



NATIONAL
AfterSchool
ASSOCIATION

Core Knowledge and **COMPETENCIES**

for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals

Self-Assessment Tool LEVEL 3

The Vision & Mission of **NAA**

NAA is the only national membership organization for professionals who work with children and youth in a variety of out-of-school time settings. Our mission is to foster development, provide education, and encourage advocacy for the out-of-school time community. We exist to inspire, connect, and equip professionals who meet this critical need for young people.

This Self-Assessment Tool was adopted from the

National AfterSchool Association (NAA), Core Knowledge and Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals (September 2011).

The complete document can be found on the NAA website:
<http://naaweb.org/resources/core-competencies>

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Introduction

Professional development requires reflection on one's practices to identify strengths, recognize areas for future growth, and incorporate new learning experiences. Reflection heightens awareness of one's own performance and leads to personal change and growth.

The Self-Assessment Tools are designed to empower individuals to assess their knowledge and skills based on the competencies outlined in the *NAA Core Knowledge and Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals*. **The Self-Assessment Tools are organized by level and allow group leaders, youth workers, or other youth development professionals to:**

- Assess level of knowledge and skills in each one of the ten content areas.
- Identify specific areas of need for future professional development.
- Plan specific actions that will lead to improvement.

The Self-Assessment Tools may also be used by administrators and supervisors to guide staff evaluation, assessment of skills, and professional development needs. **This document includes the competency statements for Level 3.**

It is also important to note that this document does not attempt to define specific indicators or examples of each of the competency statements. This national document leaves room for states and local organizations/programs to customize indicators that meet specific state and program needs (see page 9 of the *NAA Core Knowledge and Competencies*).

RECOMMENDATIONS Use this Self-Assessment Tool as a workbook to assess your areas of strength and opportunity and help you determine your professional development plans. The Assess, Reflect, Plan process prescribed here will help you to determine what professional development best fits your personal knowledge and skills for continued growth as a youth development professional. It is suggested that you work through one Content Area (e.g., Child/Youth Growth and Development) at a time or choose to focus on just a few specific Content Areas or competency statements. Complete the assessment over the course of a few days.

Note to Administrators: When using the Core Knowledge and Competencies to conduct a performance appraisal, request that the staff member conduct a self-assessment as well. Together, discuss the results of the staff member's self-assessment and your performance appraisal. Use the results to select goals and to plan for professional development.

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

- 1** = I do not understand or demonstrate this competency.
- 2** = I struggle to demonstrate this competency. I sometimes demonstrate this competency, and when I do I have a difficult time with it OR I demonstrate the competency, but only with guidance. I need more information to fully understand and implement the competency statement.
- 3** = I demonstrate this competency reasonably well, but inconsistently. I think with more practice and/or some support, I could implement this practice well.
- 4** = I demonstrate this competency extremely well. I consider this competency to be among my regular practices. I consistently demonstrate this competency. I am able to help others understand and implement this competency.

If you are not sure what is meant by a particular competency statement, score it as a 1. It is expected that even after many years as a youth development professional, one would still have much more to learn. Take notes and total your self-ratings as you work through the Self-Assessment Tool. Use the Self-Assessment Summary page at the end of the document to calculate your results as you complete each Content Area.

REFLECT Use the questions beginning on page 17 to guide your reflection. Consider your results as you think about areas of strength and areas of opportunity. Reflect on the work you do daily with youth as you think through your answers to the questions and set personal priorities.

PLAN Carefully Use the Professional Plan and Action Plan to set goals, plan for needed resources or professional development, and establish a timeframe for meeting the goals. You will develop an action plan that will become your to-do list. Will you need to look for books, webinars, training, and conferences, find a mentor, ask a specialist for ideas, etc.?

Content Area 1

CHILD/YOUTH GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Knows the typical benchmarks for growth and development and uses this knowledge to provide a program that meets the multiple needs of children and youth.

