

Gateways to Opportunity®

Credentials

How your training can
count toward a Credential.

What are Gateways to Opportunity Credentials?

Gateways to Opportunity Credentials are symbols of professional achievement that can be earned by completing an approved program of coursework at an *entitled college or university, or by completing a portfolio that documents education, training, and experience.

Gateways Credentials are in state statute and administrative rule. This allows other state agencies to recognize and potentially embed Gateways Credentials within program requirements. Gateways Credentials are an important part of personal professional development for Illinois practitioners. Credentials currently available include:

- ECE Credential
- Infant Toddler Credential
- Illinois Director Credential
- Family Specialist Credential
- School-Age & Youth Development Credential
- Family Child Care Credential
- Technical Assistance Credential (*currently in pilot*)

**Institutions that have aligned their coursework with Gateways Credential component requirements.*

How can your training help practitioners earn Gateways to Opportunity Credentials?

Choosing to have your training meet Gateways to Opportunity Credential requirements may assist practitioners who attend your training in earning a Gateways Credentials. Trainings that can be used toward a Gateways Credential must be 7.5 contact hours in length or longer, cover (at least) one Gateways content area, and include an assessment component. *Please note that trainings must provide 7.5 contact hours within one content area in order for the training to count toward a Gateways Credential.* For descriptions of the Gateways Credential Content Areas, please refer to the following pages.

Why should you develop trainings to meet Gateways to Opportunity Credential requirements?

As a trainer, having your training evaluated for Gateways Credentials shows that you want to provide quality training opportunities to early care and education practitioners and/or administrators. Many practitioners seek trainings in lieu of college coursework to fulfill the education and training component requirements of various Credentials. Credential approved trainings may also assist practitioners by counting toward Credential renewal requirements.

ECE Content Areas

The seven content areas below encompass the depth of knowledge and skills of the ECE Credential.

Human Growth and Development (HGD)

Early childhood practitioners use current and emerging principles, theories, and knowledge of developmental milestones as a foundation for all aspects of their work with young children, birth through age 8, and their families. Practitioners have a curiosity about how children develop and learn, and understand the mutual influences among different domains of development, and between the child and the contexts within which s/he develops. They view child development knowledge as the core of their professional practice, and engage in ongoing learning and reflection about developmental knowledge and theory. They use their understanding as they plan and implement observations and teaching/learning interactions, and as a context for collaboration with families and other team members on behalf of children.

Health, Safety, and Well-Being (HSW)

Early childhood practitioners understand that children's physical health, mental health, and safety are the foundations for development and learning in children, birth through age 8. They acknowledge the value of creating a healthful environment to foster children's physical, cognitive, language, and social-emotional development. They collaborate with families and health professionals to provide safe, healthful environments and to adjust health, nutrition, and safety routines to children's individual needs and abilities. They take responsibility for providing multiple opportunities for children to learn habits that will ensure their health and safety.

Observation and Assessment (OA)

Knowledge of individual children's development and learning provides the framework for curriculum and teaching/learning interactions. Early childhood practitioners are curious about how children develop and learn, and value the roles of informal and formal observation and assessment. They understand the purposes, benefits, and uses of observation and assessment information in early childhood settings. They view observation and assessment as ways to understand children, not only as means for evaluation and accountability. They take responsibility for using a variety of age, developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate formal and informal assessments to gather and share information on each child's skills, abilities, interests, and needs birth through age 8; to monitor children's progress, and to continually evaluate and reflect on and modify their own roles and practices.

Curriculum or Program Design (CPD)

Early childhood practitioners have broad knowledge of appropriate curriculum for young children from birth through age 8. They understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the content disciplines, as well as the interrelationships between and among content disciplines, and developmental domains. They recognize and value the interdependence between children's relationships with others and their construction of knowledge. They view curriculum development as a collaborative, dynamic, and ever-changing professional endeavor. They take responsibility for planning and providing an emerging, anti-bias, integrated curriculum to build on each child's current abilities and interests to expand competence in all content areas and developmental domains.

ECE Content Areas (con't)

Interactions, Relationships, and Environments (IRE)

Early childhood practitioners use their understanding of developmentally appropriate interactions and environments to provide integrated learning opportunities to young children from birth through age 8. They use interpersonal interactions that guide each child toward desired developmental and learning outcomes. They recognize the important teaching roles of the physical and social environments, and provide and support environments that are nurturing, pleasing, and intellectually stimulating. Environments and teaching/learning interactions reflect values about young children and families, and are sensitive to bias and to individual differences. Environments and interactions are responsive to each child's abilities, interests, and needs, and reflect appreciation of family and community contexts and resources.

Family and Community Relationships (FCR)

Early childhood practitioners understand and value the critical role of positive, collaborative partnerships with families, colleagues, and community service agencies. They respect multiple perspectives and demonstrate integrity in conveying their own personal and professional perspectives and values. They use their knowledge of family and social systems to create reciprocal, productive interpersonal relationships that recognize and enhance the contributions of family, program, and community participants to the development, learning, and well-being of young children, birth through age 8, and their families.

Personal and Professional Development (PPD)

Early childhood practitioners identify themselves as professionals and conduct themselves as members of a significant, expanding, and changing profession. Their professional attitudes evolve with experience, professional development, and advances in the profession. They honor diversity in cultures, beliefs, and practices. They know and value the history and contributions of their profession and its related fields. They are committed to ongoing professional development, and continually reflect on and take responsibility for their own values, choices, and actions. They advocate for young children, birth through age 8, and their families, and exemplify the ethical standards of their discipline in their profession in their personal and professional interactions and activities.

Infant Toddler Content Areas

The seven content areas below encompass the depth of knowledge and skills of the Infant Toddler Credential.

Human Growth and Development (HGD)

Infant-toddler practitioners use current and emerging principles, theories, and knowledge of developmental milestones as a foundation for all aspects of their work with young children, birth to age 3, and their families. Practitioners have a curiosity about how children develop and learn, and understand the mutual influences among different domains of development, including those related to special needs. They recognize the power and influence of the social, emotional, cultural, community, and physical contexts within which children develop, and of the interactions between the child, family, and other primary caregivers as the foundation for future development and learning in all domains. They view child development knowledge and its application with individual children as the of their practitioner practice, and engage in ongoing learning and reflection about developmental knowledge and theory. They use their understanding as they plan and implement observations, assessments, and teaching/learning interactions, and as a context for collaborating with families and other practitioners on behalf of children.

Health, Safety, and Well-Being (HSW)

Infant-toddler practitioners understand that children's mental health, physical health, and safety are the foundations for development and learning in children, birth to age 3. They acknowledge the value of creating and fostering healthy social and physical environments that promote children's adaptive behavior and emotional, social, physical, cognitive, and language development. They collaborate with families and other practitioners to understand their perspectives on health, nutrition, and safety. They provide and promote health, nutrition, and safety practices and routines that recognize individual children's needs and abilities and are congruent with individual families' cultures, values and preferences. They take responsibility for providing and promoting multiple opportunities for children to learn habits that will ensure their health and safety.

Observation and Assessment (OA)

Infant-toddler practitioners recognize that knowledge of each infant's or toddler's development and learning provides the framework for what infant-toddler practitioners do with each child, birth to age 3, and family. Infant-toddler practitioners are curious about how children develop and learn, and value the roles of informal and formal observation and assessment in understanding what and how each child is developing and learning. They understand and value the purposes, benefits, and uses of observation and assessment information for obtaining a holistic view of each child. They view observation and assessment as ways to understand children and their interactions and relationships with their families and other caregivers, peers, and physical environments, within the context of culture and community. They understand that families have important information to share about their children. They use a variety of age, developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate formal and informal assessments to gather and share information on each child's skills, abilities, interests, and needs, birth to age 3; to promote their own and the family's understanding of the child; to monitor developmental progress; to identify developmental concerns; and continually to reflect on and modify their own roles and practices.

Infant Toddler Content Areas (con't)

Curriculum or Program Design (CPD)

Infant-toddler practitioners take their cues for curriculum from the child and family. Infant-toddler practitioners use child development knowledge, knowledge of developmentally appropriate practices, and content knowledge to design, provide, promote, and evaluate opportunities and experiences that support optimal development and learning in children, birth to age 3. With each individual child, this complex process is embedded in relationships that support observations, scaffolding, and joint construction of meanings about self, others, and the world. Knowledge of each child's approaches to interaction and engagement, as well as family preferences, become the basis for what and how development and learning are supported and promoted in center and home environments, in collaboration with the family, other caregivers, and practitioners. The observations and interactions that provide curriculum information are grounded in a thorough understanding of children, families, cultures, and communities. Practitioners encourage young children's social-emotional competence, problem solving, critical thinking, and academic competence within a nurturing, supportive, challenging learning environment that emphasizes relationships, interactions, routines, and play.

Interactions, Relationships, and Environments (IRE)

Infant-toddler practitioners use their understanding of early development to support and provide healthy early relationships, both in their own work with children and as they collaborate with families on behalf of children. They provide and promote developmentally, culturally, and individually appropriate environments and seek to engage young children, ages birth to age 3, in social, play, and caregiving interactions that support and promote their development and learning. Relationships established with children and their families in support of development and learning recognize and promote the primacy of the parent-child relationship as well as foster emerging relationships with other adults and with peers. Environments and interactions reflect knowledge of the ways in which infants and toddlers develop and learn and are responsive to each child's emerging abilities, interests, and needs within the context of family, culture, and community.

Family and Community Relationships (FCR)

Infant-toddler practitioners understand the roles that culture, community, and family play in the growth and development of infants and toddlers, knowing that parenting styles, ethnicity, cultural expectations, household make-up, and community influence all domains of development. They understand and value the critical role of positive, collaborative partnerships with families, colleagues, and community service agencies. They respect multiple perspectives and demonstrate integrity in conveying their own personal and practitioner perspectives and values. They use their knowledge of family and social systems to create reciprocal, productive interpersonal relationships that recognize and enhance the contributions of family, program, and community participants to the development, learning, and well-being of young children, birth to age 3, and their families.

Personal and Professional Development (PPD)

Infant-toddler practitioners demonstrate respect for children, families, and colleagues. They identify themselves as practitioners and conduct themselves as members of a significant, expanding, changing profession. Their practitioner attitudes evolve with experience, practitioner development, and advances in the profession. They honor diversity in cultures, beliefs, and practices. They know and value the history and contributions of their profession and its related fields. They are committed to ongoing practitioner development. They continually reflect on and take responsibility for their own values, choices, and actions, including the judgments they make as they work with children and families. They advocate for young children, birth to age 3, and their families, and exemplify the ethical standards of their profession in their personal and practitioner interactions and activities.

Administrative Content Areas for Illinois Director Credential

Administrators of early childhood and school-age programs need a strong foundation in the fundamentals of business and management as demonstrated in the ten content areas below. Examples of demonstrated competencies follow each content area.

Personal and Professional Self-Awareness (PPS)

Knowledge and application of adult and career development, personality typologies, dispositions, and learning styles. Committed to ongoing reflection and professional development, and recognizes the influence of their own values on their choices and actions. The ability to evaluate ethical and moral dilemmas based on NAEYC Professional Code of Ethics for Administrators and/or National AfterSchool Association Code of Ethics. The ability to be a reflective practitioner and apply a repertoire of techniques to improve the level of personal fulfillment and professional job satisfaction.

Legal and Fiscal Management (LFM)

Knowledge and application of the advantages and disadvantages of different legal structures. Knowledge of different laws, codes, and regulations including: knowledge of Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services Licensing Standards, and building, zoning, fire, occupational, safety, health, and sanitation regulations as they relate to the delivery of services to children and families. Knowledge of child custody and guardianship, child abuse prevention, special education, confidentiality, family violence, anti-discrimination, insurance liability, contract, and labor laws pertaining to program administration. Knowledge of various federal, state, and local revenue sources. Knowledge of bookkeeping methods and accounting terminology. Skill in budgeting, cash flow management, grant writing, and fundraising.

Human Resources Development (HRD)

Knowledge and application of group dynamics, communication styles, and techniques for conflict resolution. Knowledge of different supervisory and group facilitation styles. Skilled in relating to staff and board members of diverse ability, racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. The ability to hire, orient, supervise, and motivate staff to high levels of performance. Skill in consensus building, team development, and staff performance appraisal.

Educational Programming (EP)

Knowledge and application of different research-based curriculum models, standards for high quality programming, and child assessment practices. The ability to develop and implement a program to meet the needs of children at different ages and development levels, appropriate transitions between programs, and support the inclusion. Knowledge of administrative practices that promote the inclusion of children that who are linguistically, culturally, ethnically, and ability diverse.

Program Operation and Facilities Management (POFM)

Knowledge and application of policies and procedures that meet state/local regulations and professional standards pertaining to the health and safety of children. Knowledge of nutritional and health requirements for food service. The ability to design and plan the effective use of space based on current principles of environmental psychology and child development. Knowledge of playground safety design and practice..

Administrative Content Areas for Illinois Director Credential (con't)

Family Partnership (FP)

Knowledge and application of family systems and various parenting styles. Knowledge of community resources to support family wellness. Develop and implement program practices that support children and families of diverse ability, and varying cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and socio-economic backgrounds. The ability to support families as valued partners in the educational processes of their child(ren).

Marketing and Public Relations (MPR)

Knowledge and/or application of the fundamentals of effective marketing, public relations, and community outreach. The ability to evaluate the cost-benefit of different marketing and promotional strategies. The ability to communicate the program's philosophy and promote a positive public image to families, business leaders, policy makers, and prospective funders. The ability to promote linkages with local programs and schools to promote effective transitioning of children. Skill in developing a business plan and effective use of electronic media, promotional literature, handbooks, newsletters, and press releases.

Leadership and Advocacy (LA)

Knowledge of organizational theory and leadership styles as they relate to early childhood/school-age work environments. Knowledge of the legislative process, social issues, and public policies affecting young children and their families. The ability to articulate a vision, clarify and affirm values, and create a culture built on norms of continuous improvement and ethical conduct. The ability to evaluate program effectiveness. The ability to define organizational problems, gather data to generate alternative solutions and effectively apply analytical skills in its solution. The ability to advocate on behalf of linguistically, ethnically, culturally, socio-economically, and ability diverse children and families. The ability to advocate on behalf of the profession.

Oral and Written Communication (OWC)

Knowledge and application of the mechanics of writing including organizing ideas, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. The ability to use written communication to effectively express one's thoughts. Knowledge and/or application of oral communication techniques including establishing rapport, managing conflict, active listening, and voice control. The ability to communicate ideas effectively in a formal presentation (e.g., thesis, dissertation, formal presentation, etc.).

Technology (T)

Current knowledge of how to utilize and maximize technology in managing child care administrative functions, to support social networking as a tool and resource. The ability to support staff in using technology in the classroom.

Family Specialist Credential Content Areas

Human Growth and Development (HGD)

Family specialists use current and emerging principles, theories, and knowledge of individual and family development, family functioning and the family system as a foundation for all aspects of their work with families. They understand how interactions among family members as well as between family and the contexts within which they live influence their functioning and development as a family. They view family systems knowledge and human development across the lifespan as the core of their professional practice. They engage in ongoing learning and reflection about family knowledge and theory, and understand typical and atypical functioning and development within the context of family, culture and society. They use their understanding to plan and implement assessment and services. Knowledge of family functioning and human development inform collaboration with families and other team members on behalf of the whole family and individual family members, including children from the prenatal stage through age 21.

Health, Safety, and Well-Being (HSW)

Family specialists understand that physical health, mental health, and safety are the foundations of individual and family functioning, development and well-being. They acknowledge the critical importance of the family environment to the health, safety and well-being of all family members, including children, from the prenatal stage through age 21. They collaborate with families and other professionals to facilitate safe, healthy environments. They adapt supports and interventions to families' individual strengths, assets, needs, concerns, priorities and goals within cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic contexts. They facilitate multiple opportunities for family members to strengthen protective factors, fulfill family functions, and gain knowledge and skills to support current and future well-being of the family and each of its members, including those of their children, beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.

Observation and Assessment (OA)

Knowledge of families and human development provides the framework for family services. Family specialists understand the purposes of formal and informal observation and assessment in family service settings and employ a strength-based approach to assessment of family strengths, assets, concerns, priorities and goals. They view observation and assessment as a way to understand each family and its members (e.g., single-parent families, multi-generational families) and the family context (e.g., risk and protective factors), as frameworks for engaging and collaborating with families and other service providers, and as a means for program evaluation and accountability. They take responsibility for using a variety of developmentally, culturally, linguistically, and individually appropriate formal and informal observations and assessments to gather and share information on family strengths and assets as well as family concerns, priorities and goals. They obtain research-based assessment information using repeated, multiple measures and sources. They interpret information holistically and use it to inform services, to monitor service provision and progress toward shared goals based on family priorities, and to reflect on and modify their own roles and practices.

Curriculum or Program Design (CPD)

Family specialists have broad knowledge of human development, human services, and approaches for supporting and enhancing family functioning and development, including evidence-based and recommended practices. They value families and family functioning and recognize the interdependence among family members as well as between families and individual family members and their multiple environments. They view curriculum and program design as a collaborative, dynamic, and evolving professional endeavor that encompasses and interacts with multiple areas of functioning, relationships, and environments. They collaborate with families to use assessment results to plan and provide comprehensive, cohesive programs that are family-driven, build on family strengths, and are individualized to the family, its structure, and its members, including services for children beginning in the prenatal stage through age 21.

Family Specialist Credential Content Areas (con't)

Interactions, Relationships, and Environments (IRE)

Family specialists use their understanding of culturally, linguistically and individually appropriate interactions, relationships, and environments to ensure that family services are responsive to and respectful of each family and its individual members, and reflect appreciation of family and community strengths and assets. They use interpersonal interactions that engage, support and guide each family and family member toward strength-based outcomes. They recognize the important roles of the physical, psychological and social environments in which families live and function, and strive to provide and support programmatic and home environments that are safe, nurturing, and supportive of growth toward healthy, autonomous family functioning within the contexts of natural, inclusive environments. Environments, relationships, and interactions reflect strength-based values about families and family services. They work with families and other providers to integrate services into meaningful, typical family settings and events in home and community.

Family and Community Relationships (FCR)

Family specialists understand and value the critical role of positive, collaborative partnerships with families, colleagues, and community service agencies. They respect diverse perspectives, including those reflecting cultural and linguistic diversity, and demonstrate integrity in conveying their own professional perspectives and values. They use their knowledge of family and social systems to create reciprocal interpersonal relationships that recognize, support, and promote the contributions of family, program, and community participants to the development, learning, and well-being of families and family members. They use their knowledge of community capacity, assets and dynamics to access and ensure a comprehensive, cohesive system of service delivery for each family and its individual members, including children from the prenatal stage through age 21.

Personal and Professional Development (PPD)

Family specialists identify themselves as professionals and conduct themselves as members of a vital, expanding, and changing profession. Their professional attitudes evolve with experience, reflection, professional development, and advances in the profession. They value and honor diversity in cultures, languages, beliefs, abilities, and practices. They know and value the history and contributions of their profession and its related fields. They are committed to ongoing personal and professional development, and continually reflect on and take responsibility for their own values, choices and actions. They advocate for strong families and communities and exemplify the ethical standards of the profession in their personal and professional interactions and activities.

School-Age & Youth Development Credential Content Areas

Human Growth and Development (HGD)

School-Age and Youth Development professionals use current and emerging factual, theoretical, procedural and cultural knowledge of developmental influences as essential for all aspects of their work with children. Professionals have a curiosity and understanding about how individuals develop and learn, and understand the mutual influences among the many different domains of development and change. This knowledge and skill is always underpinned by the seven core values of school-age practice. The capabilities of the school-age practitioner demonstrate how well the worker balances these core values with the core knowledge and skills of individual child development and the important contexts within which children grow and learn. Professionals view child development knowledge, and the associated values, as the core of their professional practice. Professionals use their values, understanding and skills for planning and implementing learning interactions and programs.

Health, Safety, and Well-Being (HSW)

Professionals understand that physical health, mental health, and safety are the foundations for development and learning in children. They acknowledge the value of creating a healthful environment to foster the physical, cognitive, language and social-emotional development of children. They collaborate with families and health professionals to provide safe, healthful environments and to adjust health, nutrition, and safety routines to individual needs and abilities. They take responsibility for providing multiple opportunities for children to learn habits that will ensure their health and safety.

Observation and Assessment (OA)

Professionals value the roles of informal and formal observation and assessment to gain understanding about an individual's development and learning. They understand the purposes, benefits and uses of observation and assessment information. They view observation and assessment as ways to understand children as well as means for program evaluation and accountability. They take responsibility for using a variety of age, developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate formal and informal assessments to gather and share information on an individual's skills, abilities, interests and needs, to monitor an individual's progress, and to continually evaluate and reflect on and modify their own roles and practices.

Curriculum or Program Design (CPD)

Professionals have broad knowledge of appropriate curriculum and goals for children. They understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the content disciplines, as well as the interrelationships between and among content disciplines and developmental domains. They recognize and value the interdependence between relationships with others and an individual's construction of knowledge. They view curriculum development as a collaborative, dynamic, and ever-changing professional endeavor. They take responsibility for planning and providing an emerging, bias-sensitive, integrated curriculum to build on an individual's current abilities and interests to expand competence in all content areas and developmental domains.

Interactions, Relationships, and Environments (IRE)

Professionals use their understanding of developmentally appropriate interactions and environments to provide integrated and supportive learning opportunities children. They use interpersonal interactions that guide each individual toward desired developmental and learning outcomes. They recognize the important teaching roles of the physical and social environments, and provide and support environments that are nurturing, pleasing, and intellectually stimulating. Environments and interactions reflect values about children and families, and are sensitive to bias and to individual differences. Environments and interactions are responsive to each individual's abilities, interests, and needs, and reflect appreciation of family and community contexts and resources.

School-Age & Youth Development Credential Content Areas

(con't)

Family and Community Relationships (FCR)

Professionals understand and value the critical role of positive, collaborative partnerships with families, colleagues, and community service agencies. They respect multiple perspectives and demonstrate integrity in conveying their own personal and professional perspectives and values. They use their knowledge of family and social systems to create reciprocal, productive interpersonal relationships that recognize and enhance the contributions of family, program, and community participants to the development, learning, and wellbeing of children, and their families.

Personal and Professional Development (PPD)

Professionals identify and conduct themselves as members of a significant, expanding, changing profession. Their professional attitudes evolve with experience, professional development, and advances in the profession. They honor diversity in cultures, beliefs, and practices. They know and value the history and contributions of their profession and its related fields. They are committed to ongoing professional development, and continually reflect on and take responsibility for their own values, choices and actions. They advocate for children, and their families, and exemplify the ethical standards of their discipline in their profession in their personal and professional interactions and activities.

Program and Agency Governance and Function (PAGF)

School-Age and Youth Development professionals understand their responsibility to maintain accurate documentation for group, program, and financial requirements. Professionals monitor daily program operations, as well as employ strategies which include implementation of risk and crisis management of facility, participants, and staff. Professionals engage in day-to-day supervision, through shared leadership and decision-making practices, of facilities, staff, volunteers, and resources to ensure communication and implementation of agency policies and procedures.

Advocacy and Policy (AP)

School-Age and Youth Development professionals ensure that the rights of children are promoted and upheld. Professionals recognize implications of local, state, and national trends and policies with regard to professional practice. Professionals utilize experience, knowledge, and research to plan and lead change at a range of levels. They advocate on behalf of children, working with young people and with peers, colleagues, and other stakeholders.

Family Child Care Credential Content Areas

Human Growth and Development (HGD)

Family childcare providers use current and emerging principles, theories, and knowledge of developmental milestones as a foundation for all aspects of their work with children, prenatal through age 8*, and their families. Providers continuously acquire knowledge about how children develop and learn, and understand the mutual influences among different domains of development, and between the child and the contexts within which s/he develops. They view child development knowledge as the core of their professional practice, and engage in ongoing learning and reflection about developmental knowledge and theory. They apply these understandings as they plan and implement observations and teaching/learning interactions, and as a context for collaboration with families and other professionals on behalf of children.

Health, Safety, and Well-Being (HSW)

Family childcare providers understand that children's physical and mental health, safety, and well-being are the foundations for development and learning in children, birth through age 8*. They acknowledge the value of creating a healthful environment to foster children's physical, cognitive, language, and social-emotional development. Providers collaborate with families and health professionals to provide safe, healthful environments, and to adjust health, nutrition, and safety routines to children's individual needs and abilities. They take responsibility for providing multiple opportunities for children to learn positive habits that will ensure their health, safety, and well-being.

Observation and Assessment (OA)

Family childcare providers' knowledge of individual children's development provides the framework for curriculum, teaching and learning interactions, and age-appropriate positive guidance. They understand the purposes, benefits and uses of assessment, including observation, as a way to understand children, as well as for evaluation and accountability. Professionals follow ethical practices when using a variety of age, developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate formal and informal observation and assessment practices to gather and share information on each child's skills, abilities, interests, and needs, birth through age 8*. They evaluate and modify their own roles and practices as part of an ongoing cycle of self-reflection.

Curriculum and Program Design (CPD)

Family childcare providers have broad knowledge of appropriate learning contexts and developmentally appropriate, research-based curriculums that are designed for home child care settings with small, mixed-age groups of children birth through age 8*. They understand the importance of promoting children's cognitive and intellectual development through rich conversations, interactive book reading, and active exploration of children's interests in the world. Providers recognize and value the interdependence between children's relationships with others and their construction of knowledge. They view engaging children in authentic learning as an ongoing collaborative, dynamic professional endeavor. They take responsibility for planning and providing emerging, bias-free, integrated learning opportunities and resources that build on each child's current abilities and interests, and to expand competence in all developmental domains.

Interactions, Relationships, and Environments (IRE)

Family childcare providers use responsive strategies and interactions to build sensitive and effective relationships with children from birth through age 8* and their family members across a broad range of situations. They recognize the important teaching roles of the physical and social environments, and provide and support interactions that are nurturing, pleasant and intellectually stimulating. Within the context of warm, caring relationships, they foster children's healthy social and emotional development. Interactions and relationships in family child care environments are responsive to each child's abilities, interests, and needs, and reflect appreciation of family and community contexts.

Family Child Care Credential Content Areas (con't)

Family and Community Relationships (FCR)

Family childcare providers understand and value the critical role of positive, collaborative partnerships with families, colleagues, and community service agencies. They respect multiple perspectives and demonstrate integrity in conveying their own personal and professional perspectives and values. They use their knowledge of family and social systems to create reciprocal, productive interpersonal relationships that recognize and enhance the contributions of family, program, and community participants to the development, learning and well-being of children, birth through age 8*, and their families.

Personal and Professional Development (PPD)

Family childcare providers identify themselves as professionals and conduct themselves as members of a significant, expanding, and changing profession. Their professional attitudes evolve with experience, professional development, and advances in the profession. They know and value the history and contributions of the profession and its related fields. They are committed to continual self-improvement and ongoing reflection on their practices. They exemplify the ethical standards of early childhood education and take responsibility for their own values, choices and actions. They honor diversity in culture, language, beliefs and practices.

Advocacy (ADV)

Family childcare professionals ensure that the rights and needs of children and families within a community are promoted and upheld. They recognize the implications of local, state, and national trends and laws that affect the families of children, especially their access to high-quality care and education environments. They use experience, knowledge, and research to plan and work towards improvement within community, social, and political systems. They advocate on behalf of children and families by collaborating with other stakeholders.

Technology (TECH)

Family childcare professionals will understand how to evaluate and choose appropriate technology resources for a range of business, communication, and educational purposes. A critical responsibility is articulation of a clear policy on Internet safety, data security and privacy protection. Providers will stay current with technological applications to manage business functions and communicate with families. When making informed decisions about multiple electronic media, technology and toys, providers will consider what is age and developmentally appropriate, and what promotes learning. They limit children's overall time exposure, being careful to use virtual experiences to enhance but not to replace concrete materials and activities.

Business (BUS)

Family childcare providers identify themselves as professionals and conduct themselves as members of a significant, expanding, changing profession. Their professional attitudes evolve with experience, professional development, and advances in the profession. They honor diversity in cultures, values, and practices. They know and value the history and contributions of their profession and its related fields. They are committed to ongoing professional development, and continually reflect on and take responsibility for their own values, choices and actions. They advocate for children, birth through age 8*, and their families, and exemplify the ethical standards of their discipline in their profession in their personal and professional interactions and activities.

Family Childcare Environment Management (FCEM)

Family childcare providers develop and implement a plan and routines for space and material arrangement, in order to effectively meet the needs of both their professional business and the family life that coexist in the home. They recognize the special nature of the social environment of family child care – small groups with a wide range of ages, often including siblings, with many children in the program for several years – and consider these factors when building positive, effective relationships with children and families.

Technical Assistance Credential Content Areas

The foundation of a professional development system is the identification of knowledge and skills that ensure all professionals are highly qualified to nurture and support the development and learning of children and families. The Content Areas provide the framework to develop competencies that will guide levels of education, training and role responsibilities. The seven Content Areas listed below represent key areas of knowledge that inform professionals who work with children and families.

Human Growth and Development (HGD)

Knowledge of human development and growth is at the core of professional practice. Professionals understand emerging principles, theories and knowledge of growth and development as a foundation for all aspects of their work with children, youth and families. They understand the mutual influences among different domains of development and the contexts in which individuals develop. These understandings provide the foundation for interactions with children, youth and families and for implementation of appropriate practices in programs.

