

# Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors

Working with Early Childhood and Afterschool Professionals

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Created by Northern Lights Career Development Center

<http://northernlightscdc.org> This document and related information and resources is found in the *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* on the Northern Lights website and in hard copy from Northern Lights Career Development Center

## Ways to use this tool

### INSTRUCTORS

- **Instructors** may use *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies* as a self-assessment tool to identify areas for ongoing professional growth. It can be used to create a list of areas of strength and areas for growth, which is the first step in developing an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP)
- **Instructors who teach coursework on adult instructional practices** may use the tool to generate learning objectives and as a resource for their students of adult learning.
- **Supporting Instructors** may use it to guide developing instructors, as they review together the components instructor use.

### SPONSORS of professional development activities

- **Sponsors who hire instructors** may use it to outline expectations, frame a job description or structure a performance evaluation.
- **Sponsors** may share it with instructors as a general informational resource.

### INDIVIDUALS OR ASPIRING INSTRUCTORS

- **Professionals** considering becoming instructors of adults in the early childhood or afterschool field may study *Vermont's Knowledge and Competencies for Instructors* to get an in-depth view of the tasks involved in teaching adults.

**NOTE:** in the full booklet and online are resources referenced in this tool

- Items with a \* are competencies that are in the **Instructor Observation/Planning Tool**
- Planning Design and a Learning Cycle design with samples

**Knowledge Area I: Professionalism and Ethics**

The instructor conducts herself professionally and ethically in the service of the early childhood and afterschool workforce.

<b>I.A.</b>	<b>Professionalism</b>	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
1	Plans and implements strategies for own ongoing professional growth, and promotes ongoing professional development for others			
2	Seeks and learns about current, evidence-based research and best practices in the content areas taught			
3	Seeks and develops own knowledge of community, regional, state and national resources			
4	Establishes and demonstrates credibility as a professional, and avoids self-promotion for personal gain while instructing			
5 *	Practices timeliness, responsibility and accountability with the sponsor and participants			
6 *	Uses respectful and professional communication at all times			
7*	Supports goals, policies and procedures of sponsoring organization(s)			
8	Provides learning experiences that are consistent with adult learning principles, and that explicitly account for the needs, learning styles, cultures, and stages of development of adult learners			

Comments:

<b>I.B.</b>	<b>Ethics</b>	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
1*	Uses the Code of Ethical Conduct (NAEYC 2011) to assist early childhood and afterschool professionals in making sound decisions concerning their work with children and families			
2*	Describes and models ethical practices as expressed in the Code of Ethical Conduct: Supplement for Early Childhood Adult Educators (NAEYC 2004)			
3*	Honors confidentiality and guards the privacy of the adult learners and the sponsoring organization			
4*	Adheres to F.E.R.P.A. standards when teaching in an institution of higher education			

Comments:

### **Knowledge Area II: Standards, Systems and Resources**

The instructor understands current standards, systems and resources pertaining to the early childhood and afterschool workforce, and applies this knowledge when instructing adults.

<b>II.A</b>	<b>Standards</b>	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
1*	Understands the contexts in which early childhood and afterschool professionals work including their local communities, and diverse work settings			
2*	References and promotes practices that meet or exceed Vermont and national regulations, standards and guidance as appropriate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For programs, such as Vermont child care program licensing regulations, Vermont Step Ahead Recognition System (STARS) program quality standards, national program accreditation standards, national health and safety guidelines</li> <li>• For children such as the Common Core and Vermont Early Learning Standards</li> <li>• For staff such as educator licensing standards, Council for Professional Recognition (CDA) competency standards, Northern Lights Early Childhood and Afterschool Knowledge and Competencies, Northern Lights Program Director Knowledge and Competencies, etc.</li> </ul>			

Comments:

<b>II.B</b>	<b>Systems</b>	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
1*	Uses and promotes statewide and national systems, agencies and organizations that help determine standards and enhance quality for programs and professionals			
2 *	Works with the sponsor of the learning activity to ensure that documentation, timelines and other requirements are met for the sponsor and the participants			

Comments:

<b>II.C</b>	<b>Resources</b>	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
1*	Requests information from participants about the relevant resources they use, and incorporates this information into instruction			
2*	References and promotes relevant regional, statewide and national resources that support program quality and professional development			

Comments:

**Knowledge Area III: Planning and Design**

The instructor plans and designs relevant and meaningful professional learning activities, using own expertise in specific content areas, as well as knowledge of adult learning principles and methods of instruction.

