



MAINE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CREDENTIAL INFORMATION PACKET

*This manual was developed as a collaborative effort of
Maine Roads to Quality the Early Childhood Division of
the Department of Health and Human Services*

Revised 2025

Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network
PO Box 9300 | Portland, ME 04104-9300
1-888-900-0055

<https://mrtq.org>



Table of Contents

Acknowledgments.....	2
Section 1: Purpose and History	3
Section 2: Overview of the Credential Process.....	5
Section 3: Eligibility Requirements	9
Section 4: Training Descriptions.....	10
Section 5: The Portfolio	12
Section 6: Reference Letters	22
Section 7: The Interview.....	23
Appendix A: Glossary of Terms	23
Appendix B: Growing Ideas Tipsheet – Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families.....	28
Appendix C: Maine Technical Assistance Credential Application.....	32
Appendix D: Alternative Options for Training/Education	35
Appendix E: Request for Letter of Recommendation	36
Appendix F: Forms and Resources	38
Appendix G: Contributors	55
Appendix G: Authenticity Statement	56



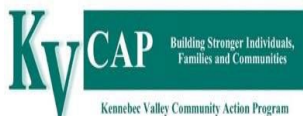


Acknowledgments

The Maine **Technical Assistance Credential** was developed with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership Grant to grantee Kennebec Valley Community Action Program.

Other collaborators include Educare Central Maine; Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network with funding from the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services, Child Care Development Block Grant; and the University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Grant No. 90DD0005.

Materials may be copied and shared for non-commercial purposes with proper attribution. Materials may not be modified or distributed (i.e., no derivative works) for commercial purposes.



Section 1: Purpose and History

Informed by implementation science research, more emphasis has been placed on the development of technical assistance supports such as mentoring, coaching, consultation and peer-to-peer networks. It is recognized that the best professional development provides practitioners with coherent, interrelated, and continuous learning activities that are aligned with each other and with evidence-based practices.¹ Given the importance of technical assistance for improving the quality of early care and education, it is imperative that the technical assistance approaches and roles are clearly defined and measured.

In 2017, Maine responded by developing a set of competencies to ensure that all Technical Assistance (TA) professionals have a common core of knowledge, skills, and dispositions as they support TA partners' progress to higher levels of quality. When TA professionals have appropriate knowledge and experience in specific subject matter, an understanding of adult learning, and both skills and knowledge in technical assistance pedagogy, they can more effectively impact positive change.

Taking a systems approach to building an integrated, cross-sector response to technical assistance, Maine stakeholders adopted the 2011 NAEYC / NACCRRA TA definitions² to create the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce³. Maine's TA competencies were developed with funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership Grant to grantee Kennebec Valley Community Action Program. Other collaborators include Educare Central Maine, Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network and the University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. The process of developing the competencies included involvement from dedicated early care and education professionals from many systems such as the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services, Maine Department of Education, Child Development Services, Maine Families, and Head Start.

The product contributors played key roles in the development and field testing of these competencies. For more information, please refer to the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Appendix C.

¹ Warren, L., & Ramming, A. (2016, April). High quality early childhood professional development systems: Helping every child to be successful. Framingham, MA: Early Childhood Associates, Inc.

² Early Childhood Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance Glossary, 2011. National Association for the Education of Young Children & National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies. Retrieved from http://www.naeyc.org/GlossaryTraining_TA.pdf.

³ Labas, L., Lavalley, S., Downs, J., & Gallik, P. (Eds.). (2017). Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce. Orono: University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies.



Maine's TA Competencies are intended to be used by all TA professionals working in early care and education and other related fields in Maine. These competencies are being used to inform the development of a Maine Technical Assistance Credential. The Competency Areas for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential expand upon those required in all Maine Credentials (see Section 2) to include specific skills and abilities required of TA professionals in the fields of early care and education.

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential is awarded to TA professionals who act as a mentor, coach, consultant and/or Peer-to-Peer Network facilitator who can document and demonstrate the specific knowledge, training, experience and professionalism required by the Credential.



Section 2: Overview of the Credential Process

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential is appropriate for experienced Technical Assistance Professionals (TA professionals) who provide targeted and customized supports to recipients of TA services through specific strategies or approaches, such as mentoring, coaching, consultation, and facilitation of peer-to-peer networks. The Technical Assistance (TA) partner is the recipient of technical assistance services provided by a TA professional. The term TA partner represents a variety of professional roles as well as families. For this document, the terms of TA professional and TA partner will be used throughout.

This section provides an overview of the components of the Maine Technical Assistance Credential, including the requirements, application process, and available supports.

1) All Maine Credentials are based upon competencies derived from the following

Core Knowledge Areas:

- a. Child development
- b. Healthy and safe environments
- c. Relationships with families
- d. Guidance
- e. Observation and assessment
- f. Developmentally appropriate practice
- g. Individual and cultural diversity
- h. Business and professional development

2) The Maine Technical Assistance Credential includes competencies designed to reflect the skills and abilities specific to those in mentoring, coaching, consultation, and peer-to-peer network facilitation roles in the field of early care and education (serving prenatal through age 8) in Maine. These additional competencies are incorporated into the Maine Technical Assistance Credential requirements. The TA Competencies are:

Competency Area 1: Professionalism

- a. Legal Requirements and Ethical Practices
- b. Responsibilities and Boundaries
- c. Maintaining Documentation for Timely and Accurate Reporting
- d. Role as Change Agent
- e. Self-reflection and Assessment of Knowledge and Skills
- f. Individual Professional Plan Development and Implementation
- g. Current Research and Best Practice
- h. Advocacy





Competency Area 2: Adult Learning Principles

- a. Adult Learning Principles
- b. Effective Learning Environment
- c. Adapting to TA Partner Styles and Needs

Competency Area 3: Building Relationships

- a. Trust with a TA Partner
- b. Clear Agreements
- c. Collaborative Problem-Solving/Conflict Resolution
- d. Ongoing Feedback
- e. Effective Communication

Competency Area 4: The Technical Assistance Process

- a. Stages of Technical Assistance
- b. Gathering Information and Conducting Assessments
- c. Goal Setting and Action Planning
- d. Supporting TA Partner to Implement and Evaluate the TA Plan
 - o Mentoring
 - o Coaching
 - o Consultation
 - o Peer-To-Peer Networks
 - o Evaluating TA Plan and Ending The TA

Competency Area 5: Systems Knowledge

- a. Early Childhood Systems' Components
- b. Regulation and Standards
- c. Resource and Referral

3) To earn the Maine Technical Assistance Credential, Applicants must:

- a. Meet the formal education, experience, and training requirements
- b. Be active members of the Maine Roads to Quality Registry
- c. Submit a completed on-line application:
 - i. Apply On-line through the Registry
 - ii. Make an online credit/debit card payment of \$75 through the Registry*
- d. Demonstrate completion of hours of required training
- e. Submit a completed electronic portfolio that demonstrates the required competencies to: mrtq.credentials@maine.edu
- f. Participate in an interview with a MRTQ PDN staff member or designee

**Arrangements can be made to submit a paper application, portfolio, references or surveys and/or the ability to submit check or money order by contacting <https://www.mrtq.org/mainecredentials/Evaluation>*

- g. Meet all education, experience, and training requirements



- h. Successfully create and complete a TA Credential Portfolio
- i. Successfully document training/education/experience hours
- j. Successfully complete a TA Credential interview

4) Decisions on awarding the Maine Technical Assistance Credential will be made by the MRTQ PDN Credential Review Team, with initial credentials being awarded for three years.

The Credential Review Team (CRT) meets on a quarterly basis to review applications.
The schedule for review is:

Application received by	Reviewed during	Applicant notified of CRT's decision
January 15 th	January - February	February 28 th
April 15 th	April - May	May 31 st
July 15 th	July - August	August 31 st
October 15 th	October - November	November 30 th

- Applicants with completed and approved materials will be contacted to schedule an interview (in person or virtual options available)
- Applicants are given **30 business days** to revise any Portfolio entry that does not demonstrate competency and/or to submit missing materials.
- Credential decisions may be appealed if the awarding of a Maine Technical Assistance Credential is denied; Applicants may submit an appeal in writing to MRTQ PDN at mrtq.credentials@maine.edu

5) The Maine Technical Assistance Credential must be renewed by documenting:

- Completion of a 3.0 credit college course **OR** 45 contact hours of training covering a topic related to any of the above Technical Assistance Competencies.
- Initial credentials must be renewed after three years; subsequent renewals will be required every five years.
- Complete information and the Maine Technical Assistance Credential Renewal Application are available on the MRTQ PDN website.

6) MRTQ PDN has the following supports available for practitioners:

- Portfolio Development Cohorts will be available for practitioners to receive support from a facilitator and peers; cohorts generally involve participation in



monthly meetings (either video conference or face-to-face) and individualized assistance from the facilitator on completing the Portfolio and preparing for the interview.

- Individualized consultation is also available to practitioners pursuing the Maine Technical Assistance Credential.

More information about each of these steps is available in the applicable section of this information packet.





Section 3: Eligibility Requirements

Prior to applying for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential, all Applicants must provide evidence of completion of educational, training, and work experience requirements.

Registry Membership

All Applicants for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential must be active members of Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network (MRTQ PDN.)

Educational Requirements

Applicants must:

- Be at least 21 years of age
- Have at least a Baccalaureate degree in education or related field.

Training Requirements

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential requires a minimum of 105 hours of specific Maine Roads to Quality Training. *Alternative options are listed in Appendix D.*

Within **ten** years of the date of application, Applicants must have completed the following MRTQ PDN Core Knowledge trainings:

- Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners (18 hours)
- Foundations of Relationship Based Technical Assistance (18 hours)
- Foundations of Mentoring (15 hours)
- Foundations of Coaching (15 hours)
- Foundations of Collaborative Consultation (15 hours)
- Foundations of Peer-to-Peer Networks (15 hours)
- Your Professional Development Portfolio (9 hours)

Complete training descriptions are listed in Section 4 of this packet

Work Experience Requirements

Applicants must document in their resume:

- 2,000 hours (equivalent to approximately 1 year) providing technical assistance (as a mentor, coach, consultant, or peer-to-peer network facilitator) within the last 5 years **and**,
- At least 2 years (equivalent to 4,000 hours) of experience working in a specific area of expertise or discipline within the last 5 years.

Alternative pathways for meeting eligibility requirements are considered by MRTQ PDN on an individual basis. Please see Appendix D for a complete description.

To help organize and track progress, use the following checklist which has all the eligibility requirements for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential. *This checklist is for your use and does not need to be included in your Portfolio.*



MAINE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CREDENTIAL



The Maine Technical Assistance Credential requires a minimum of 105 hours of specific Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network Training.

Alternative options are listed in Appendix D.

For a complete listing of current required training descriptions for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential, by visiting <https://www.mrtq.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/MRTQ-Training-Catalog-2024.pdf>

Additionally, if you have taken alternative training that you believe is comparable with the required MRTQ PDN training, or took the MRTQ PDN required training more than ten years ago, you are welcome to apply for the training to be waived by using this link [Alternative Pathway for Credentials](#) or by visiting: https://usouthmaine.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1FhWcMvR2QxqOfs

Note: You must make a separate request for each individual training. Typically, we don't waive more than one or two MRTQ PDN trainings per credential.

Training information, including the schedule and registration, can be found in MRTQ PDN's Statewide Online link here: [Training Calendar](#) or by visiting <https://ececaldarmaine.org/public/main.aspx>



Section 5: The Portfolio

Applicants for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential will create an electronic portfolio to demonstrate their competence by reflecting on their experiences as a TA professional and their experiences completing the training and building skills and knowledge for the credential. The Applicant may be asked to include multimedia components, such as video or audio recordings or photographs. Special permission is required if a paper Portfolio is submitted. (Note: The creation and requirements for electronic portfolios are covered in the training, *Your Professional Development Portfolio*).

Please note:

- Because the TA Credential addresses all four of the technical assistance roles (mentor, coach, consultant and peer-to-peer network facilitator), some of the requests for evidence in a competency area may be related to all the TA roles/ approaches or you may give an example from one of the roles or your primary role.
- It is the **Applicant's** responsibility to SAVE and organize all relevant assignments from the required training! Especially for any online training, nothing is saved by the instructor or by MRTQ PDN – it is the Applicant's responsibility to keep and organize all work. It is recommended that Applicants save electronic versions of their work to facilitate updating materials before adding them to the final Portfolio.
- All training and application materials for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential should utilize respectful "person-first" language. (See the following resource for additional information about using "person-first" language: [First-Person Usage in Academic Writing](#))
- The Portfolio is a professional document and should be clear, legible, and with correct spelling and grammar. Remember to include citations for all relevant sources.
- Whenever utilizing information from another source, it is important to remember to include citations. Reflections and descriptions written in response to prompts for evidence in different Competency Areas must reflect the Applicant's own work and views. It is fine (and can be helpful in making a point) to include relevant information from reliable sources (websites, journals, books, etc.), but citations giving credit to the author(s) and/or source(s) must be included. For guidance on using citations, refer to the [Online Writing Lab at Purdue University for Research and Citation Resources](#).
- Children, families, and professionals should remain anonymous to maintain professional confidentiality. **If confidentiality is violated, evidence for that competency area will not be accepted and the Portfolio will be returned**



to the Applicant for correction. Some options to maintain confidentiality are:

- Changing the names of children, families and/ or professionals, or simply use only initials
- Including a written permission form signed by the parents or guardians of any children shown in photographs or video
- Including a written permission form signed by the individual professional shown in photographs or video.
- Using photos or videos that do not show a child's, parent's and/or professional's face, or using stickers to obscure their identity
- Redacting (blacking out) a child, family and/ or professional's name or identifying information from any scanned text.
- For more information regarding confidentiality, Applicants can review the Growing Ideas Tipsheet – Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families, included in Appendix B.

Portfolio Composition

An Applicant's Portfolio should be divided into two sections: Introduction and Competency Areas. The sections are outlined below.

Section 1: The Introduction

All Portfolios must include:

- a. The Applicant's Personal Philosophy Statement describing their approach to relationship-based technical assistance in early care and education settings (maximum of one page)
- b. The Applicant's MRTQ PDN Professional Development Profile
- c. Resume (maximum of two pages)
- d. Authenticity Statement (Appendix G)

Section 2: Competency Areas

In this section, the Applicant will present evidence of competency in each of the five competency areas: Professionalism, Principles of Adult Learning, Building Relationships, the Technical Assistance Process, and Systems Knowledge. The outline below should guide the writing and presentation of this section.

Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence for Portfolio
A. Professionalism The conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize a person in a work setting or profession. Effective TA professionals know the applicable codes of ethical practices and standards of professionalism and apply them appropriately in their TA practice.	A. Legal Requirements and Ethical Practices B. Responsibilities and Boundaries C. Maintaining Documentation for Timely and Accurate Reporting D. Role as Change Agent E. Self-reflection F. Assessment of Knowledge and Skills G. Individual Professional Plan Development and Implementation H. Current Research and Best Practice	NOTE: These questions are for guidance only. A.1. Do principles guide you in your work? How do you meet TA partners "where they are" in implementing change? What achievement best exemplifies your professionalism in the field? A.2. Code of Ethical Conduct Supplement of Early Childhood Adult Educators A.4. Relationship-Based TA is based on eliciting change	A.1. Write a competency statement of at least 500 words describing how you demonstrate professionalism in your role as a Technical Assistance professional. The statement should include: - Your understanding of professionalism - Why this competency area is important to the work you do with TA partners - Examples of how your practice reflects competence in this area. A.2. Describe - The key elements of the NAEYC Code of Ethics Supplement for Adult Educators in TA and comment on the importance of this document. Share: - How you have used the code in your work and when and how you share this information with your TA partner. When or if faced with an ethical dilemma, - What are the most important questions you asked yourself to help you solve it? - Include any paperwork, forms or resources you use to share information about this or another field-specific Code of Ethics when providing TA. A.3. Submit samples of blank forms or other artifacts that you use to maintain accurate documentation and record keeping (e.g. a sample of your TA record keeping system; copy of a monthly reporting form; screenshot of an electronic data collection tool). A.4. Describe the areas of consideration regarding readiness. Include: - What you look for when assessing readiness within these areas (the signs of readiness) and; - What you do to support your TA partners through a change process - If you use a readiness for change tool, please include this as well A.5. Complete the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Check Write a reflection statement that focuses on Competency Area 1: Professionalism and includes: - What you learned about your current skills in this competency area; - What you will do with this information, and, - How will you do it?

Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence for Portfolio
B. Principles of Adult Learning Effective TA professionals ensure success by incorporating Adult Learning principles. They use approaches to learning that are solution-oriented and collaborative rather than merely didactic; they also emphasize equality between the TA professional and the TA partner.	I. Advocacy A. Adult Learning Principles B. Effective Learning Environment C. Adapting to Participant Styles and Needs	Building partnerships require flexibility and individualization B1. Principles of Adult Learning	B.1. Pick one of the six Principles of Adult Learning. Submit a written response to the following questions: - What would you be doing to ensure that you consider this principle as you approach your work with a TA partner? - What would it look like? What would it sound like? What might it feel like? B.2. Submit an activity, tool, or strategy you've used to learn about your TA partner(s) learning style. Share what you did and how that supported (or not) your work together. B.3. Describe a time or the process you used to adjust and/or make accommodations to meet the learning needs of your TA partner(s). Your response should include: - The type of diversity that the TA partner(s) presented - How you ensured that your TA partner's style or needs would be accommodated - The effectiveness of your response - What you learned and will continue to do or might do differently next time.
	A. Trust with a TA Partner B. Clear Agreements C. Collaborative Problem-Solving/Conflict Resolution D. Ongoing Feedback E. Effective Communication	A consultative stance is a relational, learner-focused approach Key Elements of Consultative Stance and Y Chart	C.1. Think about what it means to be aware of and maintain a professional demeanor or stance. Choose one of the tenets and share how this principle looks, sounds and feels when you are implementing this within your practice. Use the Tenets of Consultative Stance Y Chart to record and submit your responses. C.2. Submit a sample partnership or Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) or Partnership Agreement. (If completed, remove the names and/or identifying information.) C.3. Submit a video, no longer than 10 minutes, introducing yourself to a new TA partner. This could be a "mock" partner. This can be a role-play with someone you know who has agreed to be playing the role of your TA partner for the purpose of completing this assignment. The purpose is to show how you would introduce yourself and your role as you start the TA process. Briefly reflect through a written statement on the video recording process of introducing yourself

Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence for Portfolio
trust; to be present with the TA partner in the moment, employing a style that is open, flexible and confident.		C.7 Alliance building strategies are: Specific, observable cultivate positive relationships, require intentionality C.7. Day in the Life Vignette Alliance Building Strategies Checklist	- Highlight any awareness that comes to mind relevant to your role as a TA professional. C.4. Choose ONE of the following: - Share a tool or resource you use to support problem-solving and your rationale - Share a tool or resource you use to navigate conflicts/ disagreements. - Share a tool or resource you use to understand others' perspectives. Share a reflection that includes the following: - A brief description of your tool or resource - Why you chose this example - The impact this tool or resource has on you and/or your TA work 4-5 sentences to describe what you learned about the use of the tool or resource, and how you have applied the knowledge you gained. C.5. Create or provide a written communication that shares follow-up feedback when providing TA (e.g. after an on-site observation, or as a facilitator in a Communities of Practice (CoP) or Cohort). Highlight or make note of the types of feedback you provided, such as constructive or supportive feedback. C.6. Submit a sampling of questions you generally ask that communicate that you have heard what your TA partner said but do not understand what was said and encourages your TA partner to clarify their thinking. C.7. Review the <i>Day in the Life Vignette</i> and the <i>Alliance Building Strategies Checklist</i> - As you review the vignette, check off the strategies you noticed the consultant using. - When you have completed your review, write a reflection about the alliance building strategies used during this consultation. - Be specific about the examples you identified as well as your overall reflection about this consultant's ability to build positive relationships and what you took away from reading this vignette
D. The Technical Assistance Process	A. Stages of Technical Assistance B. Assistance C. Gathering Information and	D.1 Technical Assistance Match Game	D.1. Submit your completed <i>Technical Assistance Match Game</i> by selecting the TA role that matches the request and describing how you made your decision. D.2. Write a competency statement of at least 500 words to describe your understanding of the TA framework, why and how this competency area is important to

Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence for Portfolio
Effective technical assistance requires an intentional, systematic approach to support meaningful change toward improved program quality. Effective TA professionals know the TA stages and follow an established TA framework while appropriately adjusting the process to be meaningful and applicable to the primary TA strategy used. TA professionals know and apply varied TA strategies to address intended outcomes.	Conducting Assessments D. Goal Setting and Action Planning E. Supporting TA Partner to Implement and Evaluate the TA Plan • Mentoring • Coaching • Consultation • Peer-To-Peer Networks G. Evaluating TA Plan and Ending the TA	D.4 Role- play examples could be: Coach in a feedback session with a Coachee reviewing CLASS observation results Consultant at an on-site visit discussing the request for consultation related to a child with challenging behaviors CoP Facilitator guiding a discussion to generate ideas for the next meeting Mentor reviewing the Mentee's activities on her plan D.4. Communication Strategies Observation Checklist D.5. Examples may be: CoP survey tool A particular assessment tool such as the NAEYC accreditation tool	the work you do with TA partners. Include examples of how and what you share about the process and stages of TA with your TA partner. D.3. Pick one of the scenarios from the “<i>What If</i>” Scenarios located in Appendix F. Write a reflective statement in response to the scenario by answering the following questions: • Why did you choose this scenario? • What do you do? • How might you respond? D.4. This is a video role-play assignment. The purpose of this assignment is for the applicant to demonstrate the use of effective communication skills, analyze their use of the skills and reflect on their rating and what was learned. To complete this activity: • Begin by taking a video of yourself in a session with a TA Partner • The video should be no longer than 15-20 minutes. • As the applicant, you are TA professional, and your selected partner is the “pretend” TA Partner. • You are interacting with your TA partner during a scheduled session. After completing the video, watch it using the <i>Communication Strategies Checklist</i> as a guide to analyze your use of effective communication skills. To complete this assignment, write a brief response about your assessment of your use of these practices and what you learned from doing and viewing the video including: • Examples of what practices you used; • Areas you feel could be enhanced; • Strategies you can put into place to strengthen identified practices. Submit the video sample, and the completed <i>Communication Strategies Observation Checklist</i> integrating your reflection in the NOTES sections on the form. D.5. Submit a copy of an assessment tool that you have used in your TA practice to gather information to assist you and your TA partner(s) to identify the TA goal and priorities

Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence for Portfolio
			D.6. Submit a goal using the SMART goal writing framework. Use a goal from: • one of your TA plans OR • a goal you identified from your completed Technical Assistance Competencies • for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment <u>Technical Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Checklist.</u> Write a brief reflection about your confidence and competency in writing goals. • Include where you feel you are strong and where you are more challenged. • Include a tool or resource you use to support the development of goal setting and action planning with a TA partner. D.7. Even under the best circumstances, facilitators can face challenges. Below are some common facilitation situations you may have or will face when working with peer learning groups or TA partners. Submit a written description of your strategies for managing these 5 challenges. • When one person dominates. • When someone breaks the confidentiality of the group. • When no one is talking. • When someone is constantly negative or antagonistic, or presenting a hostile demeanor. • If a sub-group or clique forms.
E. Systems Knowledge Effective TA professionals have a general knowledge of the components of a comprehensive Early Childhood System to include, but not be	A. Early Childhood Systems' Components B. Regulations and Standards C. Resource and Referral	E.1. <u>Scenario: Too Much of a Good Thing</u>	E.1. Create or submit a copy of a blank TA evaluation form. This can be for any of the TA approaches or for TA in general. • Review the <i>Scenario: Too Much of a Good Thing</i> Submit a written description of your response to this scenario. • As one of the consultants in this program, what would be your approach to supporting a TA partner when you discover there are multiple TA Professionals involved? • Describe how you might handle this situation. • Provide any tools or work samples you have used or would use to better coordinate TA when there are many disciplines providing

Competency Area	Indicator of Quality Practice	Prompts for Your Thinking	Evidence for Portfolio
limited to, programs and agencies that deliver services, applicable laws, rules, regulations, standards and professional development opportunities, as well as workforce certification and licensure requirements. The TA professional should know where to refer the TA partner for additional support and assist the TA partner in locating or accessing additional resources, when needed.		E.2. Tools I Use Template	these services. E.2. Submit a completed <i>Tools I Use template</i> listing the key resources from your particular early childhood setting or sector. These resources are ones you would refer to and use with your TA partner to support accurate compliance with laws, regulations, and rules and the standards, evidence-based practices and curricula tools that help guide the development of the TA plan. E.3. Revisit Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Checklist you completed. Write a reflection statement that focuses on Competency Area 5: Systems Knowledge that includes: • What you learned about your current skills in this competency area; • What you will do with this information and, • How will you do it?



Maine Technical Assistance Credential Portfolio Checklist	
Component	Date Completed
Section 1: Introduction	
Personal Philosophy Statement	
Résumé	
Professional Development Profile	
Authenticity Statement	
Section 2: Competency Areas and Evidence	
A. Professionalism ☐ Competency statement ☐ Description of key elements of the NAEYC Code of Ethics Supplement for Adult Educators & examples of resources ☐ Examples of documentation and record keeping ☐ Description of areas of consideration regarding readiness ☐ Completion of the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Checklist and written a reflection statement that focuses on Competency Area I: Professionalism	
B. Adult Learning Principles ☐ Description of Adult Learning Principle ☐ Example of a resource used to learn about a TA partner ☐ Description of making an accommodation	
C. Building Relationships ☐ Completion of the Tenets of Consultation Y Chart ☐ Example of a sample partnership agreement or MOA ☐ Submission of a Video – Introducing yourself to a TA partner ☐ Choose ONE – Example of a tool or resource (1-problem solving; 2-conflict management; 3-understanding perspectives) ☐ Example of written communication providing feedback ☐ Sampling of questions ☐ Completion of the scenario activity and reflection statement on the Alliance Building Strategies	
D. The Technical Assistance Process ☐ Completion of the TA Roles Match Game ☐ Competency statement – Understanding of TA Framework ☐ Reflection statement on a "What If" scenario ☐ Submission of a Video/Communications checklist – Working with a TA partner ☐ Example of assessment tools ☐ Goal-setting	



☐ Description of strategies for five TA challenges	
E. Systems Knowledge	
☐ Written description of the scenario "Too Much of a Good Thing" ☐ Completed "Tools I Use" template ☐ TA Competencies Checklist Reflection	
Notes/Questions/Reminders:	



Section 6: Reference Letters

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential application includes the submission of three references, with a minimum of one TA partner recommendation. The references should be completed electronically with people who are familiar with the Applicant's character, skills, abilities, and experience as a technical assistance professional (mentor, coach, consultant, or peer-to-peer network facilitator).

References are submitted electronically using the link below:

[Reference Form – Maine Technical Assistance Credential](#)

Appendix E includes a sample Reference Form. We encourage the Applicant to share the link with those from whom they are requesting a reference from. If an applicant prefers, they can submit the references in paper by mail at the address listed on the form. The application won't be considered complete until all three references have been received by MRTQ PDN.



Section 7: The Interview

Upon successful completion of the Portfolio, an interview with an MRTQ PDN staff person or designee will be scheduled. Throughout the interview, Applicants will show how they have integrated the knowledge gained through the Maine Technical Assistance Credential process. The interview will provide an opportunity for the Applicant to:

- Respond to any questions that the review committee may have concerning the Applicant's portfolio.
- Expand on the portfolio submission by responding to a series of additional questions and allowing the Applicant to provide additional information that they can demonstrate the TA competencies specific to the skills and abilities required of TA professionals in the field of early care and education.
- Review with the MRTQ PDN staff (or designee) the credentialing process and to assure that the credential reflects the defined purpose and scope of the Maine Technical Assistance Credential.

The interview will be scheduled through a video conference for a mutually convenient time and will last approximately one hour.

The Applicant will receive a copy of the interview questions at least five business days in advance of the interview.

Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; a federal civil rights law designed to provide equal opportunity for qualified individuals with disabilities, including students
Appeal Procedure	The process by which an Applicant can respond to the decision of the Credential Review Team
Applicant	Any person in the process of meeting the requirements for any of the Maine Credentials
Coaching	A relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient(s); coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal setting for an individual or group (Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce, 2017)
Cohort	Group whose members share a significant experience at a certain period of time or have one or more similar characteristics; in this case, a group of professionals working towards a Maine Credential with guidance from a facilitator



Cohort Application	Application to be a member of a MRTQ PDN Credential Cohort, not to be confused with the application for a Maine Credential
Competency	Measurable skills, knowledge, dispositions, and abilities that practitioners working with children and/or youth need to facilitate learning and development linked to relevant guidelines or standards
Competency Area	Label to organize the knowledge, skills, and dispositions (competencies) that collectively define an essential component of effective, high- quality professional practices
Consultation	A collaborative, problem-solving process between an external consultant with specific expertise and adult learning knowledge and skills, and an individual or group from one program or organization. Consultation facilitates the assessment and resolution of an issue-specific concern—a program-/organizational-, staff-, or child-/family-related issue—or addresses a specific topic.
Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)	A process in which programs use data to identify areas of needed improvement and achieve program goals, participant satisfaction, and positive outcomes
Credential	Documents certifying an individual has met a defined set of requirements established by the grantor of the credential; usually include knowledge and skills and may include demonstrations of competence through a portfolio
Cultural Competency	The ability to interact effectively with people of different cultures; ensures that the needs of all community members are addressed (Cultural Competency Glossary)
Developmentally Appropriate Practice	Learning environment and teaching strategies that are based on current theories and research about how young children learn and develop and promote the optimum growth and development of children
DHHS OCFS	Maine’s Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services
Evaluation Tools	Include surveys, questionnaires, focus groups; program evaluation is a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about projects, policies and programs, particularly about their effectiveness and efficiency
Evidence-Based Practices	Approaches and techniques supported by research findings and/or demonstrated to be effective through examination of and reflection on current and past practices
Family Engagement Activities	Meaningful activities and experiences that demonstrate reciprocal relationships between families and early childhood and/or out-of-school time program staff on behalf of children’s learning and development; effective family engagement activities are fully inclusive of all family members and reinforce learning in multiple settings



IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; an education act to provide federal financial assistance to State and local education agencies to guarantee special education and related services to eligible children with disabilities
Indicator of Quality Practice	An identified marker or benchmark that outlines methods that are based on theories and current research for effective practices that support optimal learning and development of children and youth
Individualized Support	MRTQ PDN is committed to providing access to all offering participants, including those with disabilities, those who need interpretation or translation, and those who may be experiencing unexpected life events. The creation of equitable opportunities for offering participants requires a coordinated and collaborative effort between the participant and the MRTQ PDN staff
Licensing	Requirements or regulations necessary for a provider to legally operate child care services in a State or locality, including registration requirements established under State, local, or Tribal law
Mentoring	A relationship-based process between colleagues of similar professional roles, with a more-experienced individual with adult learning knowledge and skill, the mentor, providing guidance and example to the less experienced protégé mentee; intended to increase an individual's personal or professional capacity, resulting in greater professional effectiveness (Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce, 2017)
MRTQ Core Knowledge Training	Denotes a standardized set of curricula covering the following eight core knowledge areas: 1. Healthy, safe environments 2. Child development 3. Developmentally appropriate practice 4. Observation and assessment 5. Guidance 6. Relationships with families 7. Individual and cultural diversity 8. Business and professional development Delivered by instructors with a Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education (or a closely related field) who have taken additional training regarding teaching adult learners and offers a consistent body of knowledge regarding best practices in early childhood education and out-of-school time for both new and experienced practitioners

MRTQ PDN	Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network provides professional development services for early childhood and out-of-school time professionals throughout Maine
MRTQ Registry	The early childhood and out-of-school time professional recognition system for Maine; tracks work experience, training, and education
NAEYC	National Association for the Education of Young Children
NAEYC Code of Ethics	A professional Code of Ethics for Early Care and Education Professionals serving children birth to eight NAEYC Code of Ethics and Statement of Commitment
On-site Observer	Trained early childhood and/or out-of-school time professional who visits an Applicant at their place of employment to assess mastery of Competencies written into the applicable Maine Credential.
On-site Observation Tool	Instrument designed to assess a professional's progress toward mastering the Competencies of the applicable Maine Credential
Out-of-School Time Settings	Any of an array of programs that provide children and youth with a range of supervised activities designed to encourage learning and development outside of the typical school day
Peer-to-Peer Networks	Foster the development of relationship-based learning and support communities among colleagues, often in like roles. Peer-to-peer TA is based on the premise that a significant expert knowledge base exists in the field and that peers who have solved challenges on the ground have developed tools and strategies that can be shared with their colleagues.
Person-First Language	Typically used to depict a clear and positive image when discussing any/all people and represents more respectful and more accurate ways of communicating; people with disabilities are not their diagnoses or disabilities - they are people (e.g., a child with special needs is not a "special-needs child") (Aleman 1991; Snow 2001)
Portfolio	A collection of work assembled in an approved format to demonstrate and document knowledge and skills; it is a vehicle for tracking development, assessing changes in philosophy, and sharing beliefs with others in a clear way
Reflective Practice	The process of thoughtfully considering one's thoughts, feelings, actions, and experiences when applying knowledge to practice
Rising Stars for ME (RSM)	RSM is a five-star program designed to increase awareness of the importance of quality early childhood and out-of-school time experiences. Rising Stars for ME has three goals: 1) to recognize early childhood and out-of-school time programs that meet standards of evidence-based quality practices; 2) to encourage and support programs to engage in continuous quality improvement efforts; and 3) to provide families with identifiable standards of quality



Stakeholder	Includes funders, program staff, administrators, program participants, families or clients, community leaders, collaborating agencies, and others with a direct or even indirect interest in program effectiveness
Technical Assistance (TA)	Provision of targeted and customized supports by (a) professional(s) with subject matter and adult learning knowledge and skills to develop or strengthen processes, knowledge application, or implementation of services by recipients
Technical Assistance Partner	The recipient of technical assistance services provided by a technical assistance professional.
Technical Assistance Professional	An individual who provides targeted and customized supports to recipients of TA services through specific strategies or approaches, such as mentoring, coaching, consultation, and peer-to-peer networks.





Appendix B: Growing Ideas Tipsheet – Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families



Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies

GROWING IDEAS

Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families

Care and education professionals routinely receive confidential information about children and families as part of their work. Maintaining confidentiality is important both legally and ethically.

What is confidentiality?

Confidentiality involves the treatment of information that an individual has shared in a relationship of trust. Confidential information might include personal details about the lives of children and families, and/or details such as names, addresses, phone numbers, birth dates, health, Individual Education Plans (IEP) and employment information.

What does it mean to maintain confidentiality?

- Conversations, written documents and information, including photos or media about a child or family should be kept private.
- No information about a child or family should be shared with anyone without the written consent of the child's family or legal guardian.

Please note: exceptions include mandated reporting of child abuse required by law, and health conditions when the public health department must be notified.

Why is maintaining confidentiality important?

- Maintaining confidentiality demonstrates respect, which can support the development of a trusting relationship needed for successful family partnerships.
- Confidentiality is a legal protection and assurance of families' right to privacy.
- Practicing confidentiality assures the safety of children and families. It





creates and maintains a reputation of high-quality standards for the professional and the child care program.

How can care and education professionals honor their legal and ethical obligation to maintain family privacy?

- Know laws, regulations, and guidelines on handling personal information.
- Do not give or receive records or other information about children or families without written permission from the parents or legal guardian.
- Understand that parental permission is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time.
- Develop an internal program policy that guides information sharing among program staff, and with outside agencies and consultants.

What procedures should be in place?

- Develop a parental consent for release form that gives the provider permission to share specific information about a child, such as an IEP, medical records, and/or observations.
- Informed consent means that when parents/guardians give consent to share information about their child, they understand why they are being asked to release these details, and the conditions that apply. Discuss parental consent for release forms carefully with parents/guardians.
- Program policies describe how child records are secured, such as in a locked cabinet, who can access them and under what circumstances they can be shared.

Discuss confidential information in private locations, not in open or shared spaces (hallways, staff rooms, parking lots) where conversations can be overheard.

Share policies regarding confidentiality practices

- Review and distribute policies related to confidentiality during orientation for families and staff. Review with staff yearly, at least.
- If questions about family privacy arise, identify who in the program staff families should consult.

Disclaimer: This information is for broad educational purposes only. It is not and does not take the place of legal advice for any specific situation nor is it offered as such.





Where to learn more:

[Confidentiality: Respecting the Privacy of All Families — Learning Links](#)





The University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies gratefully acknowledges Helen M. Bailey, Esq., General Counsel, Kristin Aiello, Esq., Staff Attorney, from the Disability Rights Center, Maine's federally mandated protection and advocacy agency for individuals with developmental disabilities, for their technical assistance during the development of this tipsheet.





Appendix C: Maine Technical Assistance Credential Application

Below are instructions for the on-line Credential Application through the MRTQ PDN Registry.

1. Log in to the Registry using your Email and Password
2. Click on the blue "My Education" tab at the top of the page
3. Select the "Maine Credential Application" option
4. Select the Credential that you are interested in from the drop-down menu and then press the green "View Requirements" button
5. Make sure that all the required credential training is checked off with the completion dates
6. If you see the green "Requirements Met" button, you may continue. Please check that all your contact information is correct.
7. Type your name in the Signature Box. This serves as an e-signature.
8. NOTE: If you want to pay by check or money order, you must submit a paper application and mail it to: MRTQ PDN, PO Box 9300, Portland, ME 04104-9300. You cannot continue with the online application through the Registry.
9. Press the green "[Submit Payment](#)" button and continue to give your payment information. We accept debit and credit cards.
10. You will receive automatic notification that your credential application has been submitted.
11. If you encounter any problems, please contact mrtq.credentials@maine.edu

Please contact mrtq.credentials@maine.edu for directions to submit a paper application. See page 49 for the paper Credential Application.





Paper Application: Use only if not submitting an on-line credential application through the Registry.

Section 1: Contact Information

Name: _____

Home Address _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home/Cell Phone: _____

Home Email: _____

Section 2: Application Requirements (please initial)

- ___ I am an active member of the Maine Roads to Quality Registry
- ☐ I have met the educational requirement of having at least a Baccalaureate Degree in Education or related field
- ☐ Current Maine Credential (Infant Toddler I or II, Youth Development, or Director) OR current Child Development Associate Credential (CDA)
- ___ I have I have completed all the following trainings:
 - ☐ Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners (18 hours)
 - ☐ Your Professional development Portfolio (9 hours)
 - ☐ Foundations of Relationship-based Technical Assistance (18 hours)
 - ☐ Foundations of Mentoring (15 hours)
 - ☐ Foundations of Coaching (15 hours)
 - ☐ Foundations of Collaborative Consultation (15 hours)
 - ☐ **OR** I have completed an alternative education/training requirement, Option #_____ (See Appendix D for options)
- ___ I have a minimum of 2,000 documented ours of experience providing technical assistance within the last 5years
- ___ I have a minimum of two years of experience working in a specific area of expertise or discipline within the last 5 years
- ___ I have sent link to 3 people for references
- ___ I have completed a portfolio that confirms that I have met the educational requirements and demonstrates competency in each of the Competency Areas.

A link to my electronic Portfolio has been mailed to mrtq.credentials@maine.edu





___ I am enclosing a check for \$75 made payable to the University of Southern Maine

Application and check should be mailed to:

Maine Roads to Quality
University of Southern Maine
PO Box 9300, 34 Bedford Street
Portland, ME 04104-9300

Signature

Date



Appendix D: Alternative Options for Training/Education

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential requires a minimum of 105 hours of specific Maine Roads to Quality Training as listed below. Applicants can choose an alternative option listed below. All documentation of training and/or college coursework must be submitted to and verified by the Maine Roads to Quality Registry.

Option 1:

A minimum of 105 hours of training comprised of the following:

1. Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners (18 hours)
2. **AND** Your Professional Development Portfolio (9 hours)
3. **AND** Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance (18 hours)
4. **AND** Foundations of Mentoring (15 hours)
5. **AND** Foundations of Coaching (15 hours)
6. **AND** Foundations of Collaborative Consultation (15 hours)
7. **AND** Foundations of Peer-to-Peer Networks (15 hours)

Option 2:

A combination of training and course work comprised of the following:

1. Engaging in Professional Development with Adult Learners (18 hours)
2. **AND** Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance (18 hours)
3. **AND** Your Professional Development Portfolio (9 hours)
4. **AND** choice of **ONE** of the following:
 - a. Foundations of Mentoring (15 hours)
 - b. Foundations of Coaching (15 hours)
 - c. Foundations of Collaborative Consultation (15 hours)
 - d. Foundations of Peer-to-Peer Networks (15 hours)
5. **AND** Three credits (45 hours) of course work in adult education, adult learning and leadership, reflective practice, embedded professional development, (technical assistance, mentoring, coaching, consultation and peer learning and facilitation) or related field from an accredited institution.

Option 3:

A combination of training and/ or course work comprised of the following:

1. Six credits or 90 contact hours of course work/ training in adult education, adult learning and leadership, reflective practice, embedded professional development, (technical assistance, mentoring, coaching, consultation and peer learning and facilitation) or related field.
2. **AND** Your Professional Development Portfolio (9 hours).





Appendix E: Request for Letter of Reference

Date

Dear ,

_____ is working toward a Maine Technical Assistance Credential and is requesting that you write a letter of recommendation.

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential has been developed with the understanding that when Technical Assistance (TA) professionals have appropriate knowledge and experience in specific subject matter, an understanding of adult learning, and both the knowledge and skills in technical assistance pedagogy, they can more effectively support others in their ongoing professional learning. The Credential has been designed to promote and incorporate all of these integral factors and was based on the Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce.

This credential is awarded to TA professionals who act as a mentor, coach, consultant, and/or peer-to-peer network facilitator who are able to document specific knowledge, skills, dispositions, training, and experience required by this credential.

Please consider if the candidate demonstrates the common strengths of successful TA professionals, and include any supporting comments below:





Competency	yes	not yet	no	Comments
1. Standards of professionalism				
2. Approaches to learning that are based on principles of adult learning				
3. Knowledge of child development, developmentally appropriate practice and the content, topics, and focus of their TA				
4. Building and sustaining collaborative relationships				
5. Adherence to an established TA framework & process				
6. Knowledge of early care and education systems and how to connect TA partners to other resources and services				
7. Professional dispositions or behaviors that display qualities of character such as caring, collaborative, creative, reflective, and ethical				

Please include any additional information about this candidate's strengths as a TA professional.

Email your completed reference letter to mrtq.credentials@maine.edu.

If you have questions about the Maine Technical Assistance Credential or writing this reference, feel free to contact Abigail Robinson @ abigail.r.carter@maine.edu or call 1-207-780-4213.

We appreciate you taking the time to support this Applicant for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential.

Sincerely,

Abigail Robinson
Coordinator of Apprenticeship and Credential Programs
Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network





Appendix F: Forms and Resources

The following forms and resources are included in this Appendix:

Competency Area 1

- [*Technical Assistance Competencies for Maine's Early Childhood Workforce Self-Assessment Checklist*](#)

Competency Area 2

- None

Competency Area 3

- Tenets of Consultative Stance and Y Chart
- [Key Elements of Consultative Stance and Y Chart](#)
- Day in the Life Vignette 9
- [Day in the Life Vignette](#)
- Alliance Building Strategies Checklist
- [Alliance Building Strategies Checklist](#)

Competency Area 4

- TA Match Game
- [Technical Assistance Match Game](#)
- Communication Strategies Observation Checklist
- [Communication Strategies Checklist](#)
- What If Scenarios
- [What If Scenarios](#)

Competency Area 5

- Scenario: Too Much of a Good Thing
- [Too Much of a Good Thing](#)
- Tools I Use
- [Tools I Use Template](#)



Key Elements of the Consultative Stance

Johnston and Brinamen (2006) have identified 10 elements that seem to be essential to the consultative stance.

The 10 elements are:

1. The centrality of relationships.
2. Parallel process as an organizing principle.
3. Avoiding the position of the expert.
4. Mutuality of endeavor.
5. Understanding another's subjective experience.
6. Considering all levels of influence.
7. Hearing and representing all voices.
8. Wondering instead of knowing.
9. Patience.
10. Holding hope.

