Implementing Curriculum in Family Child Care Participant Guide

DEFINITION OF GLOSSARY TERMS

Abbreviations, Acronyms, and Glossary

Adaptations for individual needs. Changing routines, environment, activities or schedules to accommodate the individual needs of a child or family.

Adult-directed Activities. Activities led and directed by an adult; generally, all learning is planned.

Assessment. A systematic procedure for obtaining information from observation, interviews, portfolios, projects, tests, and other sources that can be used to make conclusions about children's characteristics.

Authentic Assessment. Determining a child's abilities based on experiences familiar to the child either in the classroom or in the context of their life, allowing them to demonstrate learning in more than one way.

Authentic Observation. Making observations from normal daily routines and/or developmental activities embedded into the children's play or environment.

Caregiver Strategies. Different preferred approaches to offering care, attention and meeting needs of the children in your care.

Child-directed Activities. Activities involving very little adult input or direction; learning is discovery-based.

Culture. A person's particular set of beliefs, customs, and ways of life.

Curriculum. A comprehensive plan to deliver all the opportunities children need during the early years to help them develop.

Daily Routines. Activities done in a particular sequence throughout the day, not necessarily depending on time.

Daily Schedule. A documented sequence of daily routines corresponding to set times of the day.

Developmental expectations. Established expected behaviors and skills related to a child's age and ability.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP). Creating learning opportunities and plans based on how young children develop and learn, respecting the child's uniqueness and culture.

Diversity. The understanding, acceptance, and inclusion of different cultures and races.

Domains of Learning and Development. Areas of development covering different abilities and skills including physical, social emotional, language and cognition.

Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs). A document useful both in planning activities to support a child's developmental needs and assessing expectations for the child's age and abilities.

Environment. The space, equipment, materials, tone, routines and schedules of the child care program.

Extended learning. Learning themes are extended through questions or adding materials by an adult seeking to build on the direction of the child's interests or learning.

Learning Styles. A person's unique preferences of how to learn.

Learning theory. An idea of how we think children learn. It helps us understand how they think and act, offering insight into how to support their learning journey.

Learning theories can be grouped into three logical categories:

1. **A Focus on External Influences**. These learning theories depend on the environment, teacher activities, lessons, and materials to create opportunities for learning. It does not expect a child to be able to learn and develop on their own. This is commonly known as Behaviorist learning theory. Pavlov, Watson, Thorndike, and Skinner are prominent researchers connected to this learning theory.

2. **A Focus on Internal Influences**. These learning theories focus on the internal sequences of the child's maturing brain and physical body to learn and develop on their own through curiosity and motion. They see adults more likely to constrain this natural process. This is commonly known as Cognitivist/Neuroscience learning theory (based on brain research). Piaget, Dewey, and Montessori are prominent theorists who share these beliefs on learning.

3. **A Combination of Collaborative Influences**. These learning theories look at how the abilities and natural physical development of a child work together with their environment, relationships, temperament, and interests. The child and the environment (including adults and peers) engage and collaborate to create learning experiences. This is commonly known as Constructivist/Social Learning theory. Vygotsky, Bandura, and Erikson are prominent theorists connected to this line of thought.

Lesson Plan. A written plan for specific learning events with objectives, preparation, activity ideas, and options for extending learning.

Observation. A process used to document a child's actions.

Parent communication. How information is related to parents in the child care.

Parent Conference. A scheduled time set aside for teacher and parent to focus on a child's development or behavior.

Parent involvement. The extent to which a family or parents participate in their child's care and learning, including communication, events, conferences, and activities.

Parent relationships. Interpersonal dynamics between parents and teachers regarding the care and learning of the child and the creation of community in the child care.

Philosophies of Care. How we think we should be interacting and supporting children during their routines and activities. It informs how we organize time, space, learning experiences, family involvement, and teacher responsibilities.

Process activities. Activities planned where children are offered materials, time, and space without an intended outcome. Such self-guided activities include drawing, painting, collage or clay.

Product activities. Activities planned that generate an expected outcome or form, likely where all of the children's work is very similar if not identical.

Provocations. Questions, Materials, Displays or Events causing inquiry, investigation, and research by both children and adults.

Reflection. Purposeful thought practices considering past and future events.

Reflective Practitioner. Someone who at regular intervals intentionally looks back over their work, experiences, process, and outcomes for greater understanding and context, and then evaluates and discerns next steps based on this reflection.

Responsive Caregiving. Methods of care reflecting positive interactions, safety, consistency, belonging, and sensitivity to each child's individual needs.

Scaffolding. This practice includes an adult observing a child struggling with completing a task and offering non-intrusive assistance to the child to help bridge the gap, or zone of proximal development.

Temperament. A child's innate preferences displayed in the combination of the mental, physical, and emotional traits that make up their unique personality.

Transitions. Short periods of time between regularly-scheduled routines.

Weekly Schedule. A document planned to address learning and activities for the week.

Zone of Proximal Development. The gap between a child's emerging ability to do a task and their ability to do it alone.