

PLANNING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The quality offered in a child care program depends on the knowledge and skills of the people who work with children. Everyone who works with young children and their families needs a basic understanding of child development and early education. To provide children with the best, it is important that we strive for the best in ourselves, personally and professionally. An individualized educational professional development plan serves as a map. (Vermont Early Childhood Work Group)

Think about yourself as a professional early childhood teacher:

- Evaluate your current level of knowledge. What are your personal strengths? What areas do you want to improve?
- Identify educational needs: What is your past educational experience: What kinds of training or education do you need?
- Determine professional development that can meet those needs. Where will you look for/find it?
- Identify potential career paths. What opportunities do you want to pursue? (CDA, Certificate of Mastery, AA, BA, etc.) How? When?

Reaching for the Stars Approved Professional Development

- Professional development is an ongoing process used to improve the knowledge and skills to best serve children and families. Professional development must be related to position responsibilities.
- Job-related is directly associated with the eight core content areas of the Oklahoma Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners.
- Formal professional development is two or more clock-hours from an OPDR-approved training organization and OPDR-approved college credit hours
- Informal professional development is less than two clock-hours from an OPDR approved training organization, any number of clock-hours from an OPDR non-approved training organization, and any training from electronic media, such as videos or DVDs.
- A maximum of 6 hours of informal professional development can be counted toward required hours per year.
- One college credit hour is equal to 16 clock-hours of professional development.

Note: General education coursework such as English Comp I, Biology, Math, History, etc. does not count as approved annual professional development for Stars.

Directors

Initial Star approval or upon hire of a new director:

- at least has 2 college credits in management, child development, or early childhood education or 30 clock hours of job-related professional development within the last 12 months

Ongoing professional development:

- at least has 2 college credits in management, child development, or early childhood education or 30 clock hours of job-related professional development per professional development ladder (PDL) certification

Personnel Counted in Staff/Child Ratio

Initial Star approval:

- personnel employed at the program for at least 12 months must have at least 2 college credits or 20 clock-hours of job-related professional development within the last 12 months or within the personnel's professional development ladder (PDL) certification

Ongoing professional development:

- upon being employed for 12 months, personnel have 2 college credits in child development, or early childhood education or 20 clock hours of job-related professional development per personnel's professional development ladder (PDL) certification

Reference:

Vermont Early Childhood Work Group, Professional Preparation and Development Committee. (2001, June). *Planning Your Professional Growth; Creating an Individualized Professional Development Plan for Early Care and Education.*