



# **Halton Region Early Years and Child Care Workforce Strategy**

## **Human Resource Supports Competency-Based Interview Question Guide**

**August 2021**

## **Welcome to Halton's Early Years and Child Care Human Resource Supports**

Halton Region, in collaboration with the Workforce Strategy Advisory Committee is pleased to announce the launch of four new tools to support human resources in the early years and child care community. These tools will be helpful to support employers with recruitment.

We welcome you to explore the tools listed below:

### **1. Interviewing Resource Guide**

This resource provides:

- Details on interviewing best practices in all phases of the interview process
- Tips on Human Resource practices from Halton professionals

### **2. Competency Guided Interview Questions**

This resource provides:

- Interview questions and activities across ten core competencies identified as important for early childhood educators
- Definitions and examples of core competencies

### **3. Leading Practices in Onboarding- Onboarding Summary**

This resource provides:

- foundational information regarding policies, procedures and practices;
- tips for creating a welcoming atmosphere;
- guidance on how to set expectations early and often; and
- support for employers in helping the new employee to understand organizational culture and values.

### **4. Organize your Onboarding Process- Onboarding Checklist**

This resource provides:

- A brief checklist for employers to quickly organize their onboarding processes

Thank you for supporting Halton's Early Years and Child Care Workforce Strategy. If you have questions regarding this information, please contact Supervisor, Quality and Community Development, at [childcareservices@halton.ca](mailto:childcareservices@halton.ca)

## Competency Guided Interview Questions

These competency guided interview questions were developed to support early years and child care service providers in recruiting qualified candidates.

Each chart provides a definition of the competency along with indicators demonstrating the competency and sample questions.

The charts within each competency category may be used in multiple ways.

Consider the following:

- Become familiar with all competency categories and indicators, highlighting ones that intuitively fit the needs of your organization
- Use the job description and an assessment of the skills, knowledge, experience you need for the position to select the competency categories
- Use a resume screening tool to help decide who to interview

Once you've selected the categories and questions:

- Review the selected definitions and indicators and refine or adapt questions based on your needs
- Select a variety of question types – behavioural, descriptive – and balance the complexity of the questions
- Develop your interview process (creating an interview scoring tool to guide and document the interview is a recommended practice)

## Competency: Leadership

### Definition

The practice of engaging with colleagues to draw on collective knowledge and experiences to solve problems, create solutions and improve outcomes. Leadership involves taking and encouraging collective responsibility, contributing to an inclusive and collaborative working environment and, creating, coordinating and directing change through vision, inspiration, commitment and contribution. <sup>1</sup>

Leadership has been described as the intersection of knowledge, skills, character attributes, and personality traits that motivate others to work toward a common goal; it is demonstrated by early childhood educators in every role within the profession. In addition to possessing expertise in specific areas early childhood education leaders need to understand the early childhood system itself and how policy shapes the quality of services available to children and families. A starting point for providing leadership is evaluating one's current understanding of the early care and education system, regular reflection to assess changes in one's knowledge and determining how that understanding and knowledge can continue to develop.<sup>2</sup>

### Indicators

- Takes responsibility for one's own actions, decisions and consequences<sup>3</sup>
- Mentors others through sharing professional experiences, coaching practices and guides others with positive constructive feedback.
- Actions to champion change, to extend or improve early learning opportunities and supports to children, families and early childhood educators<sup>4</sup>
- Takes initiative and responsibility for getting things done
- Is able to influence or persuade others and uses sound judgment in moving others to a common goal or outcome
- Demonstrates skills in critical/analytical thinking, professional judgement and decision making
- Offers solutions to issues, demonstrates a positive attitude, acknowledges the strengths of others, delegates tasks<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rodd, J. (2015). Leading change in the early years: Principles and practice. New York: Open University Press.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Whitebook, M., and L. Austin. 2009. Leadership in Early Childhood: A Curriculum for Emerging and Established Agents of Change. Berkeley, CA: Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, University of California at Berkeley

