Georgia Early Care and Education
Professional Development System

BRIGHT from the START
Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

The Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development Competencies

School-Age Care Professional

Developed 1994-1995
Reviewed and Revised May 2006
Levels of Competence Added January 2007

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

School-Age Care Professional

Competency Goals and Indicators (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).**

Examples of beginning level competence:

A.   Discusses developmental characteristics in each age group served.

B.   Understands child and youth development across all age groups.

C.   Acknowledges gender and cultural differences in child and youth development, and recognizes programs free from biases.

D.   Discusses unique characteristics that affect the development of children with special needs.

Examples of intermediate level competence:

A.   Applies specialization of knowledge in each age group served.

B.   Applies knowledge of child and youth development across all program areas.

C.   Examines gender and cultural differences in child/youth development and components of unbiased programs.

D.   Examines unique characteristics that affect the development of children with special needs.

Examples of advanced level competence:

A.   Develops specialization in each age group served.

B.   Integrates into practice knowledge of child and youth development across all program areas.

C.   Develops and evaluates unbiased programs.

D.   Assesses unique characteristics that affect the development of children with special needs.

SAC-2   **To establish a safe, healthy environment and promote wellness.**

Examples of beginning level competence:

A.   Demonstrates proficiency in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and first aid.

B.   Recognizes strategies for prevention of child abuse.

C.   Discusses a safe environment to prevent and reduce the incidence of illnesses and injuries, and meets licensing safety standards.

D.   Discusses good health, physical activity, and good nutrition.

E.   Understands public health standards and USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) nutritional guidelines.

F.   Has knowledge of safety/health issues of children with special needs.

G.   Recognizes nonviolent conflict resolutions and is able to support children in these efforts.

H.   Discusses age-appropriate supervision and intervention using guidelines and procedures to create emotionally and physically safe environments.

I.   Acknowledges appropriate procedures to provide short-term crisis management related to health issues (e.g., depression, stress, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, etc.).

J.   Understands guidelines and procedures to refer participants in crisis to appropriate resources.

K.   Discusses established emergency plans and procedures.

L.   Understands how to use 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.

Examples of intermediate level competence:

A.   Demonstrates proficiency in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and first aid.

B.   Uses strategies for prevention of child abuse.

C.   Provides a safe environment to prevent and reduce the incidence of illnesses and injuries, and meets licensing safety standards.

D.   Promotes good health, physical activity, and good nutrition.

E.   Meets public health standards and USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) nutritional guidelines.

F.   Demonstrates awareness of safety/health issues of children with special needs.

G.   Demonstrates knowledge of nonviolent conflict resolutions and is able to support children in these efforts.

H.   Provides age-appropriate supervision and intervention using guidelines and procedures to create emotionally and physically safe environments.

I.   Implements appropriate procedures to provide short-term crisis management related to health issues (e.g., depression, stress, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, etc.).

J.   Demonstrates knowledge in utilizing guidelines and procedures to refer participants in crisis to appropriate resources.

K.   Follows established emergency plans and procedures.

L.   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.

Examples of advanced level competence:

A.   Maintains proficiency in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) and first aid.

B.   Integrates strategies for prevention of child abuse.

C.   Assesses safety practices in the environment to prevent and reduce the incidence of illnesses and injuries, and meets licensing safety standards.

D.   Develops policies and processes to encourage good health, physical activity, and good nutrition.

E.   Develops policies and processes to meet public health standards and USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) nutritional guidelines.

F.   Integrates knowledge of safety/health issues of children with special needs.

G.   Explains nonviolent conflict resolutions and is able to support children in these efforts.

H.   Incorporates age-appropriate supervision and intervention and develops guidelines and procedures to create emotionally and physically safe environments.

I.   Assesses and initiates appropriate procedures to provide short-term crisis management related to health issues (e.g., depression, stress, drug abuse, teen pregnancy, etc.).

J.   Assesses and incorporates guidelines and procedures to refer participants in crisis to appropriate resources.

K.   Plans, implements and reviews (as needed) established emergency plans and procedures.

L.   Evaluates 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.

SAC-3	To advance physical and intellectual competence and enhance recreational activity.

Examples of beginning level competence:

A.   Describes a program appropriate for school-age children that includes new and varied activity choices.

B.   Discusses opportunities for children to develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills.

C.   Recognizes that flexibility allows choices that match children's needs and interests.

D.   Understands children need the option of choosing rest or relaxation.

E.   Recognizes that a variety of equipment and activities and regularly scheduled opportunities promote physical activity and development in school-age children, including children with special needs.

