ensure nutrition and cultural dietary preferences.		3				

Competency Area: Professionalism and Program Organization

Afterschool professionals ensure that children, youth, and their families receive high quality, developmentally appropriate services. They maintain a code of ethical conduct; articulate a vision of afterschool care and professional development; work collaboratively with colleagues, families, and organizations; maintain a solid work ethic; and implement sound administrative practices such as budgeting and evaluation as applicable.

COMPETENCY INDICATORS	LEVEL	INDICATORS			
		Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
1. Recognizes ethical versus unethical conduct.	1,2,3				
2. Defines self-reflection and begins to practice it with support from supervisors and mentors.	1,2,3				
3. Maintains confidentiality of children and families.	1,2,3				
4. Understands the role of a mandated reporter.	1,2,3				
5. Participates in learning opportunities for professional growth.	1,2,3				
6. Begins to develop an Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP).	1,2,3				
7. Maintains personal and professional boundaries.	1,2,3				
8. Discusses and adheres to the organization's mission and goals.	1,2,3				
9. Understands and follows the organization's personnel and/or staff policies.	1,2,3				
10. Maintains an IPDP by pursuing professional development opportunities to meet outlined goals.	2,3				
11. Describes and implements policies that foster respect and inclusion of all children and families.	2,3				
12. Is aware of current trends and research in afterschool care.	3				
13. Uses consultations, mentoring, and technical assistance to improve program.	3				

COMPETENCY INDICATORS	LEVEL	INDICATORS		
		Awareness	Development	Achievement
Working with Staff and Colleagues				N/A
1. Identifies positive communication strategies for use with colleagues.	1,2,3			
2. Defines role and participates as a member of a team.	1,2,3			
3. Participates or initiates conflict resolution, when needed.	1,2,3			
4. Demonstrates respect when communicating with colleagues.	1,2,3			
5. Uses feedback from supervision as an opportunity for professional growth.	1,2,3			
6. Practices effective supervision of others according to program structure.	2,3			
7. Shares resources for professional development for oneself and colleagues.	2,3			
8. Identifies qualities of a good afterschool professional for hiring purposes.	3			
9. Provides learning opportunities for staff and colleagues that enhance their professional growth.	3			
10. Assesses the performance of staff.	3			
1.1. Conducts effective job interviews.	3			

COMPETENCY INDICATORS	LEVEL	INDICATORS			
		Awareness	Development	Achievement	N/A
Program Organization and Administration					
1. Follows applicable business and financial regulations and completes required documentation.	1,2,3				
2. Complies with local, state, and federal regulations.	1,2,3				
3. Demonstrates awareness of the purpose of contracts and policies.	1,2,3				
4. Shows awareness of program accreditation and other systems of quality standards.	1,2,3				
5. Follows required procedures for the protection of children and youth when applicable.	1,2,3				
6 . Maintains an inventory of supplies and equipment.	1,2,3				
7 . Plans and operates within a budget.	2,3				
8. Assists in marketing the program and recruiting children and families.	2,3				
9. Assists in evaluating program goals.	2,3				
10 Describes and discusses the concept of reasonable accommodations for individual needs of children.	2,3				
11. Manages contracts and policies as needed.	2,3				
12. Conducts annual program evaluation and assessment.	3				
13. Creates program policies and tools (e.g. handbooks, contracts, form).	3				
14. Addresses facility needs.	3				
15. Develops and manages an annual budget.	3				
16. Creates and implements a sustainability plan.	3				
17. Understands the laws and regulations pertaining to program.	3				
18. Initiates program quality assessment (e.g. STARS or NAA)	3				
19. Leads strategic planning for the program.	3				
20. Communicates effectively with advisory or governance boards.	3				

Additional Acronyms and Resources Related to Afterschool Professional Development

State of Vermont:

21st CCLC – 21st Century Community Learning Centers

www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/pgm_federal/21st_CCLC.html

