



# **The Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development Competencies**

## **Early Care and Education Professional**

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*These Professional Development Competencies delineate the knowledge and skills for childhood care and education professionals (practitioners, teachers, caregivers, providers, group leaders, aides, directors, trainers, etc.) working in a variety of settings (child-care centers, preschools, pre-kindergarten programs, family child care and group homes, school-age care programs, etc.). The purpose of these competencies is to provide a blueprint for individual professional growth as well as guidelines for training and education programs that will meet the needs of professionals in the field.*

## Professional Development Competencies

### Early Care and Education Professional, School-Age Care Professional, Program Administrator, Trainer, and Technical Assistance Provider

#### Early Care and Education Professional Competency Goals (ECE)

ECE-1	To understand and demonstrate the principles of child growth and development.
ECE-2	To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment.
ECE-3	To advance physical and intellectual competence.
ECE-4	To support social and emotional development and provide positive guidance.
ECE-5	To establish positive and productive relationships with families.
ECE-6	To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to each individual child's needs.
ECE-7	To maintain a commitment to professionalism.

#### School-Age Care Professional Competency Goals (SAC)

SAC-1	To understand the development of school-age children: Early School-Age (5-6); Middle School-Age (7-9), and Early Adolescence (10 and older).
SAC-2	To establish a safe, healthy environment and promote wellness.
SAC-3	To advance physical and intellectual competence and enhance recreational activity.
SAC-4	To support social and emotional development and provide positive guidance.
SAC-5	To establish positive and productive relationships with families.
SAC-6	To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to the needs of each individual child.
SAC-7	To maintain a commitment to professionalism.

#### Program Administrator of Early Care and Education and School-Age Care Programs Competency Goals (ADM)

ADM-1	To develop and maintain an effective organization.
ADM-2	To plan and implement administrative systems that provide effective education and support programs.
ADM-3	To market the program to parents and the community.
ADM-4	To administer effectively a program of personnel management and staff development.
ADM-5	To maintain and develop the facility and equipment.
ADM-6	To possess legal knowledge necessary for effective management.
ADM-7	To foster good community relations and to influence child-care policy that affects the program.
ADM-8	To practice responsible financial management.
ADM-9	To maintain a commitment to ongoing personal/professional growth and development.

#### Trainer of Early Care and Education, School-Age Care, and Administrator Competency Categories (TRN)

\* Indicators are listed for the following categories in the Trainer Competencies section of this publication.

TRN-1	Professionalism and Ethics
TRN-2	Instructional Design and Development
TRN-3	Knowledge of Content
TRN-4	Presentation Skills
TRN-5	Quality Assurance

#### Provider of Technical Assistance for Early Care and Education and School-Age Care Programs (TAP)

\* Indicators are listed for the following categories in the Technical Assistance Provider Roles and Competencies section of this publication.

TAP-1	Partner
TAP-2	Needs Assessor
TAP-3	Facilitator of Change
TAP-4	Joint Problem Solver
TAP-5	Trainer/Educator
TAP-6	Information Specialist
TAP-7	Caseload Manager

## Early Care and Education Professional Competency Goals and Indicators (ECE)

### ECE-1 To understand and demonstrate the principles of child growth and development.

*Examples of beginning level competence:*

**A. Recalls knowledge of child growth and development theory and best practices as a foundation for working effectively with children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Describe stages of development and stages of play from infancy to age five.
2. Explain the sequence in which children develop physical skills.
3. Describe how children develop language skills.
4. Identify learning modes for children including sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell.
5. Define self-concept and positive self-image.
6. Describe how samples of children's work helps to know each child individually.
7. Describe how children learn through active participation.
8. Identify developmentally appropriate behavior and state reasonable expectations for children.
9. Respond immediately to the needs of children who are crying or distressed.
10. List developmental milestones.
11. Describe individual temperament styles of adults and children.
12. Describe early learning standards for young children (i.e., *The Georgia Early Learning Standards*).

**B. Recognizes how cultural, social, health and economic statuses influence child development and learning, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Identify individual children's interests, abilities, goals, and special needs.
2. Describe how children participate at their own level of interest and ability.
3. Identify each child's individual styles of interacting with others and making friends.
4. Describe the general characteristics and special needs of children.
5. Explain the importance of quality experiences and interactions for children with special needs.
6. Explain the interconnection of a variety of variables that affect a child's development (family situations, peers, personality, temperament, time of day, weather, need for sleep, hunger, availability of materials, etc.).

**C. Awareness of current findings in brain research and best practices for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.**

*Examples of intermediate level competence:*

**A. Applies knowledge of child growth and development theory and best practices as a foundation for working effectively with children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Demonstrate understanding of stages of development and stages of play from infancy to age five.
2. Recognize the sequence in which children develop physical skills.
3. Describe a variety of methods for enhancing language development.
4. Stimulate children through all learning modes, including sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell.
5. Discuss self-concept and promote a positive self-image.
6. Observe and collect samples of children's work in order to know each child individually.
7. Describe how to provide support for children to initiate the development of new skills, to build on existing knowledge and skills, and to practice newly acquired skills.
8. Explain developmentally appropriate behavior and practice reasonable expectations for children.
9. Respond and identify the needs of children who are crying or distressed.

10. Recognize developmental alerts or warning signs.
11. Use knowledge of individual temperament styles of adults and children to provide experiences to promote positive developmental outcomes.
12. Use knowledge of early learning standards for young children (i.e., *The Georgia Early Learning Standards*).

**B. Examines how cultural, social, health and economic statuses influence child development and learning, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Use knowledge about each individual child's interests, abilities, goals, and special needs to plan appropriate learning experiences.
2. Allow children to participate at their own level of interest and ability.
3. Support each child's individual styles of interacting with others and making friends.
4. Demonstrate knowledge about the characteristics and special needs of children.
5. Provide quality experiences and interactions for children with special needs.
6. Determine the interconnection of a variety of variables that affect a child's development (family situations, peers, personality, temperament, time of day, weather, need for sleep, hunger, availability of materials, etc.).

**C. Applies knowledge of current findings in brain research to implement best practices for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.**

*Examples of advanced level competence:*

**A. Integrates knowledge of child growth and development theory and best practices as a foundation for working effectively with children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Explain the integration of the stages of development and stages of play from infancy to age five in the curriculum and program.
2. Explain and evaluate the sequence in which children develop physical skills.
3. Evaluate how children develop language skills and demonstrate a variety of methods for enhancing language development.
4. Explain how children learn through all learning modes, including sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell.
5. Value the importance of self-concept and promoting a positive self-image.
6. Evaluate samples of children's work in order to know each child individually.
7. Guide situations and provide support for children to initiate the development of new skills, to build on existing knowledge and skills, and to practice newly acquired skills.
8. Assess developmentally appropriate behavior and the importance of reasonable expectations for children.
9. Respond and interpret the needs of children who are crying or distressed.
10. Evaluate developmental milestones and respond to developmental alerts or warning signs.
11. Assess individual temperament styles of adults and children to provide experiences to promote positive developmental outcomes.
12. Integrate early learning standards for young children (i.e., *The Georgia Early Learning Standards*) in program.

