



Maine Technical Assistance Credential Information Packet



This information packet was developed as a collaborative effort of Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network, the University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies, Kennebec Valley Community Action Program and the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Acknowledgments | 2 |
| Table of Contents..... | 3 |
| Section 1: Purpose and History | 4 |
| Section 2: Overview of the Credential Process..... | 6 |
| Section 3: Eligibility Requirements..... | 9 |
| Section 4: Training Descriptions..... | 11 |
| Section 5: The Portfolio | 14 |
| Section 6: Letters of Recommendation..... | 29 |
| Section 7: The Interview | 30 |
| Appendix A: Glossary of Terms | 31 |
| Appendix B: Growing Ideas Tipsheet – Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families | 35 |
| Appendix C: Maine Technical Assistance Credential Application..... | 37 |
| Appendix D: Alternative Options for Training/Education | 38 |
| Appendix E: Request for Letter of Recommendation..... | 39 |
| Appendix F: Forms and Resources..... | 41 |
| Appendix G: Contributors..... | 57 |

Section 1: Purpose and History

Informed by implementation science research, more emphasis has been placed on the development of technical assistance supports such as mentoring, coaching, consultation and peer-to-peer networks. It is recognized that the best professional development provides practitioners with coherent, interrelated, and continuous learning activities that are aligned with each other and with evidence-based practices.¹ Given the importance of technical assistance for improving the quality of early care and education, it is imperative that the technical assistance approaches and roles are clearly defined and measured.

In 2017, Maine responded by developing a set of competencies to ensure that all Technical Assistance (TA) professionals have a common core of knowledge, skills, and dispositions as they support TA partners' progress to higher levels of quality. When TA professionals have appropriate knowledge and experience in specific subject matter, an understanding of adult learning, and both skills and knowledge in technical assistance pedagogy, they can more effectively impact positive change.

Taking a systems approach to building an integrated, cross-sector response to technical assistance, Maine stakeholders adopted the 2011 NAEYC / NACCRRA TA definitions² to create the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce³. Maine's TA competencies were developed with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership Grant to grantee Kennebec Valley Community Action Program. Other collaborators include Educare Central Maine; Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network and the University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. The process of developing the competencies included involvement from dedicated early care and education professionals from many systems such as the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services, Maine Department of Education, Child Development Services, Maine Families, and Head Start. The product contributors played key roles in the development and field-testing of these competencies. For more information, please refer to the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Appendix C.

Maine's TA Competencies are intended to be used by all TA professionals working in the early care and education field in Maine. These competencies are being used to inform the development of a Maine Technical Assistance Credential. The Competency Areas for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential expand upon those required in all Maine Credentials

¹ Warren, L., & Ramming, A. (2016, April). *High quality early childhood professional development systems: Helping every child to be successful*. Framingham, MA: Early Childhood Associates, Inc.

² Early Childhood Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance Glossary, 2011. National Association for the Education of Young Children & National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies. Retrieved from http://www.naeyc.org/GlossaryTraining_TA.pdf.

³ Labas, L., Lavalley, S., Downs, J., & Gallik, P. (Eds.). (2017). *Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce*. Orono: University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies.

(see Section 2) to include specific skills and abilities required of TA professionals in the fields of early care and education.

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential is awarded to TA professionals who act as a mentor, coach, consultant and/or Peer-to-Peer Network facilitator who are able to document the specific knowledge, training, experience and professionalism required by the Credential.

Section 2: Overview of the Credential Process

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential is appropriate for experienced Technical Assistance Professionals (TA professionals) who provide targeted and customized supports to recipients of TA services through specific strategies or approaches, such as mentoring, coaching, consultation, and peer-to-peer networks. The Technical Assistance (TA) partner is the recipient of technical assistance services provided by a TA professional. The term TA partner represents a variety of professional roles as well as families. For the purpose of this document, the terms TA professional and TA partner will be used throughout.

This section provides an overview of the components of the Maine Technical Assistance Credential, including the requirements, application process, and available supports.

1. All Maine Credentials are based upon competencies derived from the following Core Knowledge Areas:

- 1) Child development
- 2) Healthy and safe environments
- 3) Relationships with families
- 4) Guidance
- 5) Observation and assessment
- 6) Developmentally appropriate practice
- 7) Individual and cultural diversity
- 8) Business and professional development

2. The Maine Technical Assistance Credential includes competencies designed to reflect the skills and abilities specific to those in mentoring, coaching, consultation, and peer-to-peer network facilitation roles in the field of early care and education (serving prenatal through age 8) in Maine. These additional competencies are incorporated into the Maine Technical Assistance Credential requirements. The TA Competencies are:

Competency Area 1: Professionalism

- A. Legal Requirements and Ethical Practices
- B. Responsibilities and Boundaries
- C. Maintaining Documentation for Timely and Accurate Reporting
- D. Role as Change Agent
- E. Self-reflection and Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
- F. Individual Professional Plan Development and Implementation
- G. Current Research and Best Practice
- H. Advocacy

Competency Area 2: Adult Learning Principles

- A. Adult Learning Principles
- B. Effective Learning Environment
- C. Adapting to Participant Styles and Needs

Competency Area 3: Building Relationships

- A. Trust with a TA Partner
- B. Clear Agreements
- C. Collaborative Problem-Solving/Conflict Resolution
- D. Ongoing Feedback
- E. Effective Communication

Competency Area 4: The Technical Assistance Process

- A. Stages of Technical Assistance
- B. Gathering Information and Conducting Assessments
- C. Goal Setting and Action Planning
- D. Supporting TA Partner to Implement and Evaluate the TA Plan
 - a. Mentoring
 - b. Coaching
 - c. Consultation
 - d. Peer-To-Peer Networks
- E. Evaluating TA Plan and Ending The TA

Competency Area 5: Systems Knowledge

- A. Early Childhood Systems' Components
- B. Regulation and Standards
- C. Resource and Referral

3. To earn the Maine Technical Assistance Credential, Applicants must:

- Meet the formal education, experience, and training requirements.
- Be a member of the Maine Roads to Quality Registry.
- Complete background checks.
- Submit a completed application and payment to MRTQ PDN.
- Demonstrate completion of hours of required training.
- Submit a completed electronic portfolio.
- Participate in an interview with a MRTQ PDN staff member or designee.

4. Evaluation and credential decisions are based upon:

- The Applicant meeting all education, experience, and training requirements.
- Successful completion of the Portfolio.
- Successful documentation of training/education hours.
- Satisfactory completion of interview.

5. Decisions on awarding the Maine Technical Assistance Credential will be made by the MRTQ PDN Credential Review Team, with initial credentials being awarded for three years.

- The Credential Review Team (CRT) meets on a quarterly basis to review applications. The schedule for review is:

| Application received by: | Reviewed during: | Applicant notified of CRT's decision: |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| January 1 st | January | January 31 st |
| April 1 st | April | April 30 th |
| July 1 st | July | July 31 st |
| October 1 st | October | October 31 st |

- Applicants with completed and approved materials will be contacted regarding an on-site interview.
- Applicants are given 60 days to revise any Portfolio entry that does not demonstrate competency or to submit missing materials.
- Credential decisions may be appealed. If awarding of a Maine Technical Assistance Credential is denied, Applicants may submit an appeal in writing to MRTQ PDN.

6. The Maine Technical Assistance Credential must be renewed by documenting:

- Completion of a 3.0 credit college course **OR** 45 contact hours of training covering a topic related to any of the above Technical Assistance Competencies.
- Initial credentials must be renewed after three years; subsequent renewals will be required every five years.
- Complete information and the Maine Technical Assistance Credential Renewal Application are available on the MRTQ PDN website.

7. MRTQ PDN has the following supports available for practitioners:

- Cohorts will be available for practitioners to join to receive support from a facilitator and peers; cohorts generally involve participation in monthly meetings (either via conference call/video conference or face-to-face) and individualized assistance from the facilitator on completing the Portfolio and preparing for the interview.
- Individualized consultation is also available to practitioners pursuing the Maine Technical Assistance Credential.

More information about each of these steps is available in the applicable section of this information packet.

Section 3: Eligibility Requirements

Prior to applying for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential, all Applicants must provide evidence of completion of educational, training, and work experience requirements.

Registry Membership

All Applicants for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential must be members of the Maine Roads to Quality Registry. Applications for Registry membership may be completed online at: <https://mrtq-registry.org> or practitioners can call MRTQ PDN at 1-888-900-0055. Review of an Applicant's Portfolio will be deferred until Registry membership can be confirmed.

All Applicants are required to have a clear background check.

Educational Requirements

Applicants must:

- Be at least 21 years of age.
- Have at least a Baccalaureate degree in education or related field.

Training Requirements

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential requires a minimum of 105 hours of specific Maine Roads to Quality Training. *Alternative options are listed in Appendix D.*

Within **five** years of the date of application, Applicants must have completed the following MRTQ PDN Core Knowledge trainings:

- *Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners* (18 hours)
- *Your Professional Development Portfolio* (9 hours)
- *Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance* (18 hours)
- *Foundations of Mentoring* (15 hours)
- *Foundations of Coaching* (15 hours)
- *Foundations of Collaborative Consultation* (15 hours)
- *Foundations of Peer-to-Peer Networks* (15 hours)

Complete training descriptions are listed in Section 4 of this packet.

Work Experience Requirements

Applicants must have:

- 2,000 documented hours (equivalent to approximately 1 year) providing technical assistance (as a mentor, coach, consultant, or peer-to-peer network facilitator) within the last 5 years **and**,
- At least 2 years (equivalent to 4,000 hours) of experience working in a specific areas of expertise or discipline within the last 5 years.

Alternative pathways for meeting eligibility requirements are considered by MRTQ PDN on an individual basis. Please see the Appendix D for a complete description.

To help organize and track progress, use the following checklist that lists all of the eligibility requirements for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential. *This checklist is for your use and does not need to be included in your Portfolio.*

| Maine Technical Assistance Credential Eligibility Requirements Checklist | |
|--|---|
| Requirement | Date Completed |
| Maine Roads to Quality Registry membership | |
| Clear background checks | |
| Minimum requirements: <input type="checkbox"/> Baccalaureate Degree in education or related field. | |
| Documented Experience within the last 5 years: <input type="checkbox"/> 2,000 hours providing technical assistance <input type="checkbox"/> At least two years working in a specific area of expertise or discipline | |
| Training requirements (see Appendix D for alternative options): <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners</i> (18 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Your Professional Development Portfolio</i> (9 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Foundations of Relationship-based Technical Assistance</i> (18 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Foundations of Mentoring</i> (15 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Foundations of Coaching</i> (15 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Foundations of Collaborative Consultation</i> (15 hours) <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Foundations of Peer-to-Peer Networks</i> (15 hours) | _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ |
| Notes/Questions/Reminders: | |

Section 4: Training Descriptions

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential requires a minimum of 105 hours of specific Maine Roads to Quality Training. *Alternative options are listed in Appendix D.*

The required trainings for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential are listed below in the *suggested sequence* for Applicants to follow. It is suggested that Applicants start with *Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners*, followed by the *Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance* 18-hour training. The other trainings can be taken in any order and/or when offered. While it is understood that training schedules, practitioner schedules, and other factors may alter this path for some, this sequence is recommended for those who have not yet begun the training component of the Maine Technical Assistance Credential.

Required Trainings

Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners (18 hours)

This six-module, eighteen-hour training is designed to bring awareness of the adult as a learner and is the starting point for building learning experiences for those who work with young children, families, and professionals. We will start to create a better understanding of the adult learner and how, through our own commitment and self-reflection, we can best exemplify this continuous lifelong learning and development process. Professional development, as defined by NAEYC and NACCRRRA, merges the experiences of education, training, and technical assistance. Thus, along with knowledge of adult learning and development principles, we will be better equipped to participate in our roles as educators, facilitators, trainers, supervisors, and technical assistance professionals.

Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance (RBTA) Training Series

Relationship-based technical assistance—the foundation for supporting programs—is established through positive, trusting, and respectful relationships between the TA professional and the provider. (NAEYC & NACCRA 2011)

The Foundations Series includes five trainings that support the knowledge, skills and dispositions for both new and practicing Technical Assistance professionals from a wide range of disciplines. Participants may include those providing TA in the child care, early education, early intervention/special education, and home visiting sectors. The specific role of a TA professional participating in this training may include, mentor, coach, consultant or peer-to-peer network facilitator.

As a cross-system cross-sector effort the training like the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce, supports statewide consistency and understanding of the fundamental aspects of providing TA services. The content of the training incorporates current research and best practice in evidence-based approaches to professional development. This series emphasizes relationships as critical in supporting the growth and development of adult learners. Participants will explore the art and science of technical assistance. Each training includes areas that correspond to the shared core competencies that represent the commonalities of technical assistance professional work, such as; professional, ethical and reflective practice, supporting adult learners, effective communication, following an established technical assistance process and knowing the

landscape of systems and sectors. Additionally, the series builds upon and reinforces how the practices apply to each unique TA role. The delivery structure includes collaborative learning with the facilitator and other participants for ongoing reflection and feedback.

Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance (RBTA) Training (18 hours)

Technical Assistance is *"the provision of targeted and customized supports by a professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills to develop and strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients."* (NAEYC & NACCRA 2011).

This training is the first offering in the Relationship-Based Technical Assistance Training Series. It addresses the basic work-related skills, knowledge and dispositions needed by any professional providing technical assistance (TA) to early care and education and Out of School Time (OST) practitioners and families. It covers information about the purpose, focus, roles and responsibilities of TA Professionals, understanding the change process, building collaborative partnerships and promoting reflective thinking. Participants will be introduced to structures, tools and resources that describe the foundational practices and attributes that represent relationship-based support. This training sets the stage for digging deeper into how these structures and resources apply to mentoring, coaching, consulting and peer-to-peer learning.

Foundations of Mentoring (15 hours)

Mentoring is one form of technical assistance. *It is "a relationship-based process between colleagues of similar professional roles with a more-experienced individual with adult learning knowledge and skill, the mentor, providing guidance and example to the less experienced protégé/mentee."* (NAEYC & NACCRRRA, 2011)

This training builds upon the Foundations of RBTA training. The training includes information about the origins and definition of mentoring, the roles of a mentor, mentee and supervisor, the enabling structures that support mentoring and how the TA stages apply to the mentoring process. Participants will explore the attributes, and dispositions that mentors need to consider as they engage with and support mentees. Employing real-life mentoring situations this training provides opportunities for participants to learn new techniques and reflect on their experiences. This training offers a sampling of mentoring forms, tools and resources for participants to use within their own practice.

Foundations of Coaching (15 hours)

Coaching is one form of technical assistance. *It is "a relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning knowledge and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s). Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal-setting and achievement for an individual or group".* (NAEYC & NACCRRRA, 2011)

This training builds upon the Foundations of RBTA training. It covers the basics of coaching; the research, what coaching is and is not, the coaching roles and structures and readiness from different dimensions when planning and executing coaching. Several coaching models with evidence of effectiveness are shared and examples provided. Much of the information is taken from an influential framework developed by the Office of Head Start National

Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (NCQTL) called Practice-Based Coaching (PBC). Participants will dig deeper into the technical aspects of coaching focusing on the PBC architecture of collaborative partnerships and a cycle of coaching that includes; goal setting and action planning; observation and action; and reflection and feedback. Participants will have an opportunity to use some of the resources and strategies shared. This training offers a sampling of coaching forms, tools and resources for participants to use within their own practice.

Foundations of Collaborative Consultation (15 hours)

Collaborative Consultation is one form of technical assistance. It is "a problem-solving process between an external consultant with specific expertise and adult learning knowledge and skills and an individual or group from one program or organization." (NAEYC & NACCRRA, 2011)

This training builds upon the Foundations of RBTA training. In addition to gaining a shared understanding of the purpose of and roles within the collaborative consultation approach, the training investigates the dynamics of the consultation role, the many factors that influence consultant behaviors and actions and explores the critical practices that support effective consultation. Activities in this module promote participant self- exploration to build awareness about their own patterns of responding, behaving and interacting and how these can influence their professional role. Participants review and try out communication and conflict managing strategies and examine how the collaborative consultation stages apply to the TA framework. This training offers a sampling of consultation forms, tools and resources for participants to use within their own practice.

Foundations of Peer-to-Peer Networks (15 hours)

Peer-to-Peer Networks are one form of technical assistance. It is "*regular and structured group peer-to-peer TA that fosters the development of relationship-based learning and support among colleagues, often in like roles.*" (NAEYC & NACCRRA, 2011)

This training builds upon the Foundations of RBTA training. It covers background information about peer-to-peer networks, the theoretical underpinnings, the purpose and various forms of networks and how the TA stages apply. Participants explore the roles and essential features of peer-to-peer networks. By participating in selected peer-to-peer network session activities participants try out tools for structuring a learning community, as well as facilitation strategies for addressing common challenges. The training provides information about how group dynamics, as well as individual perceptions and assumptions, influence the facilitator role. A sampling of peer-to-peer network forms, resources, and tools and an opportunity to tour virtual learning communities is provided.

Your Professional Development Portfolio (9 hours)

This training gives an introduction to creating a professional portfolio for the individual – the what, why, and how. Participants will gain an understanding of how and why a portfolio promotes professionalism, and begin to develop their own portfolio, including a philosophy statement, résumé, and evidence that supports their competence as a professional. **(On-demand)**

Training information, including the schedule and registration, can be found on MRTQ PDN's Statewide Online Training Calendar: <https://ececaldarmaine.org>.

Section 5: The Portfolio

Applicants for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential will create an electronic portfolio to demonstrate their competence and reflect on their experiences completing the training for the credential. This evidence in the portfolio should be presented electronically. The Applicant may be asked to include multimedia components, such as video or audio recordings or photographs. Special permission is required if a paper Portfolio will be submitted. (Note: The creation and requirements for electronic portfolios are covered in the training *Your Professional Development Portfolio*.)

Please note:

- Because the TA Credential addresses all four of the technical assistance roles (mentor, coach, consultant and peer-to-peer network facilitator), some of the requests for evidence in a competency area may related to all the TA roles/ approaches or you may give an example from one of the roles or your primary role.
- It is the **Applicant's** responsibility to SAVE and organize all relevant assignments from the required training! Especially for any online trainings, nothing is saved by the instructor or by MRTQ PDN – it is the Applicant's responsibility to keep and organize all work. It is recommended that Applicants save electronic versions of their work to facilitate updating of materials before adding them to the final Portfolio.
- All training and application materials for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential should utilize respectful "person-first" language. (See the following resource for additional information about using "person-first" language:
https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/pdf/disabilityposter_photos.pdf)
- The Portfolio is a professional document and should be clear, legible, and with correct spelling and grammar. Remember to include citations for all relevant sources.
- Whenever utilizing information from another source, it is important to remember to include citations. Reflections and descriptions written in response to prompts for evidence in different Competency Areas must reflect the Applicant's own work and views. It is fine (and can be helpful in making a point) to include relevant information from reliable sources (websites, journals, books, etc.) but citations giving credit to the author(s) and/or source(s) must be included. For guidance on using citations, refer to the [Online Writing Lab at Purdue University for Research and Citation Resources](#).
- Children, families and professionals should remain anonymous to maintain professional confidentiality. **If confidentiality is violated, evidence for that competency area will not be accepted and the Portfolio will be returned to the Applicant for correction.** Some options to maintain confidentiality are:
 - Changing the names of children, families and/ or professionals, or simply use only initials
 - Including a written permission form signed by the parents or guardians of any children shown in photographs or video

- Including a written permission form signed by the individual professional shown in photographs or video.
- Using photos or videos that do not show a child's, parents and/ or professional's face, or using stickers to obscure their identity
- Redacting (blacking out) a child, family and/ or professional's name or identifying information from any scanned text.
- For more information regarding confidentiality, Applicants can review the Growing Ideas Tipsheet – Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families, included in Appendix B.

