Florida Steps to Success — Early Learning Career Pathways

Florida Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Technical Assistance Specialists

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Purpose

The development of the Florida Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Technical Assistance Specialists was led by a steering committee of state leaders representing government agencies, higher education institutions, early care and education provider associations, training and technical assistance organizations and other early childhood stakeholders. The importance and purpose of the core competencies are summarized as follows:

- Identify and define what technical assistance specialists need to know and be able to do, i.e., knowledge and behavioral expectations, in order to provide quality technical assistance support to early care and education practitioners and programs

- Outline a set of characteristics and attributes that define a continuum of professional development, that develops over time, along multiple pathways, and supports effective job performance in the field of early care and education

- Create a framework and common language for professional development, defining terms and expectations that can be used consistently among technical assistance specialists and across agencies, institutions, programs, and organizations when communicating about technical assistance in the field of early care and education

- Serve as a standard for decisions and practices carried out by technical assistance specialists in early care and education settings and programs

- Provide guidelines for developing, tracking, supporting, and promoting staff qualifications, curricula, and professional development tools and resources for technical assistance specialists in early care and education systems and settings

- Create a framework to promote recognition of the significance of technical assistance specialists within the early care and education field, inform accountability systems, and guide training, education, interagency agreements, and articulation agreements between institutions

Florida Core Competencies for Technical Assistance Specialists

The Early Care and Education field includes many different roles and job opportunities, and the provision of technical assistance is one of the important roles in supporting quality services for young children. Technical Assistance Specialists provide a variety of supports and must have specific capabilities that are garnered through a combination of education, training, practical experience, and skills. Technical assistance is the provision of targeted and individualized support by a professional(s) to develop or strengthen processes, application, or implementation of services by the technical assistance recipient. The recipient may be an individual or a group, and the levels, intensity, and duration of technical assistance vary depending on need, response, and resources.

Typical forms of technical assistance include mentoring, coaching, and consultation. Mentoring is defined as an ongoing, relationship-based process typically between colleagues in similar professional roles with the mentor being more experienced and knowledgeable than the mentee. A specific professional development area or the mentee's holistic professional growth may be the focus of the work. Coaching is another type of relationship-based process that focuses on a specific goal for an individual or group. Coaching requires interactions that build trust and respect and the setting of performance-based outcomes. Consultation is a collaborative, problem-solving process involving a professional with specific expertise and an individual or group. Issue-specific concerns are assessed, and the consultant provides assistance in the development of goals, identification of potential solutions, and implementation strategies to achieve the goals. All types of technical assistance are intended to increase the knowledge, skills, and professional effectiveness of the technical assistance recipients.

The core competencies in this document detail the knowledge and skills required of technical assistance specialists, whether serving as a mentor, coach, or consultant. Depending on the needs and responses of the technical assistance recipients and the resources available, specific elements of the core competencies may be more utilized than others at specific times. However, all of the knowledge and skills outlined in this document are important to the delivery of high quality mentoring, coaching, and consultation. As in any role within the early care and education field, technical assistance specialists have varying levels of expertise. This document outlines the knowledge and skills that are associated with technical assistance specialists with basic proficiencies to those with advanced knowledge and skill. These levels are categorized as Technical Assistance Specialist I, Technical Assistance Specialist II, and Technical Assistance Specialist III. It is also important to remember that all professional roles require continuing growth and change through the seeking and attainment of new knowledge and skills.

About the Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Technical Assistance Specialists

The knowledge and skill requirements for technical assistance specialists are significantly different from those required of other professionals. Hence, this document was created to complete the set of competencies for the field of early care and education. That set now includes core competencies for practitioners, directors, administrators, trainers, career advisors, and technical assistance specialists. Together, these sets of competencies provide the framework for Florida's early care and education professional development system.