**B. Interprets how cultural, social, health and economic statuses impacts child development and learning, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Evaluate each individual child's interests, abilities, goals, and special needs to plan appropriate learning experiences.
2. Value the benefits of children participate at their own level of interest and ability.
3. Assess each child's individual styles of interacting with others and making friends.
4. Identify and discuss the characteristics and special needs of children.
5. Advocate for quality experiences and interactions for children with special needs.
6. Analyze the interconnection of a variety of variables that affect a child's development (family situations, peers, personality, temperament, time of day, weather, need for sleep, hunger, availability of materials, etc.).

**C. Interprets knowledge of current findings in brain research to implement best practices for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.**

**ECE-2 To establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment.**

*Examples of beginning level competence:*

**A. Recognizes a safe environment to prevent and reduce injuries, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Examine all safety aspects of toys and materials provided for use by children.
2. Describe supervision that is appropriate for the developmental levels of children.
3. Know and follow established emergency plans and procedures, including CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and first aid.

**B. Discusses good health, nutrition, and an environment that contributes to the prevention of illnesses and the prevention of child abuse and neglect, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Describe and demonstrate general hygiene practices consistently to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.
2. Describe process for cleaning and sanitizing materials used by children.
3. Describe and practice diapering/toileting procedures to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.
4. Describe and encourage health maintenance habits in children.
5. Describe meals/snacks that meet the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) requirements for children's individual and special nutritional needs.
6. Describe a pleasant and relaxing meal-time experience.
7. Describe a pleasant and appropriate environment conducive to rest each day.
8. Understand good health and nutrition practices.

**C. Recognizes how spaces, relationships, materials, and routines are resources for constructing an interesting, secure, and enjoyable environment that encourages play, exploration, learning, and a feeling of ownership among the children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Describe well-arranged spaces that meet the developmental needs of children during routines and play.
2. Identify a variety of developmentally appropriate materials.
3. Name materials conducive for children's play.
4. Describe a schedule that meets children's needs for routines, play, and freedom of choice.
5. Describe how children can take care of their environment, both inside and outside.

*Examples of intermediate level competence:*

**A. Provides a safe environment to prevent and reduce injuries, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Routinely inspect the children's toys and materials to ensure that they are safe.
2. Provide supervision that is appropriate for the developmental levels of children.
3. Explain and follow established emergency plans and procedures, including CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and first aid.

**B. Applies good health and nutrition knowledge and provides an environment that contributes to the prevention of illnesses and the prevention of child abuse and neglect, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Employ general hygiene practices consistently to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.
2. Implement a process for cleaning and sanitizing materials used by children.
3. Practice diapering/toileting procedures to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.
4. Practice and encourage health maintenance habits in children.
5. Provide meals/snacks that meet the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) requirement for children's individual and special nutritional needs.
6. Provide a pleasant and relaxing meal-time experience.
7. Provide a pleasant and appropriate environment conducive to rest each day.
8. Demonstrate good health and nutrition practices to others.

**C. Uses spaces, relationships, materials, and routines as resources for constructing an interesting, secure, and enjoyable environment that encourages play, exploration, learning, and a feeling of ownership among the children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Provide well-arranged spaces that meet the developmental needs of children during routines and play.
2. Make available a variety of developmentally appropriate materials.
3. Organize materials conducive for children's play.
4. Employ a schedule that meets children's needs for routines, play, and freedom of choice.
5. Encourage children to take care of their environment, both inside and outside.

*Examples of advanced level competence:*

**A. Assesses and provides a safe environment to prevent and reduce injuries as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Monitor and guide others to ensure that all toys and materials provided for use by children are safe.
2. Assess and provide supervision that is appropriate for the developmental levels of children.
3. Review and revise as needed established emergency plans and procedures, including CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and first aid.

**B. Determines good health and nutrition and provides an environment that contributes to the prevention of illnesses and the prevention of child abuse and neglect, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Implement and evaluate general hygiene practices consistently to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.
2. Develop and review procedures that ensure all materials used by children are clean and sanitized.
3. Instruct and monitor others in correct diapering/toileting procedures to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.
4. Develop and lead others to encourage health maintenance habits in children.
5. Monitor and provide meals/snacks that meet the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) requirements for children's individual and special nutritional needs.
6. Evaluate pleasant and relaxing meal-time experience.
7. Evaluate pleasant and appropriate environment conducive to rest each day.
8. Evaluate and adapt good health and nutrition practices.

**C. Evaluates and uses spaces, relationships, materials, and routines as resources for constructing an interesting, secure, and enjoyable environment that encourages play, exploration, learning, and a feeling of ownership among the children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Evaluate and provide well-arranged spaces that meet the developmental needs of children during routines and play.
2. Analyze the use of a variety of developmentally appropriate materials.
3. Evaluate and organize materials to enhance children's play.
4. Explain the importance of providing a schedule that meets children's needs for routines, play, and freedom of choice.
5. Develop and implement strategies to encourage children to take care of their environment, both inside and outside.

**ECE- 3 To advance physical and intellectual competence.**

*Examples of beginning level competence:*

**A. Discusses a variety of equipment, activities, and opportunities to promote physical activities and development in children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Identify a variety of activities that enable children to develop their large (gross motor) and small (fine motor) muscles.
2. Give examples of program activities that meet the individual needs of all children, including those with special needs.
3. Describe opportunities for children to develop their senses.

- B. Recognizes activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving appropriate to the developmental levels and learning styles of children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Name a variety of developmentally appropriate materials and activities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving.
  2. Explain interactions with children that provide support for play, exploration, and learning (e.g., open-ended questions, scaffolding, etc.).
  3. Identify and label each child's individual learning styles.
  4. Describe developmentally appropriate materials and activities that encourage pre-math and pre-science concept development.
- C. Understands active communications, opportunities and supports that are necessary for children to understand, acquire, and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Describe respectful communication with individual child.
  2. Give examples of talking with children that are appropriate to their developmental level.
  3. Identify ways to talk to children that support meaningful, open-ended conversations, individually and as members of groups.
  4. Explain positive responses to children's attempts to communicate.
  5. Identify ways to involve children in making decisions that are appropriate to their developmental levels (e.g., routines, activities, etc.).
- D. Recognizes a variety of opportunities and support for children to understand, acquire, and use emergent literacy skills, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Describe a developmentally appropriate, print-rich environment in which children learn about books, literature, and writing.
  2. Identify rhymes, poems, songs, and finger-plays that help children develop emergent literacy skills, such as phonological awareness.
  3. Identify ways to engage children in literacy activities, such as reading and writing.
- E. Discusses opportunities that stimulate children to play with sound, rhythm, language, materials, spaces, and ideas in individual ways and to express their creative abilities, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. List examples of individual expression and creativity.
  2. Explain developmentally appropriate musical experiences and equipment.
  3. List examples of art experiences with varied mediums that are developmentally appropriate and open-ended.
  4. Describe dramatic play experiences, with a variety of developmentally appropriate props that can be extended to other aspects of the curriculum and to other areas of the environment.
  5. Identify and describe opportunities for a variety of developmentally appropriate block play experiences.

