



NATIONAL
AfterSchool
ASSOCIATION

Core Knowledge and **COMPETENCIES**

for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals

Self-Assessment Tool LEVEL 4

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 4.**

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 18 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 4

A. I apply research-based theories of growth and development to planning and practice.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I collaborate with others to promote growth and development.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I can explain the multiple influences on development and learning.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 1 LEVEL 4
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 4

A. I can apply content knowledge, concepts, and skills to create a developmentally appropriate learning environment and integrated curriculum.

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.

B. I develop a learning environment and curriculum using major theories of child and youth development.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I reflect on the effectiveness of learning environments and curriculum to meet individual needs, interests, development, and skill levels, and make appropriate accommodations.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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D. I collaborate with other agencies to maximize opportunities for children and youth.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 2: Creating a Developmentally Appropriate Learning Environment and Curriculum LEVEL 4 TOTAL:

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Promoting Physical, Social/Emotional, and Cognitive Development LEVEL 4

A. I evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of physical, social, and cognitive development activities and interactions.

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

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 2: Promoting Physical, Social/Emotional, and Cognitive Development LEVEL 4 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.

Promoting Language and Communication Development LEVEL 4

A. I evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of language and communication activities and interactions.

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

B. I develop and teach strategies for integrating communication development activities into all curricular areas.

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

**Content Area 2: Promoting Language and Communication Development LEVEL 4
TOTAL:**

--

Promoting Creative Expression LEVEL 4

A. I advocate for the importance of creative expression for children and youth.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I evaluate the appropriateness and effectiveness of creative activities.

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

C. I partner with community organizations that stimulate creative experiences for children and youth.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 2: Promoting Creative Expression LEVEL 4
TOTAL:**

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Content Area 3

CHILD/YOUTH OBSERVATION AND ASSESSMENT

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

LEVEL 4

A. I analyze and evaluate observation and assessment data, and apply knowledge to practice.

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

B. I select and consider assessment and screening information when making curriculum and program decisions for individuals and/or groups.

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

C. I implement formal and informal assessment tools for individual and group learning.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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D. I plan relevant and culturally appropriate assessments.

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

E. I interpret assessment results and communicate them in a clear and supportive manner.

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

F. I develop a plan that utilizes assessment information to improve curriculum and modify learning experiences.

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

G. I collaborate to create partnerships for assessment.

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

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 4

A. I apply theories of child/youth development to improve guidance and support techniques.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:

B. I individualize and improve guidance and support through child/youth observation and assessment data.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:

C. I apply differentiated instructional, guidance, and support techniques to meet diverse needs and abilities.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:

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

--

Enhancing Group Experiences LEVEL 4

A. I analyze observation, evaluation, and direct input from children and youth to improve group experiences.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:

B. I design and develop effective group activities and interactions based on current research and curriculum.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:

C. I utilize group management strategies based on theories of child and youth development.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:

**Content Area 4: Enhancing Group Experiences LEVEL 4
TOTAL:**

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Content Area 5

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

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

LEVEL 4

A. I design activities to support leadership opportunities that align with developmental abilities.

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

B. I support the implementation of curricular activities that celebrate and are informed by child/youth culture and voice.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 5 LEVEL 4
TOTAL:**

SELF-RATING:

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 4

A. I support the cultural identity, beliefs, and practices of each child and youth.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I create a trusting environment by employing multicultural strategies and teaching respect for human differences.

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

C. I incorporate global perspectives.

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

D. I build relationships with culturally specific organizations and other relevant community partners.

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.

E. I connect teaching and learning approaches to the experiences and cultures of the community and others.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 6 LEVEL 4 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 4

A. I partner, plan, and communicate to enhance family support and participation.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I review the effectiveness of family involvement activities and input structures, and recommend changes as needed.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I ensure regular staff training and oversee development of program policies, procedures, liabilities, and risk management regarding family and community involvement.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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D. I teach, mentor, and coach others about how to promote family and community engagement.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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Content Area 7: Relationships with Families LEVEL 4 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.

Partnerships with the Community LEVEL 4

A. I expand relationships with community partners to support learning, development, and well-being of children, youth, and families.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I implement and support volunteer program best/promising practices.

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

C. I recognize the influence of community norms on relationships, environment, and learning.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 7: Partnerships with the Community LEVEL 4
TOTAL:**

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Partnerships with Schools LEVEL 4

A. I maintain ongoing dialogue with school personnel as needed.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I participate in shared professional development with schools attended by program participants as appropriate.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 7: Partnerships with Schools LEVEL 4
TOTAL**

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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.

Knowledge of Regulations LEVEL 4

A. I partner with others in the development and/or revision of health and safety policies and procedures.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I assess how regulations and policies affect the quality of the program.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I provide staff leadership and train staff regarding regulations, policies, and protocols.

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

D. I anticipate and plan for potential risks to protect children, youth, and adults.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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E. I articulate and monitor adherence to policies and regulations pertaining to health and safety.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 8: Knowledge of Regulations LEVEL 4
TOTAL:**

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Environmental Safety LEVEL 4

A. I collaborate with others to ensure adherence to policies and procedures pertaining to the safety of children and youth.

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.

B. I develop policies and procedures for environmental (including the sensory and physical environment) safety.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 8: Environmental Safety LEVEL 4 TOTAL:	

Health and Wellness LEVEL 4

A. I assess and adapt the program's nutrition plan.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I collaborate with others to promote nutrition, physical health, and fitness.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I design and implement activities that incorporate healthy living topics.

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

D. I train staff on healthy living topics.

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

E. I establish policies and procedures for the documentation and notification of suspected abuse, neglect, and physical, verbal, and sexual harassment.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
Content Area 8: Health and Wellness LEVEL 4 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 4

A. I develop and monitor program policies and procedures that integrate laws, regulations, and professional standards.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I promote collaborations to support the program.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I describe and interpret program evaluation methods.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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D. I manage program resources effectively.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 9: Program Planning and Evaluation LEVEL 4
TOTAL:**

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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.

Displaying Professionalism in Practice LEVEL 4

A. I respond to challenges as opportunities for professional growth.

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.

B. I collaborate with other organizations and agencies to meet goals.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I can articulate a personal philosophy of education based on knowledge of children/youth growth and development, cultural competencies, best/promising practices, and a professional code of ethics.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 10: Displaying Professionalism in Practice LEVEL 4
TOTAL:**

Ongoing Professional Growth LEVEL 4

A. I integrate knowledge of historical, philosophical, psychological, and social foundations of child/youth development into planning and decision making.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I participate actively in a leadership role in professional associations and build professional relationships.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I create professional development opportunities for others.

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

D. I evaluate and select resources for ongoing professional development.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 10: Ongoing Professional Growth LEVEL 4
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.

Leadership and Advocacy LEVEL 4

A. I advocate for programs and policies that impact the overall quality of services for all children, youth, and families.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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B. I serve in leadership roles within the profession.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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C. I advocate for best practices in child and youth development.

EVIDENCE AND NOTES:	SELF-RATING:
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**Content Area 10: Leadership and Advocacy LEVEL 4
TOTAL:**

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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	_____	÷ 4	= _____
• Promoting Physical, Social/Emotional, and Cognitive Development	_____	÷ 2	= _____
• Promoting Language and Communication Development	_____	÷ 2	= _____
• Promoting Creative Expression	_____	÷ 3	= _____
3. Child/Youth Observation and Assessments	_____	÷ 7	= _____
4. Interactions with Children and Youth			
• Providing Individual Guidance	_____	÷ 3	= _____
• Enhancing Group Experiences	_____	÷ 3	= _____
5. Youth Engagement	_____	÷ 2	= _____
6. Cultural Competency and Responsiveness	_____	÷ 5	= _____
7. Family, School, and Community Relationships			
• Relationships with Families	_____	÷ 4	= _____
• Partnerships with the Community	_____	÷ 3	= _____
• Partnerships with Schools	_____	÷ 2	= _____
8. Safety and Wellness			
• Knowledge of Regulations	_____	÷ 5	= _____
• Environmental Safety	_____	÷ 2	= _____
• Health and Wellness	_____	÷ 5	= _____
9. Program Planning and Development			
• Program Planning and Evaluation	_____	÷ 4	= _____
10. Professional Development and Leadership			
• Displaying Professionalism in Practice	_____	÷ 3	= _____
• Ongoing Professional Growth	_____	÷ 4	= _____
• Leadership and Advocacy	_____	÷ 3	= _____

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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