LEVEL 3

A. I can explain current theories and ongoing research related to child and youth development.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I support and practice inclusion.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
---------------------	--------------

C. I communicate physical, cognitive, language and communication, social and emotional, and creative differences among children and youth.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 1 **LEVEL 3**
TOTAL:

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Content Area 2

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND CURRICULUM

Creates a high-quality learning environment and implements age-appropriate curricula and program activities.

Creating a Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environment and Curriculum LEVEL 3

A. I use a broad collection of effective teaching/learning strategies, tools, and accommodations to meet individualized needs and enhance learning.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I create environments and learning experiences to value, affirm, and respect diverse needs, abilities, and cultural backgrounds.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 2

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND CURRICULUM

Creates a high-quality learning environment and implements age-appropriate curricula and program activities.

C. I design and implement learning opportunities that include goals and objectives.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 2: Creating a Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environment and Curriculum LEVEL 3	
TOTAL:	

Promoting Physical, Social/Emotional, and Cognitive Development LEVEL 3

A. I incorporate activities promoting cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development into all curricular areas.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I support children and youth in developing a sense of self.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I guide children and youth in appropriately expressing their feelings and asserting themselves in positive ways.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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D. I provide activities and interactions that promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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E. I facilitate learning opportunities that reflect the cultures and values represented in the community of the program.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 2: Promoting Physical, Social/Emotional, and Cognitive Development LEVEL 3	
TOTAL:	

Content Area 2

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND CURRICULUM

Creates a high-quality learning environment and implements age-appropriate curricula and program activities.

Promoting Language and Communication Development LEVEL 3

A. I incorporate communication skills into all curricular areas based on the program population.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 2: Promoting Language and Communication Development LEVEL 3	
TOTAL:	

Promoting Creative Expression LEVEL 3

A. I incorporate activities for self-expression that reflect diverse cultural traditions.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I can articulate the value of creative expression as necessary to the development of the individual.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I incorporate activities promoting creative development into all curricular areas.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
----------------------------	---------------------

D. I use the community as a resource for creative experiences.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 2: Promoting Creative Expression LEVEL 3	
TOTAL:	

Content Area 3

CHILD/YOUTH OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

Understands and applies observation and assessment techniques and tools to meet individual needs.

LEVEL 3

A. I engage in ongoing assessment of individual growth, development, and learning, and apply this knowledge to practice.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I identify the role of risk factors and protective factors on children and youth development.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I discuss the purpose, benefits, and uses of informal and formal assessments.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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D. I select and use observation results in planning and implementing learning activities.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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E. I recommend appropriate referrals based on observation, documentation, and assessment.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 3 LEVEL 3
TOTAL:**

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Content Area 4

INTERACTIONS WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Recognizes the importance of relationships and communication in the practice of quality child and youth care, and implements guidance techniques and strategies to support children and youth individually and in group experiences to develop self-regulation, self-concept, coping mechanisms, and positive interactions with their peers and adults.

Providing Individual Guidance LEVEL 3

A. I use age-appropriate guidance strategies.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
----------------------------	---------------------

B. I demonstrate realistic expectations about the child/youth's social, emotional, physical, and cognitive abilities and needs.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I partner with others to develop and implement individualized guidance strategies.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
----------------------------	---------------------

**Content Area 4: Providing Individual Guidance LEVEL 3
TOTAL:**

Enhancing Group Experiences LEVEL 3

A. I design and adapt group experiences to promote engagement and learning.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I plan and guide activities to teach children and youth cooperative group skills.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I observe group activities and transitions to enhance individual experiences.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 4: Enhancing Group Experiences LEVEL 3
TOTAL:**

Content Area 5

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Acts in partnership with children and youth to foster appropriate child and youth leadership and voice.

LEVEL 3

A. I share leadership and work with children and youth as appropriate.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I provide children and youth with opportunities that serve others.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I develop the capacity for self-reflection, communication, empathy, and appreciation of diverse opinions and cultures in children and youth.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 5 LEVEL 3
TOTAL:

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Content Area 6

CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND RESPONSIVENESS

Actively promotes respect for cultural diversity and creates an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful environment that embraces diversity.

