TRAINER STANDARDS

Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

CONTENTS

Overview of Changes for Fiscal Year 2023

Revised Sections

- Aligned indicators with the updated trainer observation rubrics.

- Removed "Examples in Practice". A new resource with standard area examples will be included on Coaching Companion.

- Removed Appendix on Self-Assessment. This resource will be available on Coaching Companion.

- Removed Appendix on Supporting Professional Growth Across the Standards. This will be available on Coaching Companion.

New Sections

- Created an appendix with the synchronous observation rubric

- Created an appendix with the asynchronous observation rubric

Acknowledgments

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of the individuals who were involved in the revision of the original trainer competencies. It is difficult to capture precisely how many people were involved in the effort, but well over 100 voices were heard in the process, including trainers, training participants, training program administrators, and others involved in the business of adult professional development. Thank you for sharing your insights through webinars, surveys, draft comments, and for reaching out directly to discuss this resource. This was a tremendous effort that would not have been possible without all of you.

We would also like to applaud the investment of time and energy of the workgroup representatives. They developed broad recommendations for the State-Approved Training Program and directed the specific changes to the trainer competencies. The members braided their collective expertise with their commitment to improving services to create a resource that will inform our professional development system for years to come. Thank you for your leadership!

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Introduction

Individuals can choose from a variety of settings for learning, including higher education courses, relationship-based professional development, trainings offered by community-based organizations, on-the-job learning, or a combination of these. The format, length, and depth of the materials covered in these opportunities vary. While there is variation in the learning opportunities, we know several key features must be in place for them to be impactful, including:

- Clear intention and purpose
- Grounding in the science of the content area
- Application of the science of adult learning
- Emphasis on applying the concepts to real-life situations
- Alignment with core competencies and established standards
- Processes for accountability for meeting quality expectations
- Equitable access (e.g., anti-racist design and content, affordability, language, geography)

If these features are in place, it is more likely that the learning will improve the quality of programming (Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council, 2015). This is why it is important that the individuals who provide learning experiences for professionals have the knowledge, skills, and abilities that allow us to meet these quality indicators.

While the training program and the state's professional development system are moving in the right direction, meeting all of the indicators listed above will take time. To continue moving toward this goal, the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) worked in collaboration with a representative group of stakeholders to identify what characteristics, knowledge, skills, and abilities are most essential for a state-approved trainer. This work led to the development of the revised trainer standards.

The Trainer Standards offer a unified concept of what it means to be an effective trainer. They offer a shared language for trainers and policymakers as they talk about trainer preparation and support and create clarity around expectations for individuals who are currently in the role, those who aspire to it, and the many key individuals who support training programs. These standards may be used to support individual practice, guide professional development planning, and inform the development of new learning opportunities.

Need for Updated Trainer Standards

The original trainer competencies were created in 2012. We took on the revision work so that we can be responsive to the changes that have taken place over the last decade. Researchers have made significant progress to better understand how adults learn, how to provide services with a racial equity lens and create effective virtual learning environments. DCYF has also had a chance to implement the state-approved training program and collect feedback from trainers, trainer observers, and program administrators about how we can improve trainer supports.

This trainer resource reflects the following updates:

- Addition of a new standard on developing an anti-biased and anti-racist approach
- Addition of new competencies for virtual learning environment
- Update in format to match the revised relationship-based professional development standards

The workgroup also paid close attention to the removal of repetitive indicators and placed considerable attention on making the standards easy to use for professional development and during quality assurance monitoring observations.

DCYF's goal is that this will be a living document that will undergo regular revision that will reflect changes in research, practice, and policy, as well as feedback from the community.

Overview of the Design Principles

We believe that all individuals who are involved in providing learning opportunities through the state-approved training program are committed to supporting the important work of professionals because they believe that all children, youth, and families deserve access to quality services. We want them to receive opportunities that are delivered by knowledgeable, compassionate, and kind individuals who are committed to racial equity. Our goal is to use the training standards to create a higher level of quality for learning in our state.

These standards are based on a number of assumptions about adult learning, racial equity, and the roles and responsibilities of trainers, policymakers, and program administrators. We want to call them out so that everyone who uses these standards can understand the decisions that we made.

Assumptions About Training

- Purpose of training is to provide access to essential knowledge and skills so that the learner grows a strong understanding of the science of child and youth development and program leadership in order to provide services that will improve child and youth outcomes.
- Learning opportunities should offer providers a chance to exercise skills so that they become critical and reflective thinkers, compassionate and visionary leaders, and develop the skills they need in order to meet the needs of every child, youth, and family.
- Trainings can be the place where learners can connect with others around the process of growth and improvement.
- Impactful trainings are grounded in adult learning principles and take into account the variations in learning preferences that may be driven by culture and non-white values and norms.

