



هيئة أبوظبي للطفولة المبكرة  
Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority

# EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCIES



# WHAT ARE ECD COMPETENCIES?

ECD competencies are the knowledge, skills and behaviors needed by professionals and practitioners who work with or on behalf of, children 0 to 8 and their families



## WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?



ECD competencies ensure **consistent understanding** across **all stakeholder** on the **expectations for ECD practitioners**



ECD competencies define **learning outcomes** of education, professional learning programs & professional development plans provide **input to monitoring & evaluation processes**



ECD competencies support **greater consistency in services** for children through the 0 to 8 continuum and across professional roles and settings

# WHO ARE ECD COMPETENCIES APPLICABLE TO?

ECD competencies are relevant to 96 ECD practitioners across the following 4 sectors...

## Health & Nutrition

**42** Total positions including:

Pediatrician	Speech therapist
Paramedic	Midwife
Neonatologist	Pediatric Nurse
Pediatric	Neonatal Nurse
Cardiologist	Lactation
Child Psychologist	Consultant
Obstetrician	...

## Early Childhood Care and Education

**26** Total positions including:

Nursery Director/Principal	Primary School Teaching Assistant
Primary School Principal	Nursery Teaching Assistant
Nursery Teacher	Nursery/School Bus Driver
Primary School Teacher	Nursery/School Bus Supervisor
Nursery Childcare Worker	Nursery/School Nurse
Special Education Teacher	...

## Child Protection

**17** Total positions including:

Abuse Helpline Employee	Child Protection Specialist
Child Abuse Pediatrician	Prosecutor
Police Officer	Judge
Social Worker	Child Protection Policymaker
Child and Juvenile Social Worker/Officer	Child Protection Law Specialist
	Security Guard
	...

## Family Support

**11** Total positions including:

Nanny/Housekeeper with Childcare Duties	Babysitter
Family Driver	Family Lawyer
Family Support Social Worker	Juvenile Court Counsellor
Family Counsellor	Academic Researcher in Family Support
Parent Educator	Child Visitation Supervisor
Domestic Worker	

“subject to change with potential additions as the job market evolves”



# WHAT ARE THE IDENTIFIED ECD COMPETENCIES?

WE IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING 29 TOTAL COMPETENCIES THAT ALL ECD PRACTITIONERS SHOULD POSSESS, GROUPED ACROSS 7 DOMAINS:

## 1

### SCIENCE AND PRACTICE SUPPORTING HOLISTIC EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT



**Understand impact of early years** and importance of addressing child's holistic development



**Apply evidence-based strategies** for promoting child and family development (incl. appropriate use of technology)



**Demonstrate understanding of individual differences and fluctuations** in children's development and learning that must be responded to reflectively and appropriately



**Use appropriate tools and techniques to assess child development; organizing results** so information can be used for further assessment and planning purposes in providing timely care and interventions



**Interact with kindness, warmth and care, expressing respect, appreciation and understanding of individual needs; creating a healthy, welcoming and age-appropriate environments** for them



**Understand and demonstrate respect for processes, protocols and procedures for protecting privacy and confidentiality** of the children, respective families and colleagues

## 2

### CHILD WELLNESS: HEALTH, NUTRITION, AND SAFETY



**Familiar with science** regarding healthy early childhood development and use of strategies with children and their parents to support physical growth, emotional well-being, and adequate nutrition



**Understand the influence of adverse childhood experiences on life-long health and social consequences**



**Familiar with child protection laws, policies and protocols** for reporting child neglect, abuse, exploitation or exposure to violence; taking adequate actions when children are under similar kinds of threat



**Aware of safety issues that affect children and factors and practices that reduce or increase risk to child safety** and able to provide first aid / CPR procedures



**Promote home and community safety** in partnership with parents across all spaces to prevent unintentional injuries, disease, or death of the child



# 3

## FAMILY AND COMMUNITY



**Understand** the critical importance of the family environment (physical, social...) for child's wellbeing, overall development, functioning, and learning



**Aware** of the importance of high-quality interactions between parents and the child, and between practitioners and parents; able to interact with parents in a timely, transparent, respectful, and accountable manner



**Establish relationships with parents based on mutual understanding, trust and cooperation**; using effective strategies to engage family members with diverse backgrounds using a variety of ways to communicate (e-mail, phone...)



**Listen to and involve parents in all decisions** regarding the child's safety, healthy development and learning; creates opportunities for parents to strengthen their parental skills



**Aware of community resources to support child and family development and functioning** and accordingly able to partner effectively with key stakeholders

# 4

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



**Treat all children and their families with fairness, empathy, understanding, dignity and respect**; understanding how discrimination based on diversity can impact lives and prospects of children



**Adapt practices, communication and services** to reflect each child's and family's characteristics, strengths, beliefs and special needs



**Use different strategies to make each child and family feel welcomed and respected** regardless of their background, language, socio-economic status, ability or gender



**Address own biases toward children, families and communities** to avoid stereotypical or judgmental reactions and to advance child's development



# 5

## PROFESSIONALISM AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH



**Identify** proudly as an **ECD professional** and **promote professional and personal integrity** in all interactions, while **aware** of relevant **professional code of conduct** for their profession, if applicable



**Use professional competencies and standards** for ECD practitioners as **guidance for own professional development** and as a **continuous learning** process



**Familiar** with **effective and evidence-based strategies and tools** for **improving the quality of their practice** and aware of **Abu Dhabi's ECD practitioner competencies and standards**



**Apply information** from professional meetings, seminars, workshops, as well as print and digital resources **to stay abreast of and deepen professional knowledge**

# 6

## COORDINATION ACROSS PRACTITIONER ROLES & PROFESSIONAL SETTINGS



**Cooperate and coordinate** with others to **facilitate children's and families' access and transition to services** to support overall child and family development and well-being



**Familiar with variety of practitioner roles** across ECD services; cooperating and coordinating with them for **joint planning, service delivery and evaluation of outcomes** to support child and family development and well-being



**Demonstrate collegiality** and is respectful of each other's functions, responsibilities, strengths, skills and expertise when working with other practitioners

# 7

## UAE CULTURE & HERITAGE



Aware of the **UAE's heritage, culture and Islamic values**; demonstrating **appreciation and respect** in interactions



Aware of the **diverse cultures, religions, traditions, ethnicities and races** that live in the UAE; **showing sensitivity while communicating** and engaging with the UAE community and **promoting core values**

# HOW CAN YOU EMBED ECD COMPETENCIES AS PART OF YOUR ROLE?

## BEFORE STARTING THE JOB



## ENTERING THE JOB



## ON THE JOB



### FOR EMPLOYEES

Ensure you **enroll in courses and degrees** that **embed ECD competencies** to prepare you for the role (list of courses and degrees available on the ECA competencies portal)

Understand **job entry requirements** and how **ECD competencies are embedded within them** and **prepare for interviews according**

Complete **trainings that refresh your knowledge of the ECD competencies** as part of your annual professional development plan

Engage in **active discussions with your manager** on how you **practice ECD competencies** in your day-to-day responsibilities



### FOR EMPLOYERS

**Guide prospective employees** on the **appropriate educational programs** that embed ECD competencies to prepare them for the role

Ensure **ECD competencies** are part of **relevant job profiles and requirements from candidates**  
**Assess job candidates** on their ability to exemplify the **ECD competencies** as part of the **job interview process**

Provide **trainings that maintain or reinforce knowledge** around ECD competencies

Use **ECD competencies as a key metric** when assessing performance of employees

# WHERE CAN YOU ACCESS THE ECD COMPETENCIES?

THE ECA COMPETENCIES PORTAL OFFERS ACCESS TO THE ECD COMPETENCIES IN ADDITION TO OTHER TOOLS INCLUDING...

## 1 ECD competencies

Detailed description of the **29 ECD competencies**

## 2 Job profiles

Overview of **roles and responsibilities** that **embed ECD competencies** for different ECD-related positions

## 3 Job interview checklists

Detailed **guide on how to assess job candidates** for ECD-related positions **based on ECD competencies**

## 4 Courses and university pathways

List of **professional development courses** and **university degrees** that embed **ECD competencies**

FOR MORE DETAILS,  
PLEASE CONTACT THE ECA  
HUMAN CAPITAL TEAM AT:  
[INFO@ECA.GOV.AE](mailto:INFO@ECA.GOV.AE)