<b>III. A.</b>	<b>Planning:</b>	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
1*	Determines and addresses the desired purpose and goals of the training or course according to the sponsoring organization			
2*	Closely aligns relevant and specific training content to the VT early childhood and/or afterschool Core Knowledge and Competencies			
3*	Considers training content based on current and effective practices, theories and research			
4	Applies knowledge of adult learning principles			

Comments:

<b>III. B.</b>	<b>Design:</b>	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
1*	Develops clear learning objectives linked to VT early childhood and/or afterschool Core Knowledge and Competencies that are achievable during the learning event			
2*	Designs a process to learn about the context , expectations and current conditions of the participants that will impact their learning on this topic, before the instruction begins			
3 *	Creates a written, detailed instructional design			

III. B.	Design: <i>continued</i>	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
4*	Introduces new and relevant content, building from the familiar context of the participants			
5*	Creates engaging and relevant learning tasks aligned to the learning objectives, and sequences them into one or more learning cycles that : a) initially establishes a welcoming climate of mutual trust and clarifies mutual expectations b) engages participants to explore, practice, problem solve and receive feedback. c) invites participants to reflect and analyze the new information and content shared. d) engages participant's to reflect and plan how they will apply the new learning to their professional context outside of the session.			
6*	Develops open-ended questions linked to each learning task, to promote critical thinking and invite positive, strength-based dialogue among participants			
7*	Integrates content and examples throughout the training design that are authentic, relevant and model effective practices			
8*	Incorporates various strategies in the instructional design to assess the learning by participants <u>Examples:</u> participants demonstrate, present, teach, or create models; instructor observes participant reflections and discussions; instructor asks questions or implements short pre and post assessments, etc.			
9*	Determines and adapts the physical layout of the learning environment to support the flow of the planned activities, as well as the engagement, comfort and learning needs of the participants			
10 *	Allocates sufficient time for each learning task that fits within the total time available			

Comments:

**Knowledge Area IV: Instruction**

The instructor applies a variety of instructional methods to engage diverse populations of adult learners in achieving planned learning objectives.

<b>IV. A.</b>	<b>Methods</b> of instruction	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
1*	Carries out the instructional design, adjusting it based on regular observation and solicited feedback from participants			
2*	Presents learning objectives, purpose and agenda clearly, and references them throughout the session			
3*	Implements introductory activities based on participants' current knowledge, experience and context and continues to build from this context throughout the learning experience			
4 *	Provides opportunities and encourages purposeful, hands-on, interactive learning experiences. <u>Examples</u> : small and large group discussions, problem solving, demonstrations, model building, structured analysis, role-playing etc.			
6*	Uses a variety of effective methods and materials of instruction to address the various learning styles and preferences of the participants over time <u>Examples</u> : materials that provide visual, auditory and/or kinesthetic interactions, individual reflection, group engagement, etc.			
7*.	Uses effective transitions between learning tasks that smoothly connect experiences while providing opportunities for interaction, reflection and change			
8 *	Uses technology effectively and when appropriate, to provide information and engage the learners			

Comments:

<b>IV.B.</b>	<b>Facilitation</b> engages the learners and follows their lead to meet the learning objectives	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
1*	Creates an environment that builds trust and accommodates a diverse population of learners			
2*	Keeps training focused and on schedule, while achieving the learning objectives			
3*	Uses open-ended questions, active listening, relevant examples, and other techniques to engage participants in learning, reflection and application			
4*	Effectively manages unforeseen situations such as conflict, the impact of sensitive material, disruptions, etc.			
5*	Engages participants in constructive dialogue that supports prior experience, new information and varying points of view			

Comments:

**Knowledge Area V: Assessment and Evaluation**

The instructor uses information derived from a variety of assessment and evaluation activities in an ongoing fashion to improve own practice.

V.	Assessment and Evaluation	New skill	Developing Skill	Solid Skill
1*	Checks learning by participants throughout the session			
2	Assesses effectiveness of training design periodically throughout the session, and after completion			
3*	Asks learners to evaluate whether as a result of the training there is an increase in knowledge and skill, planned application to practice, satisfaction, and if the learning objectives were met			
4	Schedules another effective instructor to observe own instructional practice periodically and to provide supportive feedback			
5	Reflects on own behavior and uses feedback from participants and others to improve instructional practice.			

Comments: