West Virginia Specialized Knowledge/ Competencies For Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Professionals

Early Childhood
Advisory Council
of West Virginia

Table of Contents

Introduction

West Virginia's Specialized Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Professionals outlines best practices for practitioners that train and support early childhood professionals who serve young children and their families. The knowledge, skills and dispositions described provide a foundation to guide practice and strengthen the Training & Technical Assistance (T&TA) profession.

The knowledge and skill requirements for T&TA professionals are quite different than those required by other early childhood professionals. T&TA professionals not only need to understand and use the West Virginia Core Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals (WV CKC), they should implement the following best practices into their work:
- have a working knowledge of the WV early childhood professional development system,
- maintain a trainer credential,
- have a current professional development plan, and
- be prepared to engage in the following activities:
- provide training and/or technical assistance that reflects their education, training, practical experience and skills;
- integrate current research and trends about child development, relationship building, adult learning, and theory of change best practices;
- continuously work to develop positive, respectful relationships with individuals and groups so learners can feel safe to share their experiences, ask questions, and reflect upon what they are learning. This is essential to successfully implementing change.

In this process, the role of the T&TA professional is to invite ideas and solutions, remain sensitive to strengths and limitations, and look for opportunities to stretch the learner's skills and knowledge. As a model of professionalism, it is critically important that T&TA professionals demonstrate the highest level of professional ethics and embrace the attributes and behaviors associated with being continuous learners.

The Core Beliefs included in the WV CKC are of prime importance to the role of the T&TA professional. They should approach their work showing respect for and interest in the participants, their roles, responsibilities and the settings in which they support children and families. T&TA professionals should also incorporate the overarching considerations from the WV CKC:
- the inclusion of children with special needs
- how the influences of culture, family structure, and/or religion impacts children and families; and,
- the responsibility of the early childhood professional in guiding young children's overall development.

To ensure understanding and universal application, the following definitions are included:
- Training is a learning experience, or series of experiences, specific to an area of inquiry and related set of skills or dispositions. A planned sequence of training sessions comprises a training program. Training will provide you knowledge of research, techniques and/or strategies. (NAEYC NACCRRA, 2011)
- Technical Assistance (TA) is the provision of targeted and customized supports to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by learners. Technical assistance will provide you with ongoing support to work toward implementation of research, techniques and/or strategies to fidelity. (NAEYC NACCRRA, 2011)

Here are some ways to effectively incorporate the Specialized Knowledge and Competencies into various environments:

Trainer and Technical Assistance Professionals
- A self-assessment tool to measure levels of knowledge and skill in each of the specialized competency areas
- A guide to identify areas for future professional development

Administrators and Supervisors
- Create job descriptions and staff evaluation tools
- Specify education and training requirements for training and/or technical assistance professional positions
- Develop and track technical assistance staff professional development and growth plans
- Create compensation incentives based on levels of competency achieved by training and/or technical assistance professionals

Trainers and Training Entities
- Guide planning and development of education and training efforts across competencies for training and/or technical assistance professionals
- Encourage cross-sector involvement in training of training and/or technical assistance professionals
- Promote training and education opportunities that address specific competencies for training and/or technical assistance professionals

Higher Education Entities
- Coordinate and design course content to facilitate transfer and articulation agreements
- Access current program content to determine course development and modification
- Design pathways leading to licensure, credentials, and degrees

Federal, State and Local Agencies
- Develop and implement policies that will enhance professionalism in early childhood education
- Link competencies to other early childhood system efforts (e.g. WV Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals, Early Learning Standards Framework: Content Standards and Learning Criteria for West Virginia Pre-Kindergarten (WV Pre-K), Early Learning Standards Framework for Infants and Toddlers, WV Infant Toddler Mental Health Competencies and Endorsement)
- Link competencies to efforts to support school success for children
- Promote the use of the specialized competencies across programs, agencies, and higher education institutions

West Virginia's Specialized Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Professionals

West Virginia's Specialized Knowledge and Competencies for Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Professionals is organized into six core content areas. Within each core content area there are competencies, which give examples of behaviors and skills that may be seen in each content area.

Content Area 1: Adult Learning
T&TA Professionals understand that adults learn in different ways and require different techniques and approaches to create change in their skills, behaviors, knowledge level or their attitudes. All the while recognizing and respecting the life of experiences, thoughts, motivators and engagement in learning.

Content Area 2: Building Relationships
T&TA Professionals understand how important it is to know the learners they are supporting, as well as the context in which they are working to support children and families. They also know that developing strong, positive connections to early childhood professionals enhances the quality of the learning opportunities.

Content Area 3: Technical Assistance Process
T&TA Professionals recognize that having a process to developing and implementing effective training and/or technical assistance opportunities is important to ensuring high quality learning opportunities for early childhood professionals. They understand that attention to the process results in increased learning and more effective implementation of knowledge and skills gained.

Content Area 4:   Communication
T&TA Professionals understand that effective communi-cation is the key to ensuring the sharing and the interpretation of information, knowledge, and skills. Within the perspective of their role in expanding upon their work with early childhood professionals, communication is the basis for building success for the individual as well as the trainer and technical assistance professional.

Content Area 5: Content Knowledge
T&TA Professionals must have a thorough knowledge of the skills required by early care and education professionals, as well as remaining abreast of current research and best practices.

Content Area 6: Professionalism
T&TA Professionals understand and embody ethical practice in their work supporting early childhood practitioners. They also have a commitment to lifelong learning and fostering this same perspective with the field seeking to contribute to the overall quality of supports and services provided across early childhood systems.

Each content area includes four sections:
1. **Key concepts** – statements specific to the function of each content area related to the roles of T&TA Professionals.
2. **Dispositions** - Disciplines are identified specific to the content area
3. **Core Competency** – fundamental knowledge, ability or expertise that each early childhood T&TA Professionals should demonstrate and practice.
4. **Behaviors and Skills** – Observable activities coming from one's knowledge, practice and aptitude in each competency.

Dispositions ━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━━

Dispositions are attributes which are an important part of being an effective training and technical assistance professional. Reflecting on dispositions takes the T&TA professional beyond knowledge and skills, what they know and can do, to think about "how they are" with their participants. In turn, this supports participants to consider their own dispositions and "how they are" with others (i.e., children, families, colleagues).

Caring Disposition - T&TA professionals with this set of dispositions value and appreciate all aspects of the well-being of children, families, practitioners, and program administrators.

1. Caring
A.1 **Empathic:** Identifies with and sees things from the perspective of others.
A.2 **Compassionate:** Sympathizes, often with the desire to understand and help improve conditions of others' lives.
A.3 **Understanding:** Develops appropriate relationships by adjusting differences to see others' perspectives.
A.4 **Respectful:** Shows appropriate regard for the needs, ideas, and experiences of others.
A.5 **Passionate:** Demonstrates excitement, enthusiasm, and optimism for the people, content, and context of the consulting-teaching-learning process.
A.6 **Culturally Competent:** Appreciates and capitalizes upon diversity; is aware of and acts to reduce one's own biases; employs culturally sensitive andragogy.

Communicative Dispositions - T&TA professionals with this set of dispositions are sensitive to and skilled in the various aspects of human activity. They have effective interpersonal relationship skills and attitudes that foster collaborative enterprises useful in enhancing the teaching-learning process.

2. Communicative
B.1 **Engaged:** Is whole-heartedly involved in interactions and observations.
B.2 **Responsive:** Is inclined to act as best meets the needs, of others and their circumstances. Responsiveness can be demonstrated in a conversation or overtime by providing follow up resources as needed.
B.3 **Attentive:** Pays attention to all aspects of communication and applies active listening techniques to ensure clear understanding.
B.4 **Collaborative:** Involves and works with others in planning, problem solving, and implementing effective practices.
B.5 **Open:** Actively engages and responds to peers, practitioners, administrators, and community.

Creative Disposition - T&TA professionals with this set of dispositions display the capacity to envision and craft things in innovative and meaningful ways.

3. Creative
C.1 **Flexible:** Adapts, adjusts, and modifies practices to meet the needs of those with whom he/she is consulting; thinks on his/her feet; is comfortable with change.
C.2 **Inventive:** Uses the interests, preferences, and needs of early childhood practitioners to collaboratively design multiple strategies to support the practitioner's successful participation in learning opportunities supporting innovation and best practices.
C.3 **Resourceful:** Identifies and uses resources in effective ways; adapts practices to unforeseen challenges; helps participants find and use resources and informal supports.
C.4 **Resilient:** Endures stress and maintains stability in the face of disruption and chaos; recovers poise or spirit that enables moving forward in an effective manner.

Critical Disposition - T&TA professionals with this set of dispositions have the ability to examine closely, to critique, and to ask questions. They do not accept the status quo at face value but employ higher level thinking skills to evaluate, analyze, and synthesize. Self-evaluation and reflection characterize individuals with this set of dispositions.

4. Critical
D.1 **Reflective:** Consistently takes time to reflect on own growth and accountability, and nurtures reflectivity in practitioners.
D.2 **Enterprising:** Exhibits a willingness to pursue solutions to problems or questions; gathers relevant data and persistently seeks to improve situations or areas of need.
D.3 **Open-Minded:** Exhibits an ability to look at different sides of an issue; recognizes the possibility of error in one's own beliefs and practices; does not display or act upon prejudices against people or ideas.
D.4 **Effective:** Nurtures high expectations; demonstrates self-direction and confidence; encourages others to display their own skills and strengths.
D.5 **Modest:** Places the needs of the learner and/or learning task above their own ego; reflects on own growth and accountability.

Professional Disposition - These are general expected qualities and practices of all professionals, including T&TA professionals.

5. Professional
E.1 **Professional:** Meets the standards expected of a professional, such as appropriateness of dress, grooming, demeanor, punctuality, tact, discretion, courtesy, etc.
E.2 **Ethical and Principled in Person and Profession:** Adheres strongly to personal and professional morals, principles and ethical standards established by the profession, for example, the NAEYC Code of Ethics and DEC Recommended Practices evidences integrity.
E.3 **Responsible and Reliable:** Conducts work and related tasks in a reliable, thorough, and efficient manner; has strong work ethic.
E.4 **Discreet:** Complies with Federal, State, and program policies relating to confidentiality.
E.5 **Objective:** Fosters and enhances the teaching and learning process while exercising judgment about personal and professional boundaries.

1. Adult Learning

Adult learning defines the reasons adults enter into learning opportunities as well as the characteristics unique to adults as participants. Most adult participants enter into learning experiences to create change in their skills, behaviors, knowledge level or their attitudes (Adult Education Centre, 2005). Adults bring a lifetime of learning experiences, along with preconceived thoughts and feelings that will affect their degree of motivation, level of engagement in the learning process, and how learning is applied. Because of this, it is essential to create a climate of mutual trust and to clarify expectations in a collaborative way.

T&TA Professionals must be creative in their approach to meeting the needs of adult participants. Recognizing:

- Adults come to the learning opportunity juggling many responsibilities that influence their motivation to maximize the learning opportunity. Learning opportunities must meet the high expectations adults may have for the learning opportunity to justify the loss of time in another component of their lives;

- Need for self-direction while understanding adult participants may need more support to implement new knowledge and skills into their practice; and,

- Need for practical and results oriented information, and the importance of integrating learning into their lifetime of experiences, using their personal experience as a key resource.

