

# Model Work Standards

Overview/Introduction

For Early Childhood Educators and Leaders

This project is supported by funding from the Child Care Development Block Grant awarded to the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning, a division of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration.

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# Mission:

**Indiana AEYC** promotes high-quality learning for each and every child, birth through age eight, by connecting practice, policy, and research.

We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children.

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# Objectives

- Participants will understand the purpose of the *Model Work Standards for Early Educators*
- Participants will identify the topic areas of the *Model Work Standards for Early Educators*
- Participants will have a general overview of the Model Work Standards
- Participants will begin to develop one or more goals to begin to create an action plan.

# History of Model Work Standards

- **1990s National advocacy campaign fighting for “rights, raises, and respect.”**
- **The Worthy Wagers fought to shine a spotlight on the conditions and experiences of teachers of America’s youngest children.**
- **By 1998, drafted a set of seminal documents: the Model Work Standards.**



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# Why Do We Need Model Work Standards?

- **Good Child Care Jobs = Good Care for Children**
- **Quality improvement efforts, despite the best of intentions (like Paths to Quality), have missed the mark when it comes to meeting the needs of the adults providing early care and education.**
- **We need to amplify the voices of early childhood educators and solidify careers that garner the rights, compensation, and respect you deserve.**
- **Early childhood educators who are supported in their workplaces can more effectively engage with children, build relationships with families, and identify the practices and policies necessary to achieve high-quality services.**

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# What makes Model Work Standards different from other quality and accreditation standards?

- **Complement accreditation and early learning standards.**
- **Capture early educator direct assessments of and perspectives about their work environments.**
- **Promote ECE jobs that guarantee early educators the rights, raises, and respect they so well deserve.**
- **Achieving economic and social justice for and valuing the work of those who teach our youngest children.**



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# Who should use the Model Work Standards?

- Programs Leaders (Directors, owners, administration)
- Educators (Teaching team within the program)
- Parents and Families
- Community advocates
- Boards of directors
- Higher education faculty
- Funders



## Early educators'

working conditions are children's learning conditions.

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# The Model Work Standards are intended to be used:

- **Improve work environment and job conditions.**
- **Local community partnerships.**
- **With policymakers and funders to raise awareness and make improvements in the nation's childcare system.**



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# The Model Work Standards are intended to be used:

- **Self-assessment tool for early childhood education programs.**
- **Assessing and Updating Aspects of the Physical Setting**
- **Creating Staff/Employee Handbook and Policy**
- **Conversation starters**
  - **to inform workforce advocacy and quality standards**

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# 3 Parts of Model Work Standards

- Part One: High-quality work environment
  - Part Two: Self-assessment checklist
  - Part Three: Action plan



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# Model Work Standards: Center-based and Home-based

- Center-Based Topics:

- Wages
- Benefits
- Employment Policies and Practices
- Payment for Professional Responsibilities
- **Professional Development**
- Staffing and Teaching Supports
- Communication and Team Building
- Decision Making and Problem Solving
- Health, Safety, and Physical Setting

- Home-Based Topics:

- Model Contract and Program Policies
- **Professional Development**
- Family Child Care Work Environment
- Provider as Employer
- Community Support for Promoting Careers in Family Child Care

# Model Work Standards and NAEYC

## 10 NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards

- 1- Relationships
- 2- Curriculum
- 3- Teaching
- 4- Assessment of Child Progress
- 5- Health
- 6- Teachers
- 7- Families
- 8- Community Relationships
- 9- Physical Environment
- 10-Leadership and Management

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# Model Work Standards and Cognia



**Key Characteristic 1:  
Culture of Learning**

**Key Characteristic 2:  
Leadership for Learning**

**Key Characteristic 3:  
Engagement of Learning**

**Key Characteristic 4:  
Growth in Learning**

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# Model Work Standards and NAFCC



## **Relationships**

The most important aspect of a high-quality family child care program is its human relationships. Providers set the emotional climate of the program. Good quality relations with the children and their families form the foundation of support needed for great experiences. Children thrive when they feel nurtured, appreciated, and have a sense of belonging to a group that is part of a community. All kinds of development are supported in the context of warm, responsive human relationships.

## **The Environment**

The next important aspect of quality in family child care is the environment. The provider's home is welcoming and comfortable, with enough materials and equipment to engage children's interest in a variety of ways, supporting their activities across all the domains of development.

## **Developmental Learning Activities**

Children's spontaneous play is ideally suited to helping them practice their developing skills and gain understanding of their world. As the provider observes their activities and interests, the provider supports and extends their play and offers new activities and materials to build upon their learning.

## **Safety and Health**

Children's physical well-being is assured through careful supervision, preparation for emergencies, minimizing the spread of disease, and serving of nutritious food.

## **Professional and Business Practices**

As a small business owner, the provider is ethical and caring in relations with children and families. The provider's contracts and policies are sound. The provider is reflective and intentional about her work, seeking continuing education and support from others. The provider abides by legal requirements and makes use of resources in the community.

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# Small Group Exercise

**First read the scenarios, then identify the topic areas and standards you see associated with each, and finally, brainstorm strategies to be able to meet those standards.**

- **Questions for reflection:**
  - **Does meeting this standard require significant financial resources?**
  - **Does meeting this standard require particular expertise that we do not have?**
  - **Do current policies or practices need to change to meet this standard, what are they, and what is the process for making such changes?**
- **Remember that there may be multiple topic areas, standards, or strategies that could apply to any given experience.**

# Share Experience

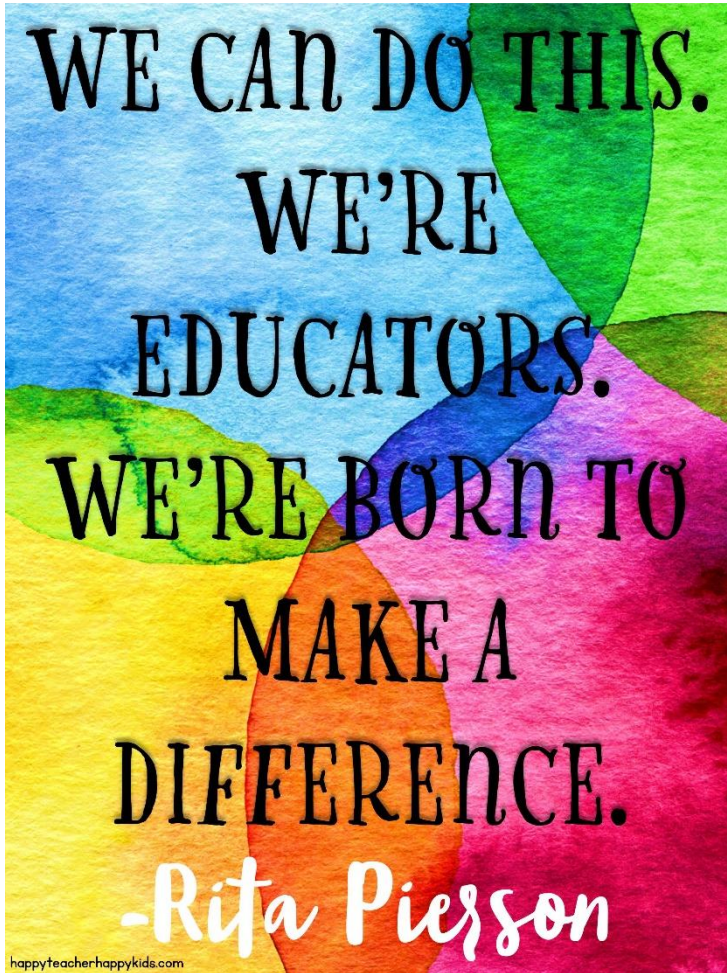
- **Tell us about your scenarios and how your group utilized the Model Work Standards to problem solve.**
- **What scenarios required possible changes to the program policies? Fundraising efforts or budget changes?**
- **What recommendations do you have for these “programs”?**



# Your turn...

1. Assess your current work environment using the Model Work Standards.
2. Determine where you want to focus your improvement efforts.
3. Make an action plan for one or more of the priorities you've identified.
4. If there's a cost involved, determine the cost for each of your top priorities.
5. Document your progress.
6. Celebrate and broadcast your accomplishments.

# Tying it altogether



- The Model Work Standards can help directors and administrators:
  - Learn from teaching staff
  - Prioritize the use of limited resources
  - Offer program transparency
  - Improve program quality by improving ECE work environments.
  - Acknowledge the positive working conditions that currently exist and celebrate the progress that has been made
  - Focus the arguments for increased public and private support for quality early care and education in their community, region, or state.

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# Thoughts? Questions?



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# References

[The Return of the Model Work Standards - Center for the Study of Child Care Employment \(berkeley.edu\)](#)

[The 10 NAEYC Program Standards | NAEYC](#)

[Performance-Standards.pdf \(cognia.org\)](#)

[Accreditation – National Association for Family Child Care \(nafcc.org\)](#)

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