F.   Describes opportunities for children to be aware of, and become involved in, the community and career-awareness activities.

G.   Discusses opportunities that stimulate creativity, through activities in areas such as music, drawing, fine arts, drama, and language.

H.   Gives examples of learning opportunities free from biases.

Examples of intermediate level competence:

A.   **Utilizes a program appropriate for school-age children that includes new and varied activity choices.**

B.   **Provides opportunities for children to develop and use problem-solving and critical thinking skills.**

C.   **Demonstrates flexibility to allow choices that match children's needs and interests.**

D.   **Gives children the option of choosing rest or relaxation.**

E.   **Provides and utilizes a variety of equipment and activities and schedules regular opportunities to promote physical activity and development in school-age children, including children with special needs.**

F.   **Provides opportunities for children to be aware of, and become involved in, the community and career-awareness activities.**

G.   **Provides opportunities that stimulate creativity, through activities in areas such as music, drawing, fine arts, drama, and language.**

H.   **Provides learning opportunities free from biases.**

Examples of advanced level competence:

A.   **Plans, implements and revises (as needed) a program appropriate for school-age children that includes new and varied activity choices.**

B.   **Designs opportunities for children to develop and use problem-solving and critical thinking skills.**

C.   **Integrates flexibility to allow choices that match children's needs and interests.**

D.   **Incorporates the idea that children need the option of choosing rest or relaxation.**

E.   **Plans, implements and revises (as needed) a variety of equipment and activities and adjusts the schedule (as needed) to incorporate regular opportunities to promote physical activity and development in school-age children, including children with special needs.**

F.   **Incorporates opportunities for children to be aware of, and become involved in, the community and career-awareness activities.**

G.   **Creates opportunities that stimulate creativity, through activities in areas such as music, drawing, fine arts, drama, and language.**

H.   **Evaluates learning opportunities free from biases.**

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

Examples of beginning level competence:

A.   **Recalls active communications, opportunities, and support that are necessary for children to understand, acquire, and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings.**

B.   **Understands the importance of physical and emotional security to help each child know, accept, and take pride in herself/himself.**

C. Recognizes that children need the freedom to develop independence and accept responsibility for their actions.

D. Recognizes that each child can feel accepted in the group by learning communication skills (e.g., getting along with others, and encouraging feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults, etc.).

E. Understands the importance of peer relationships and close friendships in the lives of school-age children.

F. Describes relationships that are accepting of differences and free from biases.

G. Discusses the development of social skills and facilitates appropriate interactions with both mixed and same-age groups.

H. Describes a supportive environment in which children learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as members of a group.

I. Identifies opportunities for children to development leadership skills.

Examples of intermediate level competence:

A. Communicates actively with children, and provides opportunities and support for children to understand, acquire, and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings.

B. Provides physical and emotional security to help each child know, accept, and take pride in herself/himself.

C. Provides children the freedom to develop independence and accept responsibility for their actions.

D. Helps each child feel accepted in the group by learning communication skills (e.g., getting along with others, and encouraging feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults, etc.).

E. Provides opportunities that develop the importance of peer relationships and close friendships in the lives of school-age children.

F. Encourages relationships that are accepting of differences and free from biases.

G. Promotes the development of social skills and facilitates appropriate interactions with both mixed and same-age groups.

H. Provides a supportive environment in which children learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as members of a group.

I. Provides opportunities for children to development leadership skills.

Examples of advanced level competence:

A. Determines appropriate opportunities for active communications with children, and support for children to understand, acquire, and use verbal and nonverbal means of communicating thoughts and feelings.

B. Builds physical and emotional security to help each child know, accept, and take pride in herself/himself.

C. Supports freedom for children to develop independence and accept responsibility for their actions.

D. Fosters the acceptance of each child in the group by refining communication skills (e.g., getting along with others, and encouraging feelings of empathy and mutual respect among children and adults, etc.).

E. Values the importance of peer relationships and close friendships in the lives of school-age children.

F. Values relationships that are accepting of differences and free from biases.

G.   Incorporates the development of social skills and facilitates appropriate interactions with both mixed and same-age groups.

H.   Plans a supportive environment in which children learn and practice appropriate and acceptable behaviors as individuals and as members of a group.

I.   Incorporates opportunities for children to development leadership skills.

SAC-5   To establish positive and productive relationships with families.

Examples of beginning level competence:

A.   Discusses the role of an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, encouraging the family's involvement in the program and supporting the child's relationship with her/his family.