Assumptions About the Challenges with Training

- There is pervasive, inequitable access to quality training in our current training program for child and youth care professionals who speak a primary language other than English and represent marginalized populations. Latinx, Somali, and other language-minority groups are more likely to have limited access to high-quality curriculum and to encounter multiple barriers to participate in training opportunities.
- Inequities in professional development opportunities are the result of unjust structures and institutional design that has created systems that intentionally and unintentionally perpetuate systems that deprive people of color. To work toward racial equity and social justice, we need to take a close look at the conditions in which professional development occurs, how that learning is organized and developed, who facilitates the learning, how those facilitators are prepared for their role, and how we guide and measure the learning outcomes.

- To address the root causes of disparities in children, we cannot just rely on trainers and training participants. We need to examine the interconnected and multi-layered systems in which early care and education exist, and use the spheres of influence of our roles to move toward the goal of dismantling racism.

Assumptions About the People Who Are Involved with Training

- Every professional is *capable of learning*, regardless of their primary language, identity markers, and professional experiences.
- Participants arrive to the training with their own rich and unique set of skills, knowledge, insights, and experiences. Trainers must acknowledge the wealth of individual and collective experiences in the room.
- Trainers are passionate about early childhood education and youth care, and they often have firsthand experience in programs. They require their own ongoing opportunities to build the skills that are captured in these standards.

Standards for State-Approved Trainers

The Washington State Trainer Standards build upon work previously developed in Washington State (the former Department of Early Learning, now DCYF, 2012). The standards are influenced by guidelines and competencies identified by national talent development associations, such as the Association for Talent Development, latest research, and other early learning trainer standards that are employed across the country. The development team paid special attention to make sure that this foundational document reflected the importance of racial equity as well as individual, social, economic, and cultural diversity.

Standard I: Anti-Bias and Anti-Racist Approach

In order for us, trainers, to provide impactful learning, we must recognize that all individuals in the training play a role in the systems of oppression that are in place around us. All of us hold multiple identities, are part of social groups, and have complex and intricate personal backgrounds that are worthy of dignity and respect. We also need to acknowledge that every person exists within a broader context of structural inequities in which implicit and explicit bias constantly shape how we navigate the world. Trainers have a responsibility to identify specific barriers to engagement and retention among participants. They must take steps to reduce the harmful impact of racism and promote equity in access and opportunity.

Standard II: Learning Environment

As a trainer, you will need to create an environment that will minimize distractions and encourage learners to participate to the fullest extent possible. The way a learner feels in their learning space will play a significant role in their attention and engagement throughout the session. Keep in mind the individual learner's and the group's psychological and emotional safety as well as physical comforts, even if the training is delivered online. Though it is not possible for a trainer to make sure that everyone is comfortable at the same time, you can strive to set the tone for the room by addressing bias, challenging false or derogatory views, focusing on strengths, and modeling respectful behavior. Pay close attention to participants with mobility constraints and make an effort to improve the accessibility of the space, and be prepared to support other diversity of learners in your sessions.

Standard III: Preparing and Developing Content

Learners attend training to gain new knowledge and skills so that they can better serve children and their families. That is why it is important to make sure that you are sharing the most accurate and up-to-date information and practice in your trainings. You may be delivering trainings that you created or using content that was put together by someone else. In both cases, the training that you deliver must be aligned with the core competencies (early learning; school-age) and the Early Learning and Development Guidelines. You may also need to make adjustments in the training to make sure that the learning experience is relevant and impactful for all participants and that you are meeting the Washington State trainer standards.

Standard IV: Facilitation

A trainer takes on the important role of a facilitator, and through facilitation they are able to guide a large group of people through the content and activities so that they can meet the learning objectives of the session. Trainers take on the role of creating appropriately challenging learning experiences for all of their participants. This means that they are constantly observing and identifying the learning needs, interests, and challenges that their participants are experiencing, and using that information to make in-the-moment changes to their instruction and activities. This standard highlights the important aspects of a trainer's role as a facilitator.

Standard V: Evaluation and Assessment

Trainers are always gathering information about their learners to understand how they are making progress toward the learning objectives. They gather this information in different ways during and after the session and use it to make adjustments to the way they are facilitating their training and even to guide the future revision of the content.

Overview of the Standards and Competencies

Each of the standards is made up of multiple competency areas, and each of the competency areas are further broken down into indicators.

Standard	Competency
Developing an Anti-Biased and Anti-Racist Approach	1. Awareness of self 2. Practices that advance racial equity and social justice
Learning Environment	1. Relational learning environment 2. Physical learning environment 3. Virtual learning environment
Preparing and Developing	1. Engaging all participants 2. Learning content 3. Virtual design
Facilitation	1. Supporting adult learners 2. Facilitation strategies
Evaluation and Assessment	1. Evaluating learning during the training (formative assessment) 2. Evaluating achievement of learning objectives (summative assessment)

Reading the Trainer Standards

Once you familiarize yourself with how the standards are organized, it will be easier for you to understand how to use them in your practice. Each standard has several competencies. Each of the competencies has a description section that shares the purpose and intent. Next, each competency is separated into indicators. These describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities for three different levels. Examples for each indicator can be found on Coaching Companion.

