

Creating a Positive Environment for Learning

Slide #1 Welcome

Welcome to this course titled, “**Creating a Positive Environment for Learning.**”

This course is developed as part of the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) alignment process, to prepare early learning providers and licensors in their understanding of the “why”, the “what” and the “how” of complying with the updated Foundational Quality Standards for Early Learning Programs (referred to in each course as the Foundational Quality Standards).

Slide #2 Helpful Hints

Washington State DCYF is pleased to present this e-Learning course! To help provide a positive learning experience for you, please take a moment to review the following “Helpful Hints” summary, detailing what you can expect from this course. A complete listing of Helpful Hints has been added to the Resources section of your learner’s screen for reference.

- If you would like to access and review the full course text, please visit the Resources section of your learner’s screen. You can view, print, or download a full version of the course text that is narrated within each module. The full text will be included in each course and listed as the first resource in the Resources section of your course frame.
- The time to complete the course will depend on the course topic and the pace at which you advance through the slides.
- To help you get the most out of the course, settings are in place to prevent users from skipping ahead through the slides. You can advance through the course when the narration for each slide concludes by selecting the “Next” button, or, go back to review material already presented by selecting the “Previous” button.
- Web links and additional resources will be utilized in some of the courses to enhance your learning experience. We hope you will take time to explore them to further develop your knowledge about the topics being presented.

Slide #3 Learning Objectives

This course will help early learning professionals understand how to meet and demonstrate ongoing compliance with the Foundational Quality Standards.

Upon completion of this course, participants will:

- Increase familiarity with the updated WAC components included in this course
- Understand the importance and application of the course content within licensed early learning programs

- Learn practices that demonstrate compliance with DCYF foundational quality standards
- Identify essential components of an early learning program curriculum philosophy
- Learn strategies for promoting and being responsive to children’s developmental, linguistic, and cultural needs
- Be able to identify the elements necessary for creating a climate that promotes healthy child development
- Learn the importance of providing safe, nurturing and consistent care

Slide #4 Guiding Principles

As we cover the material in this course, please keep in mind the following Guiding Principles. We will revisit these at the end of the course to “check in” with you and give you an opportunity to assess your understanding and application of the course content.

Guiding Principles:

- Much of the learning and development that occurs for children, and continues throughout their lifetime, is influenced by the people and places they encounter. Early learning programs have the opportunity to create lasting impacts on young children
- An early learning program should be designed to have a mix of both teacher-led and child-led play and learning activities. Early learning providers should ensure learning activities facilitate a child’s learning, which can be done through the design of the activity, the environment, and through adult-child interactions
- Children enrolled in early learning programs are often receiving services with children of a similar age group. It is important for early learning providers to recognize these children will likely be at different developmental levels, and to plan for and consider these differences when structuring and implementing activities
- Play comes naturally for most children and is important for their overall growth and development

Slide #5 Course Introduction

These Foundational Quality Standards contain important details and information for all early learning providers and their staff, as well as for licensors. Quite comprehensive in scope, they provide a wealth of straightforward information about how to demonstrate, and assess for, compliance with the WAC.

This course will cover the following sections from the Foundational Quality Standards:

- WAC 110-300-0305 Curriculum philosophy and planning;
- WAC 110-300-0345 (3)(4)(5) Supervising Children;

- WAC 110-300-0310 Concept development and feedback quality;
- WAC 110-300-0315 Language modeling and reasoning;
- WAC 110-300-0320 Facilitating child interests, learning, perspective, and productivity;
- WAC 110-300-0325 Creating a climate for healthy child development;
- WAC 110-300-0495 Consistent care policy; and
- WAC 110-300-0330 Positive relationships and child guidance.

Slide #6 WAC 110-300-0305

The first WAC we will explore is:

WAC 110-300-0305 Curriculum philosophy and planning.

(1) An early learning provider must have a written curriculum philosophy that describes the program of planned daily activities related to early childhood or child development.

Having a written curriculum philosophy is the first step to ensuring early learning providers are planning daily activities that promote developmentally appropriate practices. A written curriculum statement also helps to ensure that all early learning providers have a clear understanding of the program expectations and how to approach daily interactions with the children.

Slide #7 WAC 110-300-0305 continued

The WAC outlines the required components of a curriculum philosophy statement.

WAC 110-300-0305 Curriculum philosophy and planning.