*Examples of intermediate level competence:*

- A. Provides a variety of equipment, activities, and opportunities to promote physical activities and development in children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Offer a variety of activities that enable children to develop their large (gross motor) and small (fine motor) muscles.
  2. Adapt program activities to meet the individual needs of all children, including those with special needs.
  3. Offer opportunities for children to develop their senses.
- B. Provides activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving appropriate to the developmental levels and learning styles of children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Make available a variety of accessible developmentally appropriate materials and activities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving.
  2. Engage in interactions with children that provide support for play, exploration, and learning (e.g., open-ended questions, scaffolding, etc.).

3. Make adaptations for each child's individual learning styles.
4. Use developmentally appropriate materials and activities that encourage pre-math and pre-science concept development.

**C. Actively communicates with children and provides opportunities and support for children to understand, acquire, and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Engage in respectful communication with individual child.
2. Talk with children in ways that are appropriate to their developmental levels.
3. Employ various ways to talk to children and engage them in meaningful, open-ended conversations, individually and as members of groups.
4. Respond positively to children's attempts to communicate.
5. Involve children in making decisions that are appropriate to their developmental levels (e.g., routines, activities, etc.).

**D. Provides a variety of opportunities and support for children to understand, acquire, and use emergent literacy skills, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Use a developmentally appropriate, print-rich environment in which children learn about books, literature, and writing.
2. Use rhymes poems, songs, and finger-plays to help children develop emergent literacy skills, such as phonological awareness.
3. Encourage children to engage in literacy activities, such as reading and writing.

**E. Provides opportunities that stimulate children to play with sound, rhythm, language, materials, spaces, and ideas in individual ways and to express their creative abilities, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Acknowledge and appreciate individual expression and creativity in individuals.
2. Arrange a variety of developmentally appropriate musical experiences and equipment.
3. Use art experiences with varied mediums that are developmentally appropriate and open-ended.
4. Demonstrate dramatic play experiences, with a variety of developmentally appropriate props that can be extended to other aspects of the curriculum and to other areas of the environment.
5. Make available a variety of developmentally appropriate block play experiences.

*Examples of advanced level competence:*

**A. Evaluates a variety of equipment, activities, and opportunities to promote physical activities and development in children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Design a variety of activities to ensure children develop their large (gross motor) and small (fine motor) muscles.
2. Plan, implement, and revise (as needed) program activities to meet the individual needs of all children, including those with special needs.
3. Compile data to design and evaluate opportunities for children to develop their senses.

**B. Determines activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving appropriate to the developmental levels and learning styles of children, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Plan, implement, and critique a variety of developmentally appropriate and accessible materials and activities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving.
2. Formulate, practice, and assess interactions with children that provide support for play, exploration, and learning (e.g., open-ended questions, scaffolding, etc.).
3. Create, assess, and revise activities to meet each child's individual learning style.
4. Design, assess, and critique developmentally appropriate materials and activities that encourage pre-math and pre-science concept development.

**C. Determines appropriate opportunities for active communication and support for children to understand, acquire, and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Formulate, practice, and record frequent and respectful communication with each individual child.



2. Construct and modify ways of talking with children that are appropriate to their developmental levels.
3. Compose, practice, and modify ways to talk and engage children in meaningful, open-ended conversations, individually and as members of groups.
4. Integrate positive responses to children's attempts to communicate throughout the day.
5. Formulate or modify practices to increase ways of involving children in making decisions that are appropriate to their developmental levels (e.g., routines, activities, etc.).

**D. Incorporates a variety of opportunities that support children's understand, acquisition, and use emergent literacy skills, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Create a developmentally appropriate, print-rich environment in which children learn about books, literature, and writing.
2. Integrate and critique the use of rhymes, poems, songs, and finger-plays to help children develop emergent literacy skills, such as phonological awareness.
3. Formulate or modify practices to encourage children to engage in literacy activities, such as reading and writing.

**E. Incorporates opportunities that stimulate children to play with sound, rhythm, language, materials, spaces, and ideas in individual ways and to express their creative abilities, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Assess and modify practices to encourage and appreciate individual expression and creativity.
2. Plan and implement a variety of developmentally appropriate musical experiences and equipment.
3. Design art experiences with varied mediums that are developmentally appropriate and open-ended.
4. Prepare, implement, and assess many opportunities for dramatic play experiences, with a variety of developmentally appropriate props that can be extended to other aspects of the curriculum and to other areas of the environment.
5. Plan and implement opportunities for a variety of developmentally appropriate block play experiences.

**ECE-4 To support social and emotional development and provide positive guidance.**

*Examples of beginning level competence:*

**A. Describes the importance of physical and emotional security for each child and helps her/him to know, accept, and take pride in herself/himself and to develop a sense of independence, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Identify communications that show each child is important, respected, and valued.
2. Describe a secure, trusting relationship with each child.
3. Name ways to help each child develop a sense of security through nurturing interactions, predictable routines, and a safe environment.
4. Identify self-help skills to promote each child's developing independence and initiative.
5. Identify signs of readiness for toilet training that support each child in a positive, relaxed environment.
6. Identify and discuss opportunities for children to experience success by building on current knowledge and skills, practicing new skills, and constructing new knowledge.
7. List ways to support children and families during separation anxiety and through transitions to new environments or groups.
8. List varied opportunities for children to recognize and name their own feelings.

**B. Recognizes that each child needs to feel accepted in the group, he/she needs help learning to communicate and to get along with others, express feelings of empathy and mutual respect with other children and adults, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Label feelings of empathy and respect for others.
2. Describe characteristics of unbiased curriculum that promotes recognition and appreciation of racial, ethnic, and ability differences and similarities.
3. Explain ways to encourage children to respect themselves, others, and the environment.
4. Describe varied opportunities to develop skills for entering into social groups and friendships, and for fostering other pro-social behavior.