Competency →
Description →
Indicators →

2. Learning Content

As a trainer, you have a responsibility to provide the most accurate and up-to-date research and practices to the participants of your training. The content that you share must align with your field-specific competencies. Trainers who work with child care providers must reference the Core Competencies (early learning; school-age) and Early Learning and Development Guidelines. The way you introduce the content and allow the learners to interact with and apply concepts to their settings will influence the likelihood that changes will occur within them and their programs.

Emerging Practice	Establishing Practice	Deepening Practice
a. Appears knowledgeable in the content areas and related core competencies. b. Connects the description and learning objectives with the core competency areas for your audiences. c. Presents materials that are grounded in research-informed practices. d. Begins training by identifying learning objectives.	*And* a. There is a clear connection between the activities and the learning objectives. b. Includes activities that allow learners to apply concepts to their workplace or real-life settings. c. Creates transitions between topics and activities that maintain a logical flow throughout the session. d. Avoids plagiarism by recognizing contributions to training content development.	*And* a. Helps participants identify opportunities and barriers to implementation and what they will need to overcome them.

Understanding the Levels

The three levels in the progression are intended to capture the movement from basic to more complex knowledge and skills. As trainers progress along the continuum, they are supporting their learners to have more responsibility for their growth, helping them build self-awareness and moving them into higher-order thinking so that they can analyze, evaluate, and create.

Understanding the Progressions

The Trainer Standards are organized using a developmental approach that shows a progression across levels. This leveling strategy is based on several assumptions that are detailed below.

Knowledge and skill development occurs over a period of time and is not a linear process.
Trainers need time to develop their skills. Each individual will develop their skills at their own pace. That means that each person's strengths and areas of growth will be unique and will continue to evolve based on the new training contexts that they encounter.

Growth occurs through reflection upon experiences, feedback, and other professional learning opportunities.

Both trainers and learners are involved in a cycle of continuous growth and improvement. They must build their knowledge of effective strategies, implement them, collect data on how things went, reflect and find meaning in the data, seek additional resources and support, and then make adjustments in their approach. This cycle may be done several times until the strategies lead to positive outcomes. The trainer models the cycle of learning for the participants in their training.

The learning process is complex.

Trainers need to grow their content area expertise but also their understanding of the trainer standards. Trainers must learn how to motivate, encourage, inspire, and build awareness within individuals as much as possible during the time they have together. They are also challenged to get to know the individuals who they are training in a short amount of time.

Standard I: Developing an Anti-Biased and Anti-Racist Approach

1. Awareness of Self

In order for us, trainers, to provide impactful learning, we must recognize that we play a role in the systems of oppression that are in place around us. Every person exists within a broader context of structural inequities in which implicit and explicit bias constantly shape how they navigate the world. All of us hold multiple identities, are part of social groups, and have complex and intricate personal backgrounds worthy of dignity and respect. We must commit to continuous improvement so that we can best support the learning process of our participants.

Self-Exploration	Recognize Impacts	Take Action
	And	*And*
a. Identify how own race and cultural heritage, language/s, social and cultural identities, attitudes, values, and beliefs contribute to your identities. b. Identify how your varied social identities have provided strengths and understandings based on experiences of both injustice and privilege (NAEYC, 2020). c. Identify that your varied social identities are privileged and unprivileged, depending on context.	a. Analyze the impacts of individual and institutional racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, xenophobia, and other systems of oppression on you and the people around you. b. Consider the diverse experiences and perspectives of learners without generalizing or stereotyping (NAEYC, 2020). c. Recognize that everyone has some type of bias based on their personal background and experiences (NAEYC, 2020).	a. Listen for and examine how your mental models originate in oppressive ideologies (Aguilar, 2020). b. Reflect on how racism or bias may appear in the context of your work with others. c. Address own implicit bias or racism as it occurs in the context of your work. d. Recognize that your role as a trainer contributes to power dynamics during training; take steps to shift power to the participants.

2. Practices that Advance Racial Equity and Social Justice

As a trainer, you have a responsibility to identify specific barriers to engagement and retention among your participants. You must take steps to reduce the harmful impact of racism and promote equity in access and opportunity. "*All training participants have a right to equitable learning opportunities that help them achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society. That means that all of us have an obligation to advance equity within the learning that we provide" (NAEYC 2020).* We can do this by recognizing the presence of power, status, privilege, using strategies that show respect for people's cultures, and addressing the uneven distribution of power and privilege that is built into our society and systems.

