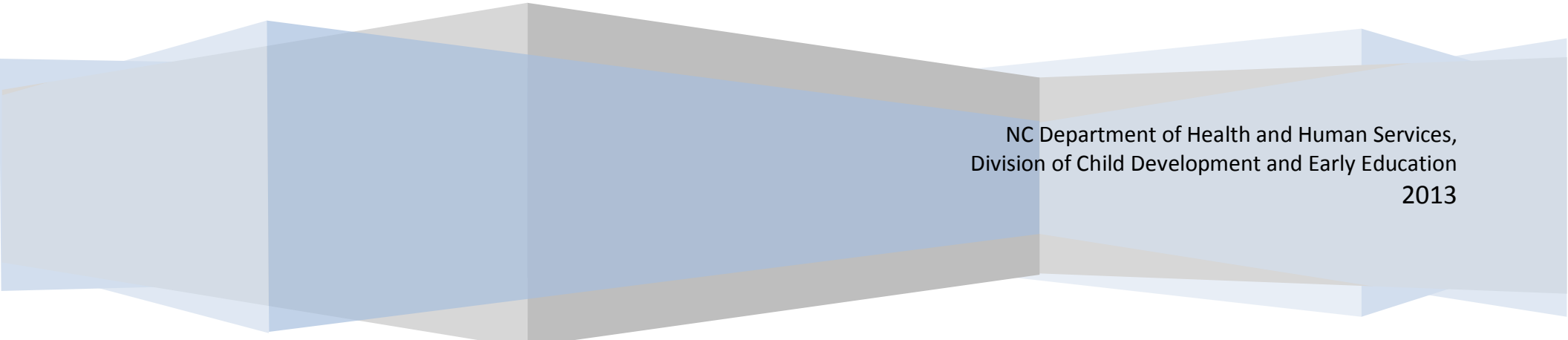# Framework for the North Carolina Technical Assistance Practitioner Competencies

The knowledge, skills and dispositions needed by early care and education and school-age child care TA practitioners who work to improve or support developmentally appropriate experiences for young children, ages birth through age 12 years by supporting, informing and building the knowledge and skills of early educators and their program administrators.

Framework for the NC Technical Assistance Practitioner Competencies

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION 1- INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

These competencies are focused on adult professional development and are organized by five domains

Domain 1   The Role of the Technical Assistance Practitioner
Domain 2   Technical Assistance Approaches
Domain 3   Technical Assistance Processes
Domain 4   TA Practitioner Professional Growth
Domain 5   Systems Knowledge

Utilizing the NAEYC/NACCRRA nomenclature, these competencies are intended for all individuals who provide mentoring, coaching, and consultation services and support. (See Glossary)

Professional Development

Technical Assistance

Mentoring   Coaching   Consultation
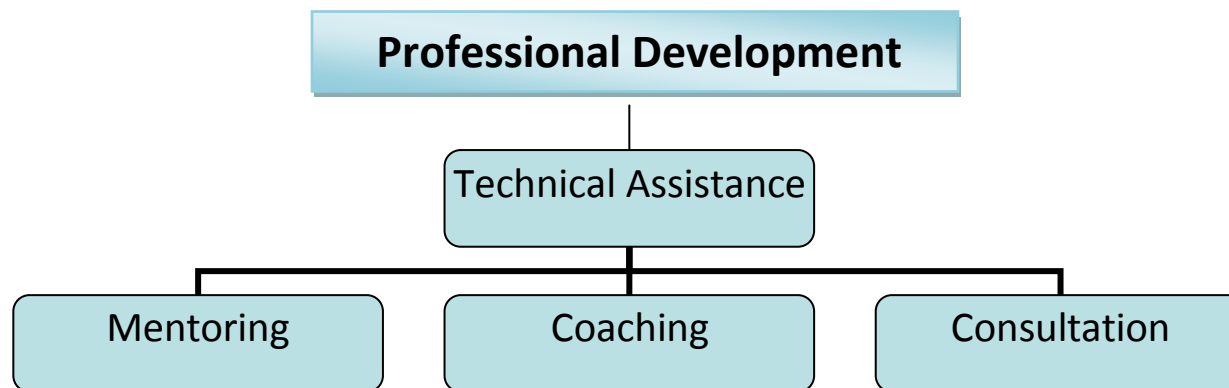
Purpose

The purpose of this document is to describe and articulate the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed by early care and education and school-age child care TA practitioners who work to improve or support developmentally appropriate experiences for young children, ages birth through age 12 years by supporting, informing and building the knowledge and skills of early educators and their program administrators. The intent is to provide Technical Assistance Practitioners with a research-based inventory of the skills, knowledge and dispositions that are considered necessary for all TA Practitioners.

The charge of the committee members working on this document was to develop competencies for technical assistance practitioners serving within this field. The committee has come to view these competencies to be the foundation for next steps to guide the practice of TA practitioners and inform the further development of the Technical Assistance Profession.

