Early Childhood System of Care Competencies

Introduction

Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County (CSC), an independent special district created by Palm Beach County voters in 1986, provides leadership, funding and research on behalf of the County’s children so they grow up healthy, safe and strong.

The Council invests resources in programs and services that support the physical, social-emotional and psychological development of children. In order to have an impact in those areas, the Council has four goals: children are born healthy, are free from abuse and neglect, are ready to learn when they enter school, and have access to quality afterschool and summer programming.

Supported by a blend of federal, state and local funding, our programs and systems are designed to achieve our goals by providing seamless, efficient and accountable prevention and early intervention services to Palm Beach County’s children and families. These systems include:

- **Healthy Beginnings**, which provides comprehensive, integrated direct services to pregnant women, infants, and young children.
- **Quality Counts**, which provides services to increase the quality of child care and afterschool providers.
- **Bridges**, which is a neighborhood-based strategy to achieve CSC’s goals at a population level. Bridges address such issues as adult literacy, father involvement, maternal depression, teen pregnancy prevention, cyclical poverty and child development.

The Council believes that by offering families the right approach – and combinations of programs and services – at the right time, in the right place – we will achieve our goals. By strengthening the system of care, which is built upon sound research and strong data, we can achieve our child outcomes.

One way to help maximize effectiveness and efficiencies is to use a workforce development model based on competencies (Schoonover and Anderson, 2000). Simply speaking, competencies are the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to perform a job function effectively.

CSC has adopted the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health (MI-AIMH) competencies for Direct Service practitioners. MI-AIMH is an interdisciplinary, professional organization established to promote and support the optimal development of infants, very young children and families through relationship-focused workforce development and advocacy efforts. For the complete list of these competencies and behavioral indicators, please see MI-AIMH Guidelines.

The Developing a Curriculum (DACUM) system (Coffin, 1993) was used to develop and refine additional competencies. This included a review of best practices currently in existence as well as interviews with key stakeholders to determine competencies needed within the early childhood system of care. Similarly, these competencies were then defined through reviewing best practices, literature and subject matter expert feedback. Additional subject matter experts and top performers were recruited to develop and validate behavioral indicators. The resulting competency model outlined in this document provides a clearly articulated framework that addresses the needs of adult learners by identifying content areas and behavioral
indicators that help define the knowledge expectations for all practitioners within the early childhood system of care. The competencies are broken down into four categories:

- Foundational
- Administrative
- Direct Service
- Leadership

Foundational competencies are critical for anyone working within the early childhood system of care, regardless of his or her position. In addition to the Foundational competencies, practitioners also have competencies linked to their role, whether it is Administrative, Direct Service, or Leadership.

Practitioners are encouraged to use this competency model to self-evaluate their current performance and identify areas where they would like to focus their professional development and growth. Whether a practitioner strives to demonstrate behavioral indicators identified as Beginner, Intermediate or Advanced level depends upon their specific goals and role within an organization. In addition to developing learning plans or self-identifying areas of professional development needed to support growth, competencies can be used in a number of ways. Examples include writing job descriptions, developing hiring standards and interview questions, developing performance targets and assessing performance, and workforce planning (identifying what an organization might need in the future to enhance employee effectiveness).

With that in mind, the early childhood system of care competencies are based on a number of guiding principles:

- Levels are defined so that career advancement does not mean movement away from direct work with children.
- Each professional role has room to develop from beginner to advanced knowledge base and competence.
- Developing and sustaining positive relationships are the foundation for applying the knowledge base and for demonstrating the core competencies. These relationships – which include adult to child, child to child, professional to parent, professional to professional and professional to community – are essential to achieving positive outcomes for children and families.
- Practitioner movement through the levels of competence is practitioner-driven and based on how one chooses to progress, current levels of education and experience, as well as current work settings and plans for future career advancement. Whether the practitioner chooses to grow within a particular role or grow into the next role, growth is determined by the practitioner using the early childhood system of care competencies to help chart a course of professional development.
- The early childhood system of care competencies represent a set of core content areas, along with examples of behavioral indicators a practitioner should be able to demonstrate at each of the three levels (Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced). The behavioral indicators illustrate only some of the cognitive and performance skills that are expected of professionals who have acquired the core body of knowledge in the content area. Practitioners also should be able to generalize and creatively apply their increasing knowledge and skills.
• Everyone working with the early childhood system of care need to master the core body of knowledge identified in the Foundational competencies. However, the knowledge may be applied differently depending on an individual’s role and setting.