(2) The curriculum philosophy must address all age groups being served, be informed by the Washington state early learning and development guidelines, and may include:

- (a) How children develop emotionally, socially, cognitively, and physically;**
- (b) What early learning looks like or areas of focus for each age group being served;**
- (c) How the provider will meet cultural, dual language learner, and special needs of children in care;**

WAC 110-300-0305 Curriculum philosophy and planning.

- (d) How to guide learning and social interactions;**
- (e) The importance of play to a child's learning process; and**
- (f) For infants and toddlers, the importance of developing consistent, nurturing relationships with caregivers as a component of learning.**

Slide #8 WAC 110-300-0305 continued

WAC 110-300-0305 Curriculum philosophy and planning.

- (3) Staff must be trained on the program's curriculum philosophy.**

Whatever is developed as a program's curriculum philosophy, it is required that all staff receive training at the time of hire, as well as, when changes are made to a program's curriculum philosophy. Having a written philosophy and ensuring staff are trained in it is a good first step toward compliance. A written curriculum philosophy statement is also a positive way to promote family engagement and communication with families about what they can expect from the program and the types of activities their child will be engaged in.

Slide #9 WAC 110-300-0305 continued

Additional considerations relating to this WAC, include:

Ensuring written practices are translated into program activities.

Programs should ensure that all program staff not only receive training, but, also follow the philosophy consistently in all classrooms and in all interactions with all children.

Adequate preparation is important to ensure that teachers have time to prepare classroom activities that support the programs' written curriculum statement and philosophy.

WAC 110-300-0305 Curriculum philosophy and planning.

- (4) A lead teacher or family home early learning provider must be given regularly scheduled time to plan and develop curriculum and activities. Planning may be done during rest time but all supervision requirements pursuant to WAC [110-300-0345](#) must be met.**

Slide #10 Test Your Learning!

Before we move on, let's test your learning.

An early learning provider must have a written curriculum philosophy that describes the planned daily activities related to early childhood or child development.

- True
- False

Slide #11 WAC 110-300-0345

We just finished reviewing WAC 0305 subsection (4). This WAC references a WAC that deals with supervision. WAC 110-300-0345 addresses different requirements for supervision, specifically pointing out the relationship between quality supervision and quality environments for children.

As we all know, supervision is a cornerstone for quality in early learning. We have all heard the scary stories of what happens when children are NOT adequately supervised, they walk out of early learning programs, they suffer injuries, and at minimum, they wander aimlessly throughout environments, without clear direction or purpose for meaningful learning.

The following slides will address ways to supervise children to create positive environments so children are safe and have opportunities for learning.

Slide #12 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

The requirements relating to supervision during rest and sleep time which are addressed in WAC 0345 include:

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

(3) An early learning provider must supervise children in care by:

- (a) Scanning the environment looking and listening for both verbal and nonverbal cues to anticipate problems and plan accordingly;**
- (b) Visibly checking children on many occasions with little time in between;**
- (c) Positioning him or herself to supervise all areas accessible to children;**

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

- (d) Attending to children and being aware of what children are doing at all times;**
- (e) Being available and able to promptly assist or redirect a child as necessary; and**

Slide #13 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

- (f) Considering the following when deciding whether increased supervision is needed:**
 - (i) Ages of children;**
 - (ii) Individual differences and abilities of children;**
 - (iii) Layout of the indoor and outdoor licensed space and play area;**
 - (iv) The risk associated with the activities children are engaged in; and**
 - (v) Any nearby hazards including those in the licensed or unlicensed space.**

Slide #14 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

Additional guidance relating to supervising children includes:

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

(4) An early learning program staff member may undertake other activities for a temporary time period when not required to be providing active supervision required under subsection (5)(c) of this section. Such activities include, but are not limited to, cleaning up after an activity or preparing items for a new activity. This early learning staff member must remain in visual or auditory range and be available and able to respond if needed.

Think about your child care or the child cares that you license, how would this requirement be met? What other activities can you think of that are not called out in this WAC?

Slide #15 WAC 110-300-0345 continued

The next section includes the following requirements:

WAC 110-300-0345 Supervising children.

(5) An early learning provider must:

- (a) Not use devices such as a baby monitors, video monitors, or mirrors in place of supervision, unless used pursuant to WAC [110-300-0270\(5\)](#);**
- (b) Be able to hear when doors in the immediate area are opened to prevent children from leaving unsupervised;**

This WAC does not require that you remove door alarms, chimes, or other sounding devices that you find helpful. There are many other ways that you can meet this requirement. Think about different ways to ensure that children are supervised, if you do not use door alarms, chimes, or other sounding devices.

Remember to consider the time of day, the activity level in the room, and other noises that may prevent you from hearing when doors are opened.

Slide #16 Test Your Learning!

Before we define this next topic, let's start with a little trivia! Select the appropriate choice from the following statement.

According to the US Census Bureau, in 2011 how many hours per week did the average child from birth through 5 years old, spend in child care?

- 15
- 27
- 33

Additional Feedback: Much of the learning and development that occurs for children, and continues throughout their lifetime, is influenced by the people and places they encounter. Early learning providers may spend more waking hours with children throughout the week than their parents. Because of this, providers play a major role in the learning and development of the children receiving their care!

Slide #17 WAC 110-300-0310

WAC 110-300-0310 Concept development and feedback quality.

(1) An early learning provider must facilitate activities to support child learning and understanding.

This can be done through a mix of teacher-led and child-led play and learning activities. The early learning provider, whether directly engaged in the activity with the children, or remaining close by to offer support, can use a variety of teaching strategies and techniques to support child learning and understanding. Let's move forward and discuss what this might look like in action in an early learning program.

Slide #18 WAC 110-300-0310 continued

Even though children receiving child care services may be the same age, they will likely be at different developmental levels. It is important that providers plan for and consider these differences when structuring and implementing activities.

WAC 110-300-0310 Concept development and feedback quality.

(2) An early learning provider may facilitate child learning and understanding through a variety of techniques such as:

- (a) Using a variety of teaching strategies (different techniques, curricula, or styles) and materials to address different learning styles, abilities, developmental levels, and temperament;**
- (b) Helping children enter into and sustain play;**

Some children may not be used to interacting with other children or they may not have developed, yet, the social skills needed to be able to successfully enter into and sustain play appropriately with other children. This may lead a child to withdraw or act out with aggression or other disruptive behaviors.

Next, we'll discuss a strategy early learning providers can use to support children who struggle with entering into and sustaining play with their peers.

For the child who is having difficulty entering into play, the early learning provider can set up situations and activities that will have the other children in the classroom entering into or joining the child in their play. The adult in this situation can support the child by

sitting close by and participating in the activity with the children. This is a simple way to give a child a chance to be successful and join others in play experiences.

With the early learning provider by their side, the child will be more likely to be joined in their play, and will be more likely to be able to sustain the learning activity. The early learning provider can act as a “coach” in this situation, verbally describing what the other children are doing or how they are responding, such as, “Johnny is waiting for his turn; he asked you if it was OK before he sat down; he listened when you said “no” and he stopped. What can you and Johnny do together with the blocks?”

The coaching or guidance offered will assist the child in developing the social skills needed to successfully enter into and sustain play independently. These types of interactions and supports, which take place in an early learning program, are easily observable by licensors and demonstrate compliance with this WAC requirement.

Slide #19 WAC 110-300-0310 continued

The guidance for early learning professionals continues in subsection (c) through (f).

WAC 110-300-0310 Concept development and feedback quality.

- (c) Encouraging children to participate by asking questions and providing guidance;**
- (d) Providing opportunities for children’s creativity;**
- (e) Linking concepts and activities to one another and to the children’s lives and interests;**
- (f) Noticing and responding to teachable moments;**

What types of interactions might an early learning provider engage in, and a licensor might observe for, to demonstrate or determine compliance with this particular requirement?

For example, a provider might be observed modeling asking questions or asking children what they think about what is happening. These interactions should occur naturally, as part of the child’s play or learning experience, and be tied to the activity the child is engaged in.

What are some examples you can think of that would demonstrate a provider engaged in this type of interaction?

Children have wonderful imaginations and the ability to use almost any item creatively. Providers can set up early learning environments with a variety of materials that children can use in creative ways. For example, pieces of fabric can be used as cape or a blanket or a magic carpet. By using these types of materials, an early learning provider is able to set up an environment that allows the child’s curiosity and creativity to take the

lead, rather than “prescribing” the play experience for the child. Licensors will be able to easily determine compliance with this subsection by observing for these types of opportunities in the early learning environment.

Slide #20 WAC 110-300-0310 continued

More components of this WAC include:

WAC 110-300-0310 Concept development and feedback quality.

- (g) Clarifying and expanding children’s understanding;**
- (h) Describing and discussing children’s learning processes;**
- (i) Encouraging children’s efforts and persistence;**
- (j) Showing tolerance for mistakes;**

Early learning providers can further facilitate child learning and understanding by engaging in the above actions with children.

Children can learn perseverance and confidence when they feel they can make mistakes in a “safe place” or in an environment that supports and celebrates their learning. When children make mistakes, providers should be patient and should look for the learning that can occur, seeking out teachable moments.

Before we move on to review more about the requirements of this WAC, let’s view a short video supporting the content we just covered.

Slide #21 Seizing the Teachable Moment

This video, Reflections from the Field: Seizing the Teachable Moment explores ways to teach in the moment and to provide opportunities for modeling and reacting when the unexpected happens. Select the link to The Center for Early Childhood Education easternct.edu to view this short video.

Slide #22 WAC 110-300-0310 continued

This WAC continues with the following guidance for early learning professionals:

WAC 110-300-0310 Concept development and feedback quality.

- (k) Using diverse vocabulary;**
- (l) Leading discussions and activities;**
- (m) Providing materials during the day, including daily routines such as meals and transitions, to encourage communication in English and children’s home languages when possible; and**
- (n) Use scaffolding methods to gradually move children toward stronger understanding and greater independence in the learning process.**

Scaffolding involves the use of specific strategies to help a child move from one activity to a related, but more complex, activity. Some specific tips for scaffolding include: giving prompts, asking questions, and modeling the steps involved in a process (like handwashing).

Before we move on, let’s view a short video that supports the requirements of this WAC.

Slide #23 Scaffolding Children’s Learning

This next video explores the concept of scaffolding. Select the [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...) link to view Scaffolding Children’s Learning which gives examples of different levels of support and feedback to help prepare children to learn.

Slide #24 WAC 110-300-0315

The next section addresses Language Modeling and Reasoning.

WAC 110-300-0315 Language modeling and reasoning.

- (1) An early learning provider must be aware of and responsive to children’s developmental, linguistic, cultural, and academic needs.**

Slide #25 WAC 110-300-0315 continued

WAC 110-300-0315 Language modeling and reasoning.

(2) An early learning provider must be aware of and responsive to children’s needs by engaging in activities such as:

- (a) Asking developmentally appropriate questions for the age group and allow children to answer without interruption from the provider;**
- (b) Circulating among the children during free choice activities and talking with children about what they are doing;**

Slide #26 WAC 110-300-0315 continued

An early learning professional must be aware of and responsive to children’s needs by engaging in activities such as:

WAC 110-300-0315 Language modeling and reasoning.

(c) Using teaching techniques such as:

- (i) Self-talk: when the provider talks about what he or she is doing, seeing, eating, touching, or thinking as he or she is involved in that activity;**
- (ii) Parallel-talk: when the provider talks about what the child is doing, seeing, eating, or touching as the child is engaging in those activities; or**
- (iii) Language expansion: when the provider adds detail or new words to build on ideas that children are expressing;**

An example of Self-talk is: An Early learning provider is playing with blocks next to a child. The provider says, “I am building with blocks. I put the yellow block on top of the blue block”.

An example of Parallel-talk is: An Early learning provider is playing with blocks next to a child. The provider says, “You have a green block, you put your green block next to my red block”.

An example of Language expansion is: An Early learning provider is playing with blocks with a child. The child says, “block”. The provider says, “Yes, you are correct. That is a block. You are building with a square block. A square has four sides that are the same length”.

Slide #27 WAC 110-300-0315 continued

WAC 110-300-0315 Language modeling and reasoning.

(d) An early learning provider working with preschool and school-age children must use language to develop and encourage reasoning skills by using techniques such as:

- (i) Talking about logical relationships or concepts during the day including, but not limited to the daily schedule, the differences and similarities between objects, or people in the classroom;**

WAC 110-300-0315: Language modeling and reasoning.

- (ii) Introducing concepts using guiding questions that encourage children to figure out cause and effect relationships;**
- (iii) Providing opportunities for reading and writing activities;**
- and**
- (iv) Asking open ended questions to help children improve skills and acquire knowledge;**

An example of an open ended question is: Today we read a book about gardens. They planted many different vegetables in their garden. What type of vegetables do you want to plant in our garden? I wonder what our garden will look like? Vegetable seeds can be planted in our garden, what else should we plant? What will happen when we water our seeds?

Slide #28 WAC 110-300-0315 continued

WAC 110-300-0315 Language modeling and reasoning.

(e) An early learning provider working with non-English speaking children must encourage language development and acquisition by using techniques such as:

- (i) Using words in various languages to talk about the routines;**
- (ii) Reading books out loud or using audio books; and**
- (iii) Playing games in different languages.**

Slide #29 Test Your Learning!

Before we move on, let's test your learning.

An early learning provider must be aware of and responsive to children's needs by engaging in activities such as: Select the best option from the activities listed.

- Ask developmentally appropriate questions
- Self-talk
- Parallel-talk
- All of the above

Slide #30 Test Your Learning!

Before we move on, let's test your learning.

Early learning providers working with non-English speaking children should use the following techniques to encourage language development and acquisition: using words from other languages in routines, reading aloud or using audio books, and playing games in different languages.

- True
- False

Slide #31 Fast Facts

Earlier in our trivia question we learned, many young children spend a significant number of waking hours each day in child care settings. This arrangement provides invaluable opportunities for early learning providers to foster language development and create rich learning experiences for children.

Research tells us that children learn language at a rapid pace. Some estimate, that between the ages of two and six, children learn an average of about ten new words per day (almost one new word for every waking hour). While children utilize many different tactics to acquire language, one of the most effective is through observing adult behaviors, even subtle ones. ¹

Slide #32 Supporting Language Development in Infants and Toddlers during Mealtime

Select the link to this next video to easternct.edu to view Reflections from the Field: Supporting Language Development in Infants and Toddlers during Mealtime with an infant/toddler teacher, Heather Mulrooney. She describes how she uses a variety of strategies during mealtime to support concept and language development in young children.

¹ <https://linguistlist.org/pubs/cupmag/pdf/O'grady%20article.pdf>

¹ O'Grady, W. (n.d.). How children learn language -what every parent should know. *Linguist List*.

Slide #33 WAC 110-300-0320

The next regulation we will cover is WAC 110-300-0320: Facilitating child interests, learning, perspective, and productivity.

This section of the WAC was updated to provide additional focus and intent on how early learning programs can facilitate a child's learning, clarify the role of children's interests and choices in activities and now includes subsection (1) provides a general overview and reads:

WAC 110-300-0320 Facilitating child interests, learning, perspective, and productivity.

(1) An early learning provider must work to maximize children's interests, engagement with developmentally and culturally responsive activities, and ability to learn from play.

Play comes naturally for most children and is important for their overall growth and development. It is important for providers to use strategies that consider the cultures and developmental levels of all the children enrolled to make the most of the many learning opportunities that occur naturally during play.

Slide #34 WAC 110-300-0320 continued

Subsection (2) of this WAC provides specific examples of techniques providers can use to take advantage of those opportunities.

WAC 110-300-0320 Facilitating child interests, learning, perspective, and productivity.

(2) An early learning provider must maximize children's interests, engagement, and abilities by using techniques such as:

- (a) Maximizing learning time with learning materials and products, limiting disruptions during activities, and offering additional choices when activities are completed;**
- (b) Giving clear instructions and directions; and**
- (c) Making opportunities for children to learn during transitions by clearly communicating expectations and keeping transitions to a duration that is developmentally appropriate.**

Slide #35 WAC 110-300-0320 continued

The final part of this WAC subsection (3) offers guidance on techniques providers can use to offer culturally and developmentally responsive activities.

WAC 110-300-0320 Facilitating child interests, learning, perspective, and productivity.

(3) An early learning provider must offer developmentally and culturally responsive activities that offer a range of auditory, visual, and movement opportunities by using techniques such as:

- (a) Encourage child engagement;**
- (b) Promote each child’s self-help and social skills;**
- (c) Organized around child interests and ideas;**
- (d) Allow choice, exploration, and experimentation;**
- (e) Promote active and play-based learning experiences;**

Slide #36 WAC 110-300-0320 continued

This section continues with this additional guidance for early learning professionals:

WAC 110-300-0320 Facilitating child interests, learning, perspective, and productivity.

- (f) Allow children freedom to move during activities;**
- (g) Ensure child expression;**
- (h) Utilize interesting and creative materials;**
- (i) Offer hands-on opportunities for children;**
- (j) Provide opportunity for children to direct their own learning and problem solving rather than teacher-directed activities; and**
- (k) Orient and guide children toward learning objectives.**

Slide #37 Test Your Learning!

Before we move on, let’s test your learning.

An early learning provider who promotes developmentally and culturally responsive activities is considered culturally appropriate and meets with WAC compliance.

- True
- False

Slide #38 Culturally Responsive Caregiving

Before we move on, let's consider another perspective. Let's consider you are the family member of a child in an early learning program. You and your child's home culture is very different from the other children and the staff in the program.

Culturally responsive caregiving is critical in early childhood services for many reasons. One important reason is that early learning providers are likely among the first professionals to interact with families.

Early learning professionals set the tone for accepting and respecting the family's cultural diversity and values. This tone may determine how accepting a family will be of future programs and services.

It is important that early learning professionals learn to access the "funds of knowledge" in working with culturally and linguistically diverse families.

Slide #39 Funds of Knowledge

Let's begin by reviewing the Funds of Knowledge.

Accessing the funds of knowledge that families have is an important way to demonstrate cultural respect and acceptance and to begin to connect with families. Early learning providers can do this, either formally or informally, through talking with families and learning more about the family's social and cultural experiences.

Asking simple questions that help the early learning provider learn more about the family's resources, the child's interests and strengths, the family's hopes and dreams- both for their family and their child, and the types of natural home learning opportunities that the family is already doing, will all inform the provider's practice, but more importantly, this inquiry will represent an interest in the child and family and a respect for the family's goals, priorities, and values.

Slide #40 Interconnectivity

Let's take a minute to think about an example of the interconnectivity of the WAC. We have talked about culturally responsive caregiving. As early learning professionals, you may be questioning ways to ensure that you are being culturally responsive to the families and children in your care. WAC 110-300-0085 – Family partnerships and communication lends a hand in addressing this need.

During the process of updating the Chapter 110-300 WACs, DCYF decided to have family partnerships and engagement be a priority for early learning programs. It is essential that early learning providers are prepared for and able to work with families in

a way that recognizes and respects their diversity. To do so, early learning providers should:

- Talk with parents and guardians about family routines or events
- Ask families about their approaches to parenting
- Take time to learn about a family's beliefs, culture, language and child rearing practices

This WAC requirement is one that may not be easily observable in a program during a monitor visit or site visit by a licensor. Licensing staff will need an understanding of what they are looking for and what types of questions to ask to be able to determine if these practices are being engaged in, as well as to help determine if an early learning provider might need some technical assistance or additional support in this area. Early learning program staff should be prepared to be able to answer questions about how they are meeting this requirement and to show any documentation they have that demonstrates steps they are taking to be in compliance with this requirement. Early learning providers should also be prepared with any questions they have about the process, and take opportunity to further their learning and understanding in partnership with their licensor.

Slide #41 How We View the World

Developing cultural awareness begins with self-reflection and examining one's own set of collective experiences and identities. Working with families offers providers an opportunity to shift perspectives, and further their own growth and understanding of themselves, through examining their own cultural influences and assumptions.

We each have our own set of lenses through which we view the world. Our own culture shapes our behavior and the "filter through which 'we' view the world." It is through this lens of our collective personal experiences and identities that we view and interpret new situations and learning. It is also through this lens that we view those around us. Developing a deeper awareness of our views and stereotypes can lead us to a better understanding of cultural differences, and it can open our minds to accepting new and different approaches than what we've experienced before.

Slide #42 WAC 110-300-0325

WAC 110-300-0325 Creating a climate for healthy child development.

(1) When communicating or interacting with children, an early learning provider must maintain a climate for healthy, culturally responsive child development such as:

- (a) Using a calm and respectful tone of voice;**
- (b) Using positive language to explain what children can do and give descriptive feedback;**
- (c) Having relaxed conversations with children by listening and responding to what they say. Adult conversations must not dominate the overall sound of the group;**

WAC 110-300-0325 Creating a climate for healthy child development.

- (d) Greeting children upon arrival and departure at the early learning program;**
- (e) Using facial expressions such as smiling, laughing, and enthusiasm to match a child's mood;**
- (f) Using physical proximity in a culturally responsive way to speak to children at their eye level and with warm physical contact, including but not limited to, gently touching a hand or shoulder, sitting next to a child, appropriately holding younger children close while communicating;**

Slide #43 WAC 110-300-0325 continued

WAC 110-300-0325 Creating a climate for healthy child development.

- (g) Validating children's feelings and show tolerance for mistakes;**
- (h) Being responsive and listening to children's requests and questions, encouraging children to share experiences, ideas, and feelings;**
- (i) Observing children in order to learn about their families, cultures, individual interests, ideas, questions, and theories;**
- (j) Modeling and teaching emotional skills such as recognizing feelings, expressing them appropriately, accepting others' feelings, and controlling impulses to act out feelings;**

WAC 110-300-0325 Creating a climate for healthy child development.

- (k) Representing the diversity found in the early learning program and society, including gender, age, language, and abilities, while being respectful of cultural traditions, values, religion and beliefs of enrolled families; and**
- (l) Interacting with staff and other adults in a positive, respectful manner.**

You most likely have noticed, as we were reviewing these, the requirements in this WAC are practices early learning providers already engage in and are observed by licensors during site visits to early learning programs. This is because most of these items are already required by current WAC and they are not new. DCYF has updated these requirements to deepen the focus around how to observe for, discover and support individual family and child differences.

Slide #44 Fostering Trusting Relationships: Ways to show warmth

Select the link to easternct.edu to view Fostering Trusting Relationships; Ways to show warmth a short 3-minute video, that explores a variety of ways to appropriately show physical and non-physical warmth to children.

Slide #45 WAC 110-300-0325 continued

WAC 110-300-0325 Creating a climate for healthy child development.

(2) An early learning provider must encourage positive interactions between and among children with techniques such as:

- (a) Giving children several chances a day to interact with each other while playing or completing routine tasks;**
- (b) Modeling social skills;**
- (c) Encouraging socially isolated children to find friends;**
- (d) Helping children understand feelings of others; and**
- (e) Including children with special needs to play with others.**

2014 federal child care law outlined new requirements related to children's health and safety, including required professional development, on a range of critical topics in health, safety and child development. Updates to this section of the WAC include important information to guide communications and interactions with children. Again, you have probably noted these are practices early learning providers currently engage

in, and the updated WAC language is providing additional guidance on how to successfully create a climate for healthy child development.

Slide #46 Creating a climate for healthy child development

Research continues to support the impact of a child's environment and interactions on their development.

This section of the WAC has been updated to reflect the value of early learning professionals using and modeling behaviors to encourage the social and emotional development of children. It provides additional descriptors and approaches to creating a climate for healthy child development.

Select the following link for additional information on The Pyramid Model, part of the Center for Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, csefel.vanderbilt.edu provides scenarios and examples of ways to incorporate strategies into the daily routines and activities of early care providers and children.

Slide #47 Strategies for creating a climate for healthy child development

To achieve compliance on this WAC, early learning professionals should demonstrate the use of strategies to create a climate for healthy child development. Some examples may include:

- Role playing to practice asking a friend for a turn with a toy;
- Greeting each child upon arrival;
- Getting down on child's eye level when speaking or listening;
- Using exaggerated facial expressions and describing feelings when telling a story;
- Facilitating conflict resolution between children, rather than solving the problem for them.

In the next section of the WAC we'll cover addresses the requirement for consistent care policies for early learning programs.

Slide #48 WAC 110-300-0495

WAC 110-300-0495 Consistent care policy.

- (1) An early learning program must have and follow a policy that promotes the consistent care of children.**
- (2) When possible, an early learning provider must be assigned to work with a consistent group of children for much of the day with a goal of building long term, trusting relationships.**

This WAC is significant and important to point out because it did not appear in any previous versions of the WACs. The WAC was added in response to requirements in the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014.

As a reminder, this act updated the federal child care law, placing an emphasis on quality child care. Early learning programs are required to articulate their approach to consistent care in their consistent care policy, and when possible, must assign early learning staff to work with a consistent group of children over much of the day. Engaging in this type of staffing practice provides the consistent care needed to help children build long term, trusting relationships with their early learning providers. This practice also ties back to DCYF's fundamental goal of early learning programs, which is to provide a foundation for child development, health and safety.

Slide #49 Benefits of consistent care

Benefits of consistent care are:

- Children develop trust, emotional security and secure attachments
- Children feel supported and are open to learning
- Children feel predictability and stability in their environment
- Children learn how to manage their emotions and behavior in a consistent trusting environment
- Children's brain connections are strengthened

Setting up a system for consistent caregiving establishes an environment in which meaningful and lasting relationships and attachments can be formed between caregiver, children and families. These practices have strong and enduring impacts on children's development and well-being.