<sup>3</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 28

<sup>4</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 28

<sup>5</sup> Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators p. 79

- Recognizes that individual leadership occurs within the context of a complex system of self, others, workplace and profession

### **Sample Questions**

1. How has your leadership contributed to the success of your current/previous team?
2. Who have you coached or mentored to achieve success? How did you find the experience?
3. What characteristics do you believe every educator should possess? What is your role in nurturing these characteristics?
4. Describe a situation when you were curious about your practice and through self-reflection made a change.
5. How do you encourage creative and critical thinking in your classroom/centre?
6. What unique initiative have you undertaken in your current role that is not part of your job description?
7. Tell us about a time when you've used your leadership skills.
8. Describe changes you have made or wanted to make within a program you have worked in. Why did you want to implement the change? What was the outcome?
9. What responsibilities do you expect to have within the classroom?
10. Provide an example of a time when you had to lead others through change. What steps did you take to keep people motivated and engaged?
11. How do you build support for ideas/goals with people who do not report to you and you have no authority over?
12. What do others applaud you for?

## Competency: Inclusion/Diversity

### Definition

#### **Inclusion and Diversity**

An approach to policies and practice in early years settings where all children and families are accepted and served within a program and where each child and family experiences a sense of belonging and is supported to participate fully in all aspects of the program or service. Inclusive practice includes being attentive to the capabilities, personalities and circumstances of all children and understanding the diversity of development of all children.<sup>6</sup>

The uniqueness each person brings to the early learning environment including, but not limited to, values and beliefs, culture and ethnicity, language, abilities, knowledge and interests, life experiences, socio-economic status, spirituality, gender, age and sexual orientation.<sup>7</sup>

The ability to honour and affirm diversity is an essential part of good practice. Practitioners need to understand and be comfortable with a wide range of diverse life experiences.<sup>8</sup>

### Indicators

- Is aware of one's own attitudes and biases and how they may impact care of children and families
- Understands and is able to implement workplace policies outlining equitable and inclusive treatment between employees
- Values children's diverse abilities by building on individual learning styles and curiosities of all children
- Works to remove all barriers preventing acceptance and accessibility for children
- Ensures an environment in which individuals experience a sense of belonging, is free from stigma and promotes inclusive learning opportunities
- Provides materials with properties that are inclusive of all children and families in the group<sup>9</sup>
- Provides culturally appropriate and authentic learning materials and opportunities<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> College of Early Childhood Educators Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, p. 24.

<sup>7</sup> Adapted from Best Start Expert Panel (2007). *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT): A Framework for Ontario Early Learning Settings*

<sup>8</sup> BC Child Care Sector Occupational Competencies

<sup>9</sup> Occupational Standards for Early Childhood Educators p. 31

<sup>10</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 12

- Selects and uses appropriate technology and assistive technology tools<sup>11</sup>
- Uses family-centred approaches and works towards common goals for children
- Aware of resources available within the community to aid inclusive/diverse practices
- Works collaboratively with family and outside supports, e.g., resource consultants, speech and language therapists, occupational therapists<sup>12</sup>
- Respects and honours the uniqueness and diversity of children, families and communities including family structure, language, cultural values and practices, ethnicity, socio-economic status, spirituality, gender, age and sexual orientation
- Evaluates programs to ensure they reflect the needs and diversity of children and their families

### Sample Questions

1. Describe an experience working with a child with differing abilities.
2. Give an example of how you would create an environment where differences are valued, encouraged and supported.
3. What strategies have you used in a classroom setting to ensure all children achieve their potential?
4. Tell me about a time when you worked with a child who had exceptionalities, exhibited extreme behaviours, or lacked self-regulation. Describe the approach you used to nurture the relationship with the child and the resources you relied on for support. What was the outcome?

<sup>11</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 12

<sup>12</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 14

## Competency: Relationships

### Definition

The capacity to develop and sustain professional connections with children, parents, colleagues, and other professionals.

