

**INDIANA YOUTH WORKER
CORE COMPETENCIES**

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Organization**
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*What is competent child
and youth work?*

**Competent child and youth work is
grounded in a recognized set of
core competencies.**

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*What is a core
competency?*

Core competencies are based on the **knowledge, skills,
and personal attributes/implementation abilities** of
youth workers.

They are the “demonstrated capacities” that allow a
youth worker to be a resource to youth, organizations,
and communities.

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Where did the Indiana Core Competencies come from?

Early in 2002, a group of statewide leaders in the youth development field were convened to address two key facts about people in the field of youth work:

- a serious shortage of well-trained, qualified practitioners exists in Indiana; and
- youth workers lack any defined professional status.

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Where did the Indiana Core Competencies come from?

On August 29, 2003, the Indiana Youth Development Credential Congress ratified the Indiana competencies and credential elements, providing the foundation of the Indiana Youth Development Credential (IYD).

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What are the Indiana Core Competencies?

There are five areas of Indiana Youth Worker Core Competencies

- Child & Youth Development
- Families & Communities
- Program Environments
- Program Content/Curriculum
- Professionalism

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IYD Credential Core Competencies

The IYD Core Competencies outline the best practices for individuals who work with children and youth as identified by the Indiana School-Age Consortium in 2003.

Individuals who earn an IYD Credential are able to demonstrate these skills, knowledge and implementation abilities in a specific program setting.

For more information about these competencies and the IYD credential, please visit indianayouthpro.org.

The 16 Competencies

Child & Youth Development	Families & Communities	Program Risk/Assessmt	Program Content / Curriculum	Professionalism
o Knowledge of Child/Youth Development	o Respect for Diverse Cultures in Communities	o Assures a Healthy & Safe Environment	o Planning for Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Development	o Self-Development
o Observation / Assessment Methods	o Work with Families	o Use Indoor/Outdoor Environments	o Planning for Cognitive and Language/Literacy Learning	o Appreciates Children/Youth
o Individual Differences			o Planning for Physical Learning	o Ethical and Responsible Employee
o Guidance Skills			o Planning for Creative Learning	o Professional Development

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What are the core competencies within each of these areas?

Child & Youth Development

- **Knowledge**
 - Understands Child/Youth Development
- **Observation/Assessment**
 - Observes to respond to individual characteristics
- **Individual Differences**
 - Respects individuals differences and includes those with special needs
- **Guidance Skills**
 - Creates a positive, supportive environment; moves to self management

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What are the core competencies within each of these areas?

Families & Communities

- **Respect for Diverse Cultures in Communities**
 - Respects ones own and diverse cultures; knows and accesses community resources
- **Work with Families**
 - Communicates with and involves families

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What are the core competencies within each of these areas?

Program Environments

- **Assures a Healthy & Safe Environment**
 - Promotes safe environments; supervises for safety and security; promotes healthy environments
- **Uses Indoor/Outdoor Environments**
 - Uses space, equipment and materials as resources for creating an interesting, secure, enjoyable environment for all children, including those with special needs

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What are the core competencies within each of these areas?

Program Content/Curriculum

- **Planning for Physical Learning**
 - Directs physical activities for both gross motor and fine motor growth
- **Planning for Creative Learning**
 - Provides opportunities that stimulate children/youth to experiment in individual ways and to express their creative abilities

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What are the core competencies within each of these areas?

Program Content/Curriculum

- **Planning for Inter-personal & Intra-personal Development**
 - Plans for positive group participation; fosters interpersonal relationships; fosters growth in self-esteem; fosters personal and social responsibility
- **Planning for Cognitive & Language/ Literacy Learning**
 - Plans for hand-on and collaborative learning; directs language/literacy activities

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What are the core competencies within each of these areas?

Professionalism

- **Self-Development**
 - Self-evaluation and self-realization; self-care and well being; language and literacy skills; creative thinking, decision making, problem solving
- **Appreciates Children/Youth**
 - Demonstrates caring for youth

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What are the core competencies within each of these areas?

Professionalism

- **Ethical & Responsible Employee**
 - Ethical conduct; organizational mission; co-worker responsibility; using public and program policies
- **Professional Development**
 - Engaging in professional development; linked to professional & community organizations

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Why are core competencies important?