The core competencies for technical assistance specialists might be used as follows:

Technical Assistance Specialists
- A self-assessment tool to measure levels of knowledge and skill in each of the five core knowledge areas
- A guide to identify specific areas for future professional development

Program Administrators
- Create job descriptions and staff evaluation tools
- Specify education and training requirements for technical assistance specialist positions
- Develop and track technical assistance staff professional development and growth plans
- Create compensation incentives based on levels of competency achieved by technical assistance specialists

Trainers and Training Entities
- Guide planning and development of education and training efforts and curriculum across levels of competencies for technical assistance specialists
- Encourage cross-sector involvement in training of technical assistance specialists
- Promote training and education opportunities that address specific competencies for technical assistance specialists

Higher Education Entities
- Coordinate and design course content to facilitate transfer and articulation agreements
- Assess current program content to determine course development and modification
- Design pathways leading to qualifications, degrees, and credentials

Federal, State, and Local Agencies
- Develop and implement policies that will enhance professionalism in early care and education
- Link Core Competencies to other early care and education system efforts (e.g., Early Learning Guidelines, Early Care and Education Frameworks, Quality Rating Improvement Systems, Accreditation systems, and Expanding Opportunities)
- Link Core Competencies to efforts to support school success for children
- Promote use of Core Competencies across programs, agencies, and higher education institution
- Link Core Competencies to compensation initiatives to improve wages within early care and education, linking competence to compensation.

What are the Five Technical Assistance Core Knowledge Areas?

Core Knowledge Area 1
Content Knowledge and Professionalism

In order to be successful in guiding others toward improved practices and greater professionalism, technical assistance specialists must have a strong understanding of child development (typical and atypical), early care and education systems and standards, and how to include all children through the use of accommodations and modifications. Technical assistance specialists need great skill in taking their knowledge of all aspects of high quality early care and education and applying it in a facilitative process. As a model of professionalism, it is critically important that technical assistance specialists demonstrate the highest level of professional ethics and embrace the attributes and behaviors associated with being continuous learners.

Core Knowledge Area 2
Building Relationships and Accountability

From the onset of technical assistance through its conclusion, technical assistance specialists must be persistent in their effort to develop positive relationships with stakeholders in the setting. The provision of technical assistance requires teamwork. When mutual trust and respect exist, those involved can feel safe to express their visions and values. The technical assistance specialist and the stakeholder can build a shared philosophy about their work, an understanding about technical assistance services and supports, and a responsible commitment to stated improvement goals.

Technical assistance plays a successful role in settings where change and growth are valued by leaders and practitioners. Support is essential, at all levels, in order for technical assistance to be integrated into the setting and valued as an essential practice for building excellence.

Core Knowledge Area 3
Facilitating Shared Goal Setting and Planning

By facilitating shared goal setting and planning,technical assistance specialists and practitioners work together to identify key needs, area of concern, goals and objectives, and plans to initiate changes in their work setting. During regularly scheduled sessions, they review past lessons and results, address problems and plan next steps, and examine ways to strengthen skills and sustain new practices. Technical assistance specialists help practitioners develop the habit of thoughtful planning and responsible reflection in everyday practice.

Ongoing observation and timely feedback provide the practitioners with information that helps them assess their progress and document their growth. Excellent technical assistance specialists are skilled at gathering information, analyzing data, and presenting the results in meaningful and sensitive ways. They help practitioners see clear relationships among their goals for learners, the activities they plan, and the outcomes they observe.

Core Knowledge Area 4
Utilizing Effective Communication Skills

Communication skills really are people skills. Once the technical assistance specialist masters the art of listening, questioning, and conversation, knowing when and how to apply these is really the key to effective communication. Human interactions are delicate and complex. What works with one person may not work with another. The technical assistance specialist must, therefore, be aware of the needs and preferences of

practitioners and stakeholders and then use skills that will result in productive interactions.

Sensitivity to the readiness of practitioners and stakeholders to discuss their professional concerns and their strengths and limitations is another dimension of communication. Technical assistance specialists need to show care and concern as they engage practitioners in reflective practice, a process that requires trust, openness, and time.

Core Knowledge Area 5
Modeling Best Practices

The provision of technical assistance is a form of staff development; technical assistance specialists are teachers. Helping practitioners apply learned concepts, philosophies, and skills in their professional settings and embed knowledge learned in courses, seminars, or conferences is the heart of technical assistance. Technical assistance specialists have considerable and varied experience and expertise; they have mastered a variety of skills and practices. Showing and sharing best practices with the practitioner is a major responsibility of the technical assistance specialist.

Essential, too, is modeling the commitment to life-long learning and professional growth through self-development and personal reflection. Technical assistance specialists must walk the talk, be actively engaged in their own learning, and make their learning visible to those with whom they work.

Standards of Development

The Florida Core Competencies for Early Care and Education Technical Assistance Specialists were developed based on a thorough review of research and best practices. The work completed by a collaborative of early childhood partners in Palm Beach County provided a base of research and criteria for the core competencies. National standards and best practice information were also reviewed and incorporated into the core competencies, including those of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), National Infant and Toddler Child Care Initiative @ Zero to Three, Child Care Bureau, and the National Child Care Information Center. Technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching competencies and standards from other states were reviewed.

Extensive efforts were made to ensure broad-scale input into the development of the core competencies within the Florida early care and education community. Workgroups and focus groups reviewed and provided comments. The Florida Early Care and Education Professional Development Steering Committee, in coordination with Expanding Opportunities Professional Development Workgroup (a Florida initiative dedicated to developing professional development resources for inclusion supported by the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center), provided important input and oversight for the development of this document.

Core Knowledge Area 1:
Content Knowledge and Professionalism

Understanding and skill in child development (typical and atypical), standards, curriculum, child screening and assessment, inclusion practices, family involvement and skill-building, health and safety standards, and business practices are the basis for a strong foundation as a technical assistance specialist. Commitment to continuous learning and the highest standards of professionalism is also essential.

Key Element 1A

Technical assistance specialists demonstrate knowledge and skill of child development (typical and atypical), standards, curriculum, child screening and assessment, inclusion practices, family involvement and skill-building, health and safety standards, and business practices.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

1.A.1.   Identify pertinent Florida standards and resources (e.g., Birth to Five Early Learning Standards, Core Competencies (including those for practitioners, directors, trainers, targeted inclusion competencies, and targeted career advisor competencies), Steps to Success Registry, Inclusion Toolkit)

1.A.2.   Demonstrate knowledge of child development (typical and atypical), curriculum, child assessment, inclusion practices, working with families, health and safety standards, and business practices

1.A.3.   Update knowledge by reading professional resources on a regular basis

1.A.4.   Participate in professional development opportunities to build knowledge and skills as a technical assistance specialist

Technical Assistant Specialist II

1.A.5.   Demonstrate understanding of and skill in implementing Florida standards and resources (e.g., Birth to Five Early Learning Standards, Core Competencies (including those for practitioners, directors, trainers, targeted inclusion competencies, and targeted career advisor competencies), Steps to Success Registry, Inclusion Toolkit)

1.A.6.   Demonstrate extensive knowledge, experience, and skill relative to child development (typical and atypical), curriculum, child assessment, inclusion practices, working with families, health and safety standards, and business practices

1.A.7.   Utilize current research and best practices in technical assistance activities

1.A.8.   Develop and carry out a professional development plan as a technical assistance specialist

Technical Assistant Specialist III

1.A.9.   Integrate understanding of and skill in implementing Florida standards and resources into all aspects of technical assistance practices (e.g., Birth to Five Early Learning Standards, Core Competencies (including those for practitioners, directors, trainers, targeted inclusion competencies, and targeted career advisor competencies), Steps to Success Registry, Inclusion Toolkit)

1.A.10.   Integrate knowledge, experience, and skill relative to child development (typical and atypical), curriculum, child assessment, inclusion practices, working with families, health and safety standards, and business practices into all aspects of technical assistance planning and activities

1.A.11.   Demonstrate skill in translating current research and best practices into technical assistance activities

1.A.12.   Develop and carry out a long-term professional development plan to advance knowledge and skills as a technical assistance specialist and provide leadership to others

Core Knowledge Area 1:
Content Knowledge and Professionalism

Key Element 1B

Technical assistance specialists demonstrate ethical and professional behavior.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

1.B.1. Show knowledge of a code of professional ethics
1.B.2. Support standards of quality
1.B.3. Identify developmentally appropriate cultural, linguistic, and inclusion practices
1.B.4. Utilize appropriate verbal and written communication skills
1.B.5. Complete reporting activities in a timely and accurate manner
1.B.6. Seek opportunities for professional development on a regular basis

Technical Assistant Specialist II

1.B.7. Model respect and implement a code of professional ethics
1.B.8. Advocate for standards of quality
1.B.9. Demonstrate understanding of developmentally appropriate cultural, linguistic, and inclusion practices
1.B.10. Demonstrate effective verbal and written communication skills
1.B.11. Provide timely and accurate reports
1.B.12. Demonstrate commitment to ongoing professional development and learning

Technical Assistant Specialist III

1.B.13. Model and provide leadership to others relative to a code of professional ethics
1.B.14. Develop and implement a plan of action to work toward standards of quality
1.B.15. Integrate developmentally appropriate cultural, linguistic, and inclusion practices
1.B.16. Demonstrate knowledge and skill relative to effective and articulate verbal and written communications
1.B.17. Deliver accurate, timely, and thorough reports
1.B.18. Model and advocate for a professional commitment to continuous, life-long learning

Core Knowledge Area 2:
Building Relationships and Accountability

A collaborative environment is fundamental to successful technical assistance. All stakeholders must understand and be committed to the technical assistance process and the philosophy. This requires mutual respect and trust, knowledge of the setting and technical assistance context, and positive working relationships with both practitioner and administrators.

Key Element 2A

Technical assistance specialists develop professional relationships that are mutually respectful so that a climate for growth and change is created.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

2.A.1. Show respect for the diverse experiences and backgrounds of others

2.A.2. Demonstrate patience

2.A.3. Identify learning styles of practitioners

2.A.4. Maintain confidentiality

Technical Assistant Specialist II

2.A.5. Model respect for the diverse experiences, backgrounds, and values of others

2.A.6. Model flexibility and patience

2.A.7. Utilize methods to address the variety of learning styles of practitioners

2.A.8. Maintain confidentiality

Technical Assistant Specialist III

2.A.9. Identify and address individual, group, and organizational barriers to respect for diverse experiences, backgrounds, and values

2.A.10. Adapt interactions and interventions as needed for optimal technical assistance outcomes

2.A.11. Adapt technical assistance methods as needed to address the learning styles of practitioners

2.A.12. Evaluate policies and procedures to ensure maintenance of confidentiality

Core Knowledge Area 2:
Building Relationships and Accountability

Key Element 2B

Technical assistance specialists work collaboratively with stakeholders to build shared ownership of the technical assistance process.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

2.B.1.   Identify the stakeholders in the process

2.B.2.   Identify elements of the setting that impact technical assistance

2.B.3.   Assist stakeholders in understanding the unique needs of the practitioner

2.B.4.   Understand and follow procedures for conducting needs assessments

2.B.5.   Assist stakeholders in developing agreements for working together

2.B.6.   Identify various roles of stakeholders

2.B.7.   Encourage all stakeholders to adhere to agreed upon actions and timelines

2.B.8.   Identify supports and mechanisms that can help administrators know and understand the technical assistance process

Technical Assistant Specialist II

2.B.9.   Include all stakeholders in the technical assistance process

2.B.10. Explain how the culture of the setting impacts technical assistance

2.B.11. Engage all appropriate stakeholders in tailoring the technical assistance process to the unique needs of the practitioner and the organization

2.B.12. Review available data from needs assessments to identify practitioner strengths and direct the improvement process

2.B.13. Prepare clear working agreements with stakeholders

2.B.14. Assist stakeholders in identifying and implementing their roles in the technical assistance process

2.B.15. Establish and monitor agreed upon actions and timelines for all stakeholders

2.B.16. Implement supports and mechanisms to assist administrators in sustaining technical assistance in their settings

Technical Assistant Specialist III

2.B.17. Evaluate the involvement of all stakeholders in the technical assistance process on an ongoing basis

2.B.18. Integrate knowledge of the setting and its impacts into interactions with stakeholders

2.B.19. Plan and implement ongoing opportunities for all appropriate stakeholders to assess and revise the technical assistance process to meet the unique needs of the practitioner and the organization

2.B.20. Design and conduct ongoing needs assessments and integrate findings into the technical assistance process

2.B.21. Articulate the importance of implementing working agreements, develop model agreements, and evaluate adherence to the agreements by all stakeholders

2.B.22. Evaluate and adapt roles of stakeholders to improve the technical assistance process

2.B.23. Develop and evaluate accountability processes and procedures to ensure all stakeholders know and adhere to agreements

2.B.24. Develop, implement, and evaluate mechanisms to help administrators sustain and support technical assistance in their settings

Building Relationships and Accountability

Key Element 2C

Technical assistance specialists assess the impact of technical assistance on the practitioner and on the organization.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

2.C.1. Follow procedures to self-assess the technical assistance process

2.C.2. Solicit practitioner feedback

2.C.3. Solicit stakeholder feedback

Technical Assistant Specialist II

2.C.4. Self-assess the technical assistance process

2.C.5. Incorporate practitioner feedback into the technical assistance process

2.C.6. Incorporate stakeholder feedback into the technical assistance process

Technical Assistant Specialist III

2.C.7. Develop an ongoing self-assessment to identify and implement needed modifications to the technical assistance process

2.C.8. Develop ongoing practitioner assessments to identify and implement needed modifications to the technical assistance process

2.C.8. Develop ongoing opportunities for stakeholder review to identify and implement needed modifications to the technical assistance process

"Any genuine teaching will result,

if successful, in someone's knowing how to bring about a better

condition of things than existed earlier."

– John Dewey

Core Knowledge Area 3: Facilitating Shared Goal Setting and Planning

The technical assistance specialist follows a professional improvement model with practitioners that is based on best practices and research, provides structure, is based on achievable goals, and includes a plan for measuring outcomes. In this process, the technical assistance specialist invites ideas and solutions, remains sensitive to strengths and limitations, and looks for opportunities to stretch the practitioner's skills and knowledge.

Key Element 3A

Technical assistance specialists draw on best practices and research to help the practitioner clearly state realistic goals and objectives.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

3.A.1.   Use the results of needs assessments to discuss practitioner's strengths and areas for improvement

3.A.2.   Help the practitioner identify goals

Technical Assistant Specialist II

3.A.3.   Assist the practitioner in evaluating their personal strengths and needs based on personal assessments

3.A.4.   Support the practitioner in developing realistic goals and ways to collect data to evaluate attainment

3.A.5.   Understand and implement mechanisms that help practitioners translate their goals into objectives and measurable outcomes that ensure a higher degree of success

3.A.6.   Provide information and resources to guide the practitioner in linking their goals to a professional development plan

Technical Assistant Specialist III

3.A.7.   Develop and implement ongoing opportunities for practitioners to assess strengths and needs

3.A.8.   Plan, implement, and analyze mechanisms to support practitioners in developing, evaluating, and refining goals based on best practices and research

3.A.9.   Plan, implement, and analyze mechanisms to support practitioners in developing, measuring, evaluating, and refining objectives and outcomes tied to their goals

3.A.10. Create mechanisms to ensure that practitioner goals and objectives are used in developing, assessing, and revising their professional development plan

Core Knowledge Area 3:
Facilitating Shared
Goal Setting and Planning

Key Element 3B

Technical assistance specialists collaborate with the practitioner to write and implement action plans.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

3.B.1.   Understand the elements of an action plan and assist the practitioner in developing one

3.B.2.   Help the practitioner set realistic outcomes, methods to collect data, and target dates

3.B.3.   Solicit the practitioner's ideas and suggestions

3.B.4.   Know how to respond to unintended events

3.B.5.   Have information on resources and materials to support the technical assistance process

3.B.6.   Know a variety of instructional strategies to support the technical assistance process

3.B.7.   Use a structured observation process with the practitioner

Technical Assistant Specialist II

3.B.8.   Support the practitioner in developing an action plan focused on measurable improved outcomes

3.B.9.   Guide the practitioner in setting realistic and practical outcomes, methods to collect data, and timelines

3.B.10. Plan regular opportunities to gather feedback and recommendations from practitioners and review data

3.B.11. Encourage the practitioner to plan for unintended events

3.B.12. Assist the practitioner in locating and understanding needed resources and materials to support the technical assistance process

3.B.13. Utilize a variety of instructional strategies during the technical assistance process

3.B.14. Plan and implement a structured observation process with the practitioner

3.B.15. Develop and assess action plans, with practitioner input and involvement, that address measurable improved outcomes for practitioners and the children and families they serve

Technical Assistant Specialist III

3.B.16. Incorporate realistic and practical outcomes, timelines, methods to collect data, and periodic re-evaluation into writing and implementing action plans with practitioners

3.B.17. Integrate practitioner's ideas and suggestions into ongoing revisions of the action plan based on data

3.B.18. Develop a plan with the practitioner for handling unintended events

3.B.19. Develop a plan with the practitioner for securing needed resources, data, and materials to support the technical assistance process

3.B.20. Integrate a variety of instructional strategies during planning, implementation, data collection, and evaluation of the technical assistance process

3.B.21. Plan, implement, and evaluate a structured observation process with the practitioner tied to the agreed upon action plan

Core Knowledge Area 3:
Facilitating Shared
Goal Setting and Planning

Key Element 3C

Technical assistance specialists conduct a review following the implementation of the action plan.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

3.C.1. Follow procedures to assist the practitioner with self-assessment
3.C.2. Help the practitioner identify positive actions
3.C.3. Identify practitioner strengths and areas for improvement based on data collection
3.C.4. Assist the practitioner in determining progress in meeting goals
3.C.5. Help the practitioner develop alternate strategies for their action plan

Technical Assistant Specialist II

3.C.6. Encourage the practitioner to self-assess actions using data
3.C.7. Understand and encourage use of statements that reinforce positive actions
3.C.8. Offer clear, articulate, and direct feedback to practitioners using data
3.C.9. Collaborate with the practitioner to determine if desired outcomes were achieved
3.C.10. Plan alternate strategies for modifiable issues

Technical Assistant Specialist III

3.C.11. Develop a plan with the practitioner for self-assessment and data review of the action plan
3.C.12. Incorporate positive reinforcement statements and supports into action plans
3.C.13. Provide comprehensive and ongoing feedback to practitioners based on data that highlights strengths and modifiable issues
3.C.14. Facilitate periodic opportunities for the practitioner to review data and assess progress in meeting desired outcomes for the practitioner and for the children and families served
3.C.15. Develop and use a wide variety of alternate strategies and resources to assist the practitioner in realizing their action plan

Core Knowledge Area 3:
Facilitating Shared Goal Setting and Planning

Key Element 3D

Technical assistance specialists apply an evidence-informed and solution-focused approach to problems and issues.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

3.D.1.   Help the practitioner identify problems

3.D.2.   Know how to collect information and data to assess problems

3.D.3.   Encourage the sharing of ideas

3.D.4.   Provide the practitioner with positive feedback

Technical Assistant Specialist II

3.D.5.   Collaborate with the practitioner to identify and analyze data and problems

3.D.6.   Collect and incorporate data to define and clarify problems

3.D.7.   Support creativity in the problem-solving process

3.D.8.   Express confidence in the practitioner's abilities to be successful

Technical Assistant Specialist III

3.D.9.   Plan and implement a process for working with the practitioner and other stakeholders to review data and identify and solve problem issues

3.D.10. Analyze data from multiple sources to assist the practitioner in identifying problems and generating solutions

3.D.11. Facilitate creative problem-solving

3.D.12. Utilize responsive, positive feedback and assess its effectiveness

"Everyone has a transferable commodity-knowledge. Sharing your unique expertise and making introductions for someone creates a lasting legacy."

– Marsha Blackburn

Core Knowledge Area 4:
Utilizing Effective Communication Skills

Communication is an essential building block for facilitating learning relationships and ensuring a successful cross-cultural technical assistance experience. Communication goes beyond sharing knowledge. It includes interpersonal skills that lead to meaningful dialogue to help practitioners grow.

Key Element 4A

Technical assistance specialists listen with the intention of understanding the practitioner's goals, concerns, values, and beliefs.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

4.A.1. Actively listen to practitioners' concerns

4.A.2. Restate practitioner concerns and beliefs to ensure understanding

Technical Assistant Specialist II

4.A.3. Focus on practitioners and their concerns

4.A.4. Ensure understanding by summarizing, paraphrasing, reiterating, and restating practitioner concerns and beliefs

Technical Assistant Specialist III

4.A.5. Plan and provide regular opportunities for the practitioner to reflect upon and share their goals, concerns, values, and beliefs

4.A.6. Incorporate reflection techniques, including assessment of word choice, tone of voice, and body language, throughout the technical assistance process

"People seldom improve when they have

no other model but themselves to copy."

– Oliver Goldsmith

Core Knowledge Area 4:
Utilizing Effective Communication Skills

Key Element 4B

Technical assistance specialists conduct conversations that provoke insight, heighten awareness, lead to self-discovery, and stimulate action.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

4.B.1. Ask questions to clarify the practitioner's experience and perspective
4.B.2. Ask questions to encourage new learning
4.B.3. Use appropriate and respectful language
4.B.4. Use words and terminology that are understandable to the practitioner

Technical Assistant Specialist II

4.B.5. Reframe and clarify the practitioner's experience and perspective
4.B.6. Structure questions to create greater clarity and generate new learning relative to desired outcomes
4.B.7. Model appropriate and respectful language
4.B.8. Explain terms, including acronyms, to ensure understanding and facilitate clear communication

Technical Assistant Specialist III

4.B.9. Develop and utilize multiple strategies to assist the practitioner in reframing, clarifying, and considering different perspectives
4.B.10. Facilitate improved insight, knowledge acquisition, and realization of desired outcomes through the use of questions
4.B.11. Develop and implement communication policies and plans that are respectful and appropriate to the practitioner
4.B.12. Develop a communications plan that ensures shared understanding of terms, acronyms, and nonverbal cues and assess the plan on a regular basis

Core Knowledge Area 4:
Utilizing Effective Communication Skills

Key Element 4C

Technical assistance specialists engage in reflective practice with the practitioner.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

4.C.1. Listen to the practitioner's insights and concerns

4.C.2. Assist the practitioner in identify effective and limiting behaviors

4.C.3. Identify elements of a high-quality learning environment

4.C.4. Assist the practitioner in examining decisions

4.C.5. Discuss the practitioner's intentions in relation to actions

Technical Assistant Specialist II

4.C.6. Validate the practitioner's insights and concerns

4.C.7. Examine information, data, settings, and situations to identify effective and limiting behaviors

4.C.8. Exchange ideas and visions with the practitioner of a high-quality learning environment

4.C.9. Reinforce the practitioner's self-awareness

4.C.10. Examine the alignment between the practitioner's intentions and actions with the practitioner

Technical Assistant Specialist III

4.C.11. Incorporate multiple strategies for soliciting and recognizing the practitioner's insights and concerns

4.C.12. Provide ongoing guidance to assist the practitioner in examining data and self-assessing their interactions, environment, and practices to identify effective and limiting behaviors

4.C.13. Facilitate the attainment on increased knowledge and skill regarding a high quality learning environment for the practitioner

4.C.14. Evaluate the practitioner's self-awareness on a periodic basis to ensure continuing growth

4.C.15. Provide ongoing opportunities for the practitioner to assess the alignment between their intentions and their actions through the use of data

Core Knowledge Area 5:
Modeling Best Practices

The technical assistance specialist provides expertise and experience to the practitioner and uses a range of techniques to assist practitioners to implement best practices into the learning environment. This requires that technical assistance specialists continually expand their knowledge and hone their knowledge and skills.