### Indicators

- Recognizes the central role of interpersonal relationships and seeks to continuously improve one's own capacity
- Recognizes and strives to understand others in the context of their immediate, historical, and systemic relationships (for example: child-family, child-child, family-culture, adult-adult, worker-workplace, professional-profession)
- Demonstrates ability to build trust by interacting and communicating with others in respectful, responsive and empathic ways
- Seeks and values the input and perspectives of others
- Is able to take the perspective of others
- Takes responsibility for own feelings
- Engages in reflective practice to enhance self-awareness and understanding of how one impacts others
- Engages children and families in reflection on learning to develop insight and build on learning<sup>13</sup>
- Demonstrates care and commitment to enhancing the well-being of others
- Uses diplomacy and tact in challenging situations
- Listens well, seeks mutual understanding and welcomes sharing of information
- Builds trust through reliability and authenticity
- Has a non-judgmental attitude towards others

<sup>13</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 8



### Sample Questions

1. Think about a previous parent or colleague. How did you build and sustain a relationship with this individual?
2. What would you do if a parent complained to you about the behaviour of another child?
3. Tell us about your experiences in building relationships with colleagues.
4. Tell us about a time when you differed with another person in opinion, approach, and/or objectives. What did you do to foster agreement and build a positive relationship? What was the outcome?
5. Our school age programs are located within schools in either a gymnasium or classroom. Describe how you would foster and maintain relationships with school staff such as teachers, principals or caretakers.

## Competency: Professionalism

### Definition

Professionalism encompasses personal actions within and outside the workplace that reflect a high level of care and concern for others as well as promoting high regard for the profession.

It includes the willingness and capacity to engage and commit oneself to the well-being of others and to act with integrity as an employee of the workplace and member of the early years and child care sector.

All individuals in early learning settings must exhibit a high standard of professionalism, including being reflective, intentional and collaborative and participating in continuous learning.

It is critical that practitioners understand that children and families are part of systems; that services develop and operate within systems and that child care is part of the larger community social service system. The ability to understand systems and to think systematically is an essential part of best practice.<sup>14</sup>

### Indicators

- Actively participates in ongoing professional learning and implements leading practices
- Uses child development knowledge to determine observation practices for assessing children's developmental needs
- Commits to continuous quality improvement of the program
- Models professional values, beliefs and behaviours with children, families and colleagues
- Demonstrates skill in being able to clearly articulate to families and student educators, the value of current pedagogical approaches and implementation practices
- Adheres to policies and procedures, the Code of Ethics and respects the rights of children and families in regards to professional boundaries, dual relationships, conflict of interest etc.
- Knowledgeable of legislation guiding professional practice (including the *Child Care and Early Years Act*, duty to report child abuse etc.)
- Knowledgeable of the licencing system that guides the operation of early years programs
- Applies ethical decision making

<sup>14</sup> BC Child Care Sector Occupational Competencies

- Safeguards and protects the privacy and confidentiality of children’s and families’ information in all written, verbal, and electronic communications<sup>15</sup>
- Maintains clear, appropriate professional boundaries with children, families and colleagues and ensures use of technology and social media is consistent with professional boundaries and guidelines<sup>16</sup>
- Is able to respond appropriately to emergency situations following provincial and/or municipal requirements and workplace policies and procedures<sup>17</sup>
- Follows policies and procedures and demonstrates skill and accuracy in record keeping
- Is able to advocate for the value of high-quality child care and early learning
- Evaluates one's interpersonal communication skills through self-awareness and ongoing personal reflection and takes into consideration peer and supervisor’s discussion<sup>18</sup>

### Sample Questions

1. Tell me about some of the continuous learning opportunities you’ve engaged in this year.
2. What are your ongoing learning interests?
3. How do you encourage creative and critical thinking in your classroom?
4. When was the last time you wanted to learn research/something new? How did you go about learning/researching it?
5. Tell me about a time when you had to convey a difficult message to a parent about their child. How did you handle it? What was the outcome?
6. What did your previous supervisor do to help inspire and activate your performance?
7. What are two things that motivate you?
8. How does legislation, specifically the *Child Care and Early Years Act (2014)*, guide your practice?