Portfolio Composition

An Applicant's Portfolio should be divided into two sections: Introduction and Competency Areas. The sections are outlined below.

Section 1: The Introduction

All Portfolios must include:

- A. The Applicant's Personal Philosophy Statement describing their approach to relationship-based technical assistance in early care and education settings (maximum of one page)
- B. The Applicant's résumé (maximum of two pages)
- C. The Applicant's MRTQ PDN Professional Development Profile

Section 2: Competency Areas

In this section the Applicant will present evidence of competency in each of the competency areas. The outline below should guide the writing and presentation of this section.

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Professionalism <i>The conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize a person in a work setting or profession. Effective TA professionals know the applicable codes of ethical practices and standards of professionalism and apply them appropriately in their TA practice.</i> | A. Legal Requirements and Ethical Practices B. Responsibilities and Boundaries C. Maintaining Documentation for Timely and Accurate Reporting D. Role as Change Agent E. Self-reflection and Assessment of Knowledge and Skills F. Individual Professional Plan Development and Implementation G. Current Research and Best Practice H. Advocacy | 1) Write a competency statement of at least 500 words describing how you demonstrate professionalism in your role as a technical assistance professional. The statement should include your understanding of professionalism, why this competency area is important to the work you do with TA partners and examples of how your practice reflects competence in this area. To prompt your thinking consider these indicators of best practice. (NOTE: these questions are for guidance only. Each question does not have to be answered in your statement). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What important principles guide you in your work? How do you meet TA partners "where they are" in implementing change? What supports do you access or resources do you use for ongoing learning to guide your own professional growth and development? What achievement best exemplifies your professionalism in the field? 2) Describe the key elements of the NAEYC Code of Ethics Supplement for Adult Educators in TA and comment on the importance of this document. Share how you have used the code in your work and when and how you share this information with your TA partner. When faced with an ethical dilemma, what are the most important questions you asked yourself to help you solve it. Include any paperwork, forms or resources you use to share information about this or |

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--|
| | | <p>another field-specific Code of Ethics when providing TA.</p> <p>3) Submit samples of blank forms or other artifacts that you use to maintain accurate documentation and record keeping (e.g. a sample of your TA record keeping system; copy of a monthly reporting form; screenshot of an electronic data collection tool).</p> <p>4) An outcome of providing Relationship-Based TA is that something will change. The partnership is focused on making adjustments to practice, understanding that the change process may include gaining new or different knowledge, skill, perspective, performance or some form of movement from where an individual or organization is to where they want to be. Readiness and the ability to change are impacted by a number of factors. Additionally there are different considerations and levels of change that relate to individuals as well as to an organization. Describe the areas of consideration regarding readiness. Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What you look for when assessing readiness within these areas, (the signs of readiness) and; • What you do to support your TA partners through a change process. • If you use a readiness for change tool, please include this as well. <p>5) Complete the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Checklist. Write a reflection</p> |

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|--|---|--|
| | | <p>statement that focuses on Competency Area 1: Professionalism and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What you learned about your current skills in this competency area. • What you will do with this information and, • How will you do it? |
| <p>2. Principles of Adult Learning</p> <p><i>Effective TA professionals ensure success by incorporating adult learning principles. They use approaches to learning that are solution-oriented and collaborative rather than merely didactic; they also emphasize equality between the TA professional and the TA partner.</i></p> | <p>A. Adult Learning Principles</p> <p>B. Effective Learning Environment</p> <p>C. Adapting to Participant Styles and Needs</p> | <p>1) Pick one of the six Principles of Adult Learning. Submit a written response to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would you be doing to ensure that you consider this principle as you approach your work with a TA partner? • What would it look like? What would it sound like? <p>2) Submit an activity, tool or strategy you've used to learn about your TA partner(s) learning style. Share what you did and how that supported (or not) your work together.</p> <p>3) Describe a time or the process you used to make adjustments and/or accommodations to meet the learning needs of your TA partner(s). Your response should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The type of diversity that the TA partner(s) presented. • How you ensured that your TA partner's style or needs would be accommodated. • The effectiveness of your response. |

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|--|--|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What you learned and will continue to do or would do differently next time. |
| 3. Building Relationships <i>Relationships are central to the TA process. To build effective relationships, TA professionals demonstrate the ability to create a safe, supportive environment that produces ongoing mutual respect and trust; to be present with the TA partner in the moment, employing a style that is open, flexible and confident.</i> | A. Trust with a TA Partner B. Clear Agreements C. Collaborative Problem-Solving/Conflict Resolution D. Ongoing Feedback E. Effective Communication | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A consultative or professional stance is described as an individual's way of working with others. It is a relational learner-focused approach. These principles guide TA professionals as they work to build a respectful climate for creating and continuing to build a positive relationship with their TA partner. Review Key Elements of the Consultative Stance handout in Appendix F. Think about what it means to be aware of and maintain a professional demeanor or stance. Choose one of the tenets and share how this principle looks, sounds and feels when you are implementing this within your practice. Use the Tenets of Consultative Stance Y Chart (found in Appendix F) to record and submit your responses. 2) Submit a sample partnership or Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Partnership Agreement. (If completed, remove the names and/or identifying information.) 3) Submit a video, no longer than 10 minutes, introducing yourself to a new TA partner. This could be a "mock" partner. This can be a role-play with someone you know who has agreed to be playing the role of your TA partner for the purpose of completing this assignment. The purpose is to show how you would introduce yourself and your role as you start the TA process. 4) Choose ONE of the following: |

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--|
| | | <p>a) Share a tool or resource you use to support problem-solving and your rationale for selecting this tool. Include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief description of your work sample. • Why you chose this example. • The impact this work sample has on you and/or your TA work. • 4-5 sentences to describe what you learned about the use of the work sample, and how you have applied the knowledge you gained. <p>b) Share a tool or resource you use to navigate conflicts/ disagreements. Include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief description of your work sample. • Why you chose this example. • The impact this work sample has on you and/or your TA work. • 4-5 sentences to describe what you learned about the use of the work sample, and how you have applied the knowledge you gained. <p>c) Share a tool or resource you use to understand others perspectives. Include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A brief description of your work sample. • Why you chose this example. • The impact this work sample has on you and/or your TA work. |

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-5 sentences to describe what you learned about the use of the work sample, and how you have applied the knowledge you gained. <p>5) Create or provide a written communication that shares follow-up feedback when providing TA (e.g. after an on-site observation, or as a facilitator in a Community of Practice or Cohort.) Highlight or make note of the types of feedback you provided, such as constructive or supportive feedback.</p> <p>6) Submit a sampling of questions you ask that communicate that you have heard what your TA partner said but do not understand what was said and encourages your TA partner to clarify their thinking.</p> <p>7) Alliance building strategies are specific, observable strategies that relate to factors of alliance that cultivate positive relationships. Recognizing when and how they are used assists the TA professional to be aware of and intentional about using these practices with partners. Review the Day in the Life Vignette 9 and the Alliance Building Strategies Checklist found in Appendix F.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As you review the vignette, check off the strategies you noticed the consultant using. • When you have completed your review, write a reflection about the alliance building strategies used during this consultation. • Be specific about the examples you identified as well as your overall reflection about this consultant's ability to build positive relationships and what you took away from reading this vignette |

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|---|--|--|
| | | that you might use, change or add to the strategies identified. |
| 4. The Technical Assistance Process <i>Effective technical assistance requires an intentional, systematic approach to support meaningful change toward improved program quality. Effective TA professionals know the TA stages and follow an established TA framework while appropriately adjusting the process to be meaningful and applicable to the primary TA strategy used. TA professionals know and apply varied TA strategies to address intended outcomes.</i> | A. Stages of Technical Assistance B. Gathering Information and Conducting Assessments C. Goal Setting and Action Planning D. Supporting TA Partner to Implement and Evaluate the TA Plan a. Mentoring b. Coaching c. Consultation d. Peer-To-Peer Networks E. Evaluating TA Plan and Ending the TA | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Submit your completed Technical Assistance Match Game (found in Appendix F) by selecting the TA role that matches the request and describing how you made your decision. 2. Write a competency statement of at least 500 words to describe your understanding of the TA framework, why and how this competency area is important to the work you do with TA partners. Include examples of how and what you share about the process and stages of TA with your TA partner. 3. Pick one of the scenarios from the "What If" Scenarios located in Appendix F. Write a reflective statement in response to the scenario by answering the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did you choose this scenario? • What do you do? • How might you respond? 4. This is a video role-play assignment. The purpose of this assignment is for the applicant to demonstrate the use of effective communication skills, analyze their use of the skills, and reflect on their rating and what was learned. To complete this activity begin by taking a video of yourself in a session with a TA Partner. The video should be no longer than 15-20 minutes. As the applicant, you are TA professional and your selected |

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| | | <p>partner is the “pretend” TA Partner. You are interacting with your TA partner during a scheduled session. (Role-play examples could be: Coach in a feedback session with a Coachee reviewing CLASS observation results; Consultant at an on-site visit discussing the request for consultation related to a child with challenging behaviors; CoP Facilitator guiding a discussion to generate ideas for the next meeting; Mentor reviewing the Mentee’s activities on her plan.)</p> <p>After completing the video, watch it using the communication checklist as a guide to analyze your use of effective communication skills. To complete this assignment, write a brief response about your assessment of your use of these practices and what you learned from doing and viewing the video including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of what practices you used; • Areas you feel could be enhanced; • Strategies you can put into place to strengthen identified practices. <p>Submit the video sample, and the completed Communication Strategies Observation Checklist integrating your reflection in the notes sections on the form.</p> <p>5. Submit a copy of an assessment tool that you have used in your TA practice to gather information to assist you and your TA partner(s) to identify the TA goal and priorities. (Examples may be: CoP survey tool, or a</p> |

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| | | <p>particular assessment tool such as the NAEYC accreditation tool.)</p> <p>6. Submit a goal using the SMART goal writing framework. Use a goal from one of your TA plans or a goal you identified from your completed Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Checklist.</p> <p>Write a brief reflection about your confidence and competency in writing goals. Include where you feel you are strong and where you are more challenged. Include a tool or resource you use to support the development of goal setting and action planning with a TA partner.</p> <p>7. Even under the best circumstances, facilitators can face challenges. Below are some common facilitation situations you may have or will face when working with peer learning groups or TA partners. Submit a written description of your strategies for managing these 5 challenges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When one person dominates. • When someone breaks the confidentiality of the group. • When no one is talking. • When someone is being constantly negative or antagonistic, or presenting a hostile demeanor. • If a sub-group or clique forms. |

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|--|---|---|
| | | 8. Create or submit a copy of a blank TA evaluation form. This can be for any of the TA approaches or for TA in general. |
| 5. Systems Knowledge <i>Effective TA professionals have a general knowledge of the components of a comprehensive Early Childhood System to include, but not be limited to, programs and agencies that deliver services, applicable laws, rules, regulations, standards and professional development opportunities, as well as workforce certification and licensure requirements. The TA professional should know where to refer the TA partner for additional support and assist the TA partner in locating or accessing additional resources, when needed.</i> | A. Early Childhood Systems' Components B. Regulation and Standards C. Resource and Referral | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Scenario: Too Much of a Good Thing located in Appendix F. Submit a written description of your response to this scenario. As one of the consultants in this program, what would be your approach to supporting a TA partner when you discover there are multiple TA professionals involved? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how you would handle this situation. Provide any tools or work samples you have used or would use to better coordinate TA when there are many disciplines providing these services. Submit a completed Tools / Use template (found in Appendix F) listing the key resources from your particular early childhood setting or sector. These resources are ones you would refer to and use with your TA partner to support accurate compliance with laws, regulations, and rules and the standards, evidence-based practices and curricula tools that help to guide the development of the TA plan. Revisit the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Checklist you completed in Professionalism # 5 Write a reflection statement that focuses on Competency Area 5: Systems Knowledge and includes: |

| Competency Area | Indicator of Best Practice | Evidence for Portfolio |
|-----------------|----------------------------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What you learned about your current skills in this competency area. • What you will do with this information and, • How will you do it? |

| Maine Technical Assistance Credential Portfolio Checklist | |
|--|----------------|
| Component | Date Completed |
| Section 1: Introduction | |
| Personal Philosophy Statement | |
| Résumé | |
| Professional Development Profile | |
| Section 2: Competency Areas and Evidence | |
| A. Professionalism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Competency statement <input type="checkbox"/> Description of key elements of the NAEYC Code of Ethics Supplement for Adult Educators & examples of resources <input type="checkbox"/> Examples of documentation and record keeping <input type="checkbox"/> Description of areas of consideration regarding readiness <input type="checkbox"/> Completion of the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Checklist and written a reflection statement that focuses on Competency Area I: Professionalism | |
| B. Adult Learning Principles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Description of Adult Learning Principle <input type="checkbox"/> Example of a resource used to learn about a TA partner <input type="checkbox"/> Description of making an accommodation | |
| C. Building Relationships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Completion of the Tenets of Consultation Y Chart <input type="checkbox"/> Example of a sample partnership agreement or MOA <input type="checkbox"/> Submission of a Video tape – Introducing yourself to a TA partner <input type="checkbox"/> Choose ONE – Example of a tool or resource (1-problem solving; 2-conflict management; 3-understanding perspectives) <input type="checkbox"/> Example of written communication providing feedback <input type="checkbox"/> Sampling of questions <input type="checkbox"/> Completion of the scenario activity and reflection statement on the Alliance Building Strategies | |
| D. The Technical Assistance Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Completion of the TA Roles Match Game <input type="checkbox"/> Competency statement <input type="checkbox"/> Reflection statement on a “What If” scenario | |

| Maine Technical Assistance Credential Portfolio Checklist | |
|---|--|
|---|--|

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Submission of a video role play and the Communication Strategies Observation Checklist integrating reflections about your use of communication skills <input type="checkbox"/> Example of an assessment tool used in TA practice <input type="checkbox"/> Example of a SMART goal and reflection statement <input type="checkbox"/> Description of strategies for addressing common facilitation challenges <input type="checkbox"/> Example of a blank written TA evaluation form | |
|---|--|

| | |
|--|--|
| E. Systems Knowledge (Choose ONE) | |
|--|--|

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Description of response to multiple TA professionals and example of tools or resources <input type="checkbox"/> Completion of the <i>Tools You Use</i> template <input type="checkbox"/> Revisit the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Checklist completed in Professionalism and written a reflection statement that focuses on Competency Area 5: Systems Knowledge | |
|--|--|

Notes/Questions/Reminders:

Section 6: Letters of Recommendation

The Applicant should include three letters of recommendation with the Maine Technical Assistance Credential Application. The letters should be written by individuals who are familiar with the Applicant's character, skills, abilities, and experience as a technical assistance professional (mentor, coach, consultant, or peer-to-peer network facilitator). Letters of recommendation should be returned to the Applicant in a sealed envelope and will remain confidential.

Appendix E includes a letter for the Applicant to share with those from whom they are requesting a letter of recommendation.

Section 7: The Interview

Upon successful completion of the Portfolio, Applicants will schedule the on-site interview with an MRTQ PDN staff person or designee. Through the interview, Applicants will show how they have integrated the knowledge gained through the Maine Technical Assistance Credential. The interview will provide an opportunity for the Applicant to:

- Respond to any questions that the review committee may have concerning the Applicant's application.
- Expand on the application submission by responding to a series of additional questions and allow for the Applicant to provide additional information that they can demonstrate the TA competencies specific to the skills and abilities required of TA professionals in the field of early care and education.
- Review with the MRTQ PDN staff (or designee) the credentialing process and to assure that the credential reflects the defined purpose and scope of the Maine Technical Assistance Credential.

The interview will be scheduled for a mutually convenient time and location and will last approximately one hour.

The Applicant will receive a copy of the interview questions at least five days in advance of the interview.

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; a federal civil rights law designed to provide equal opportunity for qualified individuals with disabilities, including students.

Appeal Procedure – The process by which an Applicant can respond to the decision of the Credential Review Team.

Applicant – Any person in the process of meeting the requirements for any of the Maine Credentials.

Coaching – A relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s); coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal setting for an individual or group.

Cohort – Group whose members share a significant experience at a certain period of time or have one or more similar characteristics; in this case, a group of professionals working towards a Maine Credential with guidance from a facilitator.

Cohort Application – Application to be a member of a MRTQ PDN Credential Cohort, not to be confused with the application for a Maine Credential.

Competency – Measurable skills, knowledge, dispositions, and abilities that practitioners working with children and/or youth need to facilitate learning and development linked to relevant guidelines or standards.

Competency Area – Label to organize the knowledge, skills, and dispositions (competencies) that collectively define an essential component of effective, high-quality professional practices.

Consultation – A collaborative, problem-solving process between an external consultant with specific expertise and adult learning knowledge and skills, and an individual or group from one program or organization. Consultation facilitates the assessment and resolution of an issue-specific concern—a program-/organizational-, staff-, or child-/family-related issue—or addresses a specific topic.

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) – A process in which programs use data to identify areas of needed improvement and achieve program goals, participant satisfaction, and positive outcomes.

Credential – Documents certifying an individual has met a defined set of requirements established by the grantor of the credential; usually include knowledge and skills and may include demonstrations of competence through a portfolio.

Cultural Competency – The ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures; ensures that the needs of all community members are addressed (<https://nccc.georgetown.edu/curricula/glossary.html>).

Developmentally Appropriate Practice – Learning environment and teaching strategies that are based on current theories and research about how young children learn and develop and promote the optimum growth and development of children.

DHHS OCFS – Maine's Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services.

Evaluation Tools – Include surveys, questionnaires, focus groups; program evaluation is a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about projects, policies and programs, particularly about their effectiveness and efficiency.

Evidence-Based Practices – Approaches and techniques supported by research findings and/or demonstrated to be effective through examination of and reflection on current and past practices.

Family Engagement Activities – Meaningful activities and experiences that demonstrate reciprocal relationships between families and early childhood and/or out-of-school time program staff on behalf of children's learning and development; effective family engagement activities are fully inclusive of all family members and reinforce learning in multiple settings.

IDEA – Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; an education act to provide federal financial assistance to state and local education agencies to guarantee special education and related services to eligible children with disabilities.

Indicator of Best Practice – An identified marker or benchmark that outlines methods that are based on theories and current research for effective practices that support optimal learning and development of children and youth.

Mentoring – is a process between colleagues of similar professional roles, with a more-experienced individual, the mentor, providing guidance and example to the less experienced protégé mentee. Mentoring is intended to increase an individual's personal or professional capacity, resulting in greater professional effectiveness.

MRTQ Core Knowledge Training – Denotes a standardized set of curricula covering the following eight core knowledge areas:

1. Healthy, safe environments;
2. Child development;
3. Developmentally appropriate practice;
4. Observation and assessment;
5. Guidance;
6. Relationships with families;
7. Individual and cultural diversity;
8. Business and professional development.

Delivered by instructors with a Master's Degree in early childhood education (or a closely related field) who have taken additional training regarding teaching adult learners and offers a consistent body of knowledge regarding best practices in early childhood education and out-of-school time for both new and experienced practitioners.

MRTQ PDN – Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network provides professional development services for early childhood and out-of-school time professionals throughout Maine.

MRTQ Registry – The early childhood and out-of-school time professional recognition system for Maine; tracks work experience, training, and education.

NAEYC – National Association for the Education of Young Children – Membership Membership-supported organization of individuals who share a desire to serve and act on the needs and rights of children from birth through age 8 – <http://www.naeyc.org/>.

NAEYC Code of Ethics – A professional Code of Ethics for Early Care and Education Professionals serving children birth to eight NAEYC Code of Ethics and Statement of Commitment.

On-site Observer – Trained early childhood and/or out-of-school time professional who visits an Applicant at their place of employment to assess mastery of Competencies written into the applicable Maine Credential.

On-site Observation Tool – Instrument designed to assess a professional's progress toward mastering the Competencies of the applicable Maine Credential.

Out-of-School Time Settings – Any of an array of programs that provide children and youth with a range of supervised activities designed to encourage learning and development outside of the typical school day.

Person-First Language – Typically used to depict a clear and positive image when discussing any/all people and represents more respectful and more accurate ways of communicating; people with disabilities are not their diagnoses or disabilities - they are people (e.g. a child with special needs is not a "special-needs child") (Aleman 1991; Snow 2001).

Peer-to-Peer Networks foster the development of relationship-based learning and support communities among colleagues, often in like roles. Peer-to-peer TA is based on the premise that a significant expert knowledge base exists in the field and that peers who have solved challenges on the ground have developed tools and strategies that can be shared with their colleagues.

Portfolio – A collection of work assembled in an approved format to demonstrate and document knowledge and skills; it is a vehicle for tracking development, assessing changes in philosophy, and sharing beliefs with others in a clear way.

Quality for ME – Maine's four-step quality rating and improvement system, designed to increase awareness of the basic standards of early care and education, to recognize and support providers who are providing care exceeding those standards, and to educate the community of the benefits of higher quality care.

Reflective Practice – The process of thoughtfully considering one's thoughts, feelings, actions, and experiences when applying knowledge to practice.

Stakeholder – Includes funders, program staff, administrators, program participants, families or clients, community leaders, collaborating agencies, and others with a direct or even indirect interest in program effectiveness.

Technical assistance (TA) – Provision of targeted and customized supports by (a) professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients.

Technical assistance partner – The recipient of technical assistance services provided by a technical assistance professional.

Technical assistance professional – An individual who provides targeted and customized supports to recipients of TA services through specific strategies or approaches, such as mentoring, coaching, consultation, and peer-to-peer networks.

Appendix B: Growing Ideas Tipsheet – Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families



Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies

GROWING IDEAS

Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families

Care and education professionals routinely receive confidential information about children and families as part of their work. Maintaining confidentiality is important both legally and ethically.

What is confidentiality?

Confidentiality involves the treatment of information that an individual has shared in a relationship of trust. Confidential information might include personal details about the lives of children and families, and/or details such as names, addresses, phone numbers, birth dates, health, Individual Education Plans (IEP) and employment information.

What does it mean to maintain confidentiality?

- Conversations, written documents and information, including photos or media about a child or family should be kept private.
- No information about a child or family should be shared with anyone without the written consent of the child's family or legal guardian.

Please note: exceptions include mandated reporting of child abuse required by law, and health conditions when the public health department must be notified.

Why is maintaining confidentiality important?

- Maintaining confidentiality demonstrates respect, which can support the development of a trusting relationship needed for successful family partnerships.
- Confidentiality is a legal protection and assurance of families' right to privacy.
- Practicing confidentiality assures the safety of children and families. It creates and maintains a reputation of high quality standards for the professional and the child care program.

How can care and education professionals honor their legal and ethical obligation to maintain family privacy?

- Know laws, regulations and guidelines on handling personal information.
- Do not give or receive records or other information about children or families without written permission from the parents or legal guardian.
- Understand that parental permission is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time.

- Develop an internal program policy that guides information sharing among program staff, and with outside agencies and consultants.

What procedures should be in place?

- Develop a parental consent for release form that gives the provider permission to share specific information about a child, such as an IEP, medical records, and/or observations.
- Informed consent means that when parents/ guardians give consent to share information about their child, they understand why they are being asked to release these details, and the conditions that apply. Discuss parental consent for release forms carefully with parents/guardians.
- Program policies describe how child records are secured, such as in a locked cabinet, who can access them and under what circumstances they can be shared.

Discuss confidential information in private locations, not in open or shared spaces (hallways, staff rooms, parking lots) where conversations can be overheard.

Share policies regarding confidentiality practices.

- Review and distribute policies related to confidentiality during orientation for families and staff. Review with staff yearly, at least.
- If questions about family privacy arise, identify who in the program staff families should consult.

Disclaimer: This information is for broad educational purposes only. It is not and does not take the place of legal advice for any specific situation nor is it offered as such.

Where to learn more:

See "[Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families — Learning Links](http://ccids.umaine.edu/resources/ec-growingideas/confidentll/)" online at <http://ccids.umaine.edu/resources/ec-growingideas/confidentll/>

The University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies gratefully acknowledges Helen M. Bailey, Esq., General Counsel, and Kristin Aiello, Esq., Staff Attorney, from the Disability Rights Center, Maine's federally-mandated protection and advocacy agency for individuals with developmental disabilities, for their technical assistance during the development of this tipsheet.

Appendix C: Maine Technical Assistance Credential Application

Section 1: Contact Information

Name: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Home Email: _____

Section 2: Application Requirements (please initial)

_____ I am a member of the Maine Roads to Quality Registry.

_____ I have passed background and finger printing checks.

_____ I have met the educational requirement of having at least a Baccalaureate degree in education or related field.

_____ I have completed all of the following trainings:

- ☐ *Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners* (18 hours)
- ☐ *Your Professional Development Portfolio* (9 hours)
- ☐ *Foundations of Relationship-based Technical Assistance* (18 hours)
- ☐ *Foundations of Mentoring* (15 hours)
- ☐ *Foundations of Coaching* (15 hours)
- ☐ *Foundations of Collaborative Consultation* (15 hours)
- ☐ *Foundations of Peer-to-Peer Networks* (15 hours)

OR ☐ I have completed an alternative education/training requirement, Option # _____ (see Appendix D for options)

_____ I have a minimum of 2,000 documented hours of experience providing technical assistance within the last 5 years.

_____ I have a minimum of two years of experience working in a specific area of expertise or discipline within the last 5 years.

_____ I am including three sealed letters of reference.

_____ I have completed a Portfolio that confirms that I have met the educational requirements and demonstrates competency in each of the Competency Areas. **A link to my electronic Portfolio has been emailed to mrtq.credentials@maine.edu.**

_____ I am enclosing a check for \$75 made out to the University of Southern Maine.

Application and check should be mailed to:

Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network
PO Box 9300
Portland, ME 04104-9300

Signature

Date

Appendix D: Alternative Options for Training/Education

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential requires a minimum of 105 hours of specific Maine Roads to Quality Training as listed below. Applicants can choose an alternative option listed below. All documentation of training and/or college coursework must be submitted to and verified by the Maine Roads to Quality Registry.

Option 1:

A minimum of 105 hours of training comprised of the following:

1. *Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners* (18 hours)
2. **AND** *Your Professional Development Portfolio* (9 hours)
3. **AND** *Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance* (18 hours)
4. **AND** *Foundations of Mentoring* (15 hours)
5. **AND** *Foundations of Coaching* (15 hours)
6. **AND** *Foundations of Collaborative Consultation* (15 hours)
7. **AND** *Foundations of Peer-to-Peer Networks* (15 hours)

Option 2:

A combination of training and course work comprised of the following:

1. *Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners* (18 hours)
2. **AND** *Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance* (18 hours)
3. **AND** *Your Professional Development Portfolio* (9 hours)
4. **AND** choice of **ONE** of the following:
 - a. *Foundations of Mentoring* (15 hours)
 - b. *Foundations of Coaching* (15 hours)
 - c. *Foundations of Collaborative Consultation* (15 hours)
 - d. *Foundations of Peer-to-Peer Networks* (15 hours)
5. **AND** Three credits (45 hours) of course work in adult education, adult learning and leadership, reflective practice, embedded professional development, (technical assistance, mentoring, coaching, consultation and peer learning and facilitation) or related field from an accredited institution.

Option 3:

A combination of training and/ or course work comprised of the following:

1. Six credits or 90 contact hours of course work/ training in adult education, adult learning and leadership, reflective practice, embedded professional development, (technical assistance, mentoring, coaching, consultation and peer learning and facilitation) or related field.
2. **AND** *Your Professional Development Portfolio* (9 hours).

Appendix E: Request for Letter of Recommendation



Date:

Dear _____,

_____ is working toward a Maine Technical Assistance Credential and is requesting that you write a letter of recommendation.

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential has been developed with the understanding that when Technical Assistance (TA) professionals have appropriate knowledge and experience in specific subject matter, an understanding of adult learning, and both the knowledge and skills in technical assistance pedagogy, they can more effectively support others in their ongoing professional learning. The Credential has been designed to promote and incorporate all of these integral factors and was based on the [Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce](#).

This credential is awarded to TA professionals who act as a mentor, coach, consultant, and/or peer-to-peer network facilitator who are able to document specific knowledge, skills, dispositions, training, and experience required by this credential.

Please consider if the candidate demonstrates the common strengths of successful TA professionals, and include any supporting comments below:

| Competency | yes | not yet | no | Comments |
|--|-----|---------|----|----------|
| 1. Standards of professionalism | | | | |
| 2. Approaches to learning that are based on principles of adult learning | | | | |
| 3. Knowledge of child development, developmentally appropriate practice and the content, topics, and focus of their TA | | | | |
| 4. Building and sustaining collaborative relationships | | | | |
| 5. Adherence to an established TA framework & process | | | | |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| 6. Knowledge of early care and education systems and how to connect TA partners to other resources and services | | | | |
| 7. Professional dispositions or behaviors that display qualities of character such as caring, collaborative, creative, reflective, and ethical | | | | |

Please include any additional information about this candidate's strengths as a TA professional.

Email your completed recommendation to mrtq.credentials@maine.edu.

If you have questions about the Maine Technical Assistance Credential or writing this reference, feel free to contact Jennifer Conley at (207) 626-5031 or jennifer.conley@maine.edu. We appreciate you taking the time to support this Applicant for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Conley, M.S.Ed.
Training and Curriculum Coordinator,
Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network

Appendix F: Forms and Resources

The following forms and resources are included in this Appendix:

Competency Area 1

- [Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Checklist](#)

Competency Area 2

- None

Competency Area 3

- Tenets of Consultative Stance handout
- Consultative Stance Y Chart handout
- Day in the Life Vignette 9
- Alliance Building Strategies Checklist

Competency Area 4

- TA Match Game
- Communication Strategies Observation Checklist
- What If Scenarios

Competency Area 5

- Scenario: Too Much of a Good Thing
- Tools I Use

Key Elements of the Consultative Stance

Johnston and Brinamen (2006) have identified 10 elements that seem to be essential to the consultative stance.

The 10 elements are:

1. The centrality of relationships.
2. Parallel process as an organizing principle.
3. Avoiding the position of the expert.
4. Mutuality of endeavor.
5. Understanding another's subjective experience.
6. Considering all levels of influence.
7. Hearing and representing all voices.
8. Wondering instead of knowing.
9. Patience.
10. Holding hope.



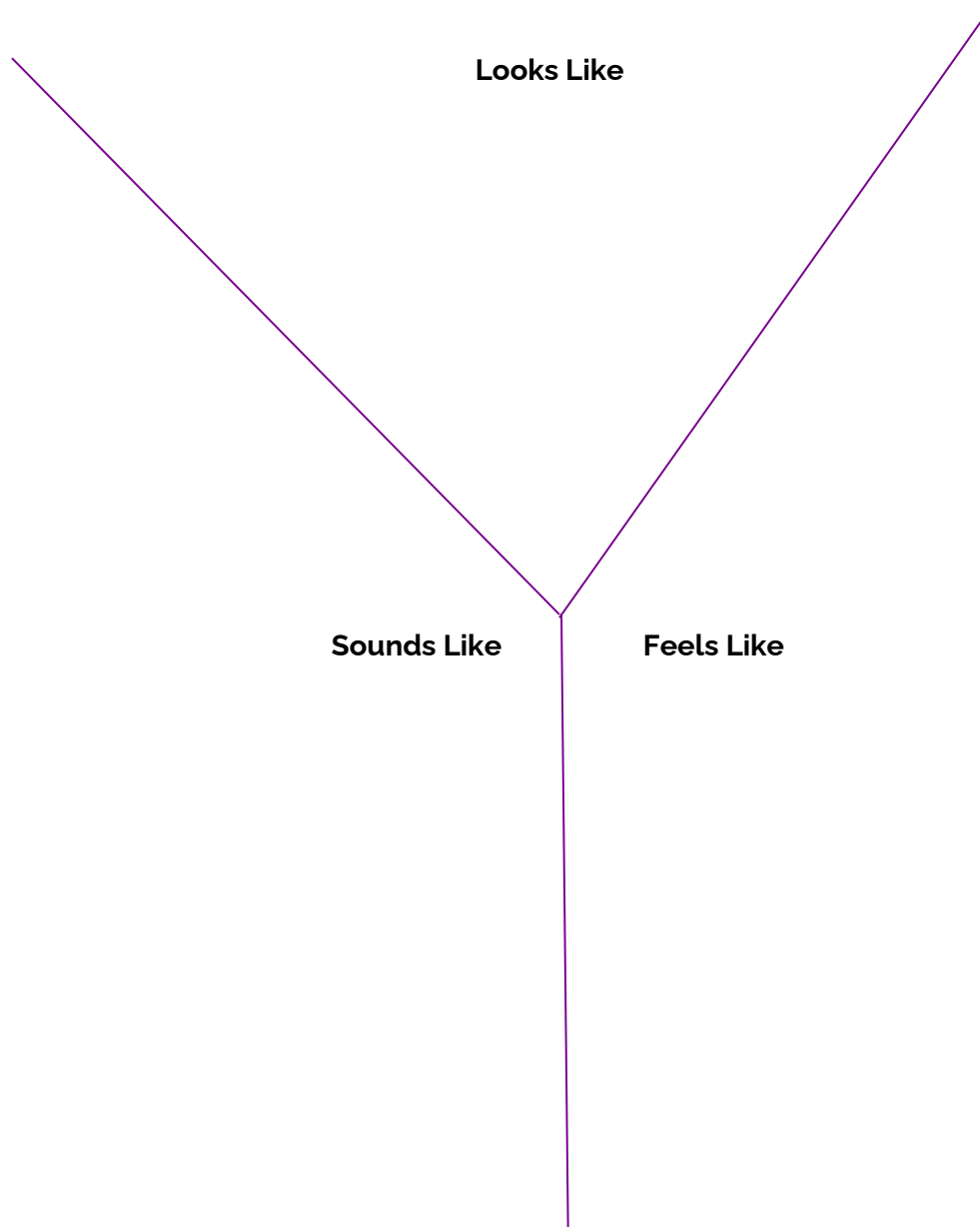
Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance Training Module 2 Activity 5

Tenets of Consultative Stance Y Chart

A Y Chart is a procedure that is used to brainstorm ideas on what you know about a topic by writing or drawing about what the topic looks like, sounds like, and feels like in practice.

Pick one tenet and complete the Y Chart.

Maine Technical Assistance Credential Portfolio Competency Area 3: Building Relationships



Maine Technical Assistance Credential Portfolio Competency Area 3: Building Relationships

VIGNETTE

9

Programmatic Planning to Support Staff Relationships and Well-being

Mr. Leighton Director of a rural Head Start program, called to discuss a referral for programmatic consultation. Mr. Leighton explained that he was worried about staff morale and stress levels in one of the centers. It had been a tough year with high rates of job loss in the community and high levels of crisis among families. He shared that teachers seemed to be laughing less and the usual joy in learning new things about early childhood were not met with as much enthusiasm, in fact several of the teachers asked to opt out of upcoming professional development opportunities. He wasn't sure what exactly the staff needed but he had noticed a marked shift in the overall tone within the center and classrooms.

I had been to this Head Start program to provide staff training on social emotional topics and to do a few child/family-centered consultations. I remember thinking to myself afterwards that staff seemed supported; professional development topics were chosen based on staff's input, time was given each week for uninterrupted teacher planning, the director attended training along with staff as a full participant and I noticed staff felt very comfortable in his presence. I wondered what was causing the shift.

I agreed to meet with the Director the next afternoon and to do some ongoing observations onsite. I arrived late in the day and went into Mr. Leighton's office. We discussed the approach he might take in introducing my presence in the center. We agreed that he had strong enough relationships to lay out his concerns at the staff meeting and he asked me to be there as well. I hadn't known the meeting was that day. We talked about how important it was that the teachers not feel they were in any kind of trouble and that they view consultation as a to support them. Together we came up with a few bullet points for the meeting and headed down to the staff room.

Teachers wandered into the room over a ten minute time frame and sat in the chairs around the table engaging in side conversations. Eventually Mr. Leighton thanked everyone for being there and said, "I bet you are all wondering why our mental health consultant is here when no one made a referral for consultation services!" The staff nodded their heads in agreement. He went on to explain that he made the referral for programmatic consultation as he was worried he wasn't able to give the staff all that they needed to keep going with all of the stress that had been impacting the community and the classrooms this year and he called me in as a resource to offer further support to them all. I knew all of the teachers from prior experiences but took this opportunity again to explain my role as a consultant. "I've been a teacher myself," I said, "and I remember coming home some days and not having enough energy left for my own family. Being a teacher is rewarding but can also be

emotional. My job is to listen and support you. I have heard you have faced some stress this year but want your word for it, on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being high how would you rate your stress level today?" They all yelled out "5"! Everyone laughed a bit and I continued on, "I am not sure yet where consultation will lead us but together we will come up with ideas that we all feel good about." I said that if they were open to it I'd be stopping into each classroom to chat in the next week and gather some preliminary information. All eight teachers signed on and we agreed to meet as a group again the following Friday.

I showed up at the Head Start program the following morning to visit each of the four classrooms. I started in Ms. Perry and Ms. Boswell's preschool room. I did notice a slight shift in the environment from my prior visits as I walked around. The plants that before were vibrant had drooping leaves, some of the information on the walls was now outdated, and several toy bins were becoming filled with various kinds of toys that were not pictured on the label. Ms. Perry was sitting in a chair watching the kids and she seemed in deep contemplation. Ms. Boswell was organizing some materials so I walked over and leaned on the counter and gave her a smile. She smiled back. I asked, "So, how are things going this year?" Ms. Boswell sighed. "It has been tough; two families in our group lost their home, one of our children got removed from his parents and is living with his grandmother now, and my husband lost his job." "Wow," I said, "that is a lot to deal with." She nodded her head in agreement and then a four year old boy came up and hugged Ms. Boswell's leg and said, "I love you!" smiled and ran off. "It looks like you are still that stable base for these kids," I said. "Yes, those hugs keep me going."

I put a hand on her shoulder and said we would talk more. I went over and sat next to Ms. Perry as she observed the children. "Boy they sure are into that clay today," I said. "Yes, they are." We both watched in silence. From first glance the kids were engaged and seemed enthusiastic about the activity; pounding clay, molding it and making all sorts of creations. What I did notice was a little less laughter between kids. This could have purely been because of the intentness they had on their project at hand but I wondered if it might be an overall tone that was enveloping the class, indicating a slight level of stress.

Ms. Perry spoke quietly and said, "I worry about these kids, every night. I've been teaching for 20 years and something has changed." We sat another few minutes. She added, "When I go home each night I hope everyone comes back okay, having been fed and loved up enough." I was starting to feel myself get a little emotional. I don't even know these children well but looking out at their faces together with Ms. Perry I could feel a slight piece of her worry and love. "That is a lot to hold unto Ms. Perry." I wonder how you get comforted," I said. "Well, I just go



I wanted to say everything would be okay as I wanted to fix it right there and then but I knew that wouldn't be the truth as families were struggling and teachers were as well. This would take time. A similar tone and several themes ran through all of the classrooms as I visited that day, mostly worry about children and families and sheer exhaustion of the teachers. To be honest, I was becoming exhausted too. I knew I would be able to discuss my thoughts later in supervision so for now I took a few deep breaths and began to think about the strengths show to me today by the teachers.

about my life. I get work done at home and try to tune it out the best I can." I put a hand on her shoulder and left it there for a moment saying, "Wow that must be hard for you." She gave me a little smile and I got up. I said I would be thinking about her and we would talk on Friday.

I went and sat in Mr. Leighton's office and waited for our 3:30 appointment. I found my eyes begin to close. He walked in and I sat up and reached down for my notebook. He greeted me by asking, "So, what did you find out?" I began with, "Well, you have a very dedicated, passionate staff that is for sure. They love those children and they are holding a lot of hard emotions in such as worry and fear." "I know," replied Mr. Leighton, but what can I possibly do to help? New toys, fun training, days off, they don't help." I replied, "I know you want to do what is best and I have an idea. Each person readily shared how they were feeling and mentioned some specific fears or worries. I wondered, if we could give it a try, for maybe the next few weeks, to use part of Fridays, your usual professional development day, to do some group reflection together. I could facilitate. This would be time just for the staff to share strengths, barriers and hope. It wouldn't take away from their planning time as you usually do some kind of training for 1-2 hours right?" "That is true," replied Mr. Leighton. I went on to say, "Actually I have done this in another center and so far staff has said they feel heard and just being able to share their feelings has alleviated some of the stress. Together we decided to try it out this Friday and see how the teachers respond and get their feedback on continuing. It was a first step I hoped would work.

Friday at 9 A.M. I was in the staff room as teachers came in and sat down. Everyone looked up at me as if expecting me to get the power point rolling, as I had in prior professional development experiences. I began, "I want to start out by thanking all of you for being so honest with me about this year's experiences. I learned a lot about the stress you all are carrying and a little about what that might be like for each of you. I learned that you all have a commitment to children; I can see it as you sit, play and talk with children. I even caught a few smiles and laughter." I went on to say, "This morning is not going to be about training, it's going to be about supporting one another. Every Friday, if you are open to it, we will spend an hour or two sharing our strengths, barriers and hopes for the upcoming week so we can go on and give what we can to the children. How does that sound?" Ms. Boswell said, "You mean we don't have to work?" They all laughed.

We went on to talk about spending this time together and came up with some ground rules, such as "what is said here stays here, no interrupting, etc. Then, we moved on and began by each person sharing something good that had happened that day or something for which they were grateful. This step set a positive tone and then we moved into a few personal stories that illustrated some of their struggles or barriers, "Tell me more about life this year and what you all have been going through." One teacher, raised her hand and told us her story about working with several children in foster care and how emotional it had been for everyone? her, the children, the parents and the foster care families. Another



I have to admit I was a bit nervous when Friday rolled around that week. I had spent time the day before thinking about how I might facilitate this group dialogue to maintain respect, honesty and confidentiality.

teacher gave her hand a gentle pat and smiled some reassurance. I could see several other teachers nodding their head in agreement. No one tried to solve the weighty problems at hand, each listened to one another. After several of the teachers had shared their stories, an hour had gone by and we moved to the last part of our experience; sharing our hopes for the next week. "I hope I can laugh a few times every day," Ms. Boswell shared. "I hope I can see the good inside all of the things going on this week," said Ms. Perry. I wrapped up this first meeting, saying, "OK, everyone, I hope we can each support one another this week and meet again next Friday. Let me know your thoughts on this experience. I will be popping into each of your rooms again on Tuesday."

I checked in with Mr. Leighton to share my observations. I gave him some resources to use in the center (i.e. stress reduction posters) and some ideas for adult relaxation tips that he might share with staff and families as well. We agreed to keep the group activity alive for the next 6 months and then revisit the impact of this staff and program support. I packed up and headed for the door.

As I walked down the hall, I noticed the teachers hadn't left the staff room. They were huddled together talking and actually laughing. Maybe this group experience lightened their emotional load a bit. I knew more was to come and other strategies would come into play but for now seeing a few smiles was a good start.

Alliance Building Strategies Checklist



Review the list. Check all that apply as you listen to and watch the coaching conversation role play.

- ☐ Restates and summarizes information conveyed by the coachee
- ☐ Asks open-ended questions
- ☐ Waits patiently and silently for coachee to respond or ask questions
- ☐ Affirms difficulty of change
- ☐ Uses non-evaluative language
- ☐ Reflects the feelings of what the coachee is saying or showing in their body language
- ☐ Refers to past situations or accomplishments
- ☐ Identifies and works toward the coachee's goals and needs
- ☐ Asks permission before sharing ideas or trying something new
- ☐ Shares information that show expertise/deep content knowledge of the topic
- ☐ Explains complex information succinctly
- ☐ Physical postures is relaxed (e.g. leans slightly toward coachee, hands relaxed in lap)
- ☐ Shows an interest in what others are saying by smiling, nodding, etc.
- ☐ Accurately interprets gestures, facial expressions (e.g. gauges understanding, moods, or emotions of coachee)
- ☐ Respects preferences for personal space and eye contact by responding to social cues of coachee (e.g. coachee steps back or moves chair away from coach)
- ☐ Other:

Adapted from: The National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) (2014)

Foundations of Coaching Module 2, Activity 4, Part 1 (2019)

Maine Technical Assistance Credential Portfolio Competency Area 3: Building Relationships

Technical Assistance Match Game

Name:

Date:

Match the Technical Assistance Request to the Technical Assistance Role

Enter the letter of the TA request (right) in the box next to the correct TA role (left). When you have completed your answers, in the box under each of the roles notes how you made your decisions. What information in the scenario helped you to make your selection?

Mentoring

How did you know?

A. "I'm a family child care provider and work alone. I have been doing this for many years, but do not have others to talk to about this work. I am interested in getting together with others working in child care to talk about what I am doing, share ideas, and learn about new resources. Is there any kind of support like this anywhere?"

Coaching

How did you know?

B. "I was recently promoted to a supervisor role in my child care center. This is a new role for me. I have never done this before. Is there someone who is in this role who I can shadow and learn from?"

Consulting

How did you know?

C. "We recently had several new children start in our child care program. A number of them are new to care and some have behaviors that are challenging us. Our program is really chaotic right now. Is there someone who can come into our program and help us figure out what is going on?"

Peer-to-Peer Networks

How did you know?

D. "I was recently trained in a research-based language and literacy curriculum called Opening the World to Learning (OWL) Curriculum. The group training helped me understand the curriculum and learn about the various components and strategies, but I need help figuring out how to use these practices in my Head Start classroom. Is there someone who can help me use this curriculum and try out the strategies?"

Communication Strategies Observation Checklist

This checklist is designed to be used to observe and identify basic communication practices. For each item, check each time you observe a practice in the box provided. Make notes in the space provided about examples you observed within each of the three broad categories.

| | |
|---|---|
| | <i>Check Yes or No to indicate whether this occurs.</i> |
| Body language Using posture, eye contact, gestures, and other non-verbal movements to show openness, interest, and concern. | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <i>For the following items, make a check in the box each time you observe and example.</i> | |
| Reflecting content and feelings Using your own words to identify the content and feelings in a message is one way to let the speaker know you understand. | |
| Encouraging and affirming Acknowledging the speaker through simple verbalizations encourages the speaker to continue. | |
| Make notes about examples of attending and active listening you observed: | |
| | |

| | |
|--|--|
| <p><i>For the following items, make a check in the box each time you observe an example.</i></p> | |
| <p>Questioning</p> <p>Using different types of questions gives you information that helps to define preferences and strengths, as well as issues and concerns from the other's viewpoint.</p> | |
| <p>Silence</p> <p>Waiting patiently and quietly gives another person time to think before answering a question and lets the speaker know you want to hear from them.</p> | |
| <p>Clarifying and validating</p> <p>Restating the main message and asking if your understanding of what has been said is correct can help avoid misunderstandings.</p> | |
| <p>Summarizing</p> <p>Pulling together the main points of the discussion into a brief statement is a good way of obtaining closure.</p> | |
| <p>Make notes about examples of seeking and verifying you observed.</p> | |
| <p>What other communication strategies did you observe in this video clip? Check if observed and give examples.</p> <p>_____ Attending and Active Listening</p> <p>Examples:</p> | |

| | |
|---|--|
| For the following items, make a check in the box each time you observe an example. | |
| Building Adding to the speaker's ideas lets the other person know you value their input and that you have something to contribute. | |
| Informing Sharing information and knowledge enhances understanding and addresses needs of others. | |
| Seeking consensus Reaching agreement is important to ensure that families and practitioners understand the goals and the ways of achieving them together. | |
| Make notes about examples of joining and supporting you observed. | |
| What other communication strategies did you observe in this video clip? Check if observed and give examples. _____ Attending and Active Listening Examples: _____ Seeking and Verifying Examples: | |
| Summary reflection about the use of these communication practices and the feedback provided by the TA partner. What are you "take aways" from this assignment? | |

Adapted from CONNECT – 2010

<http://community.fpg.unc.edu>

What If Scenarios

Pick one of the scenarios and answer the questions.



Scenario 1: (Mentor Role)

During one of your scheduled mentoring sessions, your mentee tells you that her lead teacher left her alone in the toddler room on two occasions for more than 20 minutes. She told you she is aware that this is in violation with child care licensing rules. The first time she mentioned this to the lead teacher the teacher told her she shouldn't worry about it since sometimes child care rules are flexible and no one will know anyway. Your mentee tells you she is uncomfortable with her response and worried that this will continue but doesn't know what to do.

- What do you do?
- How might you respond?
- Why did you choose this scenario?

Scenario 2: (Coach role)

You are a coach in RSU 123. You are scheduled to visit the Pre-K classroom to meet your coachee Ethel the lead teacher. Before going to the meeting, you spent time thinking about and planning for the session. As the coach your goals are to begin to establish a learning partnership with Ethel. You want to build trust and at the same time set expectations for the relationship. You jot down points you want to touch on to start off your work together. You are feel prepared and are excited to begin. When you meet Ethel at the appointed time you introduce yourself and ask her if this is still a good time to meet. Ethel responds that no time is a good time to meet because she never has much time to talk but she agrees to talk for a few minutes. As you continue to talk, Ethel says *"you should know right off that I had no idea about this"* (arms crossed and voice raised). You express surprise as you shared that your conversation with the principal included a discussion with the teachers about who would be involved in coaching. Ethel interrupts you and says *"well welcome to my world. It doesn't surprise me that you don't know what's going on. I don't know what's going on half the time around here. And another thing, who's idea was it to have you come to 'coach' me. Whatever that means!"*

- What do you do?
- How might you respond?
- Why did you choose this scenario?

Scenario 3: (Consultant role)

This Out-of-School Time (OTC) program has requested consultant assistance in addressing some issues with challenging behavior. The program exists in a school building where they share space (sometimes with reluctance on the part of the school). The school is willing to have the OTC program use the gym, and one 2nd grade classroom, both of which must look

exactly as they were left at 3:00 pm, when your children leave at 5:30 pm. You have your own equipment and materials, but storage is very limited. Teachers have heard “through the grapevine” that two of the children in their program who present behavioral challenges have one-on-one aides at school. The OTC program has not seen any IEPs. You, the consultant, have spent some time in the program building relationships with the staff and children. The OTC is invested in setting goals that will “fix” the children who are causing the problems. You, the consultant, think that the goals should begin with addressing the issues of environment and coordination/relationship building with the school.

- What do you do?
- How might you respond?
- Why did you choose this scenario?

Scenario 4: (Peer-to-Peer Network Facilitator role)

You are the facilitator of a CoP. You meet monthly and have a consistent membership. This has been your 5th session. You are facilitating the December scheduled CoP. One member comes into the session and greets you with *“I am really off tonight. Just before I left work today I had to fire a staff person. You know me, I have been doing this work for almost 12 years and been a director for 5. This has been the hardest situation I have ever had. I am not sure how to process this but I felt it would be helpful to be with others who have been doing this work too.”*

- What do you do?
- How might you respond?
- Why did you choose this scenario?

Scenario: Too Much of a Good Thing

If It's Thursday, It Must Be the Literacy Consultant

Today is Thursday in Sonia's Child Care Center. Sonia stops by the infant classroom to remind Badia that the literacy consultant will be in her classroom from 1:00 to 2:00. When Sonia leaves, you see Badia turn to her co-worker and say:



"Another consultant—that's the fifth one this month! Last week we met with both the behavior specialist to discuss the biting situation and the infant mental health consultant for our regular monthly meeting. On Monday the health consultant spent two hours here giving me recommendations on improving our diapering procedures. And today it's the literacy consultant! And tomorrow the accreditation consultant is coming. How am I supposed to spend time with the children when I have to be with these consultants? And to top it off, some of them are saying different things—one says to move the shelf this way so you have better visibility of the biter, and another says I need to turn the shelf the other way to create a cozy reading corner. And to be honest with you, I don't think some of them have ever worked with infants before. It is good that we have consultants to work with, but it's hard to do that and give my undivided attention to the babies. I am so frustrated!"

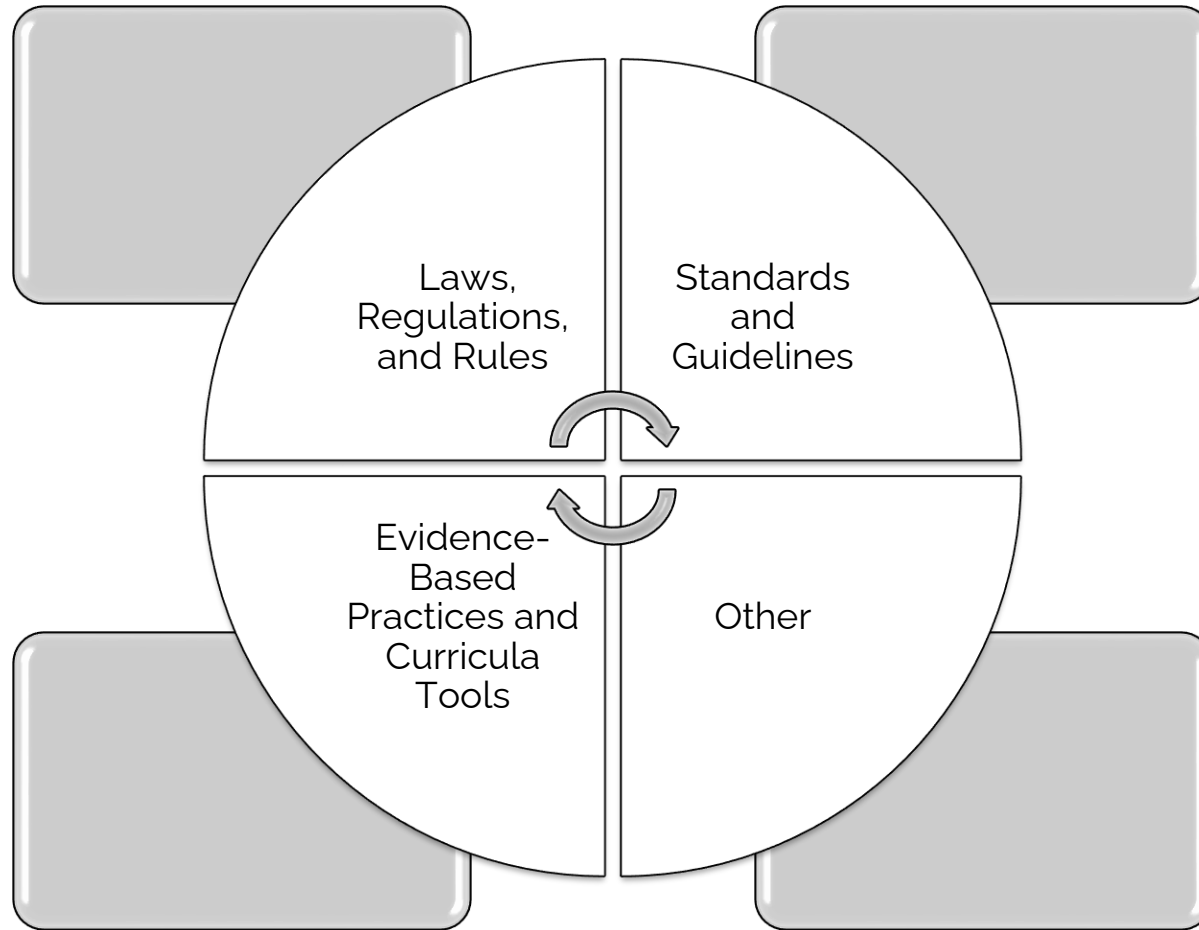
Adapted from: Child Care Bureau, ZERO to THREE, National Infant and Toddler Child Care Initiative (2010). Coordinating Child Care Consultant: Combining Multiple Disciplines and Improving Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Settings.

Tools I Use

Name:

Date:

Complete the template below to list the key resources from your particular early childhood setting or sector that you would refer to and use with your TA partner to support accurate compliance with laws, regulations, and rules and the standards, evidence-based practices, and curricula tools that help to guide the development of the TA plan.



Maine Technical Assistance Credential Portfolio Competency Area 5: Systems Knowledge

Appendix G: Contributors

Special thanks to the following individuals for their valuable contributions to this publication.

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