Key Element 5A

Technical assistance specialists model an array of strategies to advance practitioner goals.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

5.A.1. Demonstrate steps to perform a task

5.A.2. Discuss options with the practitioner

5.A.3. Listen and respond to the practitioner's recommendations and ideas

5.A.4. Assist the practitioner with implementing demonstrated tasks

5.A.5. Ask questions to ensure that the practitioner understands demonstrated tasks

5.A.6. Use a variety of resources and materials in the technical assistance process

5.A.7. Encourage the practitioner to try new things

Technical Assistant Specialist II

5.A.8.   Model how to perform a task

5.A.9.   Brainstorm with the practitioner to expand alternatives

5.A.10. Incorporate co-teaching as a strategy

5.A.11. Direct practitioners to focus on practices demonstrated during modeling

5.A.12. Debrief modeling session for comprehension of best practices

5.A.13. Incorporate video, audio, and other technology-based tools to enhance the technical assistance process

5.A.14. Promote active experimentation and self-discovery

Technical Assistant Specialist III

5.A.15. Provide explanations, information, and support resources in conjunction with modeling how to perform a task

5.A.16. Integrate ongoing opportunities for exploring various techniques and options into the technical assistance process

5.A.17. Embed opportunities for co-teaching into the technical assistance process

5.A.18. Integrate tiered, focused skill demonstration opportunities into modeling efforts

5.A.19. Assess comprehension of modeled tasks and the practitioner's demonstration of the task as a best practice

5.A.20. Integrate a wide variety of resources and materials, including technology-based tools, into the technical assistance process and evaluate their effectiveness

5.A.21. Facilitate the development of self-efficacy in the practitioner and provide regular opportunities for reflection on decision-making, experimentation and creativity

Core Knowledge Area 5:
Modeling Best Practices

Key Element 5B

Technical assistance specialists help the practitioner translate theory into practice and use resources to expand understanding and skills.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

5.B.1.   Refer the practitioner to additional professional resources
5.B.2.   Encourage the practitioner to identify and find additional information and resources
5.B.3.   Identify areas of specific need and provide verbal and/or written follow-up
5.B.4.   Assist the practitioner in developing a professional resource file

Technical Assistant Specialist II

5.B.5.   Assist the provider in locating needed resources and sources for additional professional growth
5.B.6.   Reinforce the practitioner when resources for learning are identified and accessed
5.B.7.   Examine modeling sessions for comprehension of best practices and incorporate needed specialty knowledge and techniques into verbal and/or written follow-up
5.B.8.   Promote use of a broad array of local, state, and national best practice resources to shape actions and interventions

Technical Assistant Specialist III

5.B.9.   Facilitate the development and implementation of a professional growth plan for the practitioner
5.B.10.   Implement a technical assistance process that promotes and rewards self-direction in seeking and finding professional resources and opportunities
5.B.11.   Integrate assessment of comprehension and knowledge/skill gaps into the technical assistance process and provide follow-up information, resources, and modeling relative to specific and special needs
5.B.12.   Facilitate the development and use of a professional development resource file with a broad array of local, state, and national best practice materials

Core Knowledge Area 5:
Modeling Best Practices

Key Element 5C

Technical assistance specialists motivate the practitioner to consider long-term aspirations and to plan for professional growth.

Technical Assistant Specialist I

5.C.1.   Discuss perceived weaknesses with the practitioner and help develop a plan for improvement
5.C.2.   Assist the practitioner in identifying and utilizing strengths
5.C.3.   Encourage the practitioner to develop relationships with peers and share ideas
5.C.4.   Share information on the early care and education field

Technical Assistant Specialist II

5.C.5.   Provide opportunities and challenges that move the practitioner beyond perceived limitations
5.C.6.   Identify successes and strengths and help the practitioner best apply them
5.C.7.   Encourage the practitioner to engage in peer mentoring relationships
5.C.8.   Share information on the range of professional development and technical assistance opportunities in the early care and education field and discuss the practitioner's long-term goals and career pathways

Technical Assistant Specialist III

5.C.9.   Integrate ongoing opportunities for assessing areas of perceived weakness into the technical assistance process with a follow-up plan for positive growth
5.C.10. Integrate ongoing opportunities for assessing areas of strength into the technical assistance process with a follow-up plan for positive growth
5.C.11. Incorporate peer coaching opportunities into the technical assistance process
5.C.12. Facilitate the development of a career plan with the practitioner

"A mentor is someone who allows you to

see the hope inside yourself."

– Oprah Winfrey

Florida
Steps to Success
Early Learning Career Pathways