<sup>15</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

<sup>16</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

<sup>17</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 13

<sup>18</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

## Competency: Teamwork/Collaboration

### Definition

The ability to work effectively with others to support the achievement of professional goals and outcomes for the child, family and workplace.

### Indicators

- Interacts with others in groups or teams in ways that contributes to effective working relationships and the achievement of goals<sup>19</sup>
- Communicates effectively about ongoing successes and concerns with co-workers, parents, support workers and community service providers working with children
- Shows respect for the diverse opinions, values, belief systems and contributions of others<sup>20</sup>
- Uses a variety of communication strategies to provide information and to engage others in information sharing
- Models and provides positive conflict resolution strategies in all relationships with children, families, colleagues, employers and others<sup>21</sup>
- Provides mutual support and assistance to others; takes initiative for sharing responsibilities
- Works effectively with others to establish and follow daily routines and transitions
- Encourages and actively empowers others to contribute to the success of the program
- Collaborates with others to plan and implement inclusive, inquiry and play-based learning strategies using foundational knowledge in provincial documents including *How Does Learning Happen?* and *Think, Feel, Act*
- Creates and maintains an environment that protects the health, security and well-being of children, ensuring ratio is constantly maintained and children are effectively supervised indoors and outdoors
- Is trustworthy and reliable in carrying out responsibilities as part of the team

<sup>19</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 28

<sup>20</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 28

<sup>21</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

### Sample Questions

1. How would you enhance team building in your classroom? What do you need in order to feel like you are a successful part of the team?
2. Challenges can arise when morale is low. What would you do, and not do, if morale is low among your colleagues?
3. Tell me about a time you disagreed with a co-worker. How did you handle the disagreement and what was the outcome?
4. Give an example where you needed to work with other people to deliver a solution to a work based problem.
5. Tell me about a time when you received valuable feedback from a co-worker.
6. Tell me about a time when you acted collaboratively.
7. Tell me about a time when you were unsure of something and had to ask for help.

## Competency: Flexibility/Adaptability

### Definition

The ability to adapt to evolving circumstances and change one's approach to a situation as the requirements of the situation change; includes skills for prioritizing, decision-making and accountability.

### Indicators

- Is organized, intentional in taking action and makes adaptations as required
- Is willing to see different perspectives, build new knowledge and apply new skills
- Negotiates with others to reach common understanding of situations and responses
- Communicates with others when proposing or making adaptations and changes
- Approaches work with creativity and innovativeness
- Demonstrates ability to handle high stress situations calmly and decisively
- Demonstrates ability to handle multiple projects or tasks and meet deadlines as required
- Demonstrates ability to apply appropriate skills when faced with changing situations, needs and priorities

### Sample Questions

1. How do you react in a situation where you have to make decisions? What process would you follow for making decisions in a critical situation?
2. What are the most important things to remember when working in a team?
3. Tell me about a time when you proactively eliminated or minimized a potential problem. What steps did you take in a) identifying the problem, and b) responding to the situation?
4. How do you adjust to changes you have no control over?
5. If your co-workers had a "this is how we do it" attitude to learning something new, how might you convince them to adopt a different approach?
6. What are the biggest challenges you've faced when starting a new job?