Those steps may include creating some or all of the following
- standards
- indicators
- proficiency levels
- creating alignment with other elements of the early care and education and school age systems.

TA Practitioners working in North Carolina's early care and school age education systems include, but are not limited to, professional development specialists, early interventionists, quality improvement specialists, preschool/Pre-K mentors, child care health consultants, playground safety consultants, and many others. The writing committee adopted the over-arching terms of **Technical Assistance (TA) Practitioner** to include all of these individuals regardless of organizational title or setting, and the individuals or agencies being served are hereafter referred to as **TA Partners.** The committee was united around the vision that TA Practitioners meet and exceed the competencies articulated in this document. With this goal in mind the CEU-bearing course on Technical Assistance and the Technical Assistance Endorsement (TAE- *see glossary*) will be aligned with these competencies.

Guiding Principles

The committee endorsed The Guiding Principles promoted in the ACF's *A Guide to Effective Consultation with Settings Serving Infants, Toddlers, and their Families. Core Knowledge, Competencies and Dispositions*, 2011

The Guiding Principles:

1. Reflect the knowledge, skills and dispositions essential for all TA Practitioners working with all children, their families and practitioners in any capacity, setting or sector.
2. Inform practices of TA practitioners working in all early childhood settings and sectors including Head Start/Early Head Start (EHS), early intervention and preschool exceptional children, school-age child care, center-based child care, infant/toddler care, family child care and preschool and PreK programs.

3. Are research-based and reflect best practice;

4. Build upon the work previously done nationally;

5. Support collaborative multi-disciplinary and interdisciplinary consultation practices;

6. Reflect individual, social, economic, and cultural diversity that must be understood and honored in practice;

7. Support and promote culturally competent practice; and

8. Are relationship-based and family-centered, acknowledging that children develop within the context of their families.

Organization of Document

Conceptual Framework for the Development of TA Practice

The components of the conceptual framework (Figure 2) are intended to demonstrate the progression of an individual Technical Assistance Practitioner's attainment of knowledge and skills needed to support the provision of technical assistance in a variety of early care and education and school-age child care settings. The section that follows provides a brief description of each section that is further supplemented by information provided in the appendices.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework for the Development of TA Practice

TA Strategies	Mentoring, Coaching, Consultation
Specialized Content Areas	Accreditation support, Children with Special Needs, Child Health, General Early Care and Education, Curriculum, Early Intervention, Healthy Social Behaviors, Infants and Toddlers, Organizational Development, Preschool (ages 3-5), Pre-K, Professional Development, School Aged Children Other: STEM, Literacy, Social-Emotional Development, School Readiness, Outdoor Learning Environments, etc.
Professional Recognition	Technical Assistance Endorsement (TAE)
Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions	Knowledge of TA theory and models *Completion of An Introduction to Technical Assistance*
	Knowledge of the early care and education and school age child care systems
	Three to five years experience in early care and education or related setting/field
	Core Knowledge about children and families *BA/BS degree or higher in Child Development or Related Field* *Time Limited Transition equivalency to be developed*

Narrative Description of the Conceptual Framework for the Development of TA Practice (See Figure 2)

<u>**Knowledge and Skills**</u>

The base of the **Conceptual Framework for the Development of TA Practice,** Figure 2, refers to the fundamental knowledge about child development, to be referred to as <u>Core Knowledge</u> and it serves as the foundation to all Technical Assistance. These are the same as the standards articulated *by NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation Programs*, and the North Carolina *Birth-through-Kindergarten Teacher Preparation Standards* and provided to TA practitioners in the early childhood degree programs offered by North Carolina's two-and four-year accredited institutions of higher education. Documentation of this knowledge is most often demonstrated by a minimum of a four-year degree in child development or a related field.

Core Knowledge includes:
- Child Development and Learning
- Family and Community Relationships
- Observing, Documenting, and Assessment
- Developmentally Effective Approaches

- Meaningful Curriculum
- Professionalism

<u>Professional Ethics:</u> Regardless of the area of technical assistance being supported, services must be provided in an ethical manner, as guided by the early care and education field and the professional bodies that govern the provision of services in specialized content areas.

Specialized knowledge may also be necessary to supplement the Core Knowledge for TA Practitioners working with infants and toddlers, school age, early intervention, child health, and other settings. A TA Practitioner is also responsible for meeting the specifications of applicable governing, regulatory and individual certification or licensing bodies. This may require that TA practitioners possess technical knowledge and demonstrate effective practices in the specialized content area.

Knowledge and Skills about Technical Assistance
To support the highest quality of technical assistance services, it is important that the TA Practitioner know and demonstrate understanding of the systems and policies that provide the professional early childhood environment, both nationally and specific to North Carolina. This also means maintaining connections to current relevant research, to professional associations and to policy initiatives that effect children, families, teachers and programs. The TA Practitioner should also have three to five years experience in early care and education or related setting/field.

Dispositions
A third and crucial component of competencies for TA Practitioners are dispositions. While knowledge and skills are demonstrated by what the TA Practitioner knows and can do, dispositions reflect on the "how" the TA Practitioner interacts and works with TA Partners. Dispositions are articulated later in this document.

Possible Specialized Content Areas and Technical Assistance Approaches
The remaining two bars identify some of the many settings where technical assistance services are needed and three identified approaches, mentoring, coaching or consultation, for meeting TA Partners' needs. Specialized areas of content knowledge include, but are not limited to:

- Accreditation Support
- Assessment/Evaluation
- Child Health
- Cultural Competency
- Curriculum
- Dual Language Learners
- Early Intervention/Inclusion
- Environment Rating Scales
- General Early Care and Education
- Infants/Toddlers
- Leadership

- Literacy
- Math
- Organizational Change
- Outdoor Learning Environments
- Preschool, NC PreK
- Professional Development
- School- Age Child Care
- School Readiness
- Social/Emotional Development and Behavior
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)

SECTION 2 - DISPOSITIONS

This section focuses on attributes, called dispositions that are an important part of being an effective TA Practitioner. This is not intended to be a complete list, but a starting point for reflection. Reflecting on dispositions takes the TA Practitioner beyond knowledge and skills, what they know and can do, to think about "how they are" with their TA Partners. In turn, this supports TA Partners to consider their own dispositions and "how they are" with others (children, families, colleagues).

Caring Dispositions

TA Practitioners with this set of dispositions value and appreciate all aspects of the well-being of children, practitioners, and program administrators. The following list comprises many, but not all, of the qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors that characterize a set of caring dispositions.

- **Empathic:** Identifies with and sees things from the perspective of others.
- **Compassionate:** Sympathizes, often with a desire to understand and help improve conditions of others' lives.
- **Understanding:** Develops appropriate relationships.
- **Respectful:** Shows appropriate regard for the needs, ideas, and experiences of others.
- **Passionate:** Demonstrates excitement, enthusiasm, and optimism for the people, content, and context of the consulting-teaching-learning process.
- **Culturally Competent:** Appreciates and capitalizes upon diversity; is aware of and acts to reduce one's own biases; employs culturally sensitive pedagogy.

Communicative Dispositions

TA Practitioners with this set of dispositions are sensitive to and skilled in the various aspects of human activity. They have effective interpersonal relationship skills and attitudes that foster collaborative enterprises useful in enhancing the teaching-learning process. The following list comprises many, but not all, of the qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors that characterize a set of communicative dispositions.

- **Present:** Is keenly engaged in interactions and observations.
- **Responsive**: Is inclined to act as best meets the needs, subtle as well as obvious, of others and their circumstances. Responsiveness can be demonstrated quickly in a conversation or over time by, for example, providing follow up resources as needed.
- **Attentive:** Pays attention to all aspects of communication and applies active listening techniques such as paraphrasing what the other person has said to ensure clear understanding.
- **Collaborative**: Involves and works with others in planning, problem solving, and implementing effective practices.

- **Vocal**: Is willing to openly engage and respond to peers, practitioners, administrators, and community.

Creative Dispositions

TA Practitioners with this set of dispositions display the capacity to envision and craft things in novel and meaningful ways. The following list comprises many, but not all, of the TA Practitioner qualities, tendencies, and/or behaviors that characterize a set of creative dispositions.

- **Flexible:** Adapts, adjusts, and modifies practices to meet the needs of those with whom she/he is consulting; thinks on his/her feet; is comfortable with change.
- **Inventive:** Uses the interests, preferences, and needs of children, families, and early childhood practitioners to collaboratively design multiple strategies to support the children's successful participation in natural learning opportunities; creates, reviews, problem solves, and revises intervention strategies teachers can successfully implement throughout typical routines and activities; visualizes and can support implementation of novel ideas and practices.
- **Resourceful:** Identifies and uses resources in effective ways; adapts practices to unforeseen challenges; helps teachers find and use resources and informal supports.
- **Resilient:** Endures stress and maintains stability in the face of disruption and chaos; recovers poise or spirit that enables moving forward in an effective manner.

Critical Dispositions

TA Practitioners with this set of dispositions have the ability to examine closely, to critique, and to ask questions. They do not accept the status quo at face value but employ higher level thinking skills to evaluate, analyze, and synthesize. Self-evaluation and reflection characterize individuals with this set of dispositions.

- **Reflective:** Takes time consistently to evaluate effectiveness of consultation and behavior in terms of the larger goals of consultation; nurtures reflectivity in practitioners; reflects on own growth and accountability.
- **Enterprising:** Exhibits a willingness to pursue solutions to problems or questions; gathers relevant data and persistently seeks to improve situations or areas of need.
- **Open-Minded:** Exhibits an ability to look at different sides of an issue; recognizes the possibility of error in one's own beliefs and practices; does not display or act upon prejudices against people or ideas.
- **Effective:** Nurtures high expectations; demonstrates self-direction and confidence; encourages others to display their own skills and strengths.
- **Modest:** Places the needs of the learner and/or learning task above own ego; reflects on own growth and accountability.

