

Afterschool Professional Pathways



Who are Afterschool Professionals?

Afterschool professionals work mostly part-time in diverse program settings. They work with school-age children and youth (ages 5-12) in home and community-based child care, schools, youth centers, recreation programs, and 21st Century community learning centers, to name a few. They may work directly with the children or youth, manage a program site or direct multiple sites. Job titles vary greatly, but afterschool professionals follow tend to work in common career tracts: (1) child care, (2) youth work, and (3) education.

Pathways for Afterschool Professionals

Vermont's professional development system is organized into **5 Core Knowledge Areas for Afterschool Professionals**. They frame the standards of the field.

- Child & Youth Development
- Families & Communities
- Healthy & Safe Environments
- Curriculum & Learning Environments
- Professionalism & Program Organization

Under each Core Knowledge Area are many competency statements describing what staff need to know and do.

For example, under this Core Knowledge Area:

Child & Youth Development

- describes principles of growth and development
- recognizes the special needs of children and youth

Competencies are also arranged developmentally. Those new to the field, acquire the first competencies in each Core Knowledge Area, and over time gain more.

The *Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals* can be used as a self- assessment, or as a tool for job descriptions or staff development. Afterschool professionals may receive certificates and credentials recognizing when they achieve these competencies in afterschool services.



Resources:

- Core Competencies for Afterschool Professionals
- Career Advising Guide for early childhood and afterschool professionals
- Your IPDP (Individual Professional Development Plan)

available at-

Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center
<http://northernlightscdc.org>

Vermont Afterschool, Inc.
www.vermontafterschool.org

The trainings I did for the Foundations Certificate helped me feel more competent in my work. I better understand my skills in each competency area, and now I'm applying all of the learning I did to the next step - to meeting the requirements for the Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential.
- afterschool staff

Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center

<http://northernlightscdc.org>

Phone: (802)828-2876



Afterschool Professional Pathways Certificates and Credentials



Afterschool Foundations Certificate and On the Job Training	Afterschool Essentials Certificate*	Afterschool Professional Credential*
Entry-level Competencies	Beyond the basic Competencies	Higher level Competencies and college coursework
<p>Vermont Afterschool Foundations Certificate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 total hours of training across the 5 Core Knowledge Areas • A current Individual professional Development Plan (IPDP) • Completed application <p>On-the-Job Training Certificate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A special program through the Department of Labor & Vermont Child Care Industry and Careers Council • 1000 hours of accumulated work experience • 45 hours + of approved training • monetary incentive 	<p>Afterschool Essentials Course: completed with a group, over a year</p> <p><u>Requirements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Development Institute (YDI) online modules • Participate in 4 identified ISS-AP (Vt Afterschool, Inc.) training days • 6 hour Basic Specialized Care course • 5 hours of training in a concentration area learning • Formal Observation of participant at work • A current Individual professional Development Plan (IPDP) • Additional planned workshops 	<p>Credential earned thru college coursework and independent development of a portfolio</p> <p><u>Requirements:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 years working as a program director or in other leadership capacity • Two, 3 credit online courses at Community College of VT: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Introduction to Afterschool Education and Care</i>⁺ - <i>Special Topics in Education: Development of the School Age Child</i>⁺ • additional training hours across the 5 Core Knowledge Areas • Completed Professional Portfolio <p><i>+Vermont Afterschool, Inc. offers scholarships for these courses, which also meet Program Director steps (below)</i></p>

Program Director Credential for Early Childhood and Afterschool Directors
A series of seven college courses or their equivalent, and a professional portfolio documenting achievement of Program Director Competencies. See Northern Lights website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

Step 1: 3 courses: Child Development, Curriculum, Program Management
Step 2: 3 courses: Leadership, Mentoring, Supervision; Human Resources Management; Legal and Financial Issues
Step 3: Culminating Seminar and approved portfolio*

*Recognition Bonus available from the Child Development Division or VT Afterschool, Inc. when additional requirements are met.

**Vermont Northern Lights
Career Development Center**

660 Elm St, PO Box 489; Montpelier, VT 05601