For agency administrators, core competencies provide a framework for

- Identifying and hiring the most competent, well qualified youth care staff
- Developing more appropriate and effective employee training programs and plans, e.g., in-service training, conference planning, etc.
- Evaluating the performance of child and youth care practitioners

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Why are core competencies important?

For youth workers, core competencies provide a framework for

- Implementing quality, and age and developmentally appropriate programs and services for children and youth
- Serving young people ranging from early childhood to young adults
- Using intervention strategies and developmental models such as the 40 Developmental Assets and Ready by 21

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Why are core competencies important?

Core competencies provide

- A common language to validate and unify the field of youth work
- An opportunity for the field of child and youth work to be viewed by those outside the field as a valuable profession

While you may not personally need this validation, the field of youth work does!

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Why are core competencies important?

The following national youth serving organizations and coalitions all agree that core competencies for the field of youth work are important:

- Child & Youth Care Certification Board (CYCCB)
- National Institute on Out of School Time (NIOST)
- National AfterSchool Association (NAA)
- National Collaboration for Youth (collab4youth)
- Next Generation Youth Work Coalition
- Cornerstones for Kids

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Why are core competencies important?

NIOST's publication *Making the Case: A 2009 Fact Sheet on Children and Youth In Out-of-School Time* says

The characteristics and capabilities of the youth worker are paramount to program success, and programs for youth are most successful when youth workers are creative, well trained, skilled at building relationships, and can make long-term commitments to programs.

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Why are core competencies important?

- Program quality is dependent upon having staff that possess the knowledge and skills to work with youth effectively and are capable of building positive supportive relationships.
- Without strong staff, the increasing expectations being placed on youth programs are unrealistic.

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How do I and others become more competent child and youth care practitioners?

Pathways to increasing competency

- ongoing professional development, including appropriate in-service training, workshops, participation at conferences, etc.
- classes and/or degrees in youth work through higher education
- supervised internships in youth serving agencies
- experience working in youth serving agencies
- certification and credentialing

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What can I do tomorrow with the information I learned today?

- Become familiar with the material contained in this presentation
- Consider what you have just learned means to you and your organization
- Evaluate hiring, training and performance evaluation practices and institute change as appropriate
- Align your own professional development and that of your staff based on the core competencies

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What can I do tomorrow with the information I learned today?

- Use the core competencies to develop relevant and effective tools for evaluating the performance of child and youth care staff
- Give priority in hiring and advancing other practitioners who have obtained their professional credential or certification
- Lead the way by becoming an IYD credentialed or CYC-P certified youth worker

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What can I do tomorrow with the information I learned today?

Spread the word!

- Educate others, both formally and informally, about the importance and meaning of the core competencies, and where they may find more information related to the competencies and how they may be used
- Share about the competencies with your staff, coworkers, other youth workers, intermediaries serving youth workers and funders and give them the "Competency Handout"
- Train your staff and coworkers on the Core Competencies

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Where can I access training related to the core competencies?

Indiana Youth Institute (IYI)
IYI has committed to aligning its training and conference workshops with the Indiana Core Competencies

Higher Education
Work is being done to encourage and support the offering of additional coursework related to the core competencies at Ivy Tech and colleges and universities across the state of Indiana

National Youth Development Information Center
www.ncydic.org provides access to training modules that are grounded in the core competencies

Local, Statewide and National Trainings & Conferences
Target trainings that focus on competencies you and your team need to develop

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Where can I find information, tools, and resources related to the competencies?

<http://www.indianayouthpro.org/>
Access history, information and tools regarding the competencies and the Indiana Youth Development Credential.

<http://www.acycp.org/>
Access information regarding the National Child and Youth Care Certification

<http://www.nydic.org/nydic/index.html>
-Access training modules focused on the competencies

<http://www.cyc-net.org/opening.html>
Access national information regarding the field of youth work

<http://careerswithyouth.org>
Access information about pursuing a career in the field of youth work including academic pathways

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How do I and others become credentialed or certified child and youth care practitioners?

Credentials and Certifications

IYD – Indiana Specific Credential (No exam)
<http://www.indianayouthpro.org/>

CYC-P – National Certification (Proctored exam)
<http://www.acycp.org/cyc%20certification%20board/default.htm>

Both require experience working/volunteering in the field (or a supervised practicum), competency-related training and professional development, membership in one or more professional associations

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