Professional Dispositions

These are general expected qualities and practices of all professionals, including TA Practitioners.

- **Professional:** Meets the standards expected of a professional, such as appropriateness of dress, grooming, demeanor, punctuality, tact, discretion, courtesy, etc.
- **Ethical and Principled in Person and Profession:** Adheres strongly to personal and professional morals, principles, and ethical standards established by the profession, for example, the NAEYC Code of Ethics; evidences integrity.
- **Responsible and Reliable:** Conducts work and related tasks in a reliable, thorough, and efficient manner; has strong work ethic.
- **Discreet:** Complies with Federal, State, and program policies relating to confidentiality.
- **Objective:** Fosters and enhances the teaching and learning process while exercising judgment about personal and professional boundaries; displays genuineness.

SECTION 3 - COMPETENCIES

The TA Practitioner competencies listed below are organized in five domains. Each domain articulates both the knowledge and skills needed. This is not intended to be a finite list of content a TA Practitioner would possess, but rather a base or foundation upon which additional knowledge and skills are informed by emerging evidence, best practices, and advanced professional knowledge and experiences. As previously discussed, dispositions are an integral part of any technical assistance service delivery. The domains are:

- Domain 1   The Role of the Technical Assistance Practitioner
- Domain 2   Technical Assistance Approaches
- Domain 3   Technical Assistance Processes
- Domain 4   TA Practitioner Professional Growth
- Domain 5   Systems Knowledge

DOMAIN 1.0: The Role of the TA Practitioner • Professional orientation • Role as change agent • Roles of other TA Practitioners/partners • Managing a consulting practice	Consider Dispositions (detailed on pages 9-11): • Caring • Communicative • Professional • Creative • Critical

	1.1 Professional orientation: Philosophy, responsibilities, boundaries, legal and ethical practice
Knowledge	Understands and articulates a professional philosophy including: guiding principles, legal requirements governing their practice and those whom they serve, ethical standards and common practices of a TA Practitioner.
Skill	Follows established professional, ethical, and legal standards including maintaining confidentiality of children, families, and TA partners at all times.

	1.2 Role as change agent
Knowledge	Understands and can describe the TA Practitioner's direct and indirect roles or responsibilities in supporting professional/partner boundaries. Understands one's own responsibilities as an agent of change.
Skill	Applies appropriate theories and resources to support TA Partner's growth and change.

	1.3 Roles of other TA Practitioners and Partners
Knowledge	Identifies and respects the roles of other TA practitioners and when applicable coordinates with them to serve the best interests of the TA partner.
Skill	Establishes positive relationships with other TA practitioners that are in the best interest of the TA partner(s).

	1.4 Managing a technical assistance practice
Knowledge	Understands how to manage a technical assistance process consistent with requirements of the employer and systems governing the work, and discipline-specific standards and credentials.

Skill	Manages technical assistance and meets expectations of requirements and systems, and discipline-specific standards and credentials

DOMAIN 2.0: Technical Assistance Approaches 1. Relationship-based practice 2. Communication 3. Contextual understanding of families, work environments, teacher developmental stage, role of administrator 4. Cultural and linguistic appropriateness. 5. Difference between and appropriate uses of coaching, mentoring and consulting strategies 6. Conflict resolution 7. Communities of Practice/Professional and/or Adult Learning Communities	Consider Dispositions (detailed on pages 9-11): • Caring • Communicative • Creative • Critical • Professional

	2.1 Relationship-based practice
Knowledge	Recognizes that strength-based relationships form the foundation for effective consultation and is aware of own contribution to the relationship dynamic.
Skill	Uses relationship-based principles to establish and foster strength-based relationships with TA Partners.

	2.2 Communication
Knowledge	Knows and can list effective communication techniques when working with other adults, including common language, active listening skills, explanation of jargon, and reflective listening.
Skill	Demonstrates active listening and adjusts communication style when gathering information and responding to the needs of TA Partners.

	2.3 Contextual understanding of families, work environments, teacher developmental stage, role of administrator
Knowledge	Understands and can describe the importance of the dynamics and context of the TA Partner: culture, language, demographics, policies, procedures, and organizational structure.

Skill	Demonstrates respect for the TA Partner's roles, responsibilities and community setting.
	2.4 Cultural and linguistic appropriateness
Knowledge	Understands and can articulate the importance of cultural and linguistic sensitivity throughout the consultation process.
Skill	Selects strategies and resources based on the TA Partners' learning style, culture, language, needs and preferences.
	2.5 Use of mentoring, coaching and consultation strategies
Knowledge	Knowledge of the difference between and appropriate uses of coaching, mentoring and consulting strategies.
Skill	Uses the appropriate coaching, mentoring, and consulting strategies to meet the needs of the TA partner.
	2.6 Mentoring
Knowledge	Knowledge of mentoring as a collegial relationship based process intended to increase an individual's personal or professional abilities.
Skill	Uses appropriate mentoring strategies to support individual growth.
	2.7 Coaching
Knowledge	Knowledge of coaching as focused strategy to support achievement of specific goals for individuals or groups.
Skills	Uses appropriate coaching strategies to support individual or group growth.