Consider Dispositions:
- Caring
- Communicative
- Creative
- Critical
- Professional

1.1 Demonstrate the ability to motivate learners by creating a positive, relationship based, learning environment.

TRAINER (T) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

• •

a. Recognizes that strength-based approaches form the foundation for effective training and/or technical assistance.

b. Understands adult learning theories and applies them when facilitating training and/or technical assistance for participants.

c. Uses strength-based approach to the learning environment, which is a safe space for learning, acknowledging the contributions and experiences of all involved.

d. Uses a variety of teaching and motivational strategies to promote ongoing learning.

e. Facilitates opportunities for the participants to share their experiences and knowledge, and to practice new learning before integrating new learning into daily practice.

TA PROVIDER (TA) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS*

• •

f. Gathers information from the participants to assist with planning for appropriate opportunities for learning.

g. Engages the participants in interactions tailored to individual learning preferences.

h. Acknowledges and builds on the experience and knowledge participants bring to the relationship based partnership

i. Demonstrates a commitment to shared learning and co-inquiry by utilizing a strength-based feedback and dialog process.

j. Models and encourages reflective practice as a part of goal setting and ongoing review of goals.

k. Applies knowledge of supportive ongoing adult learning groups (i.e., Communities of Practice) to promote professional develop and to sustain change.

*** Expectation that the TA provider also meets the Trainer competencies.**

Adult Learning

2. Building Relationships

• •

Building Relationships between T&TA Professionals and participants is essential to effective learning opportunities. Whether a short term training session or longer term technical assistance relationship, the ability to make meaningful social connections has a direct connection to acquisition and use of knowledge and skills. The responsibility of fostering the development of these relationships is a primary responsibility of the T&TA Professional. It is important to conceptualize the collaborative nature of the relationship with participants, valuing participant expertise, seeking to build trust, and provide supportive and individualized guidance that focuses on increasing practitioner capacity.

- Recognize that positive relationships form the foundation for effective training and technical assistance

- Respect the skills and experience participants bring to the relationship

- Build upon the base knowledge of participants by enhancing their opportunities to implement more advanced skills

Consider Dispositions:
- Caring
- Communicative
- Creative
- Critical
- Professional

2.1 Understands the importance of building positive and respectful relationships in order for learning and change to occur.

TRAINER (T) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

. . . .

a. Exhibits ethical and professional behavior that includes trustworthiness, individual integrity, and confidentiality.

b. Engages in respectful relationships and develops a sense of trust with each individual and organization.

c. Demonstrates an individualized approach to each relationship

d. Demonstrates respect and interest in the abilities of others.

e. Uses productive two-way communication that engages the participant.

f. Shows respect for and interest in the participants strengths, learning preference, goals, and cultural context.

g. Acknowledges, and builds upon the abilities and contributions of the participant

h. Demonstrates skill in active listening to respond to the needs of the participant

i. Employs a style that is open, flexible, and confident with the ability to be present with the participant

j. Creates a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust

k. Provides support as needed while maintaining professional boundaries

l. Understands conflict management and demonstrates resolution strategies

TA PROVIDER (TA) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS*

. . . .

m. Involves and works with others in planning, problem solving, and implementing effective practices.

n. Uses relationship-based principles to establish and foster strength-based relationships with participants.

o. Uses reflective practices to examine actions and feelings expressed by an individual, group, or program (i.e., appreciative inquiry, transformational learning, and relational leadership).

*** Expectation that the TA provider also meets the Trainer competencies.**

Building Relationships

3. Training and Technical Assistance Process

Training and Technical Assistance Process assists practitioners in building capacity for learning and improving practices for the implementation of high quality services and supports. T&TA may be broad in perspective or more focused, or directed toward a specific topic or set of skill development. T&TA Professionals partner with the individuals to whom they are providing education opportunities and support recognizing the existing knowledge and skills and working collaboratively to enhance those.

The T&TA process involves: the development of individual skills and the conditions to ensure they are used productively; the development of effective organizations within which individuals can work; the strengthening of interrelationships among entities; and, the development of enabling environments for addressing issues across societal sectors (Blase, 2009).

- Create a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust.

- Be present in the moment to create a relationship with the participants, employing a style that is open, flexible and confident.

- Communicate effectively while facilitating training, and use strength-based language that has the greatest positive impact on the participants.

- Ask questions that provide information and stimulate critical thinking in support of the learning objectives and goals of the training.

- Focus on what participants are communicating and understanding their contributions to the training environment in the context of their values, beliefs, goals, and culture.

Consider Dispositions:
- Caring
- Communicative
- Creative
- Critical
- Professional

West Virginia Specialized Knowledge/Competencies for Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Professionals

3.1 Demonstrates an understanding of the process, stages, and steps necessary to deliver effective training and technical assistance.

TRAINER (T) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

a. Demonstrates sensitivity to and accommodates participants' individual strengths, learning preferences, goals, and cultural context.

b. Uses appropriate conflict resolution strategies in the facilitation of training content.

c. Knowledge of the difference between and appropriate uses of training, coaching, mentoring and consulting strategies.

d. Delivers training based on principles of adult learning, using a variety of instructional methods, and media appropriate for the proposed learning outcomes.

e. Maintains fidelity to statewide content, requirements, and initiatives.

f. Uses professional resources, self-reflection, and participant feedback to improve training content.

g. Incorporates modeling and demonstration of best practices into the professional development process.

h. Facilitates and/or refers participants to additional learning opportunities outside of the training as part of supporting participants' ongoing skill development in the early childhood professional development system.

TA PROVIDER (TA) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS*

i. Understands that TA is a capacity-building process and knows the strategies for supporting participants.

j. Understands how to manage a TA process consistent with law, regulation, and employers, as well as discipline-specific standards and credentials.

k. Develops and adheres to a TA Plan including goals, expectations, strategies, outcomes, and uses assessment results to address progress and inform revision of training plans over time.

l. Training design includes reflective training experiences and follow-up activities that support use of reflective practice (i.e., coaching, mentoring, reflective practice sessions, and additional training opportunities).

m.   Supports the participant in developing an action plan that includes measurable outcomes with reasonable timelines, incorporating self-assessment as a component of the action plan.

n.   Encourages the participant to identify barriers and opportunities to implementing and sustaining changes.

o.   Assists participant in analyzing data and information to determine realistic and appropriate actions needed to meet established goals.

p.   Knows how to use evidence-based, reliable and valid assessment instruments for ongoing data collection and how to use results collaboratively to inform systems change.

* Expectation that the TA provider also meets the Trainer competencies.

Training and Technical Assistance

3.2 Understands the change process and effectively guides change.

TRAINER (T) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

a. Demonstrates the basic concepts of transfer of learning and application of learning by participants. Recognizes potential challenges participants may experience when implementing new strategies and concepts.

b. Applies appropriate theories and resources to support participant's growth and change.

c. Encourages, explores and accepts without judgment the individual participant's verbal and non-verbal expression of feelings perceptions, concerns, beliefs, suggestions, etc.

d. Summarizes, paraphrases, reflects, and restates what the participants share during trainings to facilitate clarity and understanding.

e. Conveys a message that improvement is continuous and takes time.

f. Uses a comprehensive professional development approach which includes initial training and organized follow-up experiences designed to support participants in implementing what they learned.

TA PROVIDER (TA) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS*

g. Understand and can describe the TA practitioner's direct and indirect roles or responsibilities in supporting professional/partner boundaries. Understands one's own responsibilities as an agent of change.

h. Examines the participant's readiness and commitment to change and adapts accordingly.

i. Focuses on learning opportunities to meet participants where they are, support taking risks, and trying new things.

j. Celebrates participant successes and capabilities.

k. Evaluates and documents changes occurring with the participant.

*** Expectation that the TA provider also meets the Trainer competencies**

4. Communication

• •

Communication is recognized as crucial to performance, both personally and professionally. Communication involves the whole range of ways in which people pass information or messages back and forwards in non-verbal, verbal and written formats. It includes the information given and received, how people make meaning of this information, and how they use it.

For T&TA Professionals, communication is the linchpin for success. Not only are they planning the message they are sending, they must also prepare how they will be engaging their participants, sharing information using effective speaking styles and body language, facilitating meaningful transitions to new topics, and using visual aids to enhance understanding and learning. These skills expand to include techniques for supporting adult learners, including common language, active listening skills, explanation of jargon, and reflective listening.

- Whole-heartedly engage in interactions and observations

- Responds in ways that best meets the needs and circumstances.

- Attends to all aspects of communication and applies active listening techniques to ensure clear understanding.

- Involves and works with others in planning, problem solving, and implementing effective practices.

- Openly engages and respond to peers, practitioners, administrators, and community (USDHHS, 2010).

Consider Dispositions:
- Caring
- Communicative
- Creative
- Critical
- Professional

4.1 Demonstrates communication skills which encourage positive interactions and an open exchange of ideas.

TRAINER (T) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

a. Presents information clearly in both oral and written forms.

b. Utilizes active listening skills.

c. Asks prompting questions that stimulate thinking in support of participants learning and goals.

d. Compliments oral communication with nonverbal cues and behaviors, with consideration for individual and cultural preferences.

e. Is intentional in the use of intrapersonal communication, to reflect and to reason.

f. Identifies communication barriers that may impede the professional development process.

g. Attends to the group dynamics. Uses word choice, tone, and body language to understand what is happening in the group and check understanding.

h. Is respectful, clear, articulate, and direct when clarifying content and learning objectives when misunderstandings occur.

i. Uses active listening strategies to facilitate discussions when participants' experiences and prior knowledge are in conflict with course content and stated learning objectives.

TA PROVIDER (TA) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS*

j. Supports participants in prioritizing goals, and actions; communicating in a way that encourages, explores, and accepts without judgement the feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs, and suggestions of the participant.

k. Strives to keep lines of communication open with participant in order to establish ongoing relationship in which the free exchange of ideas can occur, making the individual's communication a focal point of the interaction.

l. Encourages participants to regularly engage in reflective practices to better understand their personal/professional reactions and responses.

*** Expectation that the TA provider also meets the Trainer competencies.**

Communication

5. Content Knowledge

• •

Content Knowledge involves T&TA professionals having a strong foundation in early childhood practices for preparing individuals to work in a variety of settings to support children's development and learning. The T&TA professional seeks to maintain, and expand upon their own knowledge and skill, while encouraging the field to become resourceful and to further their own skill development.
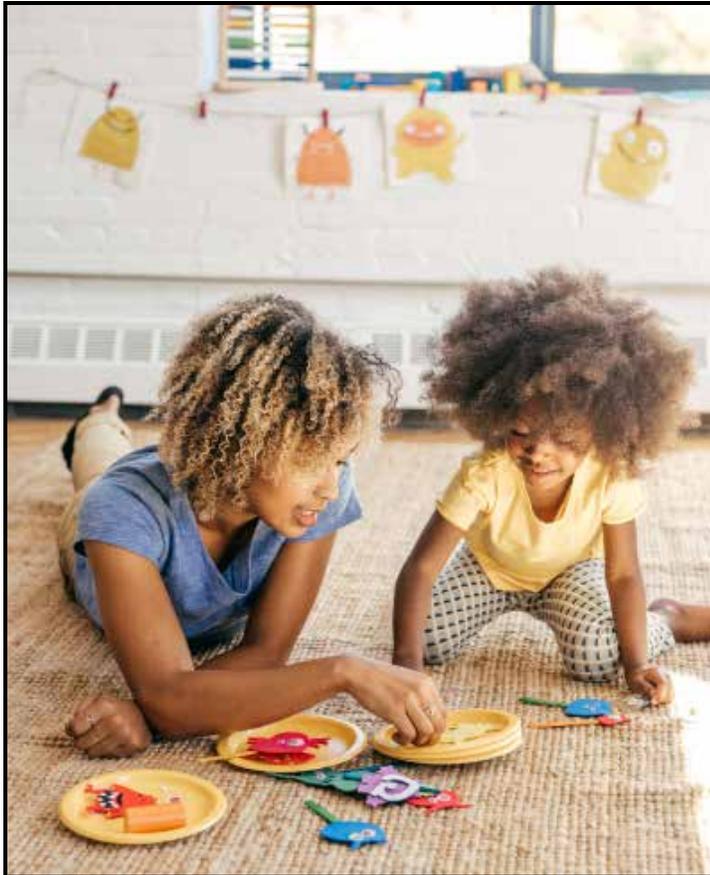
- Understands the importance of developmental domains and the integrated nature by which children learn and grow.

- Knowledge of the various types of care settings and variations in care experiences.

- Understands the importance of maintaining current knowledge related to research and recommended practices.

Consider Dispositions:
- Caring
- Communicative
- Creative
- Critical
- Professional

5.1 Demonstrates knowledge of child development, program standards, and best practices.

TRAINER (T) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

• •

a.   Acquires and maintains current professional knowledge and ongoing professional growth.

b.   Stays abreast of current research on evidence based and developmentally appropriate practice

c.   Works continuously to improve work-related skills and performance through continuing education, self-reflection, and participation in professional communities of practice.

d.   Shares accurate, up-to-date information and pertinent resources with the participant.

e.   Recognizes own areas of expertise limits, and competence in early childhood field.

f.   Uses comprehensive, meaningful, information that is relevant to participant's experiences, education, and abilities.

TA PROVIDER (TA) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS*

• •

* Expectation that the TA provider also meets the Trainer competencies

Content Knowledge

6. Professionalism

● ●

Professionalism involves a focus on quality, a code of ethics, and standards that assist us in identifying the criteria that set professionals apart from other workers. Professionalism in early care and education includes elements of a commitment to quality related to research-based practice, ongoing child assessment, program evaluation, parent involvement and life-long adult learning (Johnson-Gerard, 2017). For T&TA Professionals there is a need for ongoing professional development to ensure they have the content knowledge as well as the skill to deliver high quality trainings based on the most current trends, best practices, and research. During their day to day work with early childhood professionals, T&TA professionals may be confronted with questions requiring them to make difficult decisions regarding moral and ethical implications. It is essential that the perspective of professionalism be prevalent throughout the entire training and technical assistance process.

- Has identified a process of self-assessment of personal knowledge and skills, and supports this process for early care and education professionals

- Views ethical practice as an essential part of professional practice

- Incorporates reflective practice into individual work and work with early care and education professionals

- Understands the characteristics of leadership and provides advocacy for early childhood professional development.

Consider Dispositions:
- Caring
- Communicative
- Creative
- Critical
- Professional

Professionalism

6.1   Demonstrates a commitment to responsible, ethical and professional behavior.

TRAINER (T) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS

a.   Has a working knowledge of the early childhood professional development system, maintains trainer credential, and has a current professional development plan.

b.   Demonstrates knowledge of practices, legal standards and a professional code of ethics that supports participants, colleagues, and community in providing services with integrity.

c.   Maintains confidentiality and professional boundaries when sharing experiences, discussing issues, and solving problems.

d.   Works proactively to develop partnerships to support early care and education professionals and administrators for better outcomes for young children and families.

e.   Participates in mentoring or coaching activities related to personal growth as a trainer.

f.   Demonstrates the ability to assess T&TA needs to design appropriate professional development opportunities to meet the needs of the field, including the use of technology.

g.   Participates on local, regional, and/or state level teams articulating the significance of early education, research, and best practice to influence the development of high quality programming and public policy for young children and families.

TA PROVIDER (TA) BEHAVIORS AND SKILLS8

* Expectation that the TA provider also meets the Trainer competencies.

Professionalism

Trainer and Technical Assistant Self-Assessment Checklist ▬▬▬

Rationale

This document contains core competencies and dispositions that are essential for all effective relationship-based training and technical assistance strategies. The competencies and dispositions lay the foundation for developing a professional relationship with learners and promoting strength-based approach to continuous quality improvement. This tool is designed to be used across training and technical assistance systems and is intentionally written with open ended language. It should be interpreted to reference the context of the technical assistance provided.

Completing the Self-Assessment Checklist

1. **Assess your abilities using:**
   - **Demonstrates Strength –** Consistently demonstrates most of the related behaviors and skills independently.
   - **Demonstrates Progress –** Demonstrates many of the related behaviors and skills with limited guidance.
   - **Opportunity for Growth –** Rarely/never demonstrates this related behavior and skills without guidance.
2. **Notes/ Self-Reflection/Professional Development Column -** Use as a place to record professional development that was taken and the date completed. Reflect on the professional development and how it has affected your own growth. What outcomes have been achieved as a result of the professional development?
3. **Dispositions –** When considering the descriptions of dispositions within this document, what dispositions do you feel you possess and incorporate into your work each day, or you would like to improve upon?

Disposition 1: Caring		Assessment			Notes
		Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
A.1.	**Empathic:** Identifies with and sees things from the perspective of others.				
A.2.	**Compassionate:** Sympathizes, often with the desire to understand and help improve conditions of others' lives.				
A.3.	**Understanding:** Develops appropriate relationships by adjusting differences to see others' perspectives.				
A.4.	**Respectful:** Shows appropriate regard for the needs, ideas, and experiences of others.				
A.5.	**Passionate:** Demonstrates excitement, enthusiasm, and optimism for the people, content, and context of the consulting-teaching-learning process.				
A.6.	**Culturally Competent:** Appreciates and capitalizes upon diversity; is aware of and acts to reduce one's own biases; employs culturally sensitive pedagogy.				

Disposition 2: Communicative		Assessment			Notes
		Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
B.1.	**Engaged:** Is whole-heartedly involved in interactions and observations.				

West Virginia Specialized Knowledge/Competencies for Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance Professionals

		Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
B.2.	**Responsive:** Is inclined to act as best meets the needs, of others and their circumstances. Responsiveness can be demonstrated in a conversation or overtime by providing follow up resources as needed.				
B.3.	**Attentive:** Pays attention to all aspects of communication and applies active listening techniques to ensure clear understanding.				
B.4.	**Collaborative:** Involves and works with others in planning, problem solving, and implementing effective practices.				
B.5.	**Open:** Actively engages and responds to peers, practitioners, administrators, and community.				

Disposition 3: Creative		Assessment			Notes
		Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
C.1.	**Flexible:** Adapts, adjusts, and modifies practices to meet the needs of those with whom he/she is consulting; thinks on his/her feet; is comfortable with change.				
C.2.	**Inventive:** Uses the interests, preferences, and needs of early childhood practitioners to collaboratively design multiple strategies to support the practitioner's successful participation in learning opportunities supporting innovation and best practices.				
C.3.	**Resourceful:** Identifies and uses resources in effective ways; adapts practices to unforeseen challenges; helps participants find and use resources and informal supports.				
C.4	**Resilient:** Endures stress and maintains stability in the face of disruption and chaos; recovers poise or spirit that enables moving forward in an effective manner.				

Disposition 4: Critical		Assessment			Notes
		Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
D.1.	**Reflective:** Consistently takes time to reflect on own growth and accountability, and nurtures reflectivity in practitioners.				
D.2.	**Enterprising:** Exhibits a willingness to pursue solutions to problems or questions; gathers relevant data and persistently seeks to improve situations or areas of need.				
D.3.	**Open-Minded:** Exhibits an ability to look at different sides of an issue; recognizes the possibility of error in one's own beliefs and practices; does not display or act upon				

		prejudices against people or ideas.				
D.4.		**Effective:** Nurtures high expectations; demonstrates self-direction and confidence; encourages others to display their own skills and strengths.				
D.5.		**Modest:** Places the needs of the learner and/or learning task above their own ego; reflects on own growth and accountability.				

Disposition 5: Professional		Assessment			Notes
		Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
E.1.	**Professional:** Meets the standards expected of a professional, such as appropriateness of dress, grooming, demeanor, punctuality, tact, discretion, courtesy, etc.				
E.2.	**Ethical and Principled in Person and Profession:** Adheres strongly to personal and professional morals, principles and ethical standards established by the profession, for example, the NAEYC Code of Ethics and DEC Recommended Practices evidences integrity.				
E.3.	**Responsible and Reliable:** Conducts work and related tasks in a reliable, thorough, and efficient manner; has strong work ethic.				
E.4.	**Discreet:** Complies with Federal, State, and program policies relating to confidentiality.				
E.5.	**Objective:** Fosters and enhances the teaching and learning process while exercising judgment about personal and professional boundaries.				

Competency Area 1: Adult Learning			Assessment			Notes
			Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
Trainer	1.1.a.	Recognizes that strength-based approaches form the foundation for effective training and/or technical assistance				
	1.1.b.	Understands adult learning theories and applies them when facilitating training and/or technical assistance for participants.				
	1.1.c.	Uses strength-based approach to the learning environment, which is a safe space for learning, acknowledging the contributions and experiences of all involved.				

			Assessment			Notes
Technical Assistance	1.1.d.	Uses a variety of teaching strategies to promote ongoing learning.				
	1.1.e.	Facilitates opportunities for the participants to share their experiences and knowledge, and to practice new learning before integrating new learning into daily practice.				
	1.1.f.	Gathers information from the participants to assist with planning for appropriate opportunities for learning.				
	1.1.g.	Engages the participants in interactions tailored to individual learning preferences.				
	1.1.h.	Acknowledges and builds on the experience and knowledge participants bring to the relationship based partnership				
	1.1.i.	Demonstrates a commitment to shared learning and co-inquiry by utilizing a strength-based feedback and dialog process.				
	1.1.j.	Models and encourages reflective practice as a part of goal setting and ongoing review of goals.				
	1.1.k.	Applies knowledge of supportive ongoing adult learning groups (i.e., Communities of Practice) to promote professional develop and to sustain change.				

Competency Area 2: Building Relationships			Assessment			Notes
			Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
Trainer	2.1.a.	Exhibits ethical and professional behavior that includes trustworthiness, individual integrity, and confidentiality.				
	2.1.b.	Engages in respectful relationships and develops a sense of trust with each individual and organization.				
	2.1.c.	Demonstrates an individualized approach to each relationship.				
	2.1.d.	Demonstrates respect and interest in the abilities of others.				
	2.1.e.	Uses productive two-way communication that engages the participant.				
	2.1.f.	Shows respect for and interest in the participants strengths, learning preferences, goals, and cultural context.				

		Technical Assistance	Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
Technical Assistance	2.1.g.	Acknowledges, and builds upon the abilities and contributions of the participant.				
	2.1.h.	Demonstrates skill in active listening to respond to the needs of the participant.				
	2.1.i	Employs a style that is open, flexible, and confident with the ability to be present with the participant.				
	2.1.j.	Creates a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust				
	2.1.k.	Provides support as needed while maintaining professional boundaries				
	2.1.l.	Understands conflict management and demonstrates resolution strategies				
	2.1.m.	Involves and works with others in planning, problem solving, and implementing effective practices				
	2.1.n	Uses relationship-based principles to establish and foster strength-based relationships with participants.				
	2.1.o.	Uses reflective practices to examine actions and feelings expressed by an individual, group, or program (i.e., appreciative inquiry, transformational learning, and relational leadership).				

Competency Area 3: T&TA Process

		Trainer	Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
Trainer	3.1.a.	Demonstrates sensitivity to and accommodates participants' individual strengths, learning preferences, goals, and cultural context.				
	3.1.b.	Uses appropriate conflict resolution strategies in the facilitation of training content.				
	3.1.c.	Knowledge of the difference between and appropriate uses of training, coaching, mentoring and consulting strategies.				
	3.1.d.	Delivers training based on principles of adult learning, using a variety of instructional methods, and media appropriate for the proposed learning outcomes.				
	3.1.e.	Maintains fidelity to statewide content, requirements, and initiatives.				
	3.1.f.	Uses professional resources, self-reflection, and participant feedback to improve training content.				
	3.1.g.	Incorporates modeling and demonstration of best				

		practices into the professional development process.				
	3.1.h.	Facilitates and/or refers participants to additional learning opportunities outside of the training as part of supporting participants' ongoing skill development in the early childhood professional development system.				
Technical Assistance	3.1.i.	Uses appropriate assessment strategies and tools (i.e., session evaluations, CLASS, ERS, needs assessment, self-assessments) to inform the training and technical assistance process.				
	3.1.j.	Understands how to manage a TA process consistent with law, regulation, and employers, as well as discipline-specific standards and credentials.				
	3.1.k.	Develops and adheres to a TA Plan including goals, expectations, strategies, outcomes, and uses assessment results to address progress and inform revision of training plans over time.				
	3.1.l.	Training design includes reflective training experiences and follow-up activities that support use of reflective practice (i.e., coaching, mentoring, reflective practice sessions, and additional training opportunities).				
	3.1.m.	Supports the participant in developing an action plan that includes measurable outcomes with reasonable timelines, incorporating self-assessment as a component of the action plan.				
	3.1.n.	Encourages the participant to identify barriers and opportunities to implementing and sustaining changes.				
	3.1.o.	Assists participant in analyzing data and information to determine realistic and appropriate actions needed to meet established goals.				
	3.1.p	Knows how to use evidence-based, reliable and valid assessment instruments for ongoing data collection and how to use results collaboratively to inform systems change.				
Train er	3.2.a.	Demonstrates the basic concepts of transfer of learning and application of learning by participants. Recognizes potential challenges participants may				

		experience when implementing new strategies and concepts.				
	3.2.b	Applies appropriate theories and resources to support participant's growth and change.				
	3.2.c.	Encourages, explores and accepts without judgment the individual participant's verbal and non-verbal expression of feelings perceptions, concerns, beliefs, suggestions, etc.				
	3.2.d.	Summarizes, paraphrases, reflects, and restates what the participants share during trainings to facilitate clarity and understanding.				
	3.2.e.	Conveys a message that improvement is continuous and takes time.				
	3.2.f.	Uses a comprehensive professional development approach which includes initial training and organized follow-up experiences designed to support participants in implementing what they learned.				
Technical Assistance	3.2.g.	Understand and can describe the TA practitioner's direct and indirect roles or responsibilities in supporting professional/partner boundaries. Understands one's own responsibilities as an agent of change.				
	3.2.h.	Examines the participant's readiness and commitment to change and adapts accordingly.				
	3.2.i.	Focuses on learning opportunities to meet participants where they are, support taking risks, and trying new things.				
	3.2.j.	Celebrates participant successes and capabilities.				
	3.2.k.	Evaluates and documents changes occurring with the participant.				

Competency Area 4: Communication			Assessment			Notes
			Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth	Self-Reflection Professional Development
Trainer	4.1.a.	Presents information clearly in both oral and written forms.				
	4.1.b.	Utilizes active listening skills.				
	4.1.c.	Asks prompting questions that stimulate thinking in support of participants learning and goals.				
	4.1.d.	Compliments oral communication with nonverbal cues and behaviors, with consideration for individual and cultural preferences.				
	4.1.e.	Is intentional in the use of intrapersonal communication, to reflect and to reason.				
	4.1.f.	Identifies communication barriers that may impede the professional development process.				
	4.1.g.	Attends to the group dynamics. Uses word choice, tone, and body language to understand what is happening in the group and check understanding.				
	4.1.h.	Is respectful, clear, articulate, and direct when clarifying content and learning objectives when misunderstandings occur.				
	4.1.i.	Uses active listening strategies to facilitate discussions when participants' experiences and prior knowledge are in conflict with course content and stated learning objectives.				
Technical Assistance	4.1.j.	Supports participants in prioritizing goals, and actions; communicating in a way that encourages, explores, and accepts without judgement the feelings, perceptions, concerns, beliefs, and suggestions of the participant.				
	4.1.k.	Strives to keep lines of communication open with participants in order to establish ongoing relationship in which the free exchange of ideas can occur, making the individual's communication a focal point of the interaction.				
	4.1.l.	Encourages participants to regularly engage in reflective practices to better understand their personal/professional reactions and responses.				

Competency Area 5: Content Knowledge			Assessment			Notes
			Demonstrates Strength	**Demonstrates Progress**	**Opportunity for Growth**	**Self-Reflection Professional Development**
Trainer and Technical Assistance	5.1.a.	Acquires and maintains current professional knowledge and ongoing professional growth.				
	5.1.b.	Stays abreast of current research on evidence based and developmentally appropriate practice				
	5.1.c.	Works continuously to improve work-related skills and performance through continuing education, self-reflection, and participation in professional communities of practice.				
	5.1.d.	Shares accurate, up-to-date information and pertinent resources with the participant.				
	5.1.e.	Recognizes own areas of expertise limits, and competence in early childhood field.				
	5.1.f.	Uses comprehensive, meaningful, information that is relevant to participant's experiences, education, and abilities.				

Competency Area 6: Professionalism			Assessment			Notes
			Demonstrates Strength	**Demonstrates Progress**	**Opportunity for Growth**	**Self-Reflection Professional Development**
Trainer and Technical Assistance	6.1.a.	Has a working knowledge of the early childhood professional development system, maintains trainer credential, and has a current professional development plan.				
	6.1.b.	Demonstrates knowledge of practices, legal standards and a professional code of ethics that supports participants, colleagues, and community in providing services with integrity.				
	6.1.c.	Maintains confidentiality and professional boundaries when sharing experiences, discussing issues, and solving problems.				
	6.1.d.	Works proactively to develop partnerships to support early care and education professionals and administrators for better outcomes for young children and families.				
	6.1.e.	Participates in mentoring or coaching activities related to personal growth as a trainer.				
	6.1.f.	Demonstrates the ability to assess T&TA needs to design appropriate professional development				

		opportunities to meet the needs of the field, including the use of technology.				
	6.1.g.	Participates on local, regional, and/or state level teams articulating the significance of early education, research, and best practice to influence the development of high quality programming and public policy for young children and families.				

Summary Page

Record your assessment results below.

Core Competency	Demonstrates Strength	Demonstrates Progress	Opportunity for Growth
1. Dispositions			
2. Adult Learning			
3. Building Relationships			
4. Technical Assistance Process			
5. Communication			
6. Content Knowledge			
7. Professionalism			

Reflection Guide

Review the Summary Page and consider your assessment results. Complete the following guide using the results from the assessment.

Step One

List two dispositions/competencies in which you are demonstrating strength in order of importance to you.

1. _____

2. _____

Step Two

List two dispositions/competencies in which you are demonstrating progress in order of importance to you.

1. _____

2. _____

Step Three

List two dispositions/competencies that you indicated as an opportunity for growth in order of importance to you.

1. _____

2. _____

Step Four

Select the first priority of Step 1, Step 2, or Step 3. Indicate why this priority is important to you and your work with children and families

Priority Disposition/Competency Area:
_____

Step Five

Develop two goals related to this priority based on the behaviors and skills listed.

Goal 1: _____

Goal 2: _____

Planning Summary

Complete the following tool using the results from the Reflection Guide. Priority Competency from Step 4 _____

Key Considerations	Goal 1 from Step 5	Goal 2 from Step 5
Resources Do I need any materials or physical resources to help me meet this goal? If so, what are they?		
Professional Development Content Do I need any professional development to help me meet this goal? If so, in what content or topic area?		
Professional Development Format What format(s) of professional development would be most effective in helping me meet this goal (i.e., workshop, college course, research, shadowing, coaching)?		
Finding Professional Development How do I find the professional development that I need?		
Additional Support What type of support might I need in order to help me implement my new knowledge?		
Performance Indicators How will I know if I am making progress? How will my practice change?		

Glossary

Andragogy - the method and practice of teaching adult learners

Dispositions – Dispositions are a core group of attitudes, beliefs, and perspectives that unify its members, and reflected in how an individual views all aspects of the work within their field of practice.

Early Childhood Professional – Those working in the field of early childhood who provide direct services to children (from prenatal through age eight) and their families, as well as those who administer the programs in which these individuals work, and those who provide professional development for these individuals

Trainer – A trainer is an individual who provides learning experiences, or a series of experiences, specific to an area of inquiry and related set of skills or dispositions. They may focus on a planned sequence of sessions which comprises a training program. Activities facilitated by a trainer will provide you knowledge of research, techniques and/or strategies.

Technical Assistance – A technical assistance provider is an individual who provides targeted and customized supports to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by learners. Technical assistance will provide you with ongoing support to work toward implementation of research, techniques and/or strategies to fidelity.

References

Blase, K. (2009). Technical assistance to promote service and system change: Roadmap to effective intervention practices #4. Tampa, Florida: University of South Florida, Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children.

Colorado Coaching Consortium, (2014). Colorado competencies for early childhood coaches. Retrieved from http://www.cocoaches.net/uploads/Colorado_Competencies_for_Early_Childhood_Coaches.pdf.

Colorado Shines (2016). Colorado core competencies for trainers.
Retrieved from https://ecpd.costartstrong.org/ets/companies/08c38354-7b3d-4abd-b1ca-8309d9c5b000/UserFiles/Trainercompetencies.numbered2.18.2016.pdf

Compassion Capitol Fund National Resource Center (2010). Strengthening nonprofits: A capacity builders resource library. Delivering training and technical assistance. Retrieved from https://strengtheninnonprofits,org/resources/guidebooks/delivering_training_and_technical_assistance.pdf.

Division of Child Development and Early Education, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Resources (2013). Framework for the North Carolina technical assistance practitioner competencies. Retrieved from http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/PDF_forms/TACompetenciesApril232013.pdf.

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (2007). The Georgia early care and education professional development competencies.
Retrieved from https://www.training.decal.ga.gov/sites/default/files/uploads/docs/professional-development-competencies.pdf.

Johnson-Gerard, M (2017). Professionalism in early care and education. Retrieved from http://classroom.synonym.com/professionalism-early-child-care-education-6684786.html.

Katz, L. (1972). The developmental stages of preschool teachers.
Retrieved from http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED057922.pdf.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAYEC) and National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) (2011). Early childhood professional development: Training and technical assistance glossary. Retrieved from http://www.naeyc.org/GlossaryTraining_TA.pdf.

United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration of Children and Families (2010). A guide to effective consultation with settings serving infants, toddlers and their families: Core knowledge, competencies, and dispositions. Retrieved from https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/185-a-guide-to-effective-consultation-with-settings-serving-infants-toddlers-and-their-families.

Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners (2015). Wisconsin training and technical assistance professional (t-tap) competencies for early childhood and related professionals working with adults. Retrieved from http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/documents/WI_TTAP_Competenciesfinal5_1_15.pdf.

West Virginia Reflective Supervision Workgroup (2015). Reflective supervision handbook for West Virginia home visitation supervisors. Retrieved from http://www.wvpartners.org/docs/final%20proof%20of%20RS%20Handbook%203-2-16.pdf