

SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

CORE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & COMPETENCIES

for Out-of-School Time Professionals



CONTENT AREA

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS
AND CURRICULUM

2

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MISSION & VISION

The National Afterschool Association (NAA) is the professional membership association for people who work with and for youth outside of school hours.

NAA fosters positive youth outcomes by supporting, developing, and advocating for afterschool professionals and leaders.

As a national association, we deploy our mission through people-centered programs, partnerships, and practices that build equity, access, and connections to create a strong, valued profession that benefits kids, families, and communities.

TOOLS & RESOURCES

This Self-Assessment Tool was adopted from the National AfterSchool Association (NAA), Core Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies for Out-of-School Time Professionals (2021).

The complete document can be found on the [NAA website](#).

Visit naaweb.org, select **Research & Resources** on the top toolbar, and select **Defining the OST Profession and Creating a Thriving Workforce** to view the Core Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies document and related resources.

INTRODUCTION

Professional development requires reflection on practices to identify strengths and recognize growth areas. Reflection heightens awareness of performance and can lead to change and growth.

The Self-Assessment Tools empower individuals to assess their knowledge and skills based on the competencies outlined in the NAA Core Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies for OST Professionals. The Self-Assessment Tools are organized by content areas and allow OST professionals to reflect on practice, create professional development plans, and build skills and competencies. Note: This document does not define specific indicators or examples of each

competency statement. This national document allows states and local organizations/programs to customize indicators that meet specific state and program needs (see page 7 of the NAA Core Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies).

Use this workbook to assess areas of strength and opportunity and determine professional development plans. The Assess, Reflect, Plan & Grow process helps determine what professional development supports continued growth as a youth development professional. Work through one Content Area (e.g., Child/Youth Growth and Development) at a time or focus on just a few specific Content Areas or competency statements.

HOW TO USE:

ASSESS

Carefully read through the competency statements and use the assessment tool to indicate one of the following about each:

- 1 = Not yet**
- 2 = I've tried but struggle with this and need additional support or practice**
- 3 = Most of the time, but inconsistent and could improve**
- 4 = This is a strength, no growth needed**

If you are unsure what a particular competency statement means, score it as a 1. Even after many years as a youth development professional, there is still more to learn. As you work through the assessment, make notes with examples as evidence.

REFLECT

Use the questions beginning on page 12 to guide your reflection. Consider your results as you think about areas of strength and areas of opportunity. Reflect on your daily work and the assessment ratings as you think through your answers to the questions and set goals.

PLAN & GROW

Use the Action Plan at the back of the workbook to articulate goals, plan for needed resources or professional development, and establish a deadline for meeting the goals. Once the plan is complete, follow it to build your skills and competency.

REASSESS, CELEBRATE, AND CONTINUE TO GROW

When the goal deadline arrives, use the self-assessment to reassess and determine progress. Celebrate your successes and then make additional plans for growth in the same content area or another.

Note to Administrators: When using the Core Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies for performance appraisal, have the staff member conduct a self-assessment and compare reflections. During appraisals, be aware of and minimize biases as much as possible. Together, discuss the results of the staff member's self-assessment and your performance appraisal, remaining open to their perspectives and supporting evidence when your scores do not align. Use the results to select goals and to plan for professional development together.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND CURRICULUM

I. Physical Environments & Activities

Self-Rating

IDENTIFY

A. Recognizes the importance of creating a developmentally and culturally responsive learning environment and following a curriculum.

B. Understands how children and youth learn through relationships, activities, play, and other experiences.

C. Identifies aspects of a developmentally and culturally responsive environment and learning plan.

APPLY

A. Scaffolds learning experiences and engages children and youth with clear objectives that meet individual needs, interests, and developmental levels.

B. Shows warmth, caring, and respect for children, youth, and others as individuals.

C. Employs schedules, routines, and structured transitions.

D. Creates engaging, physically, emotionally safe, and inclusive environments to encourage play, exploration, and learning across developmental domains.

E. Uses equipment, devices, and technology to support teaching and learning.

F. Uses various culturally responsive practices, tools, and accommodations – including individualization and differentiation -- to meet individual needs and enhance learning.

G. Creates environments and experiences to value, affirm, and respect diverse needs, abilities, experiences, and backgrounds.

H. Articulates evaluates, and/or applies current theories, research, resources, and policies related to the design of curriculum and learning environments.

I. Collaborates with others to maximize opportunities for children and youth.

Self-Rating

AMPLIFY

A. Models for, teaches, mentors, and coaches others about designing environments and adapting activities to meet all children and youth needs.

B. Recommends and promotes equitable program and organizational policies, PD, and practices that support the ability to design positive learning environments and adapt activities to meet the needs of all children and youth.

C. Advocates for equitable public and philanthropic policies, practices, and funding that support the ability to design positive learning environments and adapt activities to meet the needs of all children and youth.