- C. Appreciates a supportive environment in which children can begin to learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as members of groups, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Identify strategies (e.g., routines, transitions, room arrangements, choice activities, etc.) for avoiding problems.
  2. Identify appropriate positive guidance techniques that reflect knowledge of each child's temperament and developmental level.
  3. Explain a variety of appropriate, positive guidance/discipline methods, such as listening, reinforcing, redirecting, offering choices, and setting and enforcing limits
  4. List ways that allow children to experience both logical and natural consequences for their behaviors so that they can learn how to take responsibility for their actions.
  5. Describe consequences of negative discipline methods, such as spanking, threatening, shouting, or shaming so as not to incorporate these in classroom practices.
  6. Name the steps of conflict resolution that guide children through the process.
  7. Identify ways to involve children in the establishment of guidelines for acceptable and appropriate behaviors.

*Examples of intermediate level competence:*

- A. Provides physical and emotional security for each child and helps her/him to know, accept, and take pride in herself/himself and to develop a sense of independence, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Show each child that he/she is important, respected, and valued.
  2. Establish a secure, trusting relationship with each child.
  3. Model ways to help each child develop a sense of security through nurturing interactions, predictable routines, and a safe environment.
  4. Assist and encourage self-help skills to promote each child's developing independence and initiative.
  5. Respond to the signs of readiness for toilet training to support each child in a positive, relaxed environment.
  6. Use opportunities for children to experience success by building on current knowledge and skills, practicing new skills, and constructing new knowledge.
  7. Support and assist children and families during separation anxiety and through transitions to new environments or groups.
  8. Use varied opportunities for children to recognize and name their own feelings.
- B. Implements practices that helps each child feel accepted in the group, helps her/him learn to communicate and get along with others, and encourages feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Encourage and model feelings of empathy and respect for others.
  2. Use unbiased curriculum that promotes recognition and appreciation of racial, ethnic, and ability differences and similarities.
  3. Demonstrate ways to encourage children to respect themselves, others, and the environment.
  4. Use varied opportunities to develop skills for entering into social groups and friendships, and for fostering other pro-social behavior.
- C. Provides a supportive environment in which children can begin to learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as members of groups, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Distinguish strategies (e.g., routines, transitions, room arrangements, choice activities, etc.) for avoiding problems.
  2. Use appropriate positive guidance techniques that reflect knowledge of each child's temperament and developmental level.
  3. Use a variety of appropriate, positive guidance/discipline methods, such as listening, reinforcing, redirecting, offering choices, and setting and enforcing limits.
  4. Employ ways to allow children to experience both logical and natural consequences for their behaviors so that they can learn how to take responsibility for their actions.
  5. Analyze the consequences of negative discipline methods, such as spanking, threatening, shouting, or shaming, so as not to incorporate them into classroom practice.
  6. Use the steps of conflict resolution to guide children through the process.
  7. Test ways to involve children in the establishment of guidelines for acceptable and appropriate behaviors.

*Examples of advanced level competence:*

- A. Develops and implements practices that builds physical and emotional security for each child and helps her/him to know, accept, and take pride in herself/himself and to develop a sense of independence, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Design and implement practices that each child is important, respected, and valued.
  2. Develop secure, trusting relationship with each child.
  3. Formulate ways to help each child develop a sense of security through nurturing interactions, predictable routines, and a safe environment.
  4. Arrange opportunities for self-help skills that promote each child's developing independence and initiative.
  5. Plan ways to integrate the signs of readiness for toilet training in a supportive, positive, and relaxed environment.
  6. Design and integrate opportunities for children to experience success by building on current knowledge and skills, practicing new skills, and constructing new knowledge.
  7. Plan, implement, and revise (if needed) support for children and families during separation anxiety and through transitions to new environments or groups.
  8. Design and integrate varied opportunities for children to recognize and name their own feelings.
- B. Fosters individual acceptance for each child, fosters communication and getting along with others, and encourages feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Design opportunities to express feelings of empathy and respect for others.
  2. Use data to plan and implement unbiased curriculum that promotes recognition and appreciation of racial, ethnic, and ability differences and similarities.
  3. Plan, implement, and assess ways to encourage children to respect themselves, others, and the environment.
  4. Arrange varied opportunities to develop skills for entering into social groups and friendships, and for fostering other pro-social behavior.
- C. Determines a supportive environment in which children can begin to learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as members of groups, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Implement strategies (e.g., routines, transitions, room arrangements, choice activities, etc.) for avoiding problems.
  2. Plan and implement appropriate positive guidance techniques that reflect knowledge of each child's temperament and developmental level.
  3. Use observational methodology to formulate a variety of appropriate positive guidance/discipline methods, such as listening, reinforcing, redirecting, offering choices, and setting and enforcing limits that meet the needs of each child.
  4. Facilitate ways to allow children to experience both logical and natural consequences for their behaviors so that they can learn how to take responsibility for their actions.
  5. Evaluate the consequences of negative discipline methods, such as spanking, threatening, shouting, or shaming, so as not to incorporate them into classroom practices.
  6. Plan and implement the steps of conflict resolution to guide children through the process.
  7. Facilitate ways to involve children in the establishment of guidelines for acceptable and appropriate behaviors.

**ECE-5 To establish positive and productive relationships with families.**

*Examples of beginning level competence:*

- A. Discusses an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, that encourages the family's involvement in the program, and supports the child's relationship with her/his family, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Acknowledge opportunities to appreciate children's families as part of the regular program.
  2. Describe friendships and mutual support between families and staff, while respecting professional boundaries.
  3. Recognize the importance of using information about each family's beliefs, cultures, and child-rearing practices in interactions and experiences with children.

4. Identify regular opportunities for each family to learn about and understand a child's development to strengthen parenting knowledge and skills.
5. Identify information about resources to help families meet their needs through linkages to services and opportunities.
6. Describe how to respond to, and provide appropriate support for, families under stress or in crisis.

**B. Awareness of how a program assists in preventing child abuse and neglect, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Identify best practices that foster children's social competence.
2. Observe, recognize, and respond to early warning signs of child abuse or neglect.
3. Describe how to assist families in making social connections with other parents and with the staff.

*Examples of intermediate level competence:*

**A. Maintains an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, encourages the family's involvement in the program, and supports the child's relationship with her/his family, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Provide a variety of opportunities to appreciate children's families as part of the regular program.
2. Engage in friendships and mutual support between families and staff, while respecting professional boundaries.
3. Use information about each family's beliefs, cultures, and child-rearing practices in interactions and experiences with children.
4. Offer regular opportunities for each family to learn about and understand a child's development to strengthen parenting knowledge and skills.
5. Provide information about resources to help families meet their needs through linkages to services and opportunities.
6. Respond to, and provide appropriate support for, families under stress or in crisis.