In order to achieve the strategic goals of Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County, the early childhood system of care must have a highly skilled work force that embraces a spirit of life-long learning and continuous quality improvement. The professional development system itself is never a finished product and should continually evolve based on the most recent research and be refined to best meet the needs of the population it serves. To that end, we all need opportunities to learn and grow more effectively in our chosen profession.

"Curiosity is an important part of mastery. It's the desire to know. And the nice thing about it is you never get there. It’s not like you ever get to the point where you know everything or you've mastered everything." – Dr. Jack P. Shonkoff

**Special Thanks**

Special thanks to members of the Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County’s Training Advisory Committee, a volunteer committee comprised of representatives from funded agencies that cross geographic areas and staffing levels. The Training Advisory Committee worked diligently to develop and revise the competencies and behavioral indicators so that they effectively capture the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to work effectively and efficiently within the early childhood system of care.

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Foundational Competencies

- Business Etiquette
- Communication
- Compliance Standards
- Conflict and Stress Management
- Critical Thinking
- Cultural Competency
- Leadership and Initiative
- Organizational Skills
- Technology Skills
- Teamwork
- Systems Thinking
- Values and Ethics
Definition:
Demonstrating professionalism in the workplace through appearance, attitude and interactions

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Follows organizational procedures related to professionalism including dress code, punctuality, attendance, phone etiquette, etc.
- Identifies and maintains distinction between social interaction and professional communication

**Intermediate**
- Models professionalism for others including dress code, punctuality, attendance, phone etiquette, etc.
- Respects professional boundaries and limitations

**Advanced**
- Coaches others in professionalism including dress code, punctuality, attendance, phone etiquette, etc.
- Coaches others regarding professional boundaries and limitations
Communication

Definition:
Effectively delivering and receiving messages both verbally and written

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Verbally conveys information appropriately and concisely
- Writes clearly using correct grammar and spelling to ensure message conveyed as intended
- Listens actively and objectively with the intention to understand
- Is able to address the needs of multilingual populations as necessary within their role

**Intermediate**
- Provides, accepts, and solicits feedback when needed
- Uses a plan to organize, and define main, points and sub points to create effective reports, presentations, etc.
- Remains open and positive while ensuring accurate understanding of the message

**Advanced**
- Adapts content, style, tone and medium of verbal communication to suit the target audience’s language and level of understanding
- Adjusts the writing style to meet the needs of the audience by adjusting the length, tone, pace and style of the message
- Attends to non-verbal and verbal cues (e.g. body language, tone of voice, point of view) to determine the purpose and meaning of message
Compliance Standards

Definition:
Meeting agency, local, state and federal regulations regarding all aspects of program and service delivery including, but not limited to, mandated reporting and confidentiality

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Follows federal, state and local regulations and agency procedures regarding confidentiality including identifying certain circumstances when mandated reporting is required and seeking clarification from supervisor in ambiguous situations
- Recognizes and identifies harmful or threatening situations to others and follows mandated reporting
- Follows appropriate documentation procedures in accordance with federal, state, local and agency regulations (including objectivity, respect, and accuracy)
- Promotes the program goals and objectives in line with best practices, organizational mission, and CSC sentinel outcomes

**Intermediate**
- Appropriately challenges practices that compromised client safety, privacy, and/or dignity
- Coaches others regarding reporting documentation standards
- Implements and enforces clear procedures for collecting, documenting and reporting program data within legal requirements for compliance; articulates the rationale behind regulations and policies to staff

**Advanced**
- Identifies and recommends processes to improve compliance with reporting and documentation standards
- Ensures the procedure for collection and maintenance of relevant, current data in order to improve the program based on the needs of staff and clients
Conflict and Stress Management

Definition:
Resolving conflicts between two or more people by identifying the issues and creating solutions that respect the values of all parties; managing and balancing personal and professional responsibilities while maintaining a healthy lifestyle

Behavioral Indicators:

