

What is a Core Competency?

The Washington State Core Competencies were developed by the Child Care Coordinating Committee's Career Development Subcommittee in 1994. Core competencies are statements of the skills needed for providers to offer competent care to children and parents.

The Core Competency Areas in which child care professionals should be knowledgeable and skilled are:

- **Child Growth, Development and Learning**
To understand the nature of growth and development and the adult's role in supporting a child's development and learning.
- **Cultural and Individual Diversity**
To understand families as the primary context for children's learning and development, respect diversity in family structures and values, and develop skills in interacting with parents in ways that enhance children's educational success.
- **Family Systems**
To maintain an open, friendly and cooperative relationship with each child's family, encouraging family involvement and supporting the child's relationship with his or her family.
- **Communication**
To communicate effectively with children, parents, other caregivers and colleagues.
- **Observation and Assessment**
To develop skills in observation, assessment, documentation and methods of reporting to family members.
- **Curriculum Development**
To understand that learning experiences are designed to meet the needs of all children, promote creativity, develop awareness of cultural backgrounds and diverse needs and stimulate learning in all developmental areas.
- **Environmental Design**
To be able to plan and create an atmosphere, using physical and human elements that foster children's involvement and development and promotes children's self esteem, social interaction and joy of learning.
- **Child Guidance**
To use organizational and guidance strategies that foster responsibility, autonomy, self-reliance and positive social interactions and to respond to children with respect, acceptance and comfort, acknowledging their individual diversity.
- **Health, Safety and Nutrition**
To promote good health and nutrition and to provide a safe environment for children.
- **Professionalism**
To make decisions based upon knowledge of theories and best practices, to advocate for quality in programs and schools and to improve one's competence both for personal and professional growth.
- **Administration**
To be able to effectively and efficiently operate a program or school that assures quality services to young children, youth and their families.