	2.8 Consultation
Knowledge	Knowledge of consultation as collaborative problem solving process to assess and resolve specific concerns.
Skill	Uses appropriate consultation strategies to address specific concerns.
	2.9 Conflict resolution
Knowledge	Knows and understands appropriate conflict resolution strategies.
Skill	Uses appropriate conflict resolution strategies in support of the TA processes.
	2.10 Convenes adult learning in a community
Knowledge	Applies knowledge of supportive on-going adult learning groups such as Communities of Practice and Professional Learning Communities to promote ongoing professional development and to sustain change.
Skill	Appropriately uses supportive on-going adult learning groups such as Communities of Practice and Professional Learning Communities.

DOMAIN 3.0: The Technical Assistance Process	**Consider Dispositions (detailed on pages 9-11):**
1. Stages of consultation 2. Observation and assessment 3. Plan development and evaluation 4. Supporting TA Partner capacity 5. TA Partner advocacy	• Caring • Communicative • Creative • Critical • Professional

	3.1 Stages of technical assistance
Knowledge	Understands technical assistance process, stages, and steps.

Skill	Uses an appropriate technical assistance process, including establishing a productive relationship, assessing TA Partner's willingness and commitment, and identifying the consultation/TA purpose and focus.
3.2 Observation and assessment	
Knowledge	Knows the principles and techniques of objective program observation and assessment.
Skill	Applies and models objective observation, interviewing, assessment, feedback, and demonstration.
3.3 TA plan development and evaluation	
Knowledge	Knows and can describe how to develop a technical assistance plan and formal agreements with TA Partners including goals, expectations strategies, outcomes, and evaluation.
Skill	Develops and adheres to a TA plan with TA Partners including goals, expectations, strategies, outcomes, and evaluation to address progress and revisions, as needed.
3.4 Supporting TA partner capacity	
Knowledge	Understands that TA is a capacity-building process and knows the strategies for supporting TA Partner capacity.
Skill	Effectively works with TA Partners to reflect on progress and engage in collaborative problem-solving.
3.5 TA Partner advocacy	
Knowledge	Knows when TA Partners may need support to advocate for needs and what resources and connections are available to support them.
Skill	Connects TA Partner to early childhood resources and system supports, as needed.

DOMAIN 4.0: Technical Assistance Practitioner Professional Growth	Consider Dispositions (detailed on pages 9-11):
1. Self-assessment of knowledge and skills 2. Individual professional development plan development and implementation 3. Current research and best practice 4. Reflective practice 5. Leadership 6. Partnering	• Caring • Communicative • Creative • Critical • Professional

	4.1 Self-assessment of knowledge and skills
Knowledge	Able to articulate and draw from individual knowledge and skills needed to support the provision of technical assistance to a diverse population. This includes but is not limited to evidence-based or informed methods in the following key areas: · Developmentally appropriate practice · Observation · Assessment of settings, individuals and groups of children · Relationship-based approaches · Adult learning theory and effective strategies · Facilitation of learning processes for adults and children · Planning tools and methods to support adult learning · Planning tools and methods to support child learning · Self-assessment of individual practice · Individual professional development planning · Best practices and innovations in the field to improve quality
Skill	Identifies personal dispositions, professional knowledge and skills, and sets professional development goals.

	4.2 Individual professional development plan implementation
Knowledge	Knows the resources and continuing education opportunities available for TA Practitioners to grow their knowledge and skills.
Skill	Works continuously to improve work-related skills and performance through continuing education, self-reflection, and participation in professional communities of practice and opportunities such as the TA Endorsement.

	4.3 Current research and best practice
Knowledge	Understands the latest research and trends and their relevance for early care and education best practices.
Skill	Integrates current research and trends about child development, adult learning, capacity-building, and theory of change in technical assistance work.
	4.4 Reflective practice
Knowledge	Understands the tenets of reflective practice and how it supports strength-based (technical assistance relationships).
Skill	Models and encourages reflective practice.
	4.5 Leadership
Knowledge	Understands the characteristics of an effective leader.
Skill	Identifies and uses personal leadership, advocacy, and interpersonal communication skills.
	4.6 Partnering
Knowledge	Knows the principles of partnering and collaboration with TA Partners, TA Practitioners, and other professionals.
Skill	Works proactively to develop partnerships and collaborations to support quality programs and teachers and administrators.

DOMAIN 5.0: Systems Knowledge	Consider Dispositions (detailed on pages 9-11):
TA Practitioners should have a general knowledge of the components of a comprehensive Early Childhood System, to include but not to be limited to; programs and agencies that deliver services, legislative, regulatory and policy making processes, educator certification and licensure, assessment and evaluation, data collection, analysis, and reporting. Early childhood and relevant systems 　1. Early childhood and relevant systems 　2. Needs assessment and advocacy 　3. Connects data to systems	• Caring • Communicative • Creative • Critical • Professional

	5.1 Knows early childhood and relevant systems and resources
Knowledge	Possesses and demonstrates knowledge of the local, regional and statewide early childhood system resources to support TA Partners' needs and interests.
Skill	Makes reference to the local, regional and statewide early childhood system resources to support TA Partners' needs and interests.
	5.2 Needs assessment and advocacy
Knowledge	Understands the importance of and the ability to assess needs and advocate for change at the local, regional and state level.
Skill	Demonstrates the ability to assess needs and advocate for change at the local, regional and state level.
	5.3 Connects data to system
Knowledge	Knows how to use evidence-based, reliable and valid assessment instruments for data collection and how to use them

	effectively to make change at the individual, program and system levels.
Skill	Reliably and effectively uses evidence-based, reliable and valid assessment instruments for data collection and how to use them effectively to make change at the individual, program and system levels.

SECTION 4- APPENDICES

Appendix I- Bibliography of source and cited documents

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

NAEYC Standards for Early Childhood Professional Preparation
http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/files/2009%20Professional%20Prep%20stdsRevised%204_12.pdf

North Carolina Birth-through-Kindergarten Teacher Preparation Standards http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/pdf_forms/NCPre-K_NC_BK_Speciality_Standards.pdf

North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/educatoreffect/ncees/standards/prof-teach-standards.pdf

US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families; A Guide to Effective Consultation with Settings Serving Infants, Toddlers, and their Families. Core Knowledge, Competencies and Dispositions, 2011http://transition.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2011_effective_consultation.pdf

Appendix II- Glossary of Key Terms

Accreditation—A process that insures that a program has met a specific set of quality standards applied to early childhood programs such as the Council On Accreditation (COA) or the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC), or as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Active listening—Interactions with another person that demonstrate that the listener understands what the speaker is talking about.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF)—Federal agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that provides funding to State, Territory, local, and Tribal organizations to provide family assistance, child support, child care, developmental disabilities, Head Start, child welfare, and other programs related to children and families. http://www.acf.hhs.gov

Adult learning theory—An understanding of how adults learn. Adult learning differs from children's learning in that it is self-directed, problem centered, experience based, and more often relevant to life.

Advocacy—Families, organizations, or volunteers speaking out on or working on behalf of the rights, interests, or needs of others.

Assessment—A process of collecting and recording information through the use of multiple tools to evaluate a child's abilities and skills at a given point and measure progress over time with respect to developmental domains. Assessment happens on a continual basis, is embedded in regular curriculum and schedule, and results in a variety of education decisions about children and programs.

Authentic assessment—An ongoing assessment process that occurs in the individual's natural environment.

Best practice—Term used to describe any instructional technique, scientifically based practice, or method proven through research to be effective or valid.

Capacity building—Any assistance that improves the ability of families, practitioners, administrators, and programs to support the healthy development of infants and toddlers.

Caregivers/teachers—Adults who care for and support the learning and development of infants and toddlers in homes, child care centers, family child care homes, Early Head Start programs, family, friend, and neighbor care settings, and early intervention professionals and home visitors.

Caring for Our Children—National publication by the America Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, and the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. *Caring for Our Children* describes a comprehensive set of health and safety standards for quality child care. http://nrckids.org/CFOC3

Center-based child care—Programs that are licensed or otherwise authorized to provide child care services in a non-residential setting.

Certification - An acknowledgement of an individual's verified level of educational achievement, based on a standardized scale. North Carolina's Early Educator Certification (EEC) System is an example of a certification system (www.ncicdp.org).

Child care—Comprehensive care and education of young children, usually outside their homes.

Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)—A program that provides education, information, and child care referrals for child care providers, families, and communities.

Coaching - 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

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.

Continuity of care—A practice utilized by early care and education programs and settings so that infants and toddlers experience as few transitions in caregivers as possible during their time with the program. The purpose of a continuity of care policy is for the infant or toddler to experience continuity over time in a setting, thus allowing the development of a longer-term relationship with the care provider.

Core competency—Observable skills, values, and attitudes needed by professionals in order to provide high quality services.

Core knowledge—Knowledge needed by professionals to effectively conduct their work.

Core knowledge and competencies (CKC)—Define the content (knowledge), skills (competencies), and dispositions (attributes) that consultants need to effectively guide programs and individuals to provide quality services to infants, toddlers, and their families. Core knowledge and competencies are defined and observable and establish standards of practice across disciplines.

Credential—A document or record certifying that an individual has met a defined set of requirements set forth by the grantor of the credential, usually related to skills and knowledge and may include demonstrations of competence.

Culture—The unique collection of beliefs, practices, traditions, valued competencies, world views, and histories that characterize a group of people.

Cultural competence—The ability to respect and value the differences seen in other people, including customs, thoughts, behaviors, communication styles, values, traditions, and institutions. Cultural competence includes the ability to learn from and relate respectfully to other cultural backgrounds, heritages, and traditions.

Cultural sensitivity—The recognition that there are differences between cultures. These differences are reflected in the ways that different groups communicate and relate to one another.

Curriculum—A planned, sequenced set of activities and experiences based on the developmental needs of children. A Guide to Effective Consultation with Settings Serving Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families: Core Knowledge, Competencies, and Dispositions.

Developmentally appropriate practice (DAP)—The foundation for effective teaching, based on child and youth physical, cognitive, and social/emotional needs. These practices are responsive to each child's individual strengths, interests, and needs, which are based on knowledge of child development and learning, knowledge of the child, and the cultural context in which the child lives.

Disposition—An inherent characteristic/attribute or natural tendency.

Domain—One of five broad categories in which the core knowledge and competencies for infant/toddler consultants are grouped.

Early care and education (ECE)—General term to describe the system of services provided to young children and their families. ECE includes, but is not limited to, center-based child care, family child care, in-home or family, friend, and neighbor child care, home visiting, infant mental health, early childhood mental health, Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Intervention.

Early care and education workforce—includes those working with young children (infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children in centers, homes, and schools) and their families or on their behalf (in agencies, organizations, institutions of higher education, etc.), with a primary mission of supporting children's development and learning.

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTAC) is supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) under the provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). NECTAC serves Part C-Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities Programs and Part B-Section 619 Preschool Programs for Children with Disabilities in all 50 states and 10 jurisdictions to improve service systems and outcomes for children and families. http://ectacenter.org

Early Head Start (EHS)—A program established under the 1994 Head Start Reauthorization Act to serve low-income pregnant women and families with infants and toddlers. EHS is a family-centered and community based program that is designed to promote healthy

prenatal outcomes and enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development, and promote healthy family functioning. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/

Early Intervention services (EI)—Programs or services designed to meet the developmental needs of infants and toddlers and their families.

Early learning guidelines—Research-based, measurable expectations about what children should know (understand) and do (competencies and skills) in different domains of learning.

Family child care—Child care program in which a provider cares for children within a private residence other than the child's residence.

Family, friend, and neighbor care—Child care provided by relatives, friends, and neighbors in the child's own home or in another home, often in unregulated settings. Related terms include *informal child care* and *"kith and kin"* care.

Family support—Promotion of healthy development by helping parents to enhance their strengths and resolve problems that can lead to child maltreatment, developmental delays, and family disruption. Services include peer support and counseling, early developmental screening, parent education, early childhood development, child care and respite care, home visits, family resource centers, school-linked services, recreation, and job or skills education or training.

Goodness of fit—Describes how well the demands and expectations of an environment and the people in it are compatible with a person's temperament, expectations, and other characteristics. A Guide to Effective Consultation with Settings Serving Infants, Toddlers, and Their Families:
Core Knowledge, Competencies, and Dispositions

Inclusion—The practice in which all children, with a range of abilities and disabilities, participate together and are regarded as equal members of the learning community.

Individualized professional development plan (IPDP)—Documents that provide a framework connecting various professional development experiences to each other and to the common core of knowledge and professional standards for early education professionals. Individual professional development plans are designed to create a holistic approach to building an early childhood professional's capacities and to ensure that individuals remain current regarding knowledge and practices in the field. (NAEYC and NACCRRA, "Training and Technical Assistance Glossary" [early release], March 2011.)

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) —A Federal program that provides grants to States and jurisdictions to support the planning of service systems and the delivery of services, including evaluation and assessment, for young children who have or are at risk of developmental delays/disabilities. Funds are provided through the Infants and Toddlers Program (known as Part C of IDEA) for services to children birth through 2 years of age, and through the Preschool Program (known as Part B-Section 619 of IDEA) for services to children ages 3 to 5.

Infant—A child birth to 12 months of age.

Infant/toddler consultant—A professional with specific knowledge, skills and dispositions who provides guidance to programs and individuals who work with infants, toddlers, and their families. The guidance is customized to the particular interests, needs, and circumstances of the program or individual.

Infant/toddler specialist network— A state-based system that coordinates the work of infant/toddler specialists.

In-service training—Training completed while working as a practitioner or other professional.

Interdisciplinary consultation—Interdisciplinary consultation models use formal channels of communication that encourage consultants to share information and discuss individual outcomes across disciplines and with infant/toddler practitioners.

ITERS-R—A research-based assessment instrument to evaluate the quality of child care settings for infants and toddlers. The scale is divided into seven areas: furnishings and displays for children, personal care routines, listening and talking, learning activities, interaction, program structure, and adult needs.

Licensing— (1) Requirements or regulations necessary for a provider to legally operate child care services in a State or locality, including registration requirements established under State, local, or Tribal law. **(2)** Requirements of knowledge and practice for an individual to practice a profession (e.g., North Carolina's Birth-through-Kindergarten License).

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

Multidisciplinary consultation—In multidisciplinary consultation models, professionals from several disciplines work independently of each other, usually within a loosely structured interactive framework.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) — A membership-supported organization of people who share a desire to serve and act on the needs and rights of children from birth through age 8. http://www.naeyc.org/

National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE)—National organization focused on high-quality teacher preparation through the process of professional accreditation of schools, colleges, and departments of education. http://ncate.org/

NCATE—*See* **National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education**

Observation—The intentional, systematic act of looking at the behavior of another individual in a particular setting, program, or situation.

Office of Child Care—Formerly the Child Care Bureau, a division of the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which administers the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) to States, Territories, and Federally recognized Tribes. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/occ/

Office of Head Start—A division of the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which administers the Head Start and Early Head Start (EHS) program. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/

Parallel process—A process through which the relationship between the consultant and practitioner influences the relationship between the practitioner and the child because feelings and interactions from one relationship can be carried forward to another relationship.

Part C—*See* **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

Practitioner—An individual who works directly with infants and toddlers to foster growth and development and partner with families in an early care and education setting.

Primary caregiving—A relationship-based practice that falls within the concept of continuity of care. Implementation of primary caregiving as a program policy requires that when an infant or toddler enters care, one caregiver is designated as primary for the child. This caregiver will, to the extent possible and practical in a group care setting, be the one to care for and respond to the child's needs.

Professional development—A continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work. These opportunities lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions of early education professionals. Professional development encompasses education, training, and technical assistance.
(NAEYC and NACCRRA, "Training and Technical Assistance Glossary", 2011.)
http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/ecprofessional/NAEYC_NACCRRA_TrainingTAGlossary.pdf

Prosocial behavior—Behaviors that are carried out with the goal of helping other people.

Quality—Quality child care commonly refers to early childhood settings in which children are safe and healthy and receive appropriate stimulation. Care settings are responsive, allowing children to form secure attachments to nurturing adults. Quality programs and practitioners offer engaging, appropriate activities in settings that facilitate healthy growth and development and prepare children for and promote their success in school.

Quality initiatives—Initiatives that are designed to increase the quality or availability of child care programs or to provide parents with information and support to enhance their ability to select child care arrangements most
suited to their family and child's needs. The Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) provides funds to States to support such initiatives. Common quality initiatives include child care resource and referral services for parents, training and professional development and wage enhancement for staff, and facility improvement and accreditation for child care programs.

Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS)—A method of assessment of the level of quality in early childhood programs, for the purpose of quality improvement and community engagement.

Referral—Process through which an individual or family is sent to another professional for services.

Reflective listening—Interactions with another person that demonstrate that the listener understands what the speaker is talking about.

Reflective practice—Refers to the process of studying one's own teaching methods and determining what works best for young children, youth, or adult learners. Reflective practice can help an individual to develop
and grow professionally.

Regulations—Rules or orders issued by an executive authority or regulatory agency of a government and have the force of law.

Relationship-based practice—Methods and approaches used by early childhood professionals that support healthy child development through the context of nurturing relationships. Seven principles define relationship-based work: respect for the person, sensitivity to context, commitment to evolving growth and change, mutuality of shared goals, open communication, commitment to reflecting on the work, and setting standards for staff.

Resource and referral services—*See* **Child Care Resource and Referral**

Responsive caregiving—Responsive caregiving occurs when the practitioner observes the infant or toddler carefully and bases his or her interactions or responses to the infant or toddler on that child's cues. Practitioner interactions are contingent on the child's actions or interactive bids and are therefore individualized.

Sense of self— A person's mental model of his or her abilities and attributes.

Social/emotional development— The progression of self-awareness and regulation. This growth also allows children to form and sustain social relationships with others.

Special needs—Developmental disabilities that may require specialized care.

Technical assistance (TA)—The 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. (NAEYC and NACCRRA, "Training and Technical Assistance Glossary", 2011.) http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/ecprofessional/NAEYC_NACCRRA_TrainingTAGlossary.pdf

Technical Assistance Endorsement (TAE) - The purpose of the TAE is to advance the early childhood field and TA profession with professional recognition for specialized knowledge and skills in the area of technical assistance (TA). The TAE will include a temporary education option. The TAE is designed for professionals providing TA to other adults, focusing primarily on the practitioner providing TA about early care and education or school age child care. The TAE will be available for a fee in early 2014 to early educators who hold or apply for NC Early Educator Certification (EEC) and are seeking to be voluntarily endorsed as a TA provider by the North Carolina Institute for Child Development Professionals (Institute) (www.ncicdp.org).

Temperament—The term for individual ways of responding to the environment that appear to be consistent across situations and stable over time—typically included are such characteristics as activity level, intensity of reaction, mood changes, and response to novelty.

Theory of change—Describes the intervention(s) or activities and how or why they will produce the desired outcome.

Toddler— A child 12 months to 36 months of age.

Transition— A passage from one learning setting, grade, program, or experience to another.