I. Physical Environments & Activities

Examples, notes & evidence:



LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND CURRICULUM

II. Physical, Social/Emotional, and Cognitive Development

Self-Rating

IDENTIFY

A. Recognizes that change, stress, and transition affect social and emotional development and behavior.

B. Knows that families and communities have cultural experiences that influence how children and youth respond socially to adults and peers.

C. Understands how children and youth develop a sense of self.

Self-Rating

APPLY

A. Pays attention to and interacts with children and youth.

B. Implements strategies to develop young people’s self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship building, and responsible decision making.

C. Models healthy interactions and guides children and youth in self-awareness, social awareness, relationships, and responsible decision making.

D. Incorporates activities promoting cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.

E. Is responsive and encourages learning through questions, active listening, problem-solving activities, and conversations.

F. Adapts cognitive and physical activities and interactions to support diverse needs, abilities, and interests.

G. Supports children and youth in developing a sense of self.

H. Facilitates learning and other opportunities that reflect the cultures and values represented in the local community.

I. Uses contextualized teaching strategies to provide children and youth multiple entry points to an activity based on their current knowledge and abilities.

Self-Rating

AMPLIFY

A. Models for, teaches, mentors, and coaches others about promoting the healthy development of children and youth.

B. Recommends and promotes program and organizational policies, PD, and practices that support facilitating the healthy development of children and youth.

C. Advocates for equitable public and philanthropic policies, practices, and funding that support facilitating the healthy development of children and youth.

II. Physical, Social/Emotional, and Cognitive Development

Examples, notes & evidence:



LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND CURRICULUM

III. Language and Communication Development

Self-Rating

IDENTIFY

A. Understands active listening.

B. Recognizes the importance of respecting multiple communication styles and varying cultural communication norms.

Self-Rating

APPLY

A. Uses and models active listening.

B. Responds to communication positively.

C. Encourages children and youth to communicate in a variety of ways.

D. Adapts language and communication activities and interactions to support diverse needs and abilities.

E. Demonstrates inclusive communication practices, such as pronouncing each person's name correctly and using preferred gender pronouns.

F. Develops and integrates strategies for integrating language and communication development activities into all curricular areas.

Self-Rating

AMPLIFY

A. Models for, teaches, mentors, and coaches others about supporting effective child/youth language and communication development.

B. Recommends and promotes equitable program and organizational policies, PD, and practices that support the development of child/youth language and communication skills.

C. Advocates for equitable public and philanthropic policies, practices, and funding that support the development of child/youth language and communications skills.

III. Language and Communication Development

Examples, notes & evidence:



LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND CURRICULUM

IV. Creative Expression

Self-Rating

IDENTIFY

A. Articulates the value of creative expression as necessary to the development of the individual.

B. Identifies the community as a resource for creative experiences.

Self-Rating

APPLY

A. Incorporates activities promoting creative development.

B. Supports individual expression, including cultural influences.

C. Encourages children and youth to try new activities.

D. Provides equipment and materials for use in a variety of ways to encourage imagination and creativity.

E. Adapts creative activities and interactions to support diverse needs and abilities.

F. Incorporates activities for self-expression that respectfully and authentically reflect diverse cultural traditions.

G. Uses the community as a resource for creative experiences.

Self-Rating

AMPLIFY

A. Teaches, mentors, and coaches others about how to support child/youth creative expression.

B. Recommends and promotes equitable program and organizational policies, PD, and practices that support the development of child/youth creative expression.

C. Advocates for equitable public and philanthropic policies, practices, and funding that support the ability to develop child/youth creative expression.

IV. Creative Expression

Examples, notes & evidence:



REFLECTION & PROFESSIONAL PLAN

Review your self-assessment ratings. Consider your results as you think about your areas of strength and your areas of opportunity. Reflect on your daily work as you answer the following questions and set priorities.

STRENGTHS:

On which competencies did you score the highest? Why?

What opportunities do you have or could you create to demonstrate leadership or support others with developing these competencies?

OPPORTUNITIES:

On which competencies did you score the lowest? Why? What makes these challenging for you?

From your answer above, pick two competencies that could be most impactful in your work. List these competencies as goals.

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

ACTION PLAN

Complete the following professional development action plan to meet the identified goals.

ASK YOURSELF	GOAL 1	GOAL 2
What materials and/or resources will I need to meet this goal?		
What professional development will I need to meet this goal? What topics/ content will be the most helpful?		
What form of professional development would be the most effective in helping me meet this goal (workshop, college course, research, study group, coaching, etc.)?		
How and where will I find the professional development that I need?		
How will I find the time and money to take trainings, etc.?		
What type of support might I need in my program in order to help me implement my new skills or apply my new knowledge?		
How will I know if I am making progress? How will my practice change?		
What are the first two actions I will take to meet each goal?	1. 2.	1. 2.
When will I complete each of these steps?	1. 2.	1. 2.

For more OST resources and professional development information please visit
WWW.NAAWEB.ORG