Health, Safety, and Well-Being (HSW)

Physical health, mental health and safety are the foundations for development and learning in children and families. Professionals collaborate with families, health and other professionals to provide safe, healthy environments to foster the physical, cognitive, language and social-emotional development of children. They take responsibility for providing multiple opportunities for children and families to learn positive habits and decision-making skills that will ensure their health, safety and well-being.

Observation and Assessment (OA)

Knowledge gained from informal and formal observations and assessments provide an understanding about children and families, as well as the means for program development, evaluation and accountability. Professionals follow ethical practices when using a variety of age, developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate formal and informal research-based assessments to gather and share information about an individual's skills, abilities, interests and needs and to monitor an individual's progress. They use information gathered through assessments and knowledge to continually evaluate, reflect on and inform their approaches and program practices.

Curriculum and Program Design (CPD)

Program design and curriculum development are a collaborative and dynamic professional endeavor. Professionals have broad knowledge of appropriate program design, curriculum and/or goals for children and families. They plan and implement bias-sensitive, integrated programs that build on the abilities and interests of children and families and support their learning and development in all areas.

Interactions, Relationships, and Environments (IRE)

Professional relationships with children and families are built on thoughtful interactions across a broad range of environments. These environments are designed to be sensitive to bias and to individual and cultural differences, to support learning and development and to intellectually stimulate children and families. Through appropriate strategies and interactions, professionals build appropriate relationships with each child along with the families. The strategies professions use actively engage all individuals in their development and learning and support positive interactions and relationships among children and families.

Technical Assistance Credential Content Areas (con't)

Family and Community Relationships (FCR)

Positive, collaborative partnerships with families, colleagues, and community play a critical role in the development, learning and well-being of children. Professionals apply their knowledge of family and social systems to create reciprocal relationships that recognize and enhance the contributions of all participants. They respect multiple perspectives and demonstrate integrity in conveying their own personal and professional perspectives and values.

Personal and Professional Development (PPD)

Personal and professional development provides the foundation for best practices when working with children and families. Professionals are committed to ongoing development and continually reflect on and take responsibility for their own values, choices and actions. They honor diversity in cultures, beliefs and practices and advocate for children and families. They demonstrate the highest standard of individual conduct, personal accountability, trustworthiness, integrity, fairness, consideration of the rights of others and the highest principles of good business practices and relationships.



1226 Towanda Plaza | Bloomington, Illinois 61701 | Telephone: (866) 697-8278 | www.ilgateways.com

Gateways to Opportunity is administered through Inccrra and funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services Bureau of Child Care and Development, the McCormick Foundation, and Grand Victoria Foundation. Gateways to Opportunity, the arch logo and Illinois Professional Development System are registered trademarks of Inccrra. LZD37 © 2015 INCCRRA

Scenarios for Making a Training Eligible for a Credential

Scenario 1:

You have a training titled *Math and Science for Birth to Three*. It is an 8.5 hour training. You determine the Gateways to Opportunity Content Hours should be applied to the following areas:

7.5 hrs. (D) Curriculum and Program Design **1 hr.** (E) Interactions, Relationships and Environments

Note: There are at least 7.5 hours in one content area.

After review, it is determined that the credential breakouts are:

ECE Credential: 1/2 point in Curriculum or Program Design

- OR -

Infant Toddler Credential: 1/2 point in Curriculum or Program Design

Scenario 2:

You have a series training titled *Advanced Family Child Care*. It is a 14 hour training. **Currently**, it is broken out into the following Gateways to Opportunity Content Areas:

7.5 hrs. (A) Human Growth and Development **6.5 hrs.** (G) Personal and Professional Development

This training may already count toward a credential in the area of Human Growth and Development, but you would like to have it considered for both content areas. In order to make your training eligible to count toward a credential in two content areas, you need to have 7.5 hours in each content area. You discover a 30 minute video clip showing a home provider speaking with the parents of children in her care and decide to add that to the training. You also opt to include a worksheet that includes a resource list for home providers to fill in missing information during the class. Each activity adds another 30 minutes. The training is now 15 hours in length.

Now, you determine the Gateways to Opportunity Content Hours should be applied to the following areas:

7.5 hrs. (A) Human Growth and Development **7.5 hrs.** (G) Personal and Professional Development

After review, it is determined that the credential breakouts are:

ECE Credential: 1/2 point in Curriculum or Program Design

- AND -

1/2 point in Personal and Professional Development