Slide #50 Consistent care

Examples of methods of implementing continuity of care practices in programs, include:

- Children remaining with the same teaching team for multiple years (such as, birth to three years old, or three to five years old)
- Mixed-age groupings, primary caregiver assignments and small group sizes
- Daily communication and partnering with family using a variety of methods
- Teachers who strive to provide responsiveness, sensitivity and stability in their relationships with children and their families

Slide #51 Test Your Learning!

Before we move on, let's test your learning.

It is the position of DCYF that continuity of care helps to build long term, trusting relationships, which are fundamental to the goal of licensing to support the foundation of child development, health and safety.

- True
- False

Slide #52 WAC 110-300-0330

Let's discuss the final section of the WAC that we will cover in this session.

WAC 110-300-0330 Positive relationships and child guidance.

(1) An early learning provider must work to maintain positive relationships with children by using consistent guidance techniques to help children learn. Guidance techniques must adapt an early learning program's environment, routines, and activities to a child's strength's, developmental level, abilities, culture, community, and relate to the child's behavior.

This section of the WAC has been updated to reflect what current child development research has shown how early learning providers can use consistent guidance techniques to help build and maintain positive relationships with children. This WAC provides specific consideration to a child's culture and community, and lists and defines specific strategies early learning providers can use to achieve compliance in this area.

Slide #53 WAC 110-300-0330 continued

This type of positive relationship building and child guidance takes intentionality on the part of a provider and the WAC details examples of the types of guidance that demonstrate compliance.

WAC 110-300-0330 Positive relationships and child guidance.

(2) Guidance techniques may include:

- (a) Coaching behavior;**
- (b) Modeling and teaching social skills such as taking turns, cooperation, waiting, self-control, respect for the rights of others, treating others kindly, and conflict resolution;**
- (c) Offering choices;**
- (d) Distracting;**
- (e) Redirecting or helping a child change their focus to something appropriate to achieve their goal;**

WAC 110-300-0330 Positive relationships and child guidance.

- (f) Planning ahead to prevent problems and letting children know what events will happen next;**
- (g) Explaining consistent, clear rules and involving children in defining simple, clear classroom limits;**
- (h) Involving children in solving problems; and**
- (i) Explaining to children the natural and logical consequence related to the child's behavior in a reasonable and developmentally appropriate manner.**

You have probably noticed, as we did earlier in this module, that the requirements of this section of the updated WAC are practices that many early learning programs are already engaging in. Early learning professionals will want to make themselves familiar with the updated portions of the WAC to be able to incorporate these into their program practices, or be able to know what to observe for when conducting site visits and offering technical assistance to programs.

Slide #54 Adopting a Problem-Solving Approach to Conflict

Select the [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) link to view this video Adopting a Problem-Solving Approach to Conflict that explores positive problem solving approaches to dealing with conflict.

Slide #55 Guiding Principles

This concludes the content portion of this course! Thank you for your participation!

Before this course ends, please take a moment to reflect and set personal goals related to the following Guiding Principles and ways that each of the principles relate to early learning professionals.

Guiding Principles:

- Much of the learning and development that occurs for children, and continues throughout their lifetime, is influenced by the people and places they encounter. Early learning programs have the opportunity to create lasting impacts on young children
- An early learning program should be designed to have a mix of both teacher-led and child-led play and learning activities. Early learning providers should ensure learning activities facilitate a child's learning, which can be done through the design of the activity, the environment, and through adult-child interactions
- Children enrolled in early learning programs are often receiving services with children of a similar age group. It is important for early learning providers to recognize these children will likely be at different developmental levels, and to plan for and consider these differences when structuring and implementing activities
- Play comes naturally for most children and is important for their overall growth and development

In reflection of the Guiding Principles, what take-a-ways do you have? How will you change your practices because of participation in this learning module?

Slide #56 End of Course

This concludes this course on “**Creating a Positive Environment for Learning**”. If you have questions following this session, please contact your supervisor or licenser.

We hope this course has been helpful in providing information about the WAC and how programs can meet the new standards with compliance.

Our goal is that all early learning professionals viewing this course have left with an increased understanding and knowledge of the updated WAC, and that you will be able

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to either assess programs for compliance or be able to maintain and demonstrate compliance.