

# Understanding the **What, Why** and **How** of **Professional Development Plans**



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National Association for the  
Education of Young Children

## What?

NAEYC asks programs to create a program-wide professional development plan and individual, educator-specific plans.

**These plans need to cover some specific areas:**

- › An orientation for all new staff that includes information about the **NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct**, a review of **information about the individual children** that the educator will be caring for, **daily activities** and **routines** of the program and **appropriate guidance and discipline techniques**— this also includes a plan for how leadership follows up on these items over the course of the year.
- › Trainings that help educators increase their **cultural competence** and reduce implicit and explicit bias
- › Training that helps the educator better understand the **curriculum and philosophy** of the program so that they can implement it effectively.
- › Trainings that focus on how to work as a team, **communicate**, and **collaborate** effectively
- › Trainings about **child development** and **Developmentally Appropriate Practice**
- › Trainings that are specific to the group of **families** that the center serves

What is the difference between a program wide plan and an individual plan?

- › The **program wide** plan gives the topics that the entire staff will explore over the year.
- › The **individual plan** is specific to one educator's needs.

## Why?

For educators to stay up to date on the latest research in early childhood education and provide the most intentional, meaningful experiences for young children, they need to have access to **ongoing, high quality professional development.**

- › NAEYC encourages programs to follow their state's requirements, so there is **no accreditation item requiring a certain number of training hours.**
- › The focus should be on **high-quality professional development tailored to the specific needs** of individual educators and the needs of the children and families in the program.



## How?

Because staffing and families can change, the program wide professional development plan should be **reviewed and updated at least each year.**

- › Start with a **needs assessment or survey** done by your families to give you feedback on areas of growth.
- › Remember to link the PD plans to **NAEYC accreditation standards!**
- › Build the plan into the educator's **annual performance review.** Together, the leader and educator can create a list of learning goals for the next year. The leader should support the educator in finding the sort of professional development that will help them reach those goals.
- › Another way that you can stretch the learning and growth of your team is to provide **coaching and mentoring.** These opportunities can be provided by outside support or internally through formal and informal mentoring by other educators or even communities of practice within the program.
- › Make sure to **provide details** about how you and your staff will meet your PD goals. Name the steps to meet the goal. Document who handles each task. Provide clear start and end dates for each step.
- › Don't forget your own training. **It is important for administrators to have high quality professional development** as well!

## Supplemental Resources

- **Fostering Continuous Growth and Improvement: One Program's Journey** by Deanna J. (TYC)
- **Leaving a Mark: Lesson Study for Professional Learning** by Savanna Gragg, Vicki S. Collet (TYC)
- **6x: Getting the Most out of Professional Development** by Erica Holland (TYC)
- **Personalized Professional Development: How Teachers Can Use Videos to Improve Their Practice** by Rachel E. Schachter, Hope Kenarr Gerde
- **Preparing for Evaluation with Video Self-Reflection** by Michelle Grantham-Caston, Cynthia Fontcuberta DiCarlo (YC)
- **Using Remote Strategies to Facilitate Effective Coaching Conversations with Infant and Toddler Teachers** by Luci Davila, Sarah N. Douglas, Lori E. Skibbe (YC)
- **Coaching In Difficult Conversations: A Relationship-Based Approach** by Hayley Jackson, Rachel E. Schachter, Holly Hatton-Bowers, Lisa L. Knoche (YC)
- **Summer 2023 TYC issue**, including what to consider when **Observing and Supporting Teachers' Growth** (by Candace Barriteau-Phaire, Maria Boeke Mongillo)
- *From Survive to Thrive: A Director's Guide to Leading an Early Childhood Program*

Our NAEYC team is here to help you! Contact a team member by emailing us at [accreditation.information@naeyc.org](mailto:accreditation.information@naeyc.org) or calling us at **1-800-424-2460**, option 3.



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