Credentialed Parenting Educator Competency List

1. The Purpose of Parenting Education
   Parenting Educators:
   A. Understand and advocate the need for parenting education programs
   B. Understand current issues that impact parenting and family life and how rapidly evolving social standards and ongoing research affect parenting
   C. Acknowledge that each parent is the expert on their own child and family
   D. Understand that how individuals were parented influences how they parent their own children and how they think about parenting

Human Growth and Development

2. Child and Lifespan Development
   Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to teach parents about:
   A. Child development
      i. Basic ages and stages of development from prenatal through adolescence
      ii. Typical ranges of development and when intervention may be needed
      iii. Importance of and tools for tracking development
   B. Adult development
      i. Adult development throughout the lifespan – adult behavior, growth and development
      ii. Adult life skills: literacy, job skills, relationship skills
   C. Sensitivity to children’s needs and challenges related to their emotional, cognitive and physical development
   D. Sensitivity to adult needs and challenges related to their emotional, cognitive and physical development

3. Social and Emotional Development
   Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to teach parents:
   A. That how a person feels about themselves, the people in their life, and the environment in which they live, impacts them and their family (in both positive and negative ways)
   B. That behavior is an important indicator of social/emotional wellness and maturity (in both positive and negative ways)
   C. The need to develop emotional awareness, self-regulation and healthy boundaries and the importance of balance and self care for parents
   D. Skills to nurture their child’s social-emotional development
      i. Awareness of how emotions influence learning objectives (cognitive, affective, psychomotor)
      ii. Ability to teach emotional coaching and promote/advocate awareness of body language and tone of voice
      iii. Understanding the essential nature of self-esteem and how to foster it in another
      iv. Ability to affect secure caregiver-child bonds and attachment
      v. Ability to read non-verbal cues
   E. The impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) on parenting, awareness of potential triggers, and when to seek help
F. Signs and symptoms of common forms of depression and potential impacts of emotional distress of the primary caregiver on the developing child

4. Health and Safety

*Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to teach and share with parents:*

A. Information and local resources on staying healthy and dealing with illness in both adult and child.
   i. Physical Health - access to wellness care, insurance, healthy lifestyle
   ii. Mental Health - especially maternal depression

B. Information regarding newborn health and safety: shaken baby, safe sleeping, infant feeding, car safety and infant emergency care

C. Signs and symptoms of domestic violence and awareness of the detrimental effects on children of any interpersonal violence.
   i. Skills for building healthy relationships
   ii. Effects of interpersonal violence on children

D. Essential components of safe and healthy indoor and outdoor physical environments.

E. Definitions and signs of child abuse and neglect and appropriate responses to disclosure including procedures for reporting child abuse and neglect.
   i. Physical abuse
   ii. Emotional/psychological abuse
   iii. Sexual abuse
   iv. Neglect

Parent, Child, Family and Community Relationships

5. Parent Development and Family Systems

*Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to teach parents:*

A. How circumstances, culture, and society impact relationships within families and with children.

B. How the ways in which family members communicate and relate to each other affects each individual within the family

C. How parental resilience and social connections affect family function

D. About parenting stages across the lifespan

E. About parental roles: Provider, Protector, Nurturer, Guide, Teacher, Play Partner and Advocate

F. About the influences of family type and structure on parenting

G. About the importance of fathers and their influence for the healthy growth and development of children

6. Nurturing Discipline

*Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to teach parents:*

A. Nurturing discipline techniques
   i. Appropriate levels of supervision and interaction for children of different ages
   ii. A variety of positive discipline skills
   iii. The difference between discipline and punishment
   iv. Pitfalls of rewards and punishment
   v. Using appropriate consequences

B. Parenting styles

C. Relationship between parenting roots and discipline techniques
D. Importance of and tools for adult self-control

7. Community Systems and Resources  
*Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to teach parents:*
A. About the community, financial, and human resources available to support families  
B. How to identify and access available resources to meet family needs  
C. How building Protective Factors in a community provides support for all families  
D. About parental roles in child care and educational relationships  
   i. Identifying quality child care  
   ii. Building relationships with child care providers and teachers  
   iii. Advocating for children in a child care or educational setting

8. Technology and Media  
*Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to teach and share with parents:*
A. Current research regarding the impact of various media on child development including:  
   i. Impact on physical and social-emotional wellbeing, as well as the brain, language, and gender  
   ii. Impact on specific ages  
B. Various media forms and how family members interact with media and with each other around media in both positive and negative ways:  
   i. Positive: keeping up with current events; using media for relaxation or enjoyment; learning new information  
   ii. Negative: media influences/establishes social norms; use of media to harm, coerce, or stigmatize others; media’s role in the creation/promotion of a consumer culture; media tends to foster/create stereotypes regarding gender, ethnicity/race, age, sexual orientation, etc.;  
C. How to draft a media management plan for their children, keeping in mind:  
   i. Appropriate time and content limits for various ages  
   ii. Results of over-exposure/saturation (TV, movies, games, movies, advertising, print, and internet social media)  
   iii. Parental monitoring importance and resources

Parenting Education Practice

9. Strengths-based Communication  
*Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to:*
A. Build empathy with others  
B. Create a listening atmosphere using tools such as clarifying questions and reflective listening  
C. Say what they mean clearly and respectfully using tools such as “I-statements”  
D. Use non-verbal communication messages, both sending and receiving  
E. Use tools to diffuse blame and criticism  
F. Confront people constructively when appropriate  
G. Build and keep trust with families  
H. Respect confidentiality, understanding how to keep information confidential and the circumstances that indicate a need to break confidentiality
10. Adult Learning and Learning Styles

**Parenting Educators:**

A. Know the basic characteristics of adult learners

B. Know basic learning styles

C. Offer information in ways that respect characteristics of adult learners, in that the information is:
   i. Relevant to the parent’s expressed needs and immediately accessible
   ii. Linked to parent’s prior knowledge, experience and culture
   iii. Accessible to a variety of learning styles and abilities

11. Working with Diversity

**Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to:**

A. Understand and respect diversity including family, or individual differences and how lived experiences influence family structure, beliefs, values, rituals and traditions. Parenting educators will:
   i. Commit to ongoing expansion of an understanding of self and others using reflection and empathy skills
   ii. Modify practice and/or approach based on what is learned
   iii. Communicate respectfully and effectively with diverse participants

B. Understand the myths and stereotypes related to the following issues and advocate for change:
   i. Poverty and socioeconomic status
   ii. Race and ethnicity
   iii. Country of origin and/or citizenship status
   iv. Family structure

C. Be aware of how real and perceived power differences affect everyone. Parenting educators will:
   i. Understand that workers have power to withhold or grant services
   ii. Advocate with and for families to access services and supports as appropriate

D. Be aware of how lived experiences impact parent-child interactions
   i. Ability to guide parents in reflecting on the origin of their parenting beliefs
   ii. Ability to assist families to understand societal and legal expectations related to child rearing

12. Facilitation Skills

**Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to:**

A. Assess the individual, family, and educational strengths, needs, and preferences of participants, and select strategies for optimal understanding

B. Expect and prepare to meet differing levels of knowledge, skills, expectations, and parenting goals with each new audience

C. Adapt programs for parents with special needs and challenges

D. Use multi-modal methods to engage parents with diverse learning styles and meet educational objectives

E. Balance content in parenting education with the parent’s need to process the information and apply it (science vs. art)

F. Understand that content is strengthened through reflection and dialogue and processed in the parent’s own time.

G. Effective and creative methods to engage and keep parents involved

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13. 1-3. From the following three methods of working with families, select one with which you have experience and respond to the listed competencies.

13.1. Family Conferencing

*Parenting Educators will have the knowledge and ability to:*
A. Understand effective family-led meeting techniques
   i. Teach and support families as they conduct their own family conferences as a vehicle for affirming strengths and promoting positive change
   ii. Understand the various ways that threat and coercion work and counter this by promoting positive and effective methods of communication among family members

13.2. Group Facilitation

*Parenting Educators:*
A. Accept responsibility to create a safe and supportive environment for all participants
   i. Establish and uphold respectful behavior
   ii. Convey unconditional positive regard for all individuals within a diverse group
B. Meet both individual and group needs
C. Provide group structure
D. Select and use effective educational methodologies and facilitation strategies such as large and small group process, role play, transitions, group discussion, and interaction.

13.3. Home Visiting

*Parenting Educators will:*
A. See strength and resilience regardless of perceptions and personal standards
B. Use skills, attitude, and sensitivity to work effectively within an intimate family space
C. Maintain ethical, legal, and safety responsibilities for working within a home environment

14. Professional Identity and Boundaries

*Parenting Educators:*
A. Understand roles and boundaries of the parent/parent educator relationship
   i. Guide parents, offer choices, identify and validate feelings and offer support
   ii. Set appropriate limitations on facilitator involvement
   iii. Know when and how to refer to other professionals for assistance.
   iv. Understand the role and timing of personal disclosure
B. Access frequent and appropriate reflective supervision