## Competency: Child Engagement

### Definition

Educators act on the belief of children as competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, and rich in potential. They recognize children as members of families with diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives. Educators believe every child should feel they belong, is a valuable contributor to their surroundings, and deserves the opportunity to succeed. The ability to act on this view of the child results in programs and services that value and build on children's strengths and abilities.<sup>22</sup>

The type of engagement educators enact with children involves a high ratio of 'connecting' over 'correcting' or 'directing'.<sup>23</sup>

### Indicators

- Actively listens and responds to a child from a perspective of what's important to the child
- Uses an approach emphasizing listening, responding to, and building on child-initiated communication and conversation<sup>24</sup>
- Engages in positive and beneficial interactions with children through observing and reading children's signals, communicating and responding with understanding to give children a feeling of being cared for and cared about<sup>25</sup>
- Supports the development of secure relationships by responding positively to children's cues and engaging in reciprocal interactions<sup>26</sup>
- Enables development of children's sense of belonging by supporting and valuing each child's unique spirit, individuality and presence<sup>27</sup>
- Values and protects children's first language and/or traditional language and culture, and fostering second language acquisition<sup>28</sup>
- Interacts with children to observe emerging abilities, interests and ideas and adapt programs to optimize children's holistic development and learning<sup>29</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Adapted from How Does Learning Happen? p.6

<sup>23</sup> Dr. Jean Clinton, The Power of Positive Relationships: Connection is the Key, Think, Feel, Act. p. 5

<sup>24</sup> Adapted from How Does Learning Happen? p. 41

<sup>25</sup> Adapted from Best Start Expert Panel (2007). *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT): A Framework for Ontario Early Learning Settings*

<sup>26</sup> Adapted from How Does Learning Happen? p. 24

<sup>27</sup> Adapted from How Does Learning Happen? p. 25

<sup>28</sup> Adapted from How Does Learning Happen? p. 42

<sup>29</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 10

- Co-creates and interacts with children in early learning environments and spaces that encourage investigation, imagination, creativity and problem solving and recognizes children as competent, capable of complex thought, curious and rich in experience<sup>30</sup>
- Uses a variety of strategies to support learning through inquiry and play-based experiences and provides rationale for pedagogical decision-making<sup>31</sup>
- Engages with children to model and support successful interactions in groups and develop their sense of belonging and connectedness<sup>32</sup>
- Supports children in developing internally motivated strategies for self-regulation<sup>33</sup>
- Responds to children in a manner that is timely and in direct response to a child's nonverbal and/or verbal signals, taking into account the child's temperament, background, abilities, interests, ideas and the situation<sup>34</sup>
- Uses strategies to support children's self-regulation and the development of empathy and social competence while preserving each child's sense of worth, autonomy, sense of inclusion in the group and trust in the educator<sup>35</sup>

### Sample Questions

1. How do you know when a program/activity you have implemented has been successful?
2. Outline step-by-step how you would work through this situation: Children are playing with cars. One child hits another child and takes the car the other was using.
3. How do you manage your time to ensure you're fully engaged with children and able to complete required documentation?
4. Feeling a sense of accomplishment in your work can go a long way in making a program exceptional. In your work and relationships with children, what are your key accomplishments? What are you most proud of?
5. How do you create a sense of belonging and well-being for children in your classroom?
6. How would you describe the role of an educator?

<sup>30</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 10

<sup>31</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 10

<sup>32</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 8

<sup>33</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 8

<sup>34</sup> Best Start Expert Panel (2007). *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT): A Framework for Ontario Early Learning Settings*

<sup>35</sup> Best Start Expert Panel (2007). *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT): A Framework for Ontario Early Learning Settings*



7. Children have varying interests, abilities, and needs. As an educator, you have planned a group activity; however, some children refuse to participate. How would you adapt the activity to engage all children and enable them to be successful?

## Competency: Family Engagement

### Definition

Educators recognize families as composed of individuals who are competent and capable, curious, and rich in experience. Educators believe families love their children, want the best for them and are experts on their children. Families are viewed as the first and most powerful influence on children's learning, development, health, and well-being. Educators recognize the diverse social, cultural, and linguistic perspectives of families and work to ensure families feel they belong, are valuable contributors to their children's learning, and are engaged in a meaningful way.<sup>36</sup>

Family engagement is an ongoing process that includes families as active decision makers and equal partners in service delivery at individual, organizational and system levels.<sup>37</sup>