B.   Discusses diversity of families and unbiased relationships with all families served.

C.   Understands program guidelines for referral of families in crisis.

D.   Describes how to advocate for individual children and their families.

E.   Identifies the caregiver's role and responsibility in helping school-age children, youth and their families cope with family issues.

F.   Identifies family strengths and how to support them.

G.   Identifies community agencies/support groups for referral.

H.   Identifies factors and strategies that build resiliency in families and children.

Examples of intermediate level competence:

A.   Maintains an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, encouraging the family's involvement in the program and supporting the child's relationship with her/his family.

B.   Respects the diversity of families and maintains unbiased relationships with all families served.

C.   Uses program guidelines for referral of families in crisis.

D.   Acts as an advocate for individual children and their families.

E.   Provides appropriate assistance for school-age children, youth and their families coping with family issues.

F.   Examines family strengths and how to support them.

G.   Refers families to appropriate community agencies/support groups.

H.   Explains factors and develops strategies that build resiliency in families and children.

Examples of advanced level competence:

A.   Assesses and implements practices that maintain an open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child's family, encouraging the family's involvement in the program and supporting the child's relationship with her/his family.

B.   Implements and reviews practice that support the diversity of families and maintains unbiased relationships with all families served.

C.   Plans, implements and revises (as needed) program guidelines for referral of families in crisis.

D.   Examines and assesses role as an advocate for individual children and their families.

E.   Develops ways to incorporate the caregiver's role and responsibility in helping school-age children, youth and their families cope with family issues.

F.   Examines family strengths and develops ways to support them.

G.   Values collaboration between community agencies/support groups for referring families and children.

H.   Incorporates knowledge of factors and examines strategies that build resiliency in families and children.

SAC-6	To ensure a well-run, purposeful program responsive to the needs of each individual child.

Examples of beginning level competence:

A.   Discusses the goals and philosophies of the program.

B.   Discusses all available resources to ensure effective operation.

C.   Participates in organizing, planning and keeping accurate records.

D.   Recognizes the importance of effective communication and cooperation with coworkers.

E.   Describes ways children can take ownership in the program.

F.   Understands the importance of open communication with the host agency or school and understands the roles and responsibilities of all involved parties.

G.   Recognizes ongoing program-evaluation and program-improvement efforts.

H.   Identifies activities that are responsive to individual children (e.g., special needs, various ages, hyperactive, health-restricted, in-crisis, etc.).

I.   Defines, identifies, and reports the needs of abused, neglected, or deprived children.

Examples of intermediate level competence:

A.   Implements the goals and philosophies of the program.

B.   Uses all available resources to ensure effective operation.

C.   Organizes, plans, and keeps accurate records.

D.   Communicates effectively and cooperates with coworkers.

E.   Encourages children to take ownership in the program by providing opportunities for sharing ideas and making decisions that contribute to shaping the program to meet the children's needs.

F.   Maintains open communication with the host agency or school and understands the roles and responsibilities of all involved parties.

G.   Participates in ongoing program-evaluation and program-improvement efforts.

H.   Uses activities that are responsive to individual children (e.g., special needs, various ages, hyperactive, health-restricted, in-crisis, etc.).

I.   Meets the needs of abused, neglected, or deprived children.

Examples of advanced level competence:

A.   Supports the goals and philosophies of the program.

B.   Assesses all available resources to ensure effective operation.

C.   Develops and implements accurate recordkeeping procedures.

D.   Facilitates effective communication and cooperation with coworkers.

E.   Plans, implements, and revises (as needed) ways to encourages children to take ownership in the program through opportunities for sharing ideas and making decisions that contribute to shaping the program to meet the children's needs.

F.   Incorporates open communication with the host agency or school and understands and incorporates the roles and responsibilities of all involved parties.

G.   Incorporates ongoing program-evaluation and program-improvement efforts.

H.   Plans, implements, and modifies activities to be responsive to individual children (e.g., special needs, various ages, hyperactive, health-restricted, in-crisis, etc.).

I.   Assesses the needs of abused, neglected, or deprived children.

SAC-7   To maintain a commitment to professionalism.

Examples of beginning level competence:

A.   Has knowledge of child and youth development theory and appropriate practices and promotes quality in school-age services.

B.   Identifies opportunities to improve competence, both for personal and professional growth and for the benefit of children and families.

C.   Attends staff meetings.

D.   Describes the characteristics of a positive role model for children and families.

E.   Explains confidentiality and upholds principles of ethical conduct.

F.   Explains regulatory, legislative, and workforce issues and how they affect the welfare of children.

G.   Describes a positive attitude toward her/his role in working with children.

H.   Describes the program's philosophy, goals, and objectives.

I.   Describes information necessary to be effective through a variety of resources (e.g., education/training, professional association memberships, books and periodicals, networking with other professionals, etc.).