LEVEL 3

A. I communicate the cultural and environmental effects on learning, behavior, and development.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I increase my own understanding of different cultural groups, including my own cultural identities, beliefs, practices, and biases.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 6

CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND RESPONSIVENESS

Actively promotes respect for cultural diversity and creates an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful environment that embraces diversity.

C. I create an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful environment for all children, youth, and families.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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D. I identify culturally specific organizations as resources for staff and community.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 6 LEVEL 3
TOTAL:**

Content Area 7

FAMILY, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Builds on respectful, reciprocal relationships across settings to promote optimal development for children, youth, and families and to enhance the quality of afterschool and youth services.

Relationships with Families LEVEL 3

A. I facilitate and model a strengths-based, family-centered approach.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I engage families in discussions to promote respectful partnerships.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I share information with families about the relationship among learning activities, environment, and child development.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 7

FAMILY, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

Builds on respectful, reciprocal relationships across settings to promote optimal development for children, youth, and families and to enhance the quality of afterschool and youth services.

D. I demonstrate support for families through reciprocal relationships.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 7: Relationships with Families LEVEL 3 TOTAL:	

Partnerships with the Community LEVEL 3

A. I demonstrate positive, reciprocal working relationships with community partners.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I demonstrate effective working relationships with volunteers.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 7: Partnerships with the Community LEVEL 3 TOTAL:	

Partnerships with Schools LEVEL 3

A. I develop relationships with appropriate school staff to better meet the individual needs of students.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 7: Partnerships with Schools LEVEL 3 TOTAL:	

Content Area 8

SAFETY AND WELLNESS

Ensures the safety and wellness of children and youth by implementing prevention, preparedness, and health and safety practices.

Knowledge of Regulations LEVEL 3

A. I develop illness and injury procedures and emergency preparedness plans.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I develop and implement systems for documentation and notification of suspected child abuse and neglect, in accordance with state law.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 8: Knowledge of Regulations LEVEL 3
TOTAL:**

Environmental Safety LEVEL 3

A. I create safe environments and procedures for children, youth, and adults.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 8: Environmental Safety LEVEL 3
TOTAL:**

Health and Wellness LEVEL 3

A. I design, assess, and modify healthy environments and procedures to protect the health of all children, youth, and adults.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I incorporate activities promoting healthy nutrition across curricular areas.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I identify and respond to nutritional issues.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 8

SAFETY AND WELLNESS

Ensures the safety and wellness of children and youth by implementing prevention, preparedness, and health and safety practices.

D. I accommodate diverse health needs and abilities.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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E. I promote a healthy lifestyle.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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F. I recognize signs of stress and trauma on children and youth and make appropriate referrals.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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G. I identify signs and symptoms of common childhood and adolescent health problems, including mental health issues, social issues, and risky behavior, and confer with my supervisor and/or the child's/youth's parent accordingly.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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H. I consistently monitor and implement strategies to support mental well-being of children and youth.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 8: Health and Wellness LEVEL 3

TOTAL:

Content Area 9

PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Supports staff and serves as a role model around professional development plans by building healthy relationships with colleagues and families, providing developmentally appropriate practices, and connecting with and utilizing resources.

Program Planning and Evaluation LEVEL 3

A. I align daily practices with the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 9

PROGRAM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Supports staff and serves as a role model around professional development plans by building healthy relationships with colleagues and families, providing developmentally appropriate practices, and connecting with and utilizing resources.

B. I participate in strategic planning and goal setting for program improvement.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I implement strategies to promote the value of the program in the community.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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D. I incorporate cultural diversity into the daily program.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 9: Program Planning and Evaluation LEVEL 3
TOTAL:**

Content Area 10

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Acts ethically, is committed to continuous learning, and advocates for best practices and policies for children and youth.

Displaying Professionalism in Practice LEVEL 3

A. I promote professionalism and ethical responsibilities by following a professional code of ethics.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I demonstrate oral and written skills appropriate to my professional role, including using technology.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I demonstrate positive relationships and supportive interactions when caring for children and youth.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 10

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LEADERSHIP

Acts ethically, is committed to continuous learning, and advocates for best practices and policies for children and youth.