Family engagement is a process to build genuine relationships with families. The intention is to support overall family well-being and children's healthy development through partnerships focused on helping children grow and thrive. Key concepts include understanding that children develop in the context of families and communities and that families bring different values, beliefs, strengths, practices, skills, interests, and needs into their relationships with early childhood educators and early education settings. Educators recognize their role in providing information about community resources and ensuring support is available beyond the early education experience.<sup>38</sup>

### Indicators

- Actively listens and responds to families from the perspective of what's important to them
- Establishes positive, authentic and caring relationships with families and provides a safe, non-judgemental environment for shared learning<sup>39</sup>
- Builds relationships and works in partnerships with families, understanding the family's perception of their child and helping families know the child from the educator's point of view<sup>40</sup>
- Takes a strength-based approach, recognizing and valuing family capacity and supporting them to access any needed supports<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup> Adapted from How Does Learning Happen, p. 7

<sup>37</sup> Ontario Centre of Excellence on Child and Youth Mental Health

<sup>38</sup> Adapted from the California Early Childhood Educator Competencies; developed collaboratively by the California Department of Education and First 5 California Sacramento, 2011.

<sup>39</sup> Adapted from How Does Learning Happen, p. 31

<sup>40</sup> Adapted from How Does Learning Happen, p. 25

<sup>41</sup> Adapted from How Does Learning Happen, p. 31

- Is able to listen, respond and build on child and family initiated communication<sup>42</sup>
- Shares knowledge and resources with families to support informed decision making regarding their children while respecting their readiness for information shared<sup>43</sup>
- Uses a family-centred, partnership approach to better understand the unique circumstances of each family and to help parents decide what strategies will best suit their family
- Is sensitive and responsive to different kinds of families, including those from socioeconomically diverse backgrounds and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Creates a welcoming environment that celebrates input from parents and respects different family structures
- Is able to highlight family strengths, even amid challenges
- Co-creates learning environments where families participate as co-learners and co-planners with children in programs and spontaneous learning opportunities<sup>44</sup>
- Recognizes and values the capacity and abilities that families bring to the early learning partnership<sup>45</sup>
- Evaluates programs to ensure they reflect the needs and diversity of the children and their families
- Identifies the valuable input that families contribute as experts and as first teachers, in their children's abilities, interests and ideas<sup>46</sup>
- Collaborates with families to meet specific health needs of children<sup>47</sup>
- Establishes partnerships with families to promote engagement in children's early learning<sup>48</sup>
- Communicates with families the benefits of inclusive, inquiry and play-based early learning opportunities<sup>49</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p.15

<sup>43</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 14

<sup>44</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 10

<sup>45</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 8

<sup>46</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 8

<sup>47</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 13

<sup>48</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 8

<sup>49</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 11

### **Sample Questions**

1. Talk about how family engagement has been part of your work as an educator.
2. What would you make sure to point out or identify for a family who is touring the centre?
3. Tell us about how you've established positive, authentic and caring relationship with families.
4. What does it mean to provide a safe, non-judgemental environment for shared learning with families?
5. How do parents experience a sense of belonging and well-being for themselves in your classroom?
6. Describe how you've created a welcoming environment that celebrates input from parents and respects different family structures.
7. Tell me about a time when you used a strength-based approach to recognize and value the capacity of a family to support their child's learning.

## Competency: Professional Communication

### Definition

Effective communication is the ability to 1) communicate clearly, concisely and correctly in the written, spoken and visual form that fulfills the purpose and meets the needs of the audience and 2) respond to written, spoken or visual messages in a manner that ensures effective communication.