**B. Provides a program that assists in preventing child abuse and neglect, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Use best practices that foster children's social competence.
2. Observe, recognize, and respond to early warning signs of child abuse or neglect.
3. Assist families in making social connections with other parents and with the staff.

*Examples of advanced level competence:*

**A. Advocates for an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, encourages the family's involvement in the program, and supports the child's relationship with her/his family, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Evaluate a variety of opportunities to appreciate children's families as part of the regular program.
2. Facilitate friendships and mutual support between families and staff, while respecting professional boundaries.
3. Integrate information about each family's beliefs, cultures, and child-rearing practices in interactions and experiences with children.
4. Analyze and revise (if needed) opportunities for each family to learn about and understand a child's development to strengthen parenting knowledge and skills.
5. Search for and keep abreast of information about resources to help families meet their needs through linkages to services and opportunities.
6. Guide others to respond and provide appropriate support for families under stress or in crisis.

**B. Incorporates a prevention of child abuse and neglect focus as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Analyze and implement best practices that foster children's social competence.
2. Guide others to observe, recognize, and respond to early warning signs of child abuse or neglect.
3. Determine effective ways to assist families in making social connections with other parents and with the staff.

**ECE-6 To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to each individual child's needs.**

*Examples of beginning level competence:*

**A. Discusses all available resources to ensure an effective operation, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. List materials and equipment appropriate to the developmental needs of children.
2. Explain how the communities, school systems, regulatory agencies, and health and social services work together to meet the needs of individual children and families.
3. Describe activities that are responsive to individual children (e.g., special needs, cultures, languages spoken, various ages, highly active or withdrawn, health-restricted, in-crisis, etc.), in order to promote inclusive, welcoming environments for all children.
4. Identify, report, and respond to the needs of abused, neglected, or deprived children in the child-care setting.

**B. Participates in organizing, planning and recordkeeping, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Describe observation and assessment as bases for planning individualized learning experiences and activities.
2. Explain the importance of keeping records that contain accurate information about the growth, health, behavior, and progress of each child and the group.
3. Identify developmental and behavioral information to share with families and other professionals.
4. Explains procedures for smooth transitions from one group to another.

**C. Communicates and cooperates with coworkers, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Participate with others to help orient new staff, substitutes, or volunteers to routines and to the abilities and individual needs of each child.
2. Practice cooperation, support coworkers, and encourage teamwork.

**D. Participates in ongoing program-evaluation and program-improvement efforts.**

*Examples of intermediate level competence:*

**A. Uses all available resources to ensure an effective operation, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Obtain materials and equipment appropriate to the developmental needs of children.
2. Establish liaisons with communities, school systems, regulatory agencies, and health and social services to meet the needs of individual children and families.
3. Provide activities that are responsive to individual children (e.g., special needs, cultures, languages spoken, various ages, highly active or withdrawn, health-restricted, in-crisis, etc.), in order to promote inclusive, welcoming environments for all children.
4. Identify, report, and respond to the needs of abused, neglected, or deprived children in the child-care setting.

**B. Organizes, plans, and keeps records, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Use observation and assessment as bases for planning individualized learning experiences and activities.
2. Maintain records concerning the growth, health, behavior, and progress of each child and the group.
3. Share developmental and behavioral information with families and other professionals.
4. Employ procedures for smooth transitions from one group to another.

**C. Communicates and cooperates with coworkers, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**

1. Orient new staff, substitutes, or volunteers to routines and to the abilities and individual needs of each child.
2. Practice cooperation, support coworkers, and encourage teamwork.

**D. Participates in ongoing program-evaluation and program-improvement efforts.**

*Examples of advanced level competence:*

- A. Assesses available resources to ensure an effective operation, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Adapt materials and equipment to meet the developmental needs of children.
  2. Initiate and maintain liaisons with communities, school systems, regulatory agencies, and health and social services to meet the needs of individual children and families.
  3. Develop, implement, analyze, and modify activities to be responsive to individual children (e.g., special needs, cultures, languages spoken, various ages, highly active or withdrawn, health-restricted, in-crisis, etc.), in order to promote inclusive, welcoming environments for all children.
  4. Identify, report, and respond to the needs of abused, neglected, or deprived children in the child-care setting.
- B. Develops and implements recordkeeping procedures, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Evaluate observation and assessment appropriate for planning individualized learning experiences and activities.
  2. Interpret records concerning the growth, health, behavior, and progress of each child and the group.
  3. Interpret developmental and behavioral information with families and other professionals.
  4. Develop and implement procedures for smooth transitions from one group to another.
- C. Facilitates communication and cooperation with coworkers, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Guide new staff, substitutes, or volunteers to routines and to the abilities and individual needs of each child.
  2. Guide others to value cooperation, support coworkers, and encourage teamwork.
- D. Implements ongoing program-evaluation and program-improvement efforts.**

**ECE-7 To maintain a commitment to professionalism.**

*Examples of beginning level competence:*

- A. Has knowledge of her/his own professional performance and continues to learn more about working with young children and families, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Identify self-assessment activities and goals for improvement.
  2. Attend staff meetings.
  3. Read professional books and periodicals about child development and early childhood education practices.
  4. Join professional early childhood organizations.
  5. Identify appropriate training and formal educational opportunities to improve.
- B. Understands his/her role as a child-care advocate for children and families as well as professional ethics, while balancing personal and professional life, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Explain decisions based on knowledge of early childhood theories and practices, and promote quality in child-care services.
  2. Describe regulatory, legislative, and workforce issues and how they affect the development and welfare of young children.
  3. Explain program philosophies, goals, and objectives through words and actions.
  4. Describe how to be a role model for children and families.
  5. Explain confidentiality and principles of ethical conduct and privacy laws.
  6. List program practices that balance work and home life at all levels (physical, social, emotional, intellectual).

*Examples of intermediate level competence:*

- A. Examines her/his own performance and continues to learn more about working with young children and families, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Practice self-assessment and set goals for improvement.
  2. Participate in staff meetings.
  3. Use information from professional books and periodicals about child development and early childhood education practices.
  4. Participate in professional early childhood organizations.
  5. Participate in training and formal educational opportunities to improve.
- B. Serves as a child-care advocate for children and families and applies professional ethics, while balancing personal and professional life, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Make decisions based on knowledge of early childhood theories and practices, and promote quality in child-care services.
  2. Analyze regulatory, legislative, and workforce issues and how they affect the development and welfare of young children.
  3. Demonstrate program philosophies, goals, and objectives through words and actions.
  4. Demonstrate a positive attitude and serve as a role model for children and families.
  5. Demonstrate confidentiality and uphold principles of ethical conduct and privacy laws.
  6. Establish program practices that balance work and home life at all levels (physical, social, emotional, intellectual).

