

Professional development is an important part of Quality First participation to support knowledgeable educators in providing quality care to children ages birth to five. The opportunity to engage in professional development offers continuous learning for anyone working in the field of early education. Growing in knowledge and developing new skills based on the most recent research and standards of best practice is beneficial to all staff and children. There are a variety of ways in which professional development can be offered based on program goals, staff qualifications, unique needs and availability.

The State of Arizona through its various agencies has a wealth of resources available to you as an early childhood professional in your work with young children. Quality First, through First Things First, partners with these state agencies in providing documentation to guide your practice.

The following tools are available to you free of charge and are excellent sources of information for you and your program to establish best practices in your work with the children you serve. Trainings for all three of these resources are now available online and free of charge. Please visit the Arizona Department of Education website, <http://www.azed.gov/ece/> for more information.

### **Arizona's Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines**

Arizona's Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines are part of a continuum of early learning guidelines that provide a framework for understanding and communicating a common set of developmentally appropriate expectations for young children, presented within a context of shared responsibility and accountability for helping young children meet these expectations. Specifically, these guidelines describe expectations about what infants and toddlers should know and do across multiple domains of development during specific age ranges, as well as what adults can do to support children's optimal learning and development. (Click on the link below to access these Guidelines.)

<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=54efdb1e1130c00eb465d5bc>

### **Arizona Early Learning Standards**

The Arizona Early Learning Standards have been developed to provide a framework for the planning of quality learning experiences for all children three to five years of age. The standards cover a broad range of skill

development and provide a useful instructional foundation for children from diverse backgrounds and with diverse abilities. The standards are intended for use by all those who work with young children in any early care and education setting in urban, rural and tribal communities. (Click on the link below to access these Standards.)

<https://cms.azed.gov/home/GetDocumentFile?id=5ba5462a1dcb2507f8788ea1>

### **Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: Birth Through Kindergarten**

The Program Guidelines for High Quality Early Education: Birth through Kindergarten does not contain a list of requirements, but rather a set of recommended practices for programs to use as they strive for excellence in the care and education of young children throughout Arizona. This document is intended to provide guidance by delineating quality and providing a set of indicators that concretely describe what a program will look like when providing high quality early care and education for children birth through age six. (Click on the link below to access these Guidelines.)

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