

Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)



What is an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)?

An **I**ndividual **P**rofessional **D**evelopment **P**lan (**IPDP**) is a thoughtfully developed written plan designed by you that follows a four-step process for continuing your professional growth. The process is ongoing, and includes:

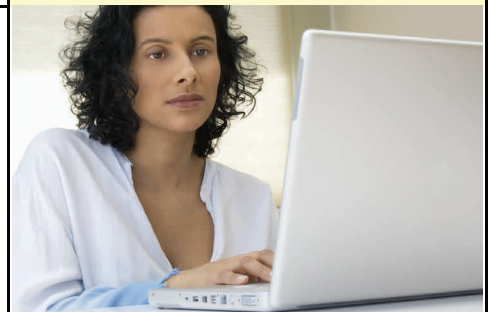
1. **Self-Assessment** (What are my current interests, knowledge and skills?)
2. **Goals** (What do I want to learn more about or what skills do I want to develop?)
3. **Strategies** (How will I do this, and what resources will I need to make it happen?)
4. **Timeline** (When will I meet each of my goals?)

Why is an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) important?

The quality of children's experiences depends largely on the knowledge, experience, skills, and attitudes of the people who work with them. Working with children and families is a demanding job requiring a wide range of skills and knowledge. Your IPDP is a process as well as a document. It guides your professional growth and reflects changes over time.

Who needs an IPDP?

Everybody who works in a regulated early childhood or afterschool program needs an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP). This includes people who work in home-based and center-based programs, schools and community programs. Many professionals are required to have an IPDP: teachers licensed by the Agency of Education; staff of CDD regulated programs, applicants for certificates, credentials or Child Development Division grants. Programs applying for Vermont's Step Ahead Recognition System (STARS) must have a current IPDP for each staff person.



"I used the Early Childhood Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies as a self-assessment and it reminded me of what I already know, and what I wanted to learn more about."

Did You Know...?

- Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Afterschool Professionals and Core Knowledge Areas and Competencies for Program Directors are a self-assessment tool
- Level I: Fundamentals for Early Childhood Professionals course offered all around Vermont includes how to develop an IPDP
- Agency of Education IPDP has the same four steps, aligned with educator standards: <http://education.vermont.gov/>

Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center
<http://northernlightscdc.org>
Phone: (802)828-2876

See the reverse side for more information on Individual Professional Development Plans

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(continued)



What will my IPDP look like?

Some individuals work in programs or organizations that provide their own framework. Common frameworks are the five early childhood or afterschool Core Knowledge Areas, the eight Child Development Associate (CDA) subject areas, or five Vermont Teacher Licensure Standards. Whatever format you use, should include these four components:

1. Self-Assessment
2. Goals
3. Strategies/Resources
4. Timeline

A meaningful IPDP also shows that the writer used self-reflection. Research indicates that teachers who reflect are better teachers. Reflective practice means a teacher is curious, considers what occurred, why and how to respond. The reflecting teacher seeks new ideas and plans how to be even more effective.

Who can help me with my IPDP?

Think about the people that you already know in the field, and select someone to help you. Look for someone with more experience and expertise who is sensitive, respectful and supportive. Consider:

- Colleagues in similar jobs
- Instructors or Trainers
- Directors or Supervisors
- Consultants, Mentors or Career Advisors
- Northern Lights staff and others who provide technical assistance in Vermont

You are the best qualified person to choose who will support you. Your professional development is a journey, and many people may be your guide.

When should I update my IPDP?

You should review your IPDP regularly. Your employer or agency may have a timeline when it should be updated. IPDPs submitted with a grant or Level Certificate application must be current within the last 3 months.

Did You Know...?

- Some programs require the director to sign off on an individual's IPDP. This is not a requirement when you apply for a Career Level Certificate.
- Examples of completed IPDPs and formats can be found on the Northern Lights website under CAREER PATHWAYS: IPDP
- You can write your IPDP online in your *Quality and Credential Account* in the Bright Futures Information System (BFIS)
<http://brightfutures.dcf.state.vt.us>



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