

Prenatal to Age 5

Cross-Sector Core Competencies Training

The Prenatal to Age 5 Project brought together leaders and practitioners from five service sectors that focus on children prenatally to age 5 and their families. Their charge: to identify core competencies for serving the prenatal to age 5 population.

The Problem

Professionals typically enter the field educated and trained in discipline-specific competencies. That specialization is further reinforced by work sector organizations and program-specific mandates, funding, and scope of practice. This is great for developing deep expertise. It's not so great for meeting the comprehensive and holistic needs of expectant families and families with young children. Too often children and families find themselves caught in the gaps between sectors with needs unmet and hopes unrealized. The interests, needs, strengths, and hopes of expectant parents, very young children, and their families are bigger than the bounds of any one discipline or service sector.

The P-5 Project's Response

The Prenatal to Age 5 Project shifts professionals' focus from a discipline- and sector-specific lens, to a cross-sector collaborative view. The more integrated view invites:

- Sharing knowledge and resources to eliminate gaps.
- Coordinating services to reduce barriers.
- Partnering with families to ensure a family-centered approach.
- Supporting colleagues by sharing expertise and perspectives.
- Relationship-building and reflective practice.

Adopting a Cross-Sector Collaborative Approach

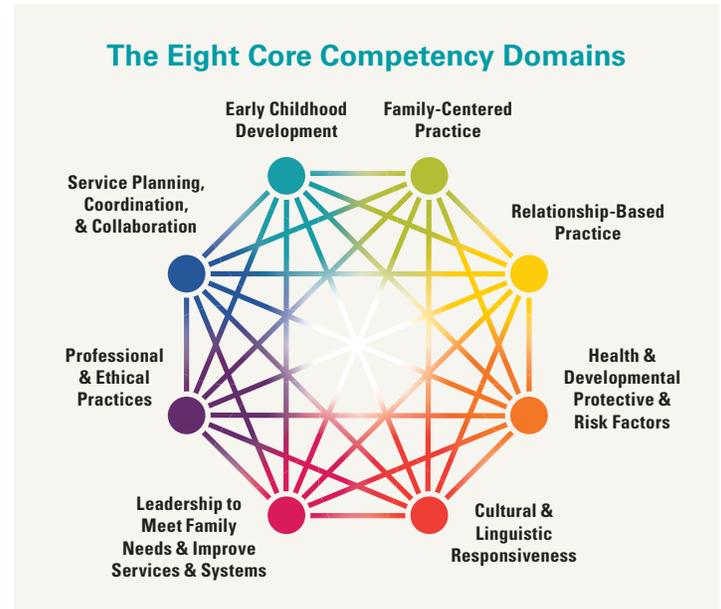
Training can help create shared understanding across the diverse early childhood workforce. **The Prenatal to Age 5 Cross-Sector Core Competencies Training** provides information, examples, and practice opportunities that support advanced practitioners' implementation of the **eight core competency domains** developed through the Prenatal to Age 5 Workforce Development Project's expert consensus process.



The Training

The self-paced online training provides varied interactive learning experiences that add to professionals' existing discipline-specific competencies. Cross-sector early childhood professionals gain knowledge of core concepts including:

- the unique developmental needs of the prenatal to age 5 period;
- the influence of family, culture, and community on early childhood development;
- a strengths-based and family-centered approach; and
- a cross-disciplinary, cross-sector collaborative perspective.



Eight 1-hour lessons provide inspiration, knowledge, strategies, and motivation for implementation of the eight core competency domains. A **Discussion Forum** provides opportunity for interaction, reflection, and peer feedback. **Optional Fieldwork** provides opportunity for extended reflection and learning. **Community of Practice** meetings offer peer interaction and support for celebrating achievements and addressing the surprises and dilemmas that arise in putting the lessons into practice.

The Benefits

We don't just tell participants to coordinate and collaborate across sectors; we show them how to do it. The learning experience itself is cross-sector, both in the content and through the selection of participants. We provide examples, tools, and strategies that show the way to work in a cross-sector and collaborative way. The Community of Practice further reinforces this learning.

Young children benefit when their healthy development is enhanced by coordination and collaboration. **Expectant families and those with children ages birth to 5** benefit when they experience meaningful partnerships with professionals who are responsive and help build strengths. **Early childhood professionals** benefit through increased job satisfaction and enhanced competence and confidence that ensues when they can more effectively support young children's and families' strengths and respond to needs.



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Headquartered in Washington, DC, with a regional Western Office in California, ZERO TO THREE is a national, nonprofit organization that informs, trains, and supports professionals, policymakers, and parents in their efforts to improve and to promote the health and development of infants and toddlers.

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