D. I can describe relationships between theory and practice.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 10: Displaying Professionalism in Practice LEVEL 3	
TOTAL:	

Ongoing Professional Growth LEVEL 3

A. I practice ongoing self-reflection, self-assessment, and problem-solving strategies to promote professional growth.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I engage in continuous, collaborative professional development for the benefit of self and others.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 10: Ongoing Professional Growth LEVEL 3	
TOTAL:	

Leadership and Advocacy LEVEL 3

A. I participate in leadership and advocacy opportunities within the profession.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I encourage and empower others to engage in advocacy and leadership.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 10: Leadership and Advocacy LEVEL 3	
TOTAL:	

Self-Assessment SUMMARY

Transfer the ratings from your self-assessment into the chart below.

CONTENT AREA	SELF-RATING TOTAL	# OF COMPETENCIES	AVERAGE RATING
1. Child/Youth Growth and Development	_____	÷ 3	= _____
2. Learning Environments and Curriculum			
• Creating a Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environment and Curriculum	_____	÷ 3	= _____
• Promoting Physical, Social/Emotional, and Cognitive Development	_____	÷ 5	= _____
• Promoting Language and Communication Development	_____	÷ 1	= _____
• Promoting Creative Expression	_____	÷ 4	= _____
3. Child/Youth Observation and Assessments	_____	÷ 5	= _____
4. Interactions with Children and Youth			
• Providing Individual Guidance	_____	÷ 3	= _____
• Enhancing Group Experiences	_____	÷ 3	= _____
5. Youth Engagement	_____	÷ 3	= _____
6. Cultural Competency and Responsiveness	_____	÷ 4	= _____
7. Family, School, and Community Relationships			
• Relationships with Families	_____	÷ 4	= _____
• Partnerships with the Community	_____	÷ 2	= _____
• Partnerships with Schools	_____	÷ 1	= _____
8. Safety and Wellness			
• Knowledge of Regulations	_____	÷ 2	= _____
• Environmental Safety	_____	÷ 1	= _____
• Health and Wellness	_____	÷ 8	= _____
9. Program Planning and Development			
• Program Planning and Evaluation	_____	÷ 4	= _____
10. Professional Development and Leadership			
• Displaying Professionalism in Practice	_____	÷ 4	= _____
• Ongoing Professional Growth	_____	÷ 2	= _____
• Leadership and Advocacy	_____	÷ 2	= _____

Reflection

Review the evidence from the Self-Assessment Summary. Consider your results as you think about your areas of strength and your areas of opportunity. Reflect on the work you do daily as you answer the following questions and set personal priorities.

On which Content Area did you score the highest? Why?

What evidence do you have to support the self-rating you selected for this Content Area?

In what ways can you further develop your strengths or exhibit leadership in this area?

On which Content Area did you score the lowest? Why? What makes this area difficult for you?

Which specific competency statements represent areas of opportunity for professional development? Prioritize them in order of importance to you.

Select the first two priorities. Why are these priorities important to you and your work with youth?

Professional PLAN

Set personal goals based on the priorities you have developed from assessing your professional knowledge and skills and areas of opportunity. Focus on one or two of the top priorities. Develop one or two goals related to each of these priorities. Use the competency statements listed to help you.

For example, if your top priority is to recognize and use community resources to support and assist families and enhance programming for children and youth (Content Area 7), you might have the following goals:

- To build a resource network that will support and assist families and enhance programming.
- To learn to effectively and appropriately use community resources to support families and enhance programming.

Next think through the action steps that should be taken to accomplish your goals. Use the questions on the Professional Plan to guide you.

PRIORITY CONTENT AREA

PRIORITY COMPETENCY STATEMENT(S)

GOAL ONE

GOAL TWO

Action PLAN

Reflect on your two goals and work through these questions to develop an action plan for your professional development needs. Evaluate your plan periodically and adjust the steps as necessary. For continuous professional development, once you've achieved your goals re-assess yourself and complete the cycle again.

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 most helpful?		
What format of professional development would be 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.

Acknowledgements

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For more afterschool resources and professional development information please visit

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