Foundational Practices	Content and Facilitation	Take Action
a. Uses intentional, people-first language that demonstrates acceptance of races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, identities, and cultures. b. Recognizes the power and benefits of diversity and inclusivity by carefully observing and listening to training participants, and considering diverse experiences and perspectives (NAEYC, 2020). c. Recognizes that expectations, practices, curriculum, and/or policies may contribute (perhaps unwittingly) to inequitable outcomes and take steps to change them (NAEYC, 2020). d. Open and receptive to feedback about comments or actions that were perceived as biased, and seeks to gain deeper understanding to improve practice. e. Resist the urge to become defensive, especially if you are a member of a privileged group (NAEYC, 2020). f. Acknowledges that there may be tension in the training space because of varied experiences and perspectives about racial equity and social justice.	*And* a. Uses materials that demonstrate inclusion and responsiveness to people of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, cultures, families, languages, and abilities. b. Appropriately incorporates cultural traditions, history, and language/s to promote multi-culturalism. c. Leads trainings with a racial equity mindset to bring out the participants' expertise. d. Considers the identity markers of learners and adjusts content so it is grounded in the context of culture and lived experiences.	*And* a. Shares constructive feedback and discusses alternative approaches when observing potentially biased actions by others (NAEYC, 2020). b. Revise your content and/or adjust your facilitation approach when you receive feedback about potential bias in your training. c. Participate in professional learning so that you can reduce harm and dismantle racism. d. Take action to promote inclusivity when outcomes vary significantly by social identities (e.g., lopsided understanding of content) (NAEYC, 2020). e. Actively addresses microaggressions, racism, sexism, or statements or behavior that may harm learners. f. Helps participants to see how behaviors, beliefs, and ways of being perpetuate systemic oppression (Aguilar, 2020).

Standard II: Learning Environment

1. Relational Learning Environment

Your goal, as a trainer, is to create a setting that allows participants to be available to engage in the learning process. Strive to create a learning environment that offers the individual learner a sense of belonging and psychological and emotional wellbeing. You will support learners to become aware of and prepared to address bias, focus on building strengths, and fostering mutual respect and trust between participants. As a trainer, you are constantly modeling how to maintain personal integrity, honesty, and sincerity while showing respect for the participant's world views, learning preferences, and interests. Pay attention to creating a positive relational learning environment in-person and virtually.

Emerging Practice	Establishing Practice	Deepening Practice
a. Demonstrates compassion, understanding, respect and empathy for the learner. b. Provides an opportunity for participants to share their perspectives. c. Provides welcoming and respectful interactions. d. Establishes group norms that foster positive emotional and psychological well-being at the beginning of a training.	*And* a. Notices and responds to verbal and/or non-verbal cues (Non-verbal cues may not be observable for all participants in a live virtual training). b. Expresses confidence in learners' ability to master the content. c. Encourages respectful dialogue by suspending judgment and being open to alternative viewpoints. d. Responds to conflict as it develops.	*And* a. Uses strategies to manage energy levels to help participants focus on learning. b. Provides feedback to participants to encourage them to be inquisitive and keep an open mind when examining the perspectives of others. c. Recognizes emotional responses to training content and help groups and individuals identify constructive ways to process.

2. Physical Learning Environment

The way the physical learning environment is set up plays a role in promoting learning. Your goal is for all participants to navigate the environment and participate to the fullest extent possible. Physical comforts like lighting, temperature, and cleanliness of the space minimize distractions away from the learning event. You may have participants with mobility constraints; make an effort to improve the accessibility of the space. If you are training virtually, you can prompt learners to make sure that their physical space is comfortable and has minimal distractions.

Emerging Practice	Establishing Practice	Deepening Practice
a. Prepares learners for what to expect about the space prior to the training. b. Prepares the learning environment for adult learners.	*And* a. Sets up the space to best support and engage learners to fully participate. b. Identifies and adapts aspects of the environment or materials that may create barriers or limit participation.	*And* a. Provides additional comforts in the training environment.

3. Virtual Learning Environment

You may choose to offer a virtual learning event. It is important to be ready to support the diversity of learners who may participate in your online training so that everyone can engage to the best of their ability.

Emerging Practice	Establishing Practice	Deepening Practice
a. Appears to understand how to use the capabilities of the virtual platform. b. Provides technical assistance to learners prior to the training start time that will help them log in and use the training platform. c. Offers to provide guidance for learners who have difficulties with the platform during the session. d. All media and technology is available and functioning for learning event; use a back-up plan if technology fails.	*And* a. Establishes, models and enforces ground rules for using platform functions. b. Demonstrates effective time management strategies. c. Creates transparency about use of any data collected through activity submissions. d. Provides timely responses to participants' engagement attempts.	*And* a. Uses different types of online learning tools to encourage interactions among learners. b. Anticipates technological challenges and carefully selects online learning tools that will be easy to navigate.

Standard III: Preparing and Developing

1. Engaging All Participants

Every training participant has unique strengths, skills, ideas and experiences. In order to make your training relevant and impactful for all participants, you must address learner variability by providing flexible and customizable learning experiences so that *all* individuals have equal opportunities to learn.

Emerging Practice	Establishing Practice	Deepening Practice
a. Applies principles of universal design for learning so that all can access and participate in the learning event. b. Shows flexibility for learners' needs by addressing emerging areas of interest and questions as they come up. c. Uses clear, direct spoken and written language that is simple and respectful. d. Connects with training participants prior to the training to identify supports for accessibility barriers, such as language(s), hearing and visual impairments.	*And* a. Offers learners multiple types of activities to engage, reflect, practice, and demonstrate their knowledge.	*And* a. Provides scaffoldings and gradually scales back when learners show growing understanding and skills. b. Uses pre-assessment activity data and feedback to adjust the level of content based on the learners' needs. c. Uses different participant groupings to promote teamwork and support individual and group participation.