Beginner
- Self-regulates emotions; establishes rapport and trust with clients and co-workers; identifies when a conflict exists; communicates conflict to management when appropriate
- Approaches stressful situations with awareness of limitations, strengths and weaknesses, and seeks help when needed; identifies stress triggers and self-response, implements stress reduction techniques
- Focuses feedback on issues, not the person

Intermediate
- Analyzes the conflict (including its source, characteristics and effects); implements solutions that are mutually respectful of parties involved
- Develops professional and personal goals for reducing stressors, and implements strategies to achieve
- Maintains work/personal life balance

Advanced
- Creates and promotes an environment of conflict resolution by being proactive
- Promotes an organizational culture of work-life balance and coaches others
Critical Thinking

Definition:
Actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning or communication, as a guide to belief and action.

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Defines key information and questions when making decisions; sets priorities and makes decisions in a timely manner
- Asks questions and identifies problems; gathers relevant information
- Integrates all available information and consults with others when making important decisions
- Remains open and curious

**Intermediate**
- Anticipates potential obstacles and develops contingency plans to overcome them
- Analyzes data and stakeholder impact prior to making decisions; identifies linkage of actions to achieving client outcomes
- Suggests and implements (when appropriate) possible solutions based upon evidence and best practices
- Regularly examines own thoughts, feelings, strengths and growth areas

**Advanced**
- Considers the organization’s priorities when making decisions or analyzing the costs and benefits of various alternative solutions
- Evaluates and readdresses (when necessary) a decision and its impact on stakeholders and results
- Evaluates solutions from multiple perspectives; seeks alignment between self-perceptions and perceptions of others
**Cultural Competency**

**Definition:**

Interacting effectively with people of different cultures and socio-economic backgrounds

**Behavioral Indicators:**

- **Beginner**
  - Recognizes how cultural boundaries, norms of behavior, styles of advocacy, diverse values and beliefs, and biases affect services and influence relationships and interactions
  - Examines and describes their cultural background, social identities and cultural heritage to increase self-awareness of assumptions, values, beliefs and biases
  - Consults with supervisors and colleagues for feedback and monitoring of performance to identify features of their own professional style that impede or enhance their culturally competent practice

- **Intermediate**
  - Develops and applies strategies to inform and change detrimental attitudes, beliefs and feelings
  - Assesses the meaning of culture for individual clients and client groups, encourages open discussion of differences, and responds to culturally biased cues
  - Selects and develops appropriate methods to advance their work with respect to the diverse relationships and groups in the community and in institutions
  - Identifies service delivery systems or models that are appropriate to the targeted client population and make appropriate referrals when indicated

- **Advanced**
  - Identifies the interaction of the cultural systems of the service provider, the individual/family served, the particular agency setting, and the broader immediate community
  - Effectively uses the individual/family's natural support system in resolving problems - for example, folk healers, storefronts, religious and spiritual leaders, families of creation, and other community resources
  - Evaluates the validity and applicability of new techniques, research and knowledge for work with diverse client groups
**Leadership and Initiative**

**Definition:**
Demonstrating self-initiative, flexibility and leadership to achieve organizational goals while supporting and helping others to be successful

**Behavioral Indicators:**

**Beginner**
- Connects the relevancy of the mission, vision and goals of the organization to their personal job responsibilities
- Defines professional goals and considers feedback from others in organization
- Identifies areas of strength and opportunities for improvement for self and the organization

**Intermediate**
- Identifies how roles support the mission, vision and goals of the organization
- Provides and solicits feedback relative to organizational goals and standards
- Analyzes and implements processes to build on strengths and address areas of improvement to increase personal and organizational effectiveness
- Seeks new opportunities and challenges for professional growth that support needs of the organization

**Advanced**
- Models and promotes the vision of the organization with colleagues
- Promotes a unified, efficient, high-quality practice within the organization to help it reach its goals
- Evaluates continuous improvement processes and makes recommendations accordingly
- Consistently goes beyond expectations in the assignment, task or job description without being asked
- Promotes/addresses organization-wide challenges to advance organizational mission/vision
**Organizational Skills**

**Definition:**
Using resources (for example: time, technology, space) effectively and efficiently in order to achieve desired results

**Behavioral Indicators:**

**Beginner**
- Undertakes a task by breaking it down into manageable parts in a systematic, detailed way
- Identifies responsibilities, expectations, and deadlines
- Identifies daily, weekly and monthly goals based upon organizational priorities
- Identifies technology required to accomplish tasks and communicates with supervisor