Examples of intermediate level competence:

A.   Makes decisions based on knowledge of child and youth development theory and appropriate practices and promotes quality in school-age services.

B.   Takes advantage of opportunities to improve competence, both for personal and professional growth and for the benefit of children and families.

C.   Participates in staff meetings.

D.   Acts as a positive role model for children and families.

E.   Demonstrates confidentiality and upholds principles of ethical conduct.

F.   Analyzes regulatory, legislative, and workforce issues and how they affect the welfare of children.

G.   Demonstrates a positive attitude toward her/his role in working with children.

H.   States program's philosophy, goals, and objectives through words and actions.

I.   Uses information necessary to be effective through a variety of resources (e.g., education/training, professional association memberships, books and periodicals, networking with other professionals, etc.).

Examples of advanced level competence:

A.   Incorporates knowledge of child and youth development theory to make decision about appropriate practices and promotes quality in school-age services.

B.   Integrates opportunities to improve competence, both for personal and professional growth and for the benefit of children and families.

C.   Integrates information from staff meetings into classroom practice and interactions.

D.   Creates opportunities to be a positive role model for children and families.

E.   Values confidentiality and upholds principles of ethical conduct.

F.   Evaluates regulatory, legislative, and workforce issues and how they affect the welfare of children.

G.   Incorporates a positive attitude toward her/his role in working with children.

H.   Reflects the program's philosophy, goals, and objectives through words and actions.

I.   Self – assesses and pursues information necessary to be effective through a variety of resources (e.g., education/training, professional association memberships, books and periodicals, networking with other professionals, etc.).

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** T**rainer 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).

Career Levels

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. By noting your achievements and number of years experience in working with young children, you can mark your professional accomplishments using the following chart.

Level I Professionals beginning their career in early care and education: ♦ High school diploma or GED; **and** ♦ 0 to 3 years of direct care experience with young children; **and** ♦ 0 to 30 clock hours of state approved/accepted training	**Level V** Professionals beginning their formal education in the early care and education field: ♦ Technical Certificate of Credit (TCC) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development	**Level IX** Professionals with a Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC) teaching certificate in the Early Care / Early Education field
Level II Professionals who have been in the early care and education field for a few years: ♦ High school diploma or GED; **and** ♦ 2 or more years of direct care experience with young children; **and** ♦ 31 to 60 clock hours of state approved/accepted training	**Level VI** Professionals who have earned formal education credit in the early care and education field: ♦ Technical College Diploma (TCD) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development	**Level X** Professionals with a graduate degree in the early care and education field: ♦ Masters degree (MA/MS/MEd) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development
Level III More experienced professionals in the early care and education field: ♦ High school diploma or GED; **and** ♦ 3 or more years of direct care experience with young children; **and** ♦ 61 or more clock hours of state approved/accepted training	**Level VII** Professionals with a two-year degree in the early care and education field: ♦ Associate degree (AA/AS) or AAS/AAT) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development; **or** ♦ Montessori Diploma	**Level XI** Professionals with a Specialist degree in the early care and education field: ♦ Specialist Degree (EdS) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development
Level IV Professionals with a credential in the early care and education field: ♦ Unrelated Degree (Associate, Bachelor, Masters or Doctorate in non-ECE-related field); **or** ♦ Current Child Development Associate (CDA); **or** ♦ PSC-certified ParaProfessional (FLD691)	**Level VIII** Professionals with a four-year degree in the early care education field: ♦ Bachelor Degree (BA/BS) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development	**Level XII** Professionals with a Doctoral degree in the early care and education field: ♦ Doctoral Degree (PhD/EdD) in Early Childhood Education or Child Development

Training, credentials, degrees, and coursework for the Career Levels must be in the field of Early Childhood Education (ECE), Child Development (CD), or related areas of study. ECE-related credits and coursework reflect the body of knowledge valued in the early care and education field. While many professionals may have a degree in a field outside of ECE, the Career Lev-els recognize specific academic preparation in ECE. If a degree major is not ECE or CD, the transcript will be reviewed by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission for ECE-related credits or coursework. Degrees are considered ECE-related if the transcripts document a minimum of 15 semester hours or 25 quarter hours of ECE-related coursework.

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

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 Assocation*

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 Assocation*

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://decal.ga.gov/) or the **Georgia Early Care and Education Professional Development System** (www.training.decal.ga.gov).*