2. Learning Content

As a trainer, you have a responsibility to provide the most accurate and up-to-date research and practices to the participants of your training. The content that you share must align with your field-specific competencies. Trainers who

work with child care providers must reference the Core Competencies (early learning; school-age) and Early Learning and Development Guidelines. The way you introduce the content and allow the learners to interact with and apply concepts to their settings will influence the likelihood that changes will occur within them and their programs.

Emerging Practice	Establishing Practice	Deepening Practice
a. Appears knowledgeable in the content areas and related core competencies. b. Connects the description and learning objectives with the core competency areas for your audiences. c. Presents materials that are grounded in research-informed practices. d. Begins training by identifying learning objectives.	*And* a. There is a clear connection between the activities and the learning objectives. b. Includes activities that allow learners to apply concepts to their workplace or real-life settings. c. Creates transitions between topics and activities that maintain a logical flow throughout the session. d. Avoids plagiarism by recognizing contributions to training content development.	*And* a. Helps participants identify opportunities and barriers to implementation and what they will need to overcome them.

3. Virtual Design (online synchronous)

You can deliver training online, either live or through a self-paced option. In both cases, you need to carefully consider the learners' experience as they use the virtual platform. The design of the learning objectives, the materials used, methods of instruction/facilitation, and assessment need to be thoughtfully designed to match the platform that is being used.

Emerging Practice	Establishing Practice	Deepening Practice
a. Uses relevant visuals to support training content. b. Provides simple and consistent instructions on how to navigate the platform's features. c. Presents content in multiple ways (e.g. video, text).	*And* a. Provides access to materials at appropriate moments, such as before, during, or after a training.	*And* a. Creates intentional, structured opportunities for participants to connect with peers (either in their workplace or in the training) to support with implementation. b. Handouts, PPTs and scanned documents are accessible for persons with disabilities.

Standard IV: Facilitation

1. Supporting Adult Learners

Supporting adult learners can be a complex undertaking. In order for you to be an effective trainer, you need to understand how adult learners grow and develop. This means that you must recognize that patterns of learning and development depend on the individual across all developmental domains. You can be successful if you create a match between the career stages and characteristics of the learner, the relevancy of the content, their readiness to receive and apply the information, and the setting in which the learning takes place. Using that insight, you can create appropriately challenging learning experiences. Keep in mind that participants have full lives and are impacted by their jobs, children, and other dependents. It may take time for participants to fully engage in a learner role.

Emerging Practice	Establishing Practice	Deepening Practice
	And	*And*
a. Recognizes that participants have unique learning needs. b. Begins the training by identifying the skills and knowledge that learners have about the training topics. c. Uses strengths-based language that encourages learning.	a. Offers individualized, timely and specific feedback to learners. b. Creates opportunities to identify how the content is relevant and will bring beneficial changes to their work.	a. Uses strategies to develop learners' self-assessment and reflection skills. b. Adjusts the content and facilitation based on information about participants' learning preferences and readiness of change.

*Please note that many of these practices call upon a trainer's ability to adapt to individual learner's needs. How quickly you make adaptations will depend on your experience as a trainer.

2. Facilitation Strategies

Facilitation is used to help learners acquire, retain and apply new knowledge and skills. As you introduce new information you will guide the discussion and take steps to deepen the exploration of the subject. By making real-time adjustments to the content, you can make it more meaningful and relevant to the participants.

Emerging Practice	Establishing Practice	Deepening Practice
	And	*And*
a. Uses real-life examples and/or scenarios that are written, spoken, or video format to share experiences that support learning objectives. b. Repeats comments or questions (when appropriate) to ensure that all participants hear and understand. c. Acknowledges participants' comments and ideas. d. Gives participants verbal and non-verbal ways to interact with the content. e. Explains activity instructions and provides support to make sure all participants understand what to do.	a. Engages the learner in identifying their strengths, opportunities for growth and goals for the training. b. Manages discussions so all can share perspectives, refocuses the group on aspects that were not addressed, and summarizes the key points. c. Models not having answers to every question so you can build an appreciation of the learning process. d. Uses open-ended questions to stimulate discussions.	a. Listens for emerging themes and extend participant's thinking by connecting comments to a broader context. b. Addresses factors that may create resistance, disruptive behavior, or conflict within training groups.

Standard V: Evaluation and Assessment

1. Evaluating Achievement of Learning Objectives (Summative Assessment)		
You are expected to measure participants' progress toward the learning objectives at the end of your session. This allows you and the learners to see their understanding of the concepts so that they can apply them into practice. Effective trainings are those that are able to shift learners' behavior as a result of the instruction. The assessment approach should take into consideration the linguistic and cultural diversity of the learners.		
Emerging Practice	**Establishing Practice**	**Deepening Practice**
a. Measures achievement of learning objectives through activities.	*And* a. Uses assessment results to inform the issuance of training completions. b. Creates assessments that allow learners to reflect on the learning and make connections to real life.	*And* a. Creates several options for learners to demonstrate what they know.