**Intermediate**
- Prioritizes, manages and delegates as appropriate regarding multiple work assignments
- Creates and implements an action plan (with milestones) to accomplish goals on a timely basis
- Utilizes technology appropriately

**Advanced**
- Anticipates future needs and tasks when planning, also considers lessons learned from past experience
- Evaluates progress towards accomplishing goals and makes changes accordingly
- Self-evaluates technical skills and seeks training accordingly; Provides technical assistance for others when appropriate
FOUNDATIONAL COMPETENCIES

Systems Thinking and Development

Definition:
Demonstrating the holistic framework that component parts of a system can be best understood in the context of relationships with others within the system rather than in isolation

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Explains the purpose of system
- Identifies components of the early childhood system of care
- Identifies how their program fits in the early childhood system of care
- Identifies how their individual role fits in the early childhood system of care

**Intermediate**
- Explains how their program interacts with other parts of the early childhood system of care
- Identifies and explains how their role interacts with the early childhood system of care
- Identifies and explains how the early childhood system of care fits within an overall service delivery system

**Advanced**
- Identifies and explains the interactions of various factors related to the early childhood system of care and other systems within the community
- Generates new insights and workable solutions to issues related to effective relationship-focused interventions within the early childhood system of care
- Evaluates and addresses opportunities for continuous improvement in program and the system
Teamwork

Definition:
Working collaboratively with a group of people, despite any personal conflict between individuals, in order to achieve a goal

Behavioral Indicators:

Beginner
- Identifies the purpose and goals of the team
- Works cooperatively (honestly, fairly, openly, friendly, diplomatically, respectfully, trustingly, flexibly) with others; encourages staff to keep one another informed and share information
- Identifies self and others’ areas of expertise to ensure that the right people are part of a team

Intermediate
- Focuses on accomplishing team goals rather than a personal agenda
- Actively participates as a team member, shows a willingness to contribute and be open to feedback; promotes collaborative decision making
- Suggests or develops methods and means for maximizing the input and involvement of team members

Advanced
- Assesses team processes and acts accordingly to continuously improve
- Acknowledges team successes and gives credit to individual efforts and contributions which support team effectiveness; analyzes team failures in the spirit of acquiring lessons learned
- Promotes collaborative decision making processes and demonstrates ability to reach team consensus
- Considers teamwork when planning for future goals
Technical Skills

Definition:
Selecting and applying contemporary forms of technology for successful accomplishment of a job or task

Behavioral Indicators

Beginner
- Uses basic functions of software, hardware, within their role
- Uses various communication tools (i.e. email, video conferencing, document sharing, etc.) effectively
- Accesses and uses online resources (i.e. search engines, web browser, online database, etc.)

Intermediate
- Uses intermediate and advanced functions of software necessary within their role
- Provides technical assistance to others when asked

Advanced
- Mentors others regarding technology
Values and Ethics

Definition:
Modeling the values of the organization and demonstrating ethical behavior in a manner that is sensitive to and respectful of cultural differences

Behavioral Indicators:

Beginner
- Maintains distinction between social interaction and professional communication with colleagues and clients
- Follows procedures regarding appropriate behavior in the workplace, including organizational and professional standards of practice
- Identifies the values of the organization
- Identifies self-bias and level of understanding of other cultural norms, Recognizes and respects the beliefs and practices of others’ culture

Intermediate
- Identifies the ramifications of inappropriate behavior in the workplace and address appropriately
- Models organizational values in practice
- Demonstrates awareness, sensitivity, openness and flexibility when dealing with others with cultural differences
- Ensuring behavior expectations of the organization are continually tied to daily work

Advanced
- Analyzes ethical dilemmas and determines appropriate actions, including potentially seeking legal counsel
- Coaches others in modeling organizational values
- Supports and leverages others’ unique culture, language, socio-economic factors and support systems to enhance relationships
ADMINISTRATIVE TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Customer Service

Administrative Technical Competencies

Telephone Skills

Reporting and Documentation
Customer Service

Definition:
Meeting the expectations and requirements of internal and external customers; establishing and maintaining effective relationships with customers