Communication areas include:

- Reading
- Writing
- Speaking
- Listening
- Presenting
- Visual literacy<sup>50</sup>

### Indicators

- Is able to clearly articulate ideas, thoughts, feelings in a variety of ways that meet the needs of the listener
- Communicates information comprehensively, concisely, accurately, objectively and in a timely manner<sup>51</sup>
- Communicates effectively and respectfully with children, families, colleagues and other professionals<sup>52</sup>
- Listens to, responds and builds on child and family initiated communication<sup>53</sup>
- Evaluates one's interpersonal communication skills through self-awareness and ongoing personal reflection, taking into consideration peer and supervisor's discussion<sup>54</sup>
- Effects change in one's communication, based on feedback received<sup>55</sup>
- Is respectful, positive and open in all communication recognizing one's personal bias<sup>56</sup>

<sup>50</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 27

<sup>51</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

<sup>52</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

<sup>53</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

<sup>54</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

<sup>55</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

<sup>56</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

- Adapts communication for children and their families considering factors such as culture, age, ability and language<sup>57</sup>
- Communicates professionally in written documentation including vocabulary, grammar, spelling and format appropriate to the early years sector<sup>58</sup>
- Selects and uses current technologies to facilitate documentation, record-keeping and communication with government authorities and/or children’s service agencies<sup>59</sup>
- Adheres to organizational policies and professional expectations in regards to social media communication
- Recognizes importance of understanding organizational messaging and is able to align activities accordingly
- Understands and uses established communication channels within the organization and outside the organization

### Sample Questions

1. Tell us about the most important communication skills you use in relationships with other adults (colleagues, supervisor, parents).
2. How do you build and refine your communication skills?
3. How would you respond to a parent who says all children do is play?
4. Working with other people means you will encounter different communication styles. What skills do you have in overcoming any communication barriers?
5. How have you adapted your communication style for children and their families considering factors such as culture, age, ability and language?
6. Give an example of when you had to simplify complex information so you could explain it to someone else.

<sup>57</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

<sup>58</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

<sup>59</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 15

## Competency: Curriculum Development and Pedagogical Approaches

### Definition

The ability to design and implement experiences, environments and interactions for children based on theories of how children learn.

### Indicators

- Observes children to understand, respond to and extend upon their learning interests and approach to learning<sup>60</sup>
- Analyzes a variety of current child learning theories and pedagogical approaches<sup>61</sup>
- Applies early learning pedagogy to program development including the four foundations, view of child and family and pedagogical documentation<sup>62</sup>
- Incorporates learning throughout all activities of the day including outdoor settings that foster an understanding and appreciation for the natural environment<sup>63</sup>
- Designs environments that encourage investigation, imagination, creativity and problem solving<sup>64</sup>
- Co-creates learning environments where families participate as co-learners and co-planners with children in programs and spontaneous learning opportunities<sup>65</sup>
- Co-creates and uses a broad range of open-ended materials that scaffold learning and support investigation, creativity and problem solving in children<sup>66</sup>
- Provides flexibility and choice in learning materials and opportunities<sup>67</sup>
- Engages in pedagogical documentation to make children's thinking and learning visible, e.g., digital/electronic platforms, documentation panels, portfolios and learning stories<sup>68</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; pp. 10 – 11

<sup>61</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; pp. 10 – 11

<sup>62</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; pp. 10 – 11

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<sup>65</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; pp. 10 – 11

<sup>66</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; pp. 10 – 11

<sup>67</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; p. 12

<sup>68</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; pp. 10 – 11

- Shares pedagogical documentation with children, families and colleagues to encourage reflection and co-learning or discovery of meaning underlying children’s experiences<sup>69</sup>
- Evaluates programs to ensure they reflect the needs and diversity of the children and their families

### **Sample Questions**

1. We use the Ministry of Education’s *How Does Learning Happen?* to guide our approach in working with children. How do you use this document in your classroom?
2. Show a picture of a classroom set up and ask candidates “What is meaningful to you in this picture?”
3. How do you document classroom activities to demonstrate children’s learning for parents?
4. Describe your process when planning curriculum for a classroom.
5. Give an example of a time when you set up a program or activity that promoted play-based learning and exploration for children ages 0 - 12 years. What did you learn from the experience?

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<sup>69</sup> Early Childhood Education Program Standard, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities; November 2018; pp. 10 – 11