

CORE KNOWLEDGE:

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

- ✓ **Core knowledge:** The central concepts that adults who work with young children need to know and understand to facilitate children’s learning and development, which are linked to early learning guidelines.
- ✓ **Core competencies:** The central range of observable skills that adults who work with young children need to facilitate children’s learning and development, which are linked to early learning guidelines.

Core knowledge and competencies can create a foundation for a professional development system. They can provide a road map for curriculum development and organization of professional development activities. In doing so, core knowledge and competencies become the basis for organizing, approving, and offering training and coursework as well as the basis for levels on a career lattice. By offering a common language for establishing early childhood student outcomes and a mechanism to document competencies throughout a practitioner’s learning experience, core knowledge and competencies can be an important tool for articulation of community training to college credit and from one level of college coursework to another. Core knowledge and competencies can be used as tools to foster cross-sector collaborations and systems integration by providing an agreed set of expectations of adult knowledge and skills that apply across all settings.

Discussion Topics

- 1) Meaning of core knowledge: What does it mean in our context?
 - Are there core knowledge areas and core competencies for early/school-age care and education professionals?
 - If not, what is used to determine content for training and courses of study?
 - Do the core knowledge and competencies apply across all sectors (i.e., child care, Head Start, public education)?
 - Are there separate core knowledge and competency documents that are used in each sector?
 - If not, what is used to determine content for training and courses of study?

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2) Themes, ideas, and questions about core knowledge:

3) Our current activities and roles related to core knowledge:

4) Possible activities and roles for the future related to core knowledge:

- What are the gaps and needs?
- How can we collaborate to meet the needs?

5) How do your group's ideas and suggestions connect with the other professional development system elements?

- Include any ideas about how to engage the community in these efforts.