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Identifies and defines key components of effective interpersonal communication to include: positive body language, tone of voice, active listening, articulate speech and follow through
- Greets, meets and satisfies customer needs in a positive and timely manner
- Uses resources to find customer solutions and/or refers to the appropriate person
- Follows organizational procedures

**Intermediate**
- Consistently demonstrates positive tone of voice and body language, active listening, clear articulation and follow through
- Exhibits actions to exceed customer expectations
- Diffuses customer’s anger by acknowledging the customer’s experience and offering solutions

**Advanced**
- Analyzes and incorporates procedural changes to improve customer service interactions to alleviate systematic problems
- Models effective conflict-management techniques (see Foundational Competencies for Conflict Management behaviors)
Reporting and Documentation Procedures

Definition:

- Accurately documenting and maintaining records and reports in accordance with applicable guidelines

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Completes basic forms (i.e. purchase requisitions, basic emails)

**Intermediate**
- Completes narrative reporting with an awareness of content and dynamics
- Identifies elements that contribute to documentation that accurately and thoroughly address the needs of stakeholders

**Advanced**
- Creates documentation that accurately and thoroughly addresses the needs of stakeholders
- Trains others in all aspects of documentation and reporting
Telephone Skills

Definition:
Using phone equipment properly; answering and returning telephone calls in a timely and courteous manner

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Demonstrates knowledge of referrals, where to forward requests
- Returns calls in a timely manner
- Demonstrates ability to properly use organizational phone systems, such as call forwarding, voicemail, text messaging and other means to respond to callers as soon as possible

**Intermediate**
- Demonstrates ability to answer basic questions and provide basic information (schedules, overviews etc.)

**Advanced**
- Coaches others in organizational phone etiquette
- Sets up and conducts conference calls and meetings using telephone and online features
Direct Services

- Age-Specific Engagement
- Social-Emotional Development
- Intervention Strategies
- Dynamics of Family Relationships/Systems
- Child and Lifespan Development
- Assessment
Age Specific Engagement

Definition:
Identifying, recognizing and applying individual developmental levels to establish effective relationships

Behavioral Indicators:

Beginner
- Recognizes, identifies and applies approaches proven effective for engaging and interacting with various age groups

Intermediate
- Evaluates engagement approaches implemented and revises as needed

Advanced
- Differentiates between chronological age and developmental skill levels
- Trains and mentors others in approaches proven effective, as needed
Assessment

Definition:
Gathering and documenting client information to identify client strengths, risks and needs in order to develop and/or apply appropriate interventions

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Identifies multiple methods to obtain data for assessment with fidelity to the model or tool
- Assists families in identifying areas of concern, priorities and resources (inclusive of referring, when appropriate)
- Incorporates assessment findings in the development of plans for clients, and periodically reviews

**Intermediate**
- Aggregates and trends data
- Recognizes irregularities in data and explores accordingly

**Advanced**
- Analyzes and interprets data gathered from assessment
- Uses aggregated assessment results and trends as a basis for planning
Child and Lifespan Development

Definition:
Recognizing differences in child development levels and functioning to formulate appropriate plans

Behavioral Indicators:

Beginner
- Describes realistic, age-appropriate behavioral expectations
- Articulates the basic ages and stages/developmental milestones in infant, toddler, child and adolescent development
- Demonstrates familiarity with conditions that optimize early infant brain development

Intermediate
- Interprets age appropriateness of behaviors with families
- Contrasts atypical and typical development; intervenes appropriately
- Keeps up to date on current trends in child development, behavior and relationship-focused practice

Advanced
- Uses and adapts materials to ensure developmental appropriateness
- Evaluates interventions and revises plan, as needed
Dynamics of Family Relations/Systems

Definition:
Understanding the family system and relationships by identifying the dynamics that may impact it including, but not limited to, cultural influences, as well as risk and protective factors

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Defines the family relationship as the most important relationship in a child’s life
- Identifies how and why changes in families take place, including typical growth and development of family members, as well as family disruption and unexpected changes
- Recognizes the diversity of family systems and interactions

**Intermediate**
- Applies interventions that support the individual/family development and structure

**Advanced**
- Integrates the various dynamic family systems and the effect of stress crises into family support systems
- Evaluates, adapts and creates new interventions and strategies based on changes in family dynamics and systems
Intervention Strategies

