



**Answers to 7 Frequently Asked Questions about  
Instructors, Sponsors, the VT professional development system & BFIS\***  
**\*Bright Futures Information System: Vermont's statewide data base for early childhood and  
afterschool professionals and programs**

- 1. What is the difference between Northern Lights and BFIS?** The Child Development Division (CDD) created the BFIS database. Northern Lights Career Development Center is charged by CDD to enter data related to professional development into BFIS, and to promote and inform others about the BFIS system.
- 2. What is the difference between an instructor and a sponsor?**  
An Instructor is the individual(s) who designs the training, and instructs the adults.  
A Sponsor of training and coursework is the organization or individual that hires, hosts and/or promotes the training event.
- 3. Can instructors and sponsors be the same person?** Yes, but they have different roles and responsibilities. An instructor is not automatically a sponsor; a sponsor is not automatically an instructor.
- 4. What is the *instructor's* responsibility in relation to BFIS and the Professional Development System?**  
Instructors need to be in the Instructor Registry. Instructors should work with the sponsor of the training activity to clarify a) the description and content of the training, b) the audience, and c) the learning objectives that will be met as a result of the training activity. The instructor signs the documentation of professional development or certificate of participation that each participant receives. If the instructor is unable to do this, then the sponsor may sign it instead.
- 5. What is the *host of the trainings* responsibility in relation to BFIS and the Professional Development System?**  
The host chooses/hires the instructor. **If the host has received an orientation and signed an agreement with Northern Lights, then that host is a BFIS Sponsor.** The BFIS Sponsor provides streamlined services to the participants, by completing 3 steps: a) submits training information to Northern Lights to enter into the BFIS course calendar before the training; b) completes and distributes to the participants, the documentation forms provided by Northern Lights; c) submits completed attendance lists to Northern Lights as verification, immediately following the training. Northern Lights staff then, enter the attendance into each participant's BFIS Credential account for them. Using this system is preferred by participants. By being a BFIS sponsor, the participants and the sponsors are recognized and included in the data and reports concerning professional training and its effect in Vermont.
- 6. What if there is more than one sponsor?** BFIS only recognizes one sponsor per training activity. The sponsors must determine which one will be listed in BFIS and complete the three steps described above.
- 7. What if the training host is not a BFIS Sponsor?** The host still should provide a certificate or documentation of attendance to the participants at the training. This is necessary for child care licensing, Agency of Education, CDA training, and others that verify attendance, certificates and credentials. At the minimum this document should include: a) the host organization name and logo; b) title and description of content; c) date(s), time, total training hours; d) name of participant; and e) signature of sponsor or instructor to verify attendance. The host should also tell the participants, they need to make a copy of the document, and submit it to Northern Lights. All training content should be related to the core knowledge and competencies for early childhood or afterschool professionals.

## 8. SOME SCENARIOS

**What if...** You are an instructor in the registry. ABC child care calls you to do a training for their staff. *You should ask them:* who is hosting the training? Is that host a BFIS sponsor? If they are NOT a BFIS Sponsor, work with the host to provide the documentation described in step 6 above, to give to the participants. If they ARE a BFIS Sponsor, provide information as needed, so the Sponsor can complete the required documentation forms. (#4 above).

**What if...** You are an instructor and you are also a BFIS Sponsor of trainings. ABC child care asks you to do a training for their staff. *You should ask them:* who is hosting the training and is that organization a BFIS sponsor? If they are NOT a BFIS Sponsor, you can decide with the child care, if *your organization* should be the BFIS sponsor of this training. If so, *you* will need to complete the paperwork in your role as BFIS Sponsor (#4 above). If not, then you can work with the child care to create a documentation form, that each participant will need to submit to Northern Lights to be verified and entered into their BFIS credential account (#6 above).

**What if ...** ABC child care wants to become a BFIS Sponsor? If they offer trainings regularly, they may choose to become a BFIS Sponsor by contacting Northern Lights staff. We will provide an orientation over the phone using computers, and have them sign an agreement with us to ensure that the BFIS and professional development system requirements are followed.

### Questions?

Northern Lights website: <http://northernlightscdc.org>

- About the Instructor Registry (Look under ROLES- Instructors)
- About sponsoring trainings (Look under TRAINING AND COURSEWORK)
- About being a BFIS Sponsor (Look under ROLES – Sponsors)
- About BFIS Course Calendar ( Look under TRAINING and COURSEWORK – BFIS)
- About Tracking professional development in BFIS ( Look under CAREER PATHWAYS – BFIS)

Northern Lights staff:

Nancy Sugarman ([nancy.sugarman@ccv.edu](mailto:nancy.sugarman@ccv.edu) 802-828-2876)

For sponsors to submit information to be verified and entered into BFIS: [profdev@ccv.edu](mailto:profdev@ccv.edu)

About BFIS: Child Development Division – BFIS help desk <http://bfishelp.ahs.state.vt.us/> or

Phone: Bright Futures Information System Help Desk 1.802.241-0800 or

email: [bfishelpadministrator@ahs.state.vt.us](mailto:bfishelpadministrator@ahs.state.vt.us) with a specific question

Fax: 802.769.2064.

### **Finally, why Instructors, Sponsors, the VT professional development system & BFIS?**

These sectors work together in order create a quality professional development system.