*Examples of advanced level competence:*

- A. Determines her/his own performance and continues to learn more about working with young children and families, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Collect regular self-assessment and revise goals for improvement.
  2. Integrate information from staff meetings into classroom performance and interactions.
  3. Plan and implement information from professional books and periodicals about child development and early childhood education practices.
  4. Design and include, as appropriate, ideas from professional early childhood organizations into practice.
  5. Include ideas from training and formal educational opportunities to improve.
- B. Determines his/her role as a child-care advocate for children and families and as well as professional ethics, while balancing personal and professional life, as demonstrated by the abilities to:**
1. Include decisions based on knowledge of early childhood theories and practices, and promote quality in child-care services.
  2. Evaluate regulatory, legislative, and workforce issues and how they affect the development and welfare of young children.
  3. Plan and implement program philosophies, goals, and objectives through words and actions.
  4. Self-asses positive attitudes and serve as a role model for children and families.
  5. Value confidentiality and principles of ethical conduct and privacy laws.
  6. Integrate program practices that balance work and home life at all levels (physical, social, emotional, intellectual).

## About the Professional Development Competencies . . .

The goal of the Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development Competencies is to promote quality learning experiences for professionals in early care and education in Georgia. The competencies address the question: “What should professionals who work with children ages birth through five and in after-school programs know and be able to do?” The competencies provide a framework with which professionals can evaluate their own training needs. Trainers can use the competencies to develop training that directly addresses individual needs.

Developed to support nationally recognized standards of excellence within the field of early care and education, the goals and indicators identify knowledge, skills, and abilities that a qualified practitioner should demonstrate. Competency goals and indicators are provided for the:

Early Care and Education Professional (ECE) – For those who work with children from birth through the age of five.

School-Age Care Professional (SAC) – For those who work with children from the age of five to early adolescence.

Program Administrator (ADM) – For those who work in administrative capacities in a variety of settings within the field.

### Training Levels

A recommendation of a strategic planning committee in 1994-95, identified the need for training to be defined according to the needs of professionals. Because we know that individuals come to training with varied skills, knowledge, experience, and abilities, it was recommended that levels of training for each competency are needed to define training for the Beginning, Intermediate, and Advance professional.

Based on work completed by a committee in 1996-97, ECE, SAC, and ADM competencies were revised in 2006-07 to define and suggest framework for training tailored to the professional depending on their needs. To support trainers of early care and education professionals, competencies and qualifications for trainers were revised to reflect requirements at the Trainer I, II, and III designations. (Refer to the **Georgia Trainer Designation Matrix** on page 39 of the full Professional Development Competencies document for more information).

In the Georgia Professional Development system, core competencies are observable behaviors and represent a range of knowledge grouped into three levels of mastery:

- Beginning
- Intermediate
- Advanced

**Beginning** competencies are most appropriate for entry level professionals with little or no experience working with children or in some cases professionals who have been in the field for a while but are exposed to new topics, concepts, or information. Beginning level mastery of the competency for the professional includes a basic knowledge or understanding and demonstration of developing skills. The professional is able to identify, describe, define, name, give examples, list, recognize, be familiar with, participate, etc. Professionals in the beginning of their career will most likely be an assistant teacher or in a similar role, working under supervision or with support of a more experienced professional.

Beginning level training is designed to facilitate learning focused on exposure of material, concepts, terms, information, etc. for the beginning professional or the introduction of new topics for more experienced professionals. Trainers qualified to design and deliver beginning level training meet at minimum the Trainer I requirements. (Refer to the **Georgia Trainer Designation Matrix** on page 39 of the full Professional Development Competencies document for more information).

**Intermediate** competencies are most appropriate for the professional that has a few years experience and some training, formal education, and/or relevant credentials. Intermediate level mastery of the competencies includes an expanding knowledge and application to demonstrate refining skills. The professional is able to apply, structure, communicate, implement, demonstrate, practice, find, use, etc. Intermediate career development stage professionals will most likely be working toward or be in lead teacher roles or beginning administrators and are well on their way toward mastering content knowledge and putting that knowledge into practice.

Training designed for the intermediate level assumes that the professional has mastered the beginning level competency. The professional has a basic understanding of the concepts and utilizes information in their everyday practice. The training should focus on everyday application of sound developmentally appropriate practice—the how and why—and the articulation of their practice. The training should be an exercise in using abstractions in concrete situations. The abstractions could be theories, ideas, and principles that must be remembered and applied to the child care setting. Trainers qualified to design and deliver training at the intermediate level must have the experience and credentials to help other adults make the link between a basic knowledge of a



concept, the application of developmentally appropriate practice and an articulation of the process. The trainer qualified to train at the intermediate level must meet at minimum the Trainer I (with Training for Trainers II) or Trainer II requirements. (Refer to the **Georgia Trainer Designation Matrix** on page 39 of the full Professional Development Competencies document for more information).

**Advanced** competencies are most appropriate for the seasoned professional that has considerable years experience and documentation of training, education, and/or relevant credentials. These professionals are most often in leadership or mentor roles as lead teachers, directors, administrators, etc. They thoroughly understand developmentally appropriate practice and have the ability to bring new resources and innovative practice to the program. Mastery of advanced level competencies reflects depth of knowledge, understanding, and extending skills to foster growth. The professional is able to assess, evaluate, design, interpret, take a leadership role, plan and implement, advocate, lead, etc.

Trainers for advanced competency instruction must qualify at the Trainer II (with Training for Trainers III) or Trainer III designation. The trainer at this level must utilize knowledge and skill to help professionals put elements together to form a whole, perform analysis and construct their own knowledge. (Refer to the **Georgia Trainer Designation Matrix** on page 39 of the full Professional Development Competencies document for more information).

## Levels of Early Care and Education Career Development

Professional preparation is vital to improving the quality of early care and learning environments. Professional development in the *Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System* takes into account training, education, and experience.

<p><b>Level I</b> Professionals beginning their career in early care and education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High school diploma or GED;</li> <li>◆ 0 to 3 years of direct employment experience working with young children; and</li> <li>◆ 0 to 30 clock hours of state-approved/accepted training</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level IV</b> Professionals beginning their formal education in early care and education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High school diploma or GED;</li> <li>◆ 1 or more year(s) of direct employment experience working with young children; and</li> <li>◆ Current Child Development Associate (CDA) or Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level VII</b> Professionals who have completed a four-year degree in early care and education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High school diploma or GED;</li> <li>◆ 1 or more year(s) of direct employment experience working with young children; and</li> <li>◆ Bachelor's degree (BA/BS)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Level II</b> Professionals who have been in early care and education for a few years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High school diploma or GED;</li> <li>◆ 2 or more years of direct employment experience working with young children; and</li> <li>◆ 31 to 60 clock hours of state-approved/accepted training</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level V</b> Professionals who have earned formal education credit in early care and education prior to completing a degree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High school diploma or GED;</li> <li>◆ 1 or more year(s) of direct employment experience working with young children; and</li> <li>◆ Completion of a Technical College Diploma (TCD)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level VIII</b> Professionals who have completed a Master's degree in early care and education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High school diploma or GED;</li> <li>◆ 1 or more year(s) of direct employment experience working with young children; and</li> <li>◆ Master's degree (MA/MS)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Level III</b> More experienced professionals in early care and education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High school diploma or GED;</li> <li>◆ 3 or more years of direct employment experience working with young children; and</li> <li>◆ 61 or more clock hours of state-approved/accepted training</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level VI</b> Professionals who have earned a two-year degree in early care and education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High school diploma or GED;</li> <li>◆ 1 or more year(s) of direct employment experience working with young children; and</li> <li>◆ Associate's degree (AA/AS)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Level IX</b> Professionals who have completed a Doctoral degree in early care and education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ High school diploma or GED;</li> <li>◆ 1 or more year(s) of direct employment experience working with young children; and</li> <li>◆ Doctoral degree (PhD/EdD/EdS)</li> </ul>

## **Competency Development**

In 1993, the Georgia Association on Young Children provided leadership bringing together leaders and stakeholders from all over the state to develop the competencies. The competencies were developed in 1994-95 and were revised in 2006. The development process included the input of numerous sources and guided by the following vision, mission, and agreed-upon principles:

### ***Vision***

A well-articulated and coordinated, statewide professional development system will prepare childhood care practitioners to provide high-quality early childhood and school-age programs to Georgia's children.

### ***Mission***

To implement a statewide professional development system that will enhance the skills and career opportunities for childhood care and education professionals and will support quality programs for Georgia's children.

### ***Guiding Principles***

1. Quality childhood care and education is strongly linked to a constructive society and a productive economy that share in the cost, as well as the benefits, of quality care.
2. Delivery of quality childhood care and education is linked to a comprehensive and effective professional development system.
3. Planning for professional development includes an understanding that the care and the education of children are inseparable. There is no learning without care, and likewise, no care without learning.
4. A common core of shared knowledge, grounded in a sound, theoretical and philosophical base, is needed by all persons involved in childhood care and education.
5. Professional development includes the achievement of professional goals and fair compensation.
6. A recognized set of competencies is used to document and register professional development.
7. Professional development adheres to, but is not limited by, minimum regulations/requirements that govern childhood care and education.
8. Recognized quality standards are used to develop and evaluate training.
9. Bridges for articulation and transformation of credit are necessary for multiple career advancement opportunities to exist.
10. Training and educational opportunities are ongoing and accessible in terms of time, location, and cost.
11. Training and education programs are responsive and relevant to the variety of roles and program philosophies, adult learning styles, and educational and experiential backgrounds of practitioners, while incorporating a diverse scope of strategies and interactive processes.
12. Training and education programs address the broad diversity of children, families, and professionals, such as age, gender, disabilities, culture, race, and ethnicity.
13. Policymakers, legislators, businesses, parents, and the general public need to be educated about the benefits and costs of quality childhood care and education programs, in order to help build a diverse and consistent funding base of both public and private funds.

## **The 2006 Competencies Revision**

In 2006, a formal review process was established, and the competencies were revised to reflect current best practices and research. The review process included input from early childhood care and education professionals and leaders in Georgia through electronic surveys, focus groups, reviews of research and the systems of other states, and editing.

A formal review should take place every five years to ensure accurate and effective competencies for early care and education professionals in Georgia.

## **Acknowledgements**

### **Collaborative Leadership Team**

Martha Abbott-Shim, *Georgia Association on Young Children*

Tamara Ard/Joe Raymond  
*Georgia Academy*

Joy Blount./Sharon Breunig/Robin Kahan  
*Georgia Department of Education*

Anne Bramlette  
*Georgia School-Age Care Association*

Jo Cato/Marsha Gates  
*Georgia Department of Human Resources  
Child Care Licensing Section*

Patricia Fountain  
*Cherokee Heights Child Development  
Center*

Annie Lacy  
*Family Day Care Provider*

Robert Lawrence  
*Head Start Collaboration Project*

Susan Maxwell/Julie Sharp/Susan Tauber  
*Georgia Child Care Council*

Pat Minish/Karen Shetterley  
*Georgia Child Care Training Network*

Mary Anne Pace-Nichols  
*University of Georgia Cooperative  
Extension*

Patt Stonehouse/Patricia Richard  
*Georgia Department of Technical and  
Adult Education*

Nancy Travis/Ruth Anne Foote  
*Georgia Child Care Resource and Referral  
Agencies*

Dee Woodward  
*Georgia Department of Human Resources  
Child and Family Services*

Amy Hobart  
*Planning Grant Project - GAYC*

### **1993-94 Development**

Linda Adams, *Morris Brown College*

Jannis Barber, *Childtime Childcare, Inc*

Rene Betz, *Professional Training Center*

Clarence Billups, *Georgia Head Start  
Association*

Nancy Bright, *Americus City Schools*

Eve Bogan, *Babies Can't Wait-DHR*

Anne Bramlette, *Georgia School-Age Care  
Association*

Jean Brown, *Family Day Care Provider*

Marion Brown, *Augusta Technical Institute*

Sandy Byrd, *Georgia Association for  
Family Day Care*

Mady Chrismond, *Columbus Day Care &  
Child Development Center*

Iris Cobb, *Randolf County After-School  
Child Care*

Mick Coleman, *Department of Child &  
Family Development/UGA*

Connie Craft, *Georgia Child Care  
Leadership Forum*

Janice Cuevas, *Georgia Child Care  
Association*

Sallie Devero, *Macon Technical Institute*

Tracey Dickson, *Save the Children*

Pat Fountain, *Cherokee Heights Child  
Development Center*

Rose Gabriel, *Gabriel and Associates*

Peggy Gallagher, *Georgia State*

Linda Grant, *Georgia School-Age Care  
Association*

Donna Grice, *Camden County Board of  
Education*

Janice Haker, *Georgia Association on  
Young Children*

Kelly Hanke, *Foundations For Learning*

Lisa Haverty, *Haverty Holly*

Gloria Henderson, *Georgia Child Care  
Association*

Shirley Herrington, *Herrington Day School*

Amy Hobart, *Planning Grant Project –  
GAYC*

Anne Hoffman, *Druid Hills Child  
Development Center*

Tracey Horton, *Georgia School-Age Care  
Association*

Yvonne Jeffords, *Resource and Referral*

Cynthia Jones-Blazia, *McIntosh Trail ECD  
Council*

Kay Kelly, *Extended Day Program  
Dougherty County Schools*

Lynn A. Manfredi/Petitt, *Lynn's NET*

Heather McCabe, *REACH*

Marian Melton, *Camp Fire Boys & Girls*

Mary Miller, *Decatur Recreation  
Department*

Pat Minish, *Georgia Association on Young  
Children*

Debbie Moritz, *Valdosta Lowndes County  
YMCA*

Pat Nodine, *Gainesville College*

Mary Anne Pace-Nichols, *Cooperative  
Extension Service/UGA*

Beth Parr, *St Luke's Child Development  
Center*

Elizabeth Powers, *Early Childhood  
Administrative Consultant*

Sandra Ramsey, *Georgia Association for  
Family Day Care  
School-Age Family Day Care*

Patricia Richard, *Albany Technical Institute  
Barbara Saffold, YWCA*

Bill Selmon, *Butler Street YMCA*

Karen Shetterley, *University of Georgia  
Continuing Education*

Wesley Shorter, *Randolf County Head Start*

Crystal Sirmans, *Resource and Referral*

Linda Smith, *St. Anne's Day School and  
Enrichment Program*

Clinton Taylor, *Child Development Center*

Randy Taylor, *Open City, Inc.*

Stephanie Thomas, *Community Schools  
Superintendent  
Columbus Consolidated Government*

Marcia Thompson, *Fayette Co. BOE After-  
School Program*

Mary Lou Upchurch, *Carrollton Board of  
Education*

Janice Vogt, *Ashford Dunwoody YMCA*

Jerry Walker, *Project KITE*

Joe Webb, *Gainesville-Hall Co. Boys Club*

Beth Webb-Woods, *Sheltering Arms*

Tony Welch, *Westbroad YMCA*

Lynn White, *National Child Care Association*

Susie Wilcher, *Washington County Head Start*

Sandy Williams, *Greater Atlanta Christian School*

**2006 Revision**

Diane Bales, *University of Georgia Cooperative Extension*

Nick Craft, *Georgia Child Care Association*

Jennifer Dunn, *Child Care Resource and Referral - Athens*

Rose Gabriel, *Gabriel & Associates*

Janice Haker, *Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning*

Victoria Hawkins, *Child Care Resource and Referral – Augusta*

Ellery Hill, *MACCDA*

Amy Hobart, *Consultant*

Tracey Horton, *Georgia School Age Care Association*

Gary Larson, *Flint River Tech*

Sherry Lowery, *Dekalb Technical College*

Lynn A. Manfredi-Petitt, *Lynn's NET*

Pat Minish, *Georgia Association on Young Children*

Stephanie Moss, *Babies Can't Wait*

Lisa Polk, *Georgia Child Care Association*

Pam Runkle, *Georgia Child Care Resource and Referral Association*

Sarah Sailors, *University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education*

Karen Shetterley, *University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education*

John Shores, *University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education*

Anita Smith, *University of Georgia, Department of Child and Family Development*

Mercedes Smith, *Georgia School Age Care Association*

Pat Sullivant, *Quality Care for Children*

Hilda Tompkins, *Georgia Department of Training and Adult Education*

Beth Webb-Woods, *Sheltering Arms*

Holly Higgins Wilcher, *Georgia Child Care Training Approval, UGA*

Debbie Wilkes, *Phoenix Early Care & Educational Consulting, Inc*

**1996-97 Competencies Levels Development**

Elaine Collins, *Consultant*

Marsha Gates, *Georgia Department of Human Resources*

Pat Minish, *Georgia Association on Young Children*

Pat Nodine, *Gainesville College*

Anita Payne, *Consultant*

Beth Webb-Woods, *Sheltering Arms*

**2006-07 Competencies Levels Development**

Diane Bales, *University of Georgia Cooperative Extension*

Rhonda Canerday, *University of Georgia, Georgia Child Care Training Approval System*

Nick Craft, *Georgia Child Care Association*

Jennifer Dunn, *Child Care Resource and Referral - Athens*

Rose Gabriel, *Gabriel & Associates*

Janice Haker, *Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning*

Victoria Hawkins, *Child Care Resource and Referral – Augusta*

Ellery Hill, *MACCDA*

Amy Hobart, *Consultant*

Tracey Horton, *Georgia School Age Care Association*

Gary Larson, *Flint River Tech*

Sherry Lowery, *Dekalb Technical College*

Lynn A. Manfredi-Petitt, *Lynn's NET*

Pat Minish, *Georgia Association on Young Children*

Stephanie Moss, *Babies Can't Wait*

Lisa Polk, *Georgia Child Care Association*

Pam Runkle, *Georgia Child Care Resource and Referral Association*

Sarah Sailors, *University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education*

Karen Shetterley, *University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education*

John Shores, *University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education*

Anita Smith, *University of Georgia, Department of Child and Family Development*

Mercedes Smith, *Georgia School Age Care Association*

Pat Sullivant, *Quality Care for Children*

Hilda Tompkins, *Georgia Department of Training and Adult Education*

Beth Webb-Woods, *Sheltering Arms*

Holly Higgins Wilcher, *Georgia Child Care Training Approval, UGA*

Debbie Wilkes, *Phoenix Early Care & Educational Consulting, Inc*

**1996 Trainer Competencies**

Terrie Buckner, *La Petite Training Center*

Trudy Friar,

Marsha Gates, *Child Care Licensing, DHR*

Amy Hobart, *GAYC*

Robin Kahan,

Tricia Kelly-Lynch,

Pat Nodine, *Gainesville College*

Kim Nottingham,

Beth Webb-Woods, *Sheltering Arms*

**2006 Trainer Competencies/Level Matrix**

Linda Adams, *Mercer University*

Lisa Belliston, *Quality Care for Children*

Nick Craft, *Georgia Child Care Association*

Rose Gabriel, *Gabriel & Associates*

Janice Haker, *Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning*

Jay Lamont Harris, *Georgia Quality*

Gary Larson, *Flint River Tech*

Bisa Lewis, *Ideal Consultants*

Sheila Lewis, *Sunshine House*

Pat Minish, *Georgia Association on Young Children*

Melissa Roney, *Kids R Kids International*

Michelle Pittman, *Creative Learning Training & Consulting*

Karen Shetterley, *University of Georgia*

Beth Webb-Woods, *Sheltering Arms*

Debbie Wilkes, *Phoenix Early Care & Educational Consultin*

*For more information concerning professional development for early care and education, contact **Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning** (<http://dec.al.ga.gov>) or the **Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System** ([www.training.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.training.dec.al.ga.gov)).*