Parenting Educator Competencies: A Resource Document for the Field of Parenting Education
Acknowledgments

Members of the Professional Preparation and Recognition Committee (PPRC) of the National Parenting Education Network (NPEN) developed Parenting Educator Competencies: A Resource Document For the Field of Parenting Education over a period of several years. It is based on the work of Dana McDermott, Professor Emeritus of DePaul University (see page 3 in this document for details).

Feedback and input on the document have been received through reviews by the NPEN Council and Membership and by professional colleagues in parenting education and related fields who have reviewed the document over the years. Presentations of drafts at state and national conferences have also been a source of further feedback.

Questions and comments about this resource can be sent to pprc@npen.org.

© 2018 National Parenting Education Network

Thanks to the following PPRC and NPEN members who have been involved in the creation of this document since work on it began in 2013:

**Betty Cooke**
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, MN

**Lorna Durrant**
Texas Woman’s University, Denton, TX

**Gayle Hart**
Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY), Little Rock, AK

**Harriet Heath**
Parent Center, Bryn Mawr College, PA & Winter Harbor, ME

**Stephanie Jones**
Just Families, NC

**Sandra McClintic**
Texas Woman’s University, Denton, TX

**Dana McDermott**
DePaul University, Chicago, IL

**Glen Palm**
St. Cloud State University, MN

**Mary Kay Stranik**
MELD Director, Minneapolis, MN

**Judy Wolf**
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tioga County, NY

**Jerri Wolfe**
Linn Benton Community College, OR
# Table of Contents

**Acknowledgements** .......................................................................................................................................................................................... ii

**Introduction** ................................................................................................................................................................................................. 2

**Background and Structure** .................................................................................................................................................................................. 3

**NPEN Parenting Educator Competencies Model** .............................................................................................................................. 4

**Uses for NPEN Parenting Educator Competencies** ............................................................................................................................. 5

**Parenting Educator Attitudes and Dispositions** ................................................................................................................................. 6

## DOMAIN 1: Knowledge of Human Development Across the Lifespan .......................................................... 7

1. Theories and research on human development and learning across the lifespan
2. Diverse influences on human development across the lifespan

## DOMAIN 2: Knowledge of Parent Development, Parenting, Parent-Child and Family Relationships and Other Systems .......................... 10

1. Theories and research on parent development, parenting, parent-child and family relationships and other systems
2. The parenting role and related responsibilities
3. Family, community, and other contextual factors influencing parent development, parenting, and parent-child and family relationships
4. Diverse community and cultural influences on parent development, parenting, and parent-child and family relationships

## DOMAIN 3: Knowledge of Parenting Education Practice ...................................................................................... 14

1. Foundations of parenting education
2. Adult learning and education
3. Educational methodology/instructional design
4. Working with parents in groups
5. Working individually with parents and families (home visits, one-on-one instruction, consultation, coaching)
6. Assessment and evaluation
7. Relationships and communication with parents and families
8. Professional behavior and development

## DOMAIN 4: Skills for Parenting Education Practice ................................................................................................. 19

1. Foundations of parenting education
2. Adult learning and education
3. Educational methodology/instructional design
4. Working with parents in groups
5. Working individually with parents and families (home visits, one-on-one instruction, consultation, coaching)
6. Assessment and evaluation
7. Relationships and communication with parents and families
8. Professional behavior and development

## Administration and Supervision Addendum ......................................................................................................................... 25

1. Program design and evaluation
2. Staff supervision
3. Policy understanding, development, and management
4. Communication and marketing
5. Collaboration and referrals with other organizations
6. Funding and budget management

**References** ........................................................................................................................................................................................................... 32
Introduction

NPEN’s purpose in creating this document is to describe the knowledge, the practice skills, and the attitudes and dispositions that are foundational to effective practice for parenting educators, with the ultimate goal of improving parent and child outcomes.

The NPEN Professional Preparation and Recognition Committee (PPRC) developed this document to describe the competencies related to effective parenting education practice. Parenting educators must possess basic knowledge and skills to effectively practice, regardless of their mode of service delivery (e.g., written materials, electronic/technological means, group programs, home visits, or individual consultations). NPEN's purpose in creating this document is to describe the knowledge, the practice skills, and the attitudes and dispositions that are foundational to effective practice for parenting educators, with the ultimate goal of improving parent and child outcomes. We start with the assumption that effective parenting educator practice positively impacts parent knowledge, skills, and development, leading to improved parent-child interaction and parent and child outcomes.

Parenting education is a field that encompasses knowledge and skills that stem from a diverse set of disciplines representing multiple perspectives about children, parents, parent-child relationships, family life, and parenting across the lifespan. Parenting education practice has roots in several disciplines including child development; early childhood education; adult development, learning, and education; family studies; psychology; sociology; health care; and social work. As such, parenting education is practiced in multiple arenas by practitioners who have typically been prepared in a specific discipline with a knowledge-base and mindset that is consistent with their preparation.

The PPRC aims to promote a broad and comprehensive set of competencies, which include key knowledge, skills, and attitudes and dispositions typical of effective parenting educators, while maintaining an appreciation of the diverse perspectives characteristic of the professional community. NPEN hopes that this document will help guide the development of a unique interdisciplinary identity that draws upon the best of the diverse roots and maintains both a mindset and space for collaborative work with those in other disciplines to best serve children, parents, and families.

It is not expected that parenting educators will have in-depth knowledge and have mastered all of the skills related to the competencies listed here. Parenting educators will likely acquire competencies and proficiency over time through formal and informal education and experience. The competencies they acquire and hone are often tailored to their role as a parenting educator and the audiences they serve. Roles and audiences can change over time requiring parenting educators to revisit the competencies needed to be effective.
This document is based on the work of Dana McDermott, Professor Emeritus of DePaul University in Chicago. McDermott (2011, 2018) researched university programs, state and national networks, and international initiatives to identify where they converge on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes and dispositions needed to be competent in the field of parenting education. Her publication describes her compilation of competencies from different sources and includes a representation of program overlap and recommendations going forward. McDermott lists 10 areas of competencies found in her research. (McDermott’s ten areas are: Human Growth & Development; Dynamics of Family Relationships; Guidance and Nurturing; Family Diversity or Diversity in Family; Professional Best Practices Related to Parenting Education and Family Support; Family and Community Relationships; Child Care and School Relationships; Assessment and Evaluation; Health & Safety; and Policy Development. [McDermott, 2016a, 2016b].)

Parenting Education is a process that involves the expansion of insights, understanding and attitudes and the acquisition of knowledge and skills about the development of both parents and of their children and the relationship between them (NPEN, 1996).

Parents are those who are so defined legally and those who have made a long-term commitment to a child to assume responsibility for that child’s well-being and development. This responsibility includes providing for the child’s physiological and emotional needs, forming a loving emotional relationship, guiding the child’s understanding of the world and culture, and designing an appropriate environment (NPEN, 1996).
NPEN Parenting Educator Competencies Model

The NPEN Parenting Educator Competencies Model below depicts parenting education competencies in three knowledge domains and a separate applied knowledge/skill domain that incorporates knowledge from the first three domains. Content in the first three domains consists of competencies in three broad areas of knowledge needed by parenting educators, and the fourth domain describes skills needed to practice parenting education. The three knowledge domains are illustrated with the three pieces of the pie chart, and the circle surrounding them shows that the skills described in domain four apply to all three knowledge domains. The circle in the center of the pie chart represents the attitudes and dispositions that parenting educators should aspire to for guiding their practice. NPEN members developed a list of critical attitudes and dispositions needed by parenting educators covering all four domains. Content of parenting education is derived from research and theories related to human development and family science. The illustration shows that each domain is influenced by and also influences research, theory, and practice in parenting education.
This document describes parenting educator competencies and has many potential uses. It can be used by individual parenting educators, program administrators, providers of pre-service and professional development services, and state and national systems or organizations that set standards for parenting education.

The competencies described in this document can be used by the following:

**Individual Practitioners**
- Assess current competencies
- Identify areas for continuing education and professional development
- Set professional development goals and develop plans for continuing education and professional development

**Program Administrators**
- Identify qualifications for parenting educators
- Assess parenting educator competencies
- Encourage professional development and recognize achievements

**Higher Education Institutions**
- Develop parenting education preparation programs
- Develop resources for preparing parenting educators
- Promote theory development and research

**Professional Development Providers**
- Identify areas for continuing professional development.
- Plan professional development opportunities, e.g., workshops, conferences

**State/National Government Systems or Professional Organizations**
- Develop career ladders and credentials
- Promote quality of parenting education services through standards
- Guide networking and collaboration across programs and institutions
The identified parenting educator attitudes and dispositions reflect core beliefs and values that ground and guide practice. They embody both beliefs about people (i.e., children, parents and professionals) and values (i.e., caring, social justice, professional responsibility) that lead to ethical thinking and behavior. The list encompasses the beliefs and values that have emerged from the parenting and family education field.

Parenting educators:

1. believe that human development is a life-long process that can be supported through parenting education.
2. care about the physical and emotional health and well-being of children and parents.
3. respect parents’ rights and honor their responsibility to make decisions for their family.
4. recognize there are many positive ways to parent and appreciate that parenting occurs in changing and complex families, societies, and cultures.
5. are dedicated to developing respectful relationships and partnerships with parents and other practitioners.
6. believe that identifying parent, child and family strengths is the starting point for work with parents and families.
7. appreciate family and community relationships and cultural traditions as possible sources of support for individuals and families.
8. strive to be capable and effective, open to learning, and dedicated to growth as a parenting educator.
9. recognize and respect other parenting education and community support services available to meet the diverse needs of parents.
10. value research and theory as the foundations of parenting education practice and commit to the development of the field.
11. value assessment and evaluation as important to improving parenting education practice and outcomes.
12. honor established standards of ethical practice for parenting educators.

Attitude is defined as “one’s beliefs about people, things, events, places, roles, etc., that can be reflected in one’s emotions and behaviors” (adapted from Perloff, 2003, as cited in McDermott, 2016). Attitudes can be seen as predispositions that impact both dispositions and behavior.

Dispositions refer to prevailing tendencies or habits of mind encompassing values, commitments, and professional ethics. In parenting educators, ideal dispositions lead an individual toward positive actions supporting parent and family well-being. These dispositions reflect important values that guide parenting educator thinking and behavior. Dispositions imply that parenting educators’ actions should be based upon positive habits of mind associated with such values as personal and parent growth, caring, fairness, honesty, personal/professional responsibility, and social justice (INTASC, 1992; Katz & Raths, 1985).
Knowledge of Human Development Across the Lifespan
Parenting educators are knowledgeable about and understand typical and atypical human development and the many influences that can impact development across the lifespan. They are competent in delivering quality and developmentally-appropriate services and programs aimed at promoting human development. They believe that effective, research-informed practices promote healthy development of individuals and families, and that communities and societies benefit as a result.

Parenting educators are knowledgeable about and understand:

Theories and research on human development and learning across the lifespan.

### Theories

- **Attachment theories** — influence of the quality of relationship between the child and their primary caregiver/s and early experiences on development
- **Bio-ecological theories** — interacting influences on one’s development of people, place, and the overarching environment
- **Constructivist theories** — development of learning, meaning making, and reasoning
- **Behavioral theories** — the role of the environment in shaping and changing behavior

### Research

- **Ages and stages of development and markers of typical and atypical development across the lifespan in the following developmental domains:**
  - **Physical development** — how individuals’ bodies grow and change
  - **Cognitive development** — how individuals grow in thinking skills and the way they understand the world around them
  - **Social development** — how individuals learn to connect with others and build relationships
  - **Emotional development** — how individuals experience, express, and manage emotions; understand emotions in others; and develop empathy
  - **Language and communication development** — how individuals learn to take in and understand information and express themselves through speech and writing
  - **Moral and spiritual development** — moral, how individuals learn the difference between right and wrong and understand how to make choices; spiritual, individuals’ efforts to understand the meaning and causes of life experience

- **Neuroscience and brain development**
- **Trauma and resilience**
Diverse influences on human development across the lifespan.

Nature: Heredity & Genetics
- Genetic predispositions
- Temperament
- Abnormalities and disabilities

Nurture/Environmental Influences

- Diet and physical activity
  - Basic nutritional needs
  - The role of diet and physical activity
  - The influence of culture on diet and physical activity

- Sleep
  - General sleep guidelines based on age and stage of development
  - The influence of culture on sleep and sleeping arrangements

- Health care
  - The role of preventative health care
  - Basics of first aid
  - The influence of culture on health care

- Safety
  - Safety practices at different stages of development
  - The impact of stressful or traumatic experiences on children and other family members.
  - Definitions and signs of domestic violence and child abuse and neglect

- Physical environment
  - Features of physical environments necessary to meet developmental needs of both parents and children
  - Standards for safe indoor and outdoor physical environment

- Emotional
  - The role of social-emotional environments in emotional awareness, emotional regulation, and appropriate expression of emotion
  - The importance of understanding emotions in others and developing empathy and caring
  - The importance of predictable but flexible routines that provide an emotionally safe environment

- Social
  - The influence of relationships with parents and other caring adults and their effect on the development of relationships
  - The role of peer relationships, including siblings, and how they affect other relationships
  - The influence of culture on relationships
  - Standards for effective and intentional use of personal technology, e.g. smart phones, tablets, etc.
Knowledge of Parent Development, Parenting, Parent-Child and Family Relationships and Other Systems
DOMAIN 2
Knowledge of Parent Development, Parenting, Parent-Child and Family Relationships and Other Systems

Parenting educators are knowledgeable about and understand diverse influences on parent development, parenting, and parent-child and family relationships in socio-cultural context. They know about and understand the complex nature of the parenting role and variations in how it is expressed. They are competent in delivering quality services and programs promoting sensitive and effective parenting, as well as healthy parent-child and family relationships.

Parenting educators are knowledgeable about and understand:

1. Theories and research on parent development, parenting, parent-child and family relationships and other systems.

   - Theories and research on parent development, parenting, and the parent-child relationship
     - Attachment theories* – influence of the quality of relationship between the child and his/her primary caregiver/s and early experiences on development
     - Bio-ecological theories* – interacting influences of people, place, and the overarching environment
     - Social learning theories – how learning is achieved from observing and interacting with others
     - Stages of parenting and parent development
     - Styles of parenting and factors that affect each style

   - Theories and research on family structure and family relationships
     - Family systems theories – families as systems of interconnected and interdependent individuals
     - Family development theories – family life stages
     - Feminist and gender-focused theories – role of gender, sexuality, and power in family relationships
     - Family stress theory – family experience of stress, crises, and adaptation

   - Theories and research on community and societal contexts of parenting and family relationships
     - Bio-ecological theories* – interacting influences of people, places, and the overarching environment
     - Social justice perspective
     - Research on historical and social events and trends
     - Multidisciplinary and culturally-based perspectives on parenting roles and practices

*Repeated from Domain 1 with greater emphasis in Domain 2 on parenting and community
The parenting role and related responsibilities.

Parents as providers
- Essential resources to meet the needs of children and the family (e.g., food, shelter, clothing, financial support, etc.).
- The role of providing structure and routines

Parents as protectors
- Components of safe indoor and outdoor physical and emotional environments
- State and federal laws pertaining to the safety and welfare of children
- Strategies for teaching children how to keep themselves safe

Parents as nurturers
- The importance of warmth, nurturing, and caring behaviors for children
- Ways parents get to know and appreciate their children as unique individuals.
- Strategies for identifying children’s emotions and appropriately responding to them

Parents as guides
- Appropriate expectations of and responses to children at different ages and stages of development
- Parents as role models
- The role of appropriate parental supervision and regulation of emotions
- Differences in guidance and discipline techniques
- The role of limit setting and ways of explaining boundaries
- Effects of family violence and harsh punishment on children

Parents as teachers
- Parents’ role in understanding how children learn
- Strategies for supporting children’s learning through structuring environments and scaffolding children’s learning.
- Parents’ role in transmitting family and cultural values and traditions

Parents as play partners
- The importance of play and of parents promoting children’s play
- Benefits of play and how play influences development, relationships, and creativity across the lifespan

Parents as advocates
- The importance of parents advocating for their children and family.
- Effective strategies for parents to advocate for their children and family.

Parents as providers of their own self-care
- The importance of social support to parental well-being
- Effective ways parents can identify and manage stress
- Ways to promote their own development
Family, community, and other contextual factors influencing parenting and the parent-child and family relationships.

- Family conditions and contextual influences affecting parenting and parent-child and family relationships, e.g., socioeconomic status, ethnicity, employment, family type and structure
- Family dynamics affecting parenting and parent-child and family relationships, e.g., family communication, coping with stress, family routines, family roles
- Social, technological, and historical conditions affecting parenting and parent-child and family relationships, e.g., social, political, and economic climate; laws and policies affecting children, parents, and families

Diverse community and cultural influences on parenting and the parent-child and family relationships.

- Family and community interaction
  - The reciprocal nature of relationships between family and community
  - Interaction of family and community cultures
  - Opportunities for family community involvement
- Interactions with informal resources in the community as supports for parents and families including, peers, neighbors, and other community members
- Interactions with environmental factors and formal systems in the community as sources of support for parents and families
  - Environmental factors, e.g., level of public safety; housing; food, clothing, and other services
  - Formal institutions with services for families, e.g., health care, education, child care, faith communities, human service programs, social media and technology
- Cultural influences on parenting and parent-child and family relationships, e.g., family roles and traditions, societal norms, gender roles
- Technological influences on parenting and parent-child and family relationships, e.g., digital access difficulties, child safety in technology uses, family well-being and privacy, etc.
Knowledge of Parenting Education Practice
DOMAIN 3
Knowledge of Parenting Education Practice

Parenting educators are knowledgeable about and understand parenting education theory and practice. They believe that parenting education can be an effective means of promoting healthy parent-child relationships and addressing parenting and family life issues. They are vigilant to work within the boundaries of their role and the profession while striving for greater competence. Finally, they honorably represent the profession and advocate for the advancement of the profession.

1. Foundations of parenting education.
   - The history of parenting education
   - Program models and underlying assumptions
   - Parenting education social and cultural meanings
   - Parenting education in institutional contexts

2. Adult learning and education.
   - Theories about adult learning and education
   - Models of working with adult learners
     - Humanistic approach
     - Behavioral approach
     - Cognitive developmental approach
     - Social learning theory approach
     - Social constructivist approach
3 Educational methodology/instructional design.

- A variety of education methods to meet diverse needs, abilities, and learning styles of parents
- Observational skills related to parenting education
- Effective and creative methods to engage and keep parents involved
- How to promote critical thinking in parents
- Methods to evaluate parenting and family life curricula and materials
- Design principles for creating and modifying curricula to meet parent and family needs
- Criteria for reviewing and tailoring teaching resources to meet parent needs
- Effective integration of information technologies to achieve pedagogical and content goals

4 Relationships and communication with parents and families.

- Skills and attitudes for building an authentic partnership with parents
- Effective communication techniques
- Recognizing parent and family strengths and successes
- How to address negative parenting behaviors/reactions
- Problem solving and decision-making strategies

5 Working with parents in groups.

- Group process and facilitation
  - Stages of group formation and development
  - Conceptual frameworks for understanding group dynamics
  - Group leadership styles
  - Levels of involvement with parent groups
  - Strategies for addressing difficult moments
  - Facilitating group learning and community building through online environments

- Parent-child family programming
  - Role of parent-child activities and design based on the age and developmental stages of children and parents
Working individually with parents and families (home visits, one-on-one instruction, consultation, coaching).

- Home visitation as a delivery system
  - Unique boundary issues of working in parents’ home space
  - Practices related to personal safety
- The roles and expectations for conducting one-on-one meetings with parents

Assessment and evaluation.

- Key concepts and terms related to assessment and evaluation
- A continuum of evaluation activities from needs assessment to outcome evaluation
- Methods to assess individual and group needs and goals
- The role of assessment and evaluation in improving parenting education services
8

Professional behavior and development.

Professional development
- The role of ongoing training and supervision related to work with parents
- The role of resource sharing and networking with other parenting educators and family practitioners/service providers

Reflective practice
- The role of self-assessment and self-reflection
- Strategies and techniques for reflecting on one’s work in parenting education

Professional ethics
- Ethical guidelines for professional practice
- Professional boundaries and limits
- The interface of legal and ethical issues
- Application of ethical practice across instructional settings, inclusive of virtual environments

Collaboration and referrals with other organizations
- Indicators of need for referrals of children and parents to other professionals and services
- Other community services and sources of support for children and parents.

Policy advocacy
- Local, state, and national policies that govern and impact parenting education programs/services
- The role of advocating for parents, children, and families
- The connection of public policies to personal family life
- Methods of communicating with various stakeholders
Skills for Parenting Education Practice
The skills for parenting education practice are based on the ability to integrate understanding of the knowledge base identified in Domains 1-3 into practice through development of a coherent philosophy and provision of effective parenting education services. Parenting educators are able to apply their knowledge in the three knowledge Domains through the skills listed in Domain 4.

NOTE: The categories in Domains 3 and 4 are the same because the skills for parenting education practice reflect the emerging knowledge of practice in the field of parenting education.

## Parenting educators:

### Foundations of parenting education

Parenting educators have skills to:

- Consider the historical and disciplinary influences of parenting education programs that they implement.
- Articulate theories of change models used in their programs.
- Develop a personal philosophy of parenting education.

### Adult learning and education

Parenting educators have skills to:

- Adapt to different models of working with adult learners.
- Adapt to the unique characteristics and needs of adult learners.
- Consider the different roles of parenting educators and parents in supporting adult learning.
Domain 4

Educational methodology/instructional design

Parenting educators have skills to:
- Use an understanding of individual and group behavior to create learning environments that encourage positive social interaction and active engagement in learning.
- Create clear goals and outcomes for parent programming.
- Choose activities to suit a range of learning styles.
- Integrate current research on adult learning and parenting education into professional practice.
- Develop and critically assess curricula and related materials for parents and families.
- Develop a repertoire of effective adult learning activities.
- Recognize and address learner needs and abilities when building the program and selecting and/or developing curricula and other resources.
- Involve parents in planning and implementation of family programs.
- Adapt programs for parents with special needs and challenges such as cultural, language, and ability differences.
- Reflect understanding of individuals’ access and comfort related to design of digital learning environments.
- Effectively implement technology and use virtual environments to achieve pedagogical and content objectives.
Relationships and communication with parents and families

Parenting educators have skills to:
- Develop personal awareness and skills to interact sensitively with parents.
- Promote, teach, and model effective communication with families.
- Practice relationship-building activities to understand the target audience.
- Use observation and reflection to gain understanding of each parent.
- Identify and address different levels of parent knowledge, skills, expectations, and goals.
- Assist parents in discovering and assessing their values related to parenting.
- Communicate concerns with parents directly and honestly.
- Maintain communication and relationships with parents through virtual tools and digital devices accessible and familiar to parents.

Working with parents in groups

Parenting educators have skills to:
- **Group process and facilitation**
  - Facilitate the process of enabling parents to discover and clarify their own goals and the steps towards achieving them.
  - Practice the skills and approaches necessary to work with parents who may have different starting points, such as:
    - Balancing the different needs of individuals within the group;
    - Integrating parents with cultural and language differences into groups;
    - Using structures that enable people to work in pairs/smaller groups/at different paces;
    - Acknowledging differences and similarities among parents;
    - Achieving a balance between time for building trust and providing support and time for learning skills;
    - Facilitating parents learning from one another;
    - Acknowledging strengths of parents;
    - Using group discussion to illustrate common parenting challenges; and
    - Employ social media and virtual spaces to promote group engagement and community building for learning.
  - Encourage parents to develop friendships and mutual support systems.
  - Practice skills for managing difficult situations.

- **Parent-child family programming**
  - Model and encourage nurturing behavior between parents and their children.
  - Identify, advocate for, and model positive guidance techniques for parents of children at various stages of development.
  - Create an environment and activities that provide opportunities to teach parents about child learning and development.
  - Demonstrate and model ways of teaching children, answering their questions, and opening up new ideas.
  - Use shared observation and reflection to help parents become better observers of their children.
6 Working individually with parents and families (home visits, one-on-one instruction, consultation, coaching)

Parenting educators have skills to:

- Develop relationships with parents based on trust and caring.
- Identify and address individual parent, child, and family needs.
- Use home visiting as a way to understand the parent/family context.
  - Respect parent space and role as a visitor to the family home.
  - Are sensitive to issues of safety.

7 Assessment and evaluation

Parenting educators have skills to:

- Use appropriate methods to evaluate parenting education processes and outcomes.
- Integrate needs assessment into the initial and continual design of programs.
- Engage participants in evaluation of programs and services.
- Maintain records on participants and program activities and operations.
- Observe and assess each child’s development, identifying strengths and challenges.
- Observe parents’ strengths and challenges.
- Assist parents in reflecting on their parenting successes and challenges and own growth as parents.
- Effectively use assessment and evaluation tools in data collection, analysis, and storage.
Parenting educators have skills to:

- **Professional development**
  - Keep current with trends and issues in the field.
  - Participate in formal and informal opportunities for continuing education and professional development.
  - Participate in state, regional, and/or national parenting and family life professional organization(s).

- **Reflective practice**
  - Reflect on their own practice and identify knowledge and skills that need further strengthening.
  - Confront personal biases that interfere with their ability to educate and support family members.

- **Professional ethics**
  - Apply ethical principles in all aspects of professional life.
  - Monitor their role and boundaries in interacting with parents.

- **Collaboration and referrals with other organizations**
  - Are familiar with community resources and refer parents to appropriate resources as needed.
  - Respond to family crises by connecting families to the support and resources they need.
  - Design, develop, and participate in support services and support networks for children, parents, and families.
  - Assess family needs and strengths along with current support systems and resources.
  - Use reflective questioning to motivate parents to become actively engaged in their informal networks and supports.
  - Develop effective methods to attract and involve community partners in parenting education.

- **Policy advocacy**
  - Respect and uphold laws and regulations that pertain to one’s practice as a parenting educator and offer expertise to authorities based on professional knowledge.
  - Advocate for children and families using a variety of strategies.
  - Inform relevant agencies of unmet needs among families in the community.
Administration and Supervision Addendum
This section identifies knowledge and skills that support a unique set of roles and responsibilities that are in addition to the direct service role of parenting education practitioners. In smaller programs the parenting educator may take on some of these responsibilities, and in programs embedded in larger institutional systems (e.g., health care agency, social service agency, school) some of these roles and responsibilities may be held by their program administrator/s. They are presented here as program administration roles related specifically to parenting education. They represent a higher or more advanced level of responsibilities that might fit into a career ladder for parenting educators. The knowledge and skills in this section are in addition to those already articulated for the parenting education practitioner whose primary role is to provide direct services to parents.

1 Program design and evaluation

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors are knowledgeable about and understand:

- Key theoretical concepts and terms related to assessment and evaluation.
- The program development process, including planning, design, implementation, and evaluation.
- Integrating assessments in the initial and continuing design of programs.
- Administrative issues in conducting and evaluating programs.
- Key assessment and evaluation tools in the field.
- How to conduct an effective program evaluation.
- Use of evaluation results for continual program improvement.
- Apply theoretical concepts and terms related to assessment and evaluation.

(continued on next page)
Program design and evaluation (continued)

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors have **skills** to:

- Describe how the outcomes of research and evaluation can be applied to practice.
- Identify and utilize key assessment and evaluation tools in the field.
- Conduct and report on assessment of community strengths and needs.
- Locate, customize, or design curricula, instructional approaches, participation costs, and program delivery methods to fit family strengths, needs, and preferences.
- Identify and address factors that might contribute to participant attrition.
- Select the processes and tools that will be used to measure the success of the parenting education experience.
- Document how a program’s results may be replicated and expanded to additional groups.
- Include discussions and celebrations that honor the pertinent cultural or family history, spiritual and secular values, communication styles, and current challenges of all participating groups.
- Support diversity by recruiting parent leadership for programs and consulting with parents on curriculum and instructional processes on a continuing basis.
Staff supervision

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors are knowledgeable about and understand:

- Hiring processes.
- Support for staff professional development.
- Promoting program leadership and professional advancement.
- Mentoring staff.
- Staff evaluation.

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors have skills to:

- Embody and model professional attitudes and behaviors expected of staff and volunteers.
- Clearly describe parenting educator role and responsibilities using parenting educator competencies.
- Use protocol for screening and hiring staff and volunteers.
- Provide adequate resources to allow staff and volunteers to participate in professional development.
- Set goals with staff and volunteers for individual professional development.
- Conduct ongoing staff evaluation.
- Recognize professional development milestones and celebrate accomplishments.
- Provide staff and volunteers with reflective supervision opportunities.
- Use evaluation results to inform staff development and continued program improvement.
Policy understanding, development, and management

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors are knowledgeable about and understand:

- Legal, ethical, and policy guidelines in parenting education.
- The impact of family law and public policy on families.
- Pertinent laws and policies and how they apply to specific family related areas (e.g., child or spouse abuse, child care, adoption, teen pregnancy, family leave, bankruptcy, divorce, custody, and social services).
- Current laws, public policy, and initiatives regulating and influencing professional conduct and services.

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors have skills to:

- Maintain policies and procedures for the health and safety of parents and staff and the environment, in accordance with local and national policy, regulatory requirements, and current guidance.
- Create data privacy and confidentiality guidelines respectful of family members and protective of their legal rights.
- Monitor local, state, national, and international initiatives that affect parenting or impact families.
- Participate in the formation and shaping of child-, parent-, and family-friendly policies for colleague review and dialogue before distribution to appropriate decision-makers in the community and state.
- Educate legislators and policymakers so they can make more informed decisions affecting children and families.
Communication and marketing

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors are knowledgeable about and understand:

- Public communication and marketing strategies.

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors have skills to:

- Use effective methods to directly inform parents about the benefits and availability of parenting education.
- Use effective methods to attract and involve school and agency staff and administrators, businesses, and community groups in family support and parenting education initiatives.
- Engage in critical discussions and professional activities that build the field of parenting education and enhance the image of parenting educators at the local, state, national, and international level.

Collaboration and referrals with other organizations

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors are knowledgeable about and understand:

- Effective methods to engage other agencies and groups in collaborating.

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors have skills to:

- Form partnerships with community organizations and agencies that serve children, parents, and families.
- Connect and partner with other family-supporting professionals to share resources, support community initiatives, and facilitate referrals between agencies.
- Communicate child, parent, and teacher development information to colleagues, collaborators, and stakeholders in order to plan future programs.
- Establish referral procedures and create a data base of community resources
- Facilitate access to family support and social services that are culturally appropriate for families who need and want them.
Parenting educator administrators and supervisors are knowledgeable about and understand:

- Financial management techniques.
- Fund raising.

Parenting educator administrators and supervisors have skills to:

- Create thorough budgets based on accurate cost estimates.
- Maintain accurate financial records and regularly reconcile accounts.
- Ensure adequate oversight of financial accounts to ensure accountability.
- Report status of financial accounts appropriately.
- Create procedures to ensure transparency of financial records.
- Use program funds prudently.
- Establish fundraising procedures and guidelines.
- Develop a fundraising plan with goals to support program sustainability.
- Identify funders that align with program.
- Develop relationships with funders.
- Follow guidelines and requirements set forth by funders.
- Communicate program needs accurately and effectively.
- Plan and host fundraising events and sponsor fundraising activities.
- Honor and recognize funders.
- Meet fundraising goals and deadlines.
References


