

# Frequently Asked Questions and Answers about M.A.T.C.H.

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## **What does MATCH stand for?**

**Mentoring, Advising, Teaching, Coaching/Consulting, Helping.** It is Vermont's system of early childhood and afterschool professional support.

## **Who created MATCH and why?**

In 2009 Northern Lights Career Development Center was charged by the Vermont Child Development Division to create a formal system to ensure full access to quality individualized support (mentoring, coaching, consulting, technical assistance) by early childhood and afterschool programs and to individual staff working in those programs. The goal is to have this system of supports fully integrated into the professional development system. In 2009-10 Northern Lights facilitated a statewide work group of 25 people plus other advisors to start to define this new initiative. They worked over 9 months to define system components, how to describe it, who would be involved, who would benefit and why. As part of that work they looked at national models and research, models in Vermont, and surveyed current mentors, coaches, consultants, and those providing professional development in Vermont. A smaller committee is continuing this work. At a MATCH summit held November 30, 2011, 65 people reviewed and gave their perspective on the work and the DRAFT Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies. To date the Professional Preparation and Development Committee, and representation from the following groups have participated in the process: public schools, Head Start, special education, health, mental health, Afterschool, professional organizations, Child Development Division, Children's Integrated Services, child care, Resource Development Specialists, and current program directors, instructors, mentors, coaches, and consultants.

## **Why not "mentor" or "coach" or "consultant"?**

When the statewide workgroup examined terms and definitions from other states, from research, and what Vermonters thought about these terms, they realized that there are conflicting definitions for each term, and many have the same definition. There are strong feelings for and against each of these terms. The person providing individualized support may use mentoring, then coaching and then provide technical assistance – all in one day with one person. They came to see these terms as strategies, rather than as roles. Also they wanted to include everyone- all those already called coaches, mentors, consultants, and others, no matter what term was used. For these reasons, they chose a new inclusive term: the MATCH professional who uses a range of strategies (mentoring, coaching, etc.) as needed. They also hope this term will help people think about the importance of the match, the relationship between the professional providing guidance and the person gaining support to develop.

## **What will it look like when MATCH is fully implemented?**

The MATCH committee is drafting the model now, while continuing to seek and incorporate input. These are some components of the vision. Professional mentors, coaches, consultants and advisors come from a wide range of disciplines and fields. They use the MATCH Knowledge areas and related Competencies to self-assess their current skills and knowledge, and identify areas of professional growth. These professionals are part of a learning community that also may identify and receive specialized training to meet their needs. MATCH professionals are listed in an online registry, similar to the Instructor Registry, where program administrators and individuals can find them. There will be consistent expectations for all MATCH professionals that align with the MATCH Competencies. MATCH professional services will be integrated into career pathways, credentials, STARS, and other program and professional supports and regulations. The MATCH system would be overseen and evaluated by Northern Lights and its partners.