Using the Trainer Standards

State-approved trainers, employers, and funders may use the standards to support individual practice, guide professional development planning, and inform the development of new learning opportunities.

Supporting Individual Professional Growth

Growth is continuous. We expect that every trainer is committed to furthering their knowledge and expertise in facilitating learning events. Trainers, like other professionals, should be engaged in continual self-reflection about their professional practice so that they can improve their practice.

The standards were designed with growth in mind. They can be used in conjunction with the Trainer Observation Rubrics (Appendix A and B) to help professionals decide on meaningful and relevant professional learning opportunities that would deepen understanding and practice.

Guidelines for Organization Trainer Mentors and Employers of Trainers

If you are an organization trainer mentor (OTM) or employ trainers, you can use the trainer standards to set expectations and inform future professional development. We would like to offer a couple of guidelines on supporting your trainer workforce:

- Familiarize yourself with the Standards of Practice and Professionalism and the Trainer Standards to have a strong understanding of the policies and procedures.
- Provide training observations followed by reflective conversations to encourage the trainer to reflect on their session and take the lead for identified areas of growth and next steps. Offer additional insights to expand their understanding of the training successes and areas for opportunity.
- Provide access to annual professional development opportunities related to the content that the trainer most often delivers, anti-bias and anti-racist approaches, or other concepts addressed in the Trainer Standards. A minimum of 15 hours of annual continuing education is required for trainers (monitoring begins in 2023).
- Conduct annual evaluations involving observation, participant evaluations, and self-reflection.

Conclusion

State-approved trainers play a critical role within the state's professional development system. They provide the majority of the in-service hours for child care providers across all settings to meet their annual professional development requirements. We want to make sure that we are meeting the needs of our trainers. If you have any insights, ideas, and requests for how we can better support our trainers in reaching the expectations detailed in this document, please reach out and share them with us.

This resource was developed to be a living document. It will undergo periodic revisions based on research and advancements made in the field, feedback from users, and other systems-level changes within Washington State. If you have any ideas about how to improve the usability and functionality of this document, reach out to DCYF to share those invaluable comments. Together, we can build a better system of supports!

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Appendix A: Synchronous Observation Rubric

Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Synchronous Observation Rubric

Trainer Name:	STARS ID:
Training Date:	Training Title:
Format:	Observer:

Standard I: Developing an Anti-Biased and Anti-Racist Approach

State-approved trainers will receive a self-reflection worksheet for the Awareness of Self competency from the Professional Development Team at DCYF. Trainers are encouraged to complete the reflections prompts independently.

2. Practices that Advance Racial Equity and Social Justice				
				Notes
Foundational Practices	a	Uses intentional, people-first language that demonstrates acceptance of races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, identities and cultures.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Recognizes the power and benefits of diversity and inclusivity by carefully observing and listening to training participants, and considering diverse experiences and perspectives (NAEYC, 2020).	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	d	Open and receptive to feedback about comments or actions that were perceived as biased, and seeks to gain deeper understanding to improve practice.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	
	f	Acknowledges that there may be tension in the training space because of varied experiences and perspectives about racial equity and social justice.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	
Content and Facilitation	a	Uses materials that demonstrate inclusion and responsiveness to people of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, cultures, families, languages and abilities.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Appropriately incorporates cultural traditions, history, and language/s to promote multi-culturalism.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

				Notes
Take Action	c	Leads trainings with a racial equity mindset to bring out the participants' expertise.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	a	Shares constructive feedback and discusses alternative approaches when observing potentially biased actions by others (NAEYC, 2020).	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	
	e	Actively addresses micro-aggressions, racism, sexism or statements or behavior that may harm learners.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	
	f	Helps participants to see how behaviors, beliefs, and ways of being perpetuate systemic oppression (Aguilar, 2020).	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

Standard II: Learning Environment

1. Relational Learning Environment

				Notes
Emerging	a	Demonstrates compassion, understanding, respect and empathy for the learner.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Provides an opportunity for participants to share their perspectives.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Provides welcoming and respectful interactions.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	d	Establishes group norms that foster positive emotional and psychological well-being at the beginning of a training.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	a	Notices and responds to verbal and/or non-verbal cues. *(Non-verbal cues may not be observable for all participants in a live virtual training).*	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Expresses confidence in learners' ability to master the content.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Encourages respectful dialogue by suspending judgement and being open to alternative viewpoints.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	d	Responds to conflict as it develops.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	

				Notes
Deepening	a	Uses strategies to manage energy levels to help participants focus on learning.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Provides feedback to participants to encourage them to be inquisitive and keep an open mind when examining the perspectives of others.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Recognizes emotional responses to training content and helps groups and individuals identify constructive ways to process.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	

