ZERO TO THREE Critical Competencies for Infant-Toddler Educators™

Sarah LeMoine • Director, Early Childhood Workforce Innovations department

Developing and Assessing Competencies for Teachers and Caregivers Serving Infants and Toddlers meeting • Washington, DC • January 4, 2017
The ZERO TO THREE Critical Competencies for Infant-Toddler Educators™ describe what educators can do to make the most of teacher–child interactions.

- Support educators who work in group settings (center-based and family child care homes) with infants, toddlers, or both.

- Focus on pedagogy—the method and practice of teaching.

- Detail essential and observable skill sets that effective educators use to optimize babies’ and toddlers’ social-emotional, cognitive, and language and literacy development.

- Emphasize considerations for supporting high-needs populations and multi-language learners.
Critical Needs, Opportunities, & Competencies

lack of information, opportunities, & capacity

impact of teacher-child interactions

unique child & family, & workforce needs

increased local, state, & national attention
Critical Needs & Opportunities

How do we advocate for, develop, and implement partnerships, policies, and systems that respect the differences and also build common ground?
Creating the Critical Competencies

3 primary sources to inform and enhance development

1. Current evidence base
2. Workforce and systems status
3. Expertise
   - ZERO TO THREE’s board and staff expertise
   - Organization and pilot partners’ expertise
Specialized Competencies Build on Core

Critical Competencies
- Specialized Competencies: Sector, Discipline, Role, and Age-Specific Skills

Area 1: Supporting Social-Emotional Development
Area 2: Supporting Cognitive Development
Area 3: Supporting Language & Literacy Development

Cross-Sector Core Competencies
- Shared Fundamentals: Foundational Core Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes

Service Planning, Coordination, & Collaboration
Professional & Ethical Practices
Leadership to Meet Family Needs & Improve Services & Systems
Cultural & Linguistic Responsiveness
Health & Developmental Protective & Risk Factors
Family-Centered Practice
Relationship-Based Practice
Early Childhood Development

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Overarching Principles: Irving Harris Foundation’s Diversity-Informed Infant Mental Health Tenets

Awareness

Tenet 1: Self-awareness leads to better services for families.

Readiness

Intentionality
Critical Needs, Opportunities, & Competencies

ZERO TO THREE Critical Competencies for Infant-Toddler Educators™

ZERO TO THREE Cross-Sector Core Competencies for the Prenatal to Age 5 Field

Source: Reprinted and adapted with permission from Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation, Institute of Medicine and National Research Council, 2015, p. 430, by the National Academy of Sciences, courtesy of the National Academies Press, Washington, DC.
Critical Competencies’ Features

• Specific teaching practices that support social-emotional, cognitive, and language and literacy development of babies and toddlers

• Detailed descriptions of observable skills of infant-toddler educators

• Considerations for serving high-needs populations and dual-/multi-language learners

• Summaries of foundational knowledge, attitudes, and competencies from ZERO TO THREE’s Cross-Sector Core Competencies for the Prenatal to Age Five Field

• Crosswalks with related ECE criteria, tools, and example child outcomes
• Overview of the developmental area for infants and toddlers

• Summary of infant–toddler educators’ role in supporting development in the area

• Specific, pedagogy-focused skill statements

• Considerations for working with high-needs populations and dual-/multi-language learners

• Examples in practice with young infants, mobile infants, and toddlers
Tenets underpin the Critical Competencies’ Additional Considerations

3. Work to Acknowledge Privilege and Combat Discrimination
4. Recognize and Respect Nondominant Bodies of Knowledge
5. Honor Diverse Family Structures
6. Understand That Language Can Be Used to Hurt or Heal
7. Support Families in Their Preferred Language
### Suggested Relationships with State CKCs

1. **High-level overview of relationship between criteria for all states with CKCs**
2. **More detailed alignment, to the level of student outcomes, done with pilot states**

#### Table: Pennsylvania Core Knowledge Competencies for Early Childhood & School-Age Professionals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Area</th>
<th>Strand</th>
<th>Sample Competency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>K1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Examine how classroom practices support child development through positive interactions with families, caregivers, peers and other community members to further develop reciprocal relationships. (K1.1.C3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Apply knowledge of brain development to facilitate children's learning, socio-emotional development, and self-regulation. (K1.4.C2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1.7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Apply knowledge of growth, development, and learning to establish appropriate expectations for individual children. (K1.7.C2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1.8</td>
<td></td>
<td>Provide play environments, experiences and activities that foster communication, problem solving, and creativity. (K1.8.C2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K1.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Develop environments that foster competence and self-confidence birth to middle childhood. (K1.9.C2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K2.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Arrange a responsive learning environment (setting, space, resources, relationships and schedules) based on ages, abilities, home culture, and interests and needs of children that are linked to the PA Learning Standards. (K2.1.C2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K2.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Describe ways that a prepared physical environment promotes positive behavior and encourages supportive relationships including, room arrangement, visual cues, temperature, acoustics, schedules, resources, and adaptations and accommodations for diverse learners. (K2.3.C1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Plan for appropriate use of indoor and outdoor physical space and materials to support comprehensive, developmental learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table: ZERO TO THREE Critical Competencies for Infant-Toddler Educators™: Areas/Sub-Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency Area</th>
<th>Supporting</th>
<th>Supporting</th>
<th>Supporting Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building Wears, Uses and Learning Relationships</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing Consistent and Responsive Caregiving</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting Emotional Expression and Regulation</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting Socialization</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guiding Behavior</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting Children’s Sense of Identity and Belonging</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facilitating Exploration and Concept Development</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Building Meaningful Curricular Experiences</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting Initiative, Representation, and Play</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting Reasoning and Problem Solving</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting Communication</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting Cognitive Development</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promoting Early Literacy</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<td>✓</td>
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Suggested Relationships with State CKCs

Drafted for 47 states’ with CKCs
In Process ... Development and Piloting

- ZERO TO THREE Reflection Tool™: Critical Competencies
- Professional Development Modules (in-person and scenario-based e-Learning)
- Training-of-Trainers and Trainer Certification
- Faculty Institutes

ZERO TO THREE is already an:

- Accredited Provider by IACET (approved CEU provider)
- Recognized Training Organization by the National Workforce Registry Alliance
4 State Pilot Partners

1. Arkansas
2. Nevada
3. Ohio
4. Pennsylvania
The Early Childhood Workforce Innovations department:

• Supports your efforts to build, implement, and enhance cross-sector early childhood professional development systems and workforce supports
  • develops pioneering products such as ZERO TO THREE’s **Critical Competencies for Infant-Toddler Educators™**
  • provides customized training and technical assistance to states and communities
For close to 40 years, ZERO TO THREE’s mission has been to transform the science of early childhood development into practical resources and responsive policies for millions of parents, professionals, and policymakers.