AHS – Agency of Human Services www.ahs.state.vt.us

BFIS – Bright Futures Information System www.bfis.org

CCV -- Community College of Vermont www.ccv.edu

CDD – Child Development Division/State of Vermont www.dcf.state.vt.us/cdd

NCEA – National Community Education Association www.ncea.com

DCF – Department for Children and Families www.dcf.state.vt.us

NLCDC – Northern Lights Career Development Center www.northernlights.vsc.edu

VAEYC – Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children www.vaeyc.org

VCCICC – Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council www.vtchildcareindustry.org

VOOST – Vermont Out of School Time Network www.voost.org

VSACN – Vermont School Age Care Network www.voost.org/vsacn

VTDOE – Vermont Department of Education www.state.vt.us/educ

YD – Youth Development www.theconsultationcenter.org/ydtrc/home.htm

National:

Afterschool Alliance www.afterschoolalliance.org

And to view activities of networks by state, click:

www.afterschoolalliance.org/states/statepages

Charles Stewart Mott Foundation www.mott.org

NAA - National AfterSchool Association www.naaweb.org

NAEYC - National Association for the Education of Young Children www.naeyc.org

NYDIC - National Youth Development Information Center www.nydic.org

Nextgen - Next Generation Youth Work Coalition www.nydic.org/nydic/staffing/workforce/nextgen.htm

NIOST - National Institute of Out-of-School-Time (NIOST)
Wellesley Center for Women at Wellesley College www.niost.org

Search Institute www.search-institute.org

The Finance Project www.financeproject.org

For a Sampling of Professional Development Standards from Other State Afterschool Networks:

Colorado Afterschool Network
www.coloradoafterschoolnetwork.org

Connecticut Afterschool Network
www.csaca.org

Maine Afterschool Network
www.maine.edu

Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership
www.massafterschool.org

Plustime New Hampshire
www.plustime.org

New Mexico out-of-School Time Network
www.nmforumforyouth.org

New York State Afterschool Network
www.tascorp.org

North Carolina Center for Afterschool Programs
www.ncforum.org

Pennsylvania Statewide Afterschool/Youth Development Network
www.csc.csiu.org

Rhode Island Afterschool Plus Alliance
www.afterschoolri.org

Washington Afterschool Network
www.schoolsoutwashington.org

Youth Community Connections: Minnesota Partners for Healthy Youth Development
www.youthcommunityconnections.org

Vermont's Common Language & Terminology for the Professional Development Framework for Afterschool Professionals

Note: The following terms form a basic Glossary meant to serve as a companion to the Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals and it is intended to be used within that frame of reference.

Achievement: A phase in professional development in which the individual can teach and demonstrate learning, as well as apply it in their chosen profession. (For example, a professional works with colleagues to develop activities that support the strengths and interests of the youth in their program).

Afterschool: The collective range of supervised settings for age appropriate activities and programs that school-age children, approximately ages 5-18, engage in during their out-of-school-time.

Awareness: The first stage in a process of learning in which a professional is exposed to the areas of knowledge that are integral to her/his job and professional growth. (For example, a beginning professional begins to learn about theories of child and youth development).

Best Practices: Applying what works best in a given situation, and working in a manner that is recognized by peers and by objective evidence to be exemplary in guiding children and youth development.

Collaboration: Working together to achieve mutually agreed-upon outcomes in response to the needs and concerns of families and children.

Community Education: The process of building learning communities by responding to individual and community-based needs and making opportunities available that support the lifelong learning needs of all residents. From the National Community Education Association.

Core Competencies: A set of standards that outline a path for professional development.

Credential: "A certification that recognizes an individual's performance based on a set of defined skills and knowledge. A way to provide recognition of competence to professionals". From: National Institute on Out-of-School-Time, Wellesley Center for Women, 2006.

Development: The process of physical, mental, emotional, social and spiritual growth that happens throughout one's lifetime.

Developmentally Appropriate (Learning): Learning that takes place for children and youth of one age or skill level, as distinct from the learning that takes place for another child or youth of another age and/or skill level.

Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP): A personalized plan for increasing one's knowledge and improving skills by assessing current knowledge and skills, identifying specific areas for improvement, developing strategies and resources to address those areas and providing opportunities to reflect on and demonstrate personal growth.

Indicators: A way of measuring the scope of a professional's competence within each of the core competency areas.

Knowledge: Comprehension acquired by experience, training, or study that can be applied. (For example, a professional will apply knowledge of youth development to designing and implementing curricula that meets youths' needs and interests).

Nutrition (good or proper): A diet that provides an adequate amount of carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, proteins, minerals and water, but does not exceed the number of calories required for the body's energy needs. This must take into account individual age and ethnic/cultural dietary differences.

Professional Development: Experiences which over a sustained period of time, enable practitioners to acquire and apply knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities to achieve personal, professional and organizational goals. Types of professional development include: training, education (on-the-job and off-the-job), internships, symposia, research projects, volunteering, mentoring, experiential learning opportunities, cultural studies, and formal classroom studies.

Resilience: The ability to spring back and successfully adapt to adversity. From Resilience in Action, www.resilience.com

Special Needs (identified): A term that may refer to any number of individual situations, including but not limited to: learning disabilities, mental retardation, allergies, developmental delays, psychiatric disorders; a designation used to get children and youth any needed services which can help in goal setting and building understanding. From About: Parenting Special Needs www.specialchildren.about.com

Standards: Measures that guide and define quality programming, organizational development, and individual professional growth.

Strengths: Factors found in individuals and communities that reduce at-risk behaviors. Some examples of strengths for children and youth include: participation in structured activities, internal motivation, spiritual and/or religious ideas, and experiences of early and current caring by family and community. From the Search Institute, Minneapolis, MN

Youth Development: A process by which youth develop the personal, social, academic, and citizenship competencies necessary for adolescence and adult life, as based on their capacities, strengths, and formative needs. From the Advancing Youth Development Curriculum, Academy for Educational Development/Center for Youth Development and Policy Research.

Also, from the **Building Blocks for Life: 8 Types of Assets All Kids Need!** www.search-institute.org

Boundaries and Expectations: "Understanding the limits and possibilities."

Commitment to Learning: "Believing that education is important and engaging."

Constructive Use of Time: "Being involved in enriching and structured activities."

Empowerment: "Knowing they (children and youth) are valued and valuable."

Positive Identify: "Believing in their personal power, purpose, and potential."

Positive Values: "Caring for others and holding high standards for self."

Social Competencies: "Developing Skills and relationships for life."

Support: "Experiencing people and places that are accepting and loving."

This document was developed in partnership between the Afterschool Professional Development Framework Committee, the Vermont Out Of School Time Network and the Northern Lights Career Development Center for Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals. Specifically, we would like to thank each of the following persons for their assistance, ideas, and support in developing this document:

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Comments and Evaluation

Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals

Your feedback will help the Afterschool Professional Development Committee refine the Core Competencies and the development of additional components of the larger professional development framework. We anticipate making changes to this document based on the feedback we receive. At this time, we are interested in knowing whether the Competencies serve your best interests and appreciate your taking the time to answer the following:

The Competencies provide clear objectives that are relevant to my work. Yes No

How are you using this document? _____

I am using the document as a (check all that apply):

- Personal Professional Development Resource
- Reflective Learning Resource
- Mentoring Tool
- Supervision Tool
- Part of a course
- Informational Document to share w/Colleagues
- Other _____

The five Core Competencies areas are sufficient. Yes No

If no, please explain: _____

For each Core Competency area listed below, please share what is helpful for your professional development. (*For example, in the area of Curriculum and the Environment, you may have learned that it is important to assess program environments to make sure they reflect diversity.*)

Child and Youth Development _____

Families and Communities _____

Curriculum and the Environment _____

Health and Safety _____

Professionalism and Program Organization _____

Do you think any of the Competency areas should take precedence over the others for our future course planning? If so, which one(s) _____

One way I immediately used this document was _____

One way I see myself using this document in the future is _____

Please list two strengths of the Core Competencies

1) _____

2) _____

Please list two shortcomings of the Core Competencies:

1) _____

2) _____

Are there other topics not included in the document that you believe need to be?

Are you aware of the Northern Lights Professional Development System for Early Educators and After-school Professionals (www.northernlightscdc.org)? Yes No

Other _____

Please detach this page and return to:
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Thank you