2. Physical Learning Environment				☐ **NA**
				Notes
Emerging	a	Prepares learners for what to expect about the space prior to the training.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Prepares the learning environment for adult learners.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	a	Sets up the space to best support and engage learners to fully participate.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Identifies and adapts aspects of the environment or materials that may create barriers or limit participation.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Provides additional comforts in the training environment.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

3. Virtual Learning Environment				☐ **NA**
				Notes
Emerging	a	Appears to understand how to use the capabilities of the virtual platform.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Provides technical assistance to learners prior to the training start time that will help them log-in and use the training platform.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Offers to provide guidance for learners who have difficulties with the platform during the session.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	
	d	All media and technology is available and functioning for learning event; uses a back-up plan if technology fails.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

Establishing	a	Establishes, models and enforces ground rules for using platform functions (ex. camera use, raise hand, muting, chat box use).	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Demonstrates effective time management strategies.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Creates transparency about use of data collected through activity submissions.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	d	Provides timely responses to participants' engagement attempts.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Uses different types of online learning tools to encourage interactions among learners.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

Standard III: Preparing and Developing

1. Engaging All Participants

				Notes
Emerging	b	Shows flexibility for learners' needs by addressing emerging areas of interest and questions as they come up.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Uses clear, direct spoken and written language that is simple and respectful.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	d	Connects with training participants prior to the training to identify supports for accessibility barriers, such as language(s), hearing and visual impairments.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	a	Offers learners multiple types of activities to engage, reflect, practice and demonstrate their knowledge.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Provides scaffolding and gradually scales back when learners show growing understanding and skill.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Uses different participant groupings to promote teamwork and support individual and group participation.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

2. Learning Content

				Notes
Emerging	a	Appears knowledgeable in the content areas and related core competencies.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Presents materials that are grounded in research-informed practices.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	d	Begins training by identifying learning objectives.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	a	There is a clear connection between the activities and the learning objectives.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Includes activities that allow learners to apply concepts to their workplace or real-life settings.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Creates transitions between topics and activities that maintain a logical flow throughout the session.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	d	Avoids plagiarism by recognizing contributions to training content development.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Helps participants identify opportunities and barriers to implementation and what they will need to overcome them.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

3. Virtual Design (online synchronous)　☐ NA

				Notes
Emerging	a	Uses relevant visuals to support training content.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Provides simple and consistent instructions on how to navigate the platform's features.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Presents content in multiple ways (e.g. video, text).	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	a	Provides access to materials at appropriate moments, such as before, during and/or after a training.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Creates intentional, structured opportunities for participants to connect with peers (either in their workplace or in the training) to support implementation.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Handouts, PPTs and scanned documents are accessible for persons with disabilities.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

Standard IV: Facilitation

1. Supporting Adult Learners

				Notes
Emerging	b	Begins the training by identifying the skills and knowledge that learners have about the training topics.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	c	Uses strengths-based language that encourages learning	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	a	Offers individualized, timely and specific feedback to learners.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	
Establishing	b	Creates opportunities to identify how the content is relevant and will bring beneficial changes to their work.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Uses strategies to develop learners' self-assessment and reflection skills.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

2. Facilitation Strategies

				Notes
Emerging	a	Uses real-life examples and/or scenarios that are written, spoken, or video format to share experiences that support learning objectives.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	b	Repeats comments or questions (when appropriate) to ensure that all participants hear and understand.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	c	Acknowledges participants' comments and ideas.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	d	Gives participants verbal and non-verbal ways to interact with the content.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	e	Explains activity instructions and provides support to make sure all participants understand what to do.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	a	Engages the learner in identifying their strengths, opportunities for growth and goals for the training.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	b	Manages discussions so all can share perspectives, refocuses the group on	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

				Notes
		aspects that were not addressed, and summarizes the key points.		
	c	Models not having answers to every question so learners can build an appreciation of the learning process.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	
	d	Uses open-ended questions to stimulate discussions.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Listens for emerging themes and extends participant's thinking by connecting comments to a broader context.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Addresses factors that may create resistance, disruptive behavior, or conflict within training groups.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	

Standard V: Evaluation and Assessment

1. Evaluating Achievement of Learning Objectives (Summative Assessment)				
				Notes
Emerging	a	Measures achievement of learning objectives through activities.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	b	Creates assessments that allow learners to reflect on the learning and make connections to real-life.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Creates several options for learners to demonstrate what they know.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

MERIT Data Entry Review

Recommendations for the Trainer
Please use this section to provide general feedback and guidance for the trainer based on the observation as well as recommendations for trainer support funds (if applicable). The trainer will use this information to inform future professional development decisions and improvement to the training session.

Appendix B: Asynchronous Observation Rubric

Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Asynchronous Observation Rubric

Trainer Name:	STARS ID:
Training Date:	Training Title:
Format:	Observer:

Standard I: Developing an Anti-Biased and Anti-Racist Approach

State-approved trainers will receive a self-reflection worksheet for the Awareness of Self competency of Standard I from the Professional Development Team at DCYF. Trainers are encouraged to complete the reflections prompts independently.