Definition:
Engaging with an individual/family to identify, use and apply appropriate strategies that promote the individual/family’s safety and well-being

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Identifies strength based approaches or interventions that empower individuals/families
- Identifies services available to individuals/families in the community that promote positive outcomes for individuals/families
- Locates and explains appropriate referral resources for various community agencies

**Intermediate**
- Actively involves and empowers individual/families in development and follow-through regarding the services they receive
- Uses intervention methods or approaches to enhance individual and family functions
- Assists and supports individual/families to access and navigate the network of supports available within the community
- Engages in ongoing reflective practice to understand own emotional response to work, and recognize areas for professional and/or personal development

**Advanced**
- Applies knowledge gained from reflective practice to enhance program services, as well as to identify and participate in value-added learning activities
- Equipds and guides individual/families to advocate for system change when appropriate
- Advocates for services needed by individual/families with supervisors, programs and agencies
- Evaluates service outcomes and revises interventions accordingly
Social-Emotional Development

Definition:
Understanding and promoting the healthy social, emotional and cognitive well-being of infants/children within the context of a caregiving relationship

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Establishes trusting relationship that supports the caregiver(s) and infant/child in their relationship with each other and that facilitates needed change
- Formally and informally observes the caregiver(s) and infant/child to understand the nature of their relationship, developmental strengths and capacities for change
- Supports and reinforces each caregiver’s strengths, emerging competencies and positive caregiver-infant/child interactions and relationships
- Recognizes environmental and caregiving threats to the health and safety of the infant/child and parents, and takes appropriate action

**Intermediate**
- Helps parents identify goals and activities that encourage interaction, and that can be woven into the infant’s/very young child’s and family’s daily routines
- Demonstrates familiarity with conditions that optimize early infant brain development
- Effectively implements relationship-focused parent-infant/very young child interventions that enhance the capacities of parents and infants/very young children

**Advanced**
- Recognizes and holds multiple viewpoints, e.g., the infant, the parent, the service provider
- Uses multiple strategies to help parents or caregivers
Leadership Technical Competencies

- Business & Financial Skills
- Change Management
- Community Relations
- Data Utilization
- Performance Management
- Team Building
LEADERSHIP TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Business & Financial Skills

Definition:
Understanding the financial, accounting, marketing and operational functions of an organization so that there is a keenness and depth of perception that enables sound, quick business decisions

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Identifies and applies best practices and outcomes of services to determine internal/external improvement opportunities
- Implements sound business practices and accounting principles standard in the field

**Intermediate**
- Develops internal processes to make regular and data-driven improvements to agency business practices
- Develops internal mechanisms to measure adherence to professional business & accounting standards; responds proactively to those measurements
- Reviews and adjusts program budget to ensure that fiscal policy supports programmatic goals and philosophy

**Advanced**
- Reinforces internal practices for using relevant data to make sound business decisions
- Analyzes business & accountings practices being used and makes changes accordingly, weighs the benefits of trends against budgetary and operational implications
- Evaluates adherence to professional business & accounting standards, and implements change accordingly
- Manages the budget in a way that demonstrates cost-effectiveness and savings, and manages budget projections
LEADERSHIP TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Change Management

Definition:
Transitioning individuals, teams and organizations to a desired future state using basic structures and tools to control organizational change efforts, with the goal of maximizing benefits and minimizing negative impact on those affected

Behavioral Indicators:

**Beginner**
- Communicates and models how the vision, mission and strategies relate to daily tasks and activities
- Identifies new opportunities to support stakeholder needs and communicates these opportunities to key stakeholders
- Defines what change looks like and how it benefits and impacts individuals. Solicits feedback/input from staff regarding the change process and communicates this information appropriately with key stakeholders

**Intermediate**
- Mentors staff in demonstrating the vision and mission
- Trains employees to identify the needs of internal/external customers
- Guides and supports staff through change initiatives
- Implements a systemic process for managing change, including developing contingency plans that respond to industry organizational change
- Models positive change-management behaviors; coaches others toward successful change; identifies and communicates potential change consequences on the organization

**Advanced**
- Aligns the vision, mission and values with job responsibilities, organizational goals and outcomes; identifies any misalignments and addresses accordingly
- Assesses and analyzes community needs and makes program recommendations accordingly
- Promotes an environment where others look for opportunities to change; develops methods for measuring and evaluating change initiatives
**Community Relations**

**Definition:**
Building relationships and influencing internal and external stakeholders to create a mutually collaborative work environment that benefits the child/family and organizational outcomes

**Behavioral Indicators:**

**Beginner**

- Speaks in a manner clearly understood by community members
- Listens actively to obtain community opinion and conveys understanding
- Identifies internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization
- Collaborates, establishes and maintains relationships with internal and external stakeholders to aid in meeting strategic objectives and program outcomes

**Intermediate**

- Informs, invites and involves the community, in a collaborative manner, to become involved in achieving programmatic and organizational outcomes
- Promotes activities that encourage community members to participate in the life of the organization
- Uses constructive measures to influence internal and external politics that impact the organization

**Advanced**

- Designs and implements strategies to promote positive organizational/community relationships
- Takes overall responsibility for establishing and maintaining open lines of communication and involvement with the community
Data Utilization

Definition:
Achieving or surpassing internal and/or external standards of excellences through the promotion, use and analysis of measureable results and data-driven decisions

Behavioral Indicators:

Beginner
• Supports collection of data to document program achievements
• Facilitates staff understanding of program status in relation to outcomes by reviewing data

Intermediate
• Consistently promotes and measures productivity by coordinating procedures for evaluation and assessment, in consultation with staff involved in delivering and/or monitoring services
• Analyzes collected data in relation to program outcomes, as well as external benchmarks; communicates findings with key stakeholders

Advanced
• Analyzes existing programmatic plans; recommends changes aligned with organizational values and strategic direction to improve identified outcomes
• Advocates for resources necessary to continuously improve program outcomes
Definition:
Ensuring that goals are consistently being met in an effective and efficient manner by creating a work environment or setting in which people are enabled to perform to the best of their abilities

Behavioral Indicators:

Beginner
- Assesses staff’s skills; provides quality and constructive feedback; determines when to edit or defer goals; consults with staff on modifying
- Explains performance evaluation to staff in a way that ensures buy-in and monitors performance
- Identifies and discusses staff strengths and areas of improvement to support professional development in connection to the competency model
- Assists in identifying various learning opportunities that support transfer of learning to help staff in meeting performance objectives

Intermediate
- Establishes and revises behavioral-based goals consistent with the department and organization’s strategic plan; writes effective performance appraisals
- Implements process to ensure performance evaluation is valid and reliable
- Co-creates developmental plans with staff while keeping competency advancement and career paths in mind
- Coaches staff to assist in the attainment of their goals

Advanced
- Monitors staff performance and provides feedback accordingly (uses data-driven performance management)
- Evaluates both qualitative and quantitative data and processes in relation to internal and external benchmarks
- Constructs a mechanism for assessing staff strengths and areas of improvement in order to forecast organization’s current and future developments
LEADERSHIP TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Team Building

Definition:
Building and leading high-performing teams that work together to achieve goals and higher levels of performances

Behavioral Indicators:

Beginner
- Identifies and expresses mission, strategy and goals that impact all teams
- Collaborates with staff with developing short- and long-term goals that establish clear team expectations
- Seeks input from all levels of staff by listening attentively; Demonstrates fairness and consistency and conveys information fully and clearly
- Examines team decision-making process to ensure that strategies suggested result in useful policies/procedures
- Provides balanced feedback to improve team collaboration and functioning on a continuous basis

Intermediate
- Serves as a role model by leading staff and others towards accomplishing goals
- Implements the process for integrating team goals with the organization’s vision, mission, strategy and operational plans
- Encourages and allows opportunities for staff to communicate issues and suggest solutions that affect program-related services
- Examines team decision-making process to ensure that strategies suggested result in useful policies and procedures
- Regularly initiates communication to help solve interpersonal/team conflicts and problems

Advanced
- Evaluates and measures teams’ responsibilities and performance goals to ensure even distribution across the organization
- Monitors progress and redirects, as necessary, to ensure work is on target with outcomes and remains strategically aligned
- Assesses evidence of staff ownership through various research methods
- Collaboratively designs programs, shares strategies, conducts assessments, analyzes results and adjust processes with full team input
- Proactively works with team members to improve team collaboration and functioning on a continuous basis