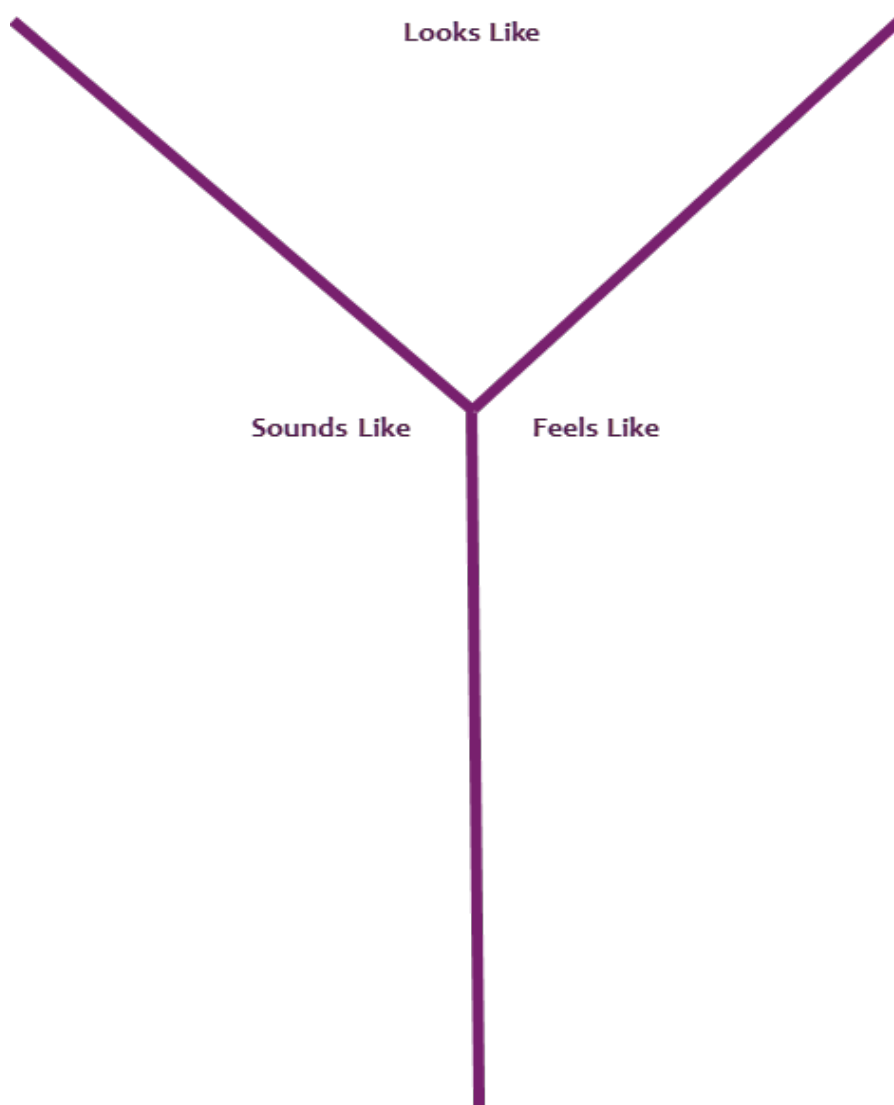


Foundations of Relationship-Based Technical Assistance Training Module 2 Activity 5

Tenets of Consultative Stance Y Chart

A 'Y' Chart is a procedure that is used to brainstorm ideas on what you know about a topic by writing or drawing about what the topic looks like, sounds like, and feels like in practice.

Pick one tenet and complete the 'Y' Chart.



Maine Technical Assistance Credential Portfolio Competency Area 3: Building Relationships

VIGNETTE

9

Programmatic Planning to Support Staff Relationships and Well-being

MR. Leighton, Director of a rural Head Start program, called to discuss a referral for programmatic consultation. Mr. Leighton explained that he was worried about staff morale and stress levels in one of the centers. It had been a tough year with high rates of job loss in the community and high levels of crisis among families. He shared that teachers seemed to be laughing less and the usual joy in learning new things about early childhood was not met with as much enthusiasm, in fact several of the teachers asked to opt out of upcoming professional development opportunities. He wasn't sure what exactly the staff needed, but he had noticed a marked shift in the overall tone within the center and classrooms.

I have been to this Head Start program to provide staff training on social emotional topics and to do a few child/family-centered consultations. I remember thinking to myself afterwards that staff seemed supported; professional development topics were chosen based on staff's input, time was given each week for uninterrupted teacher planning, the director attended training along with staff as a full participant and I noticed staff felt very comfortable in his presence. I wondered what was causing the shift.

I agreed to meet with the Director the next afternoon and to do some ongoing observations onsite. I arrived late in the day and went into Mr. Leighton's office. We discussed the approach he might take in introducing my presence in the center. We agreed that he had strong enough relationships to lay out his concerns at the staff meeting and he asked me to be there as well. I hadn't known the meeting was that day. We talked about how important it was that the teachers do not feel they were in any kind of trouble and that they view consultation as a way to support them. Together we came up with a few bullet points for the meeting and headed down to the staff room.

Teachers wandered into the room over a ten-minute time frame and sat in the chairs around the table engaging in side conversations. Eventually Mr. Leighton thanked everyone for being there and said, "I bet you are all wondering why our mental health



consultant is here when no one made a referral for consultation services!" The staff nodded their heads in agreement. He went on to explain that he made the referral for

programmatic consultation as he was worried, he wasn't able to give the staff all that they needed to keep going with all of the stress that had been impacting the community and the classrooms this year and he called me in as a resource to offer further support to them all. I knew all of the teachers from prior experiences but took this opportunity again to explain my role as a consultant. "I've been a teacher myself," I said, "and I remember coming home some days and not having enough energy left for my own family. Being a teacher is rewarding but can also be emotional. My job is to listen and support you. I have heard you have faced some stress this year but want your word for it, on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being high how would you rate your stress level today?" They all yelled out "5"! Everyone laughed a bit, and I continued, "I am not sure, yet where consultation will lead us but together, we will come up with ideas that we all feel good about." I said that if they were open to it, I'd be stopping into each classroom to chat in the next week and gather some preliminary information. All eight teachers signed on, and we agreed to meet as a group again the following Friday.

I showed up at the Head Start program the following morning to visit each of the four classrooms. I started in Ms. Perry and Ms. Boswell's preschool room. I did notice a slight shift in the environment from my prior visits as I walked around. The plants that before were vibrant had drooping leaves, some of the information on the walls was now outdated, and several toy bins were becoming filled with various kinds of toys that were not pictured on the label. Ms. Perry was sitting in a chair watching the kids, and she seemed in deep contemplation. Ms. Boswell was organizing some materials, so I walked over and leaned on the counter and gave her a smile. She smiled back. I asked, "So, how are things going this year?" Ms. Boswell sighed. "It has been tough; two families in our group lost their home, one of our children got removed from his parents and is living with his grandmother now, and my husband lost his job." "Wow," I said, "that is a lot to deal with." She nodded her head in agreement and then

A four-year-old boy came up and hugged Ms. Boswell's leg and said, "I love you!