2. Practices that Advance Racial Equity and Social Justice			
			Notes
Foundational	a	Uses intentional, people-first language that demonstrates acceptance of races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, identities and cultures.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Content and Facilitation	a	Uses materials that demonstrate inclusion and responsiveness to people of all races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, cultures, families, languages and abilities.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Appropriately incorporates cultural traditions, history, and language/s to promote multi-culturalism.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Take Action	a	Shares constructive feedback and discusses alternative approaches when observing potentially biased actions by others (NAEYC, 2020).	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	
	e	Actively addresses micro-aggressions, racism, sexism or statements or behavior that may harm learners.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	

	f	Helps participants to see how behaviors, beliefs, and ways of being perpetuate systemic oppression (Aguilar, 2020).	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

Standard II: Learning Environment

1. Relational Learning Environment				
				Notes
Emerging	b	Provides an opportunity for participants to share their perspectives.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	c	Provides welcoming and respectful interactions.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	b	Expresses confidence in learners' ability to master the content.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	b	Provides feedback to participants' that encourages them to be inquisitive and keep an open mind when examining the perspectives of others.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	c	Recognizes emotional responses to training content may occur and suggests constructive ways to process.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	

3. Virtual Learning Environment				☐ **NA**
				Notes
Emerging	b	Provides technical assistance to learners prior to the training start time that will help them log-in and use the training platform.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	c	Offers to provide guidance for learners who have difficulties with the platform during the session.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	
Emerging	d	All media and technology is available and functioning for learning event; uses a back-up plan if technology fails.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

Establishing	a	Establishes, models and enforces ground rules for using platform functions (ex. discussion board; participant interaction).	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA (Correspondence only)	
	c	Creates transparency about use of data collected through activity submissions.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Uses different types of online learning tools to encourage interactions among learners.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

Standard III: Preparing and Developing

1. Engaging All Participants

				Notes
Emerging	c	Uses clear, direct spoken and written language that is simple and respectful.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	d	Connects with training participants prior to the training to identify supports for accessibility barriers, such as language(s), hearing and visual impairments.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	a	Offers learners multiple types of activities to engage, reflect, practice and demonstrate their knowledge.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

2. Learning Content

				Notes
Emerging	a	Appears knowledgeable in the content areas and related core competencies.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	c	Presents materials that are grounded in research-informed practices.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	d	Begins training by identifying learning objectives.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	a	There is a clear connection between the activities and the learning objectives.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	b	Includes activities that allow learners to apply concepts to their workplace or real-life settings.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

	c	Creates transitions between topics and activities that maintain a logical flow throughout the session.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
	d	Avoids plagiarism by recognizing contributions to training content development.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Helps participants identify opportunities and barriers to implementation and what they will need to overcome them.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

3. Virtual Design (online synchronous)

				Notes
Emerging	a	Uses relevant visuals to support training content.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	b	Provides simple and consistent instructions on how to navigate the platform's features.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	c	Presents content in multiple ways (e.g. video, text).	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	b	Provides access to materials at appropriate moments, such as before, during and/or after a training.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Creates intentional, structured opportunities for participants to connect with peers (either in their workplace or in the training) to support with implementation.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	b	Handouts, PPTs and scanned documents are accessible for persons with disabilities.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

Standard IV: Facilitation

1. Supporting Adult Learners

				Notes
Emerging	b	Begins the training by identifying the skills ad knowledge that learners have about the training topics.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	c	Uses strengths-based language that encourages learning.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

Establishing	a	Offers individualized, timely and specific feedback to learners.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	b	Creates opportunities to identify how the content is relevant and will bring beneficial changes to their work.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Deepening	a	Uses strategies to develop learners' self-assessment and reflection skills.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

2. Facilitation Strategies

				Notes
Emerging	a	Uses real-life examples and/or scenarios that are written, spoken, or video format to share experiences that support learning objectives.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Emerging	e	Explains activity instructions and provides support to make sure all participants understand what to do.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	a	Engages the learner in identifying their strengths, opportunities for growth and goals for the training.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	b	Manages discussions so all can share perspectives, refocuses the group on aspects that were not addressed, and summarizes the key points.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed ☐ NA	
Establishing	d	Uses open-ended questions to stimulate thinking.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

Standard V: Evaluation and Assessment

1. Evaluating Achievement of Learning Objectives (Summative Assessment)

				Notes
Emerging	a	Measures achievement of learning objectives through activities.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	
Establishing	b	Creates assessments that allow learners to reflect on the learning and make connections to real-life.	☐ Observed ☐ Not observed	

| Deepening | a | Creates several options for learners to demonstrate what they know. | ☐ Observed
☐ Not observed | |

MERIT Data Entry Review

Recommendations for the Trainer

Please use this section to provide general feedback and guidance for the trainer based on the observation as well as recommendations for trainer support funds (if applicable). The trainer will use this information to inform future professional development decisions and improvement to the training session.

If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations (1-800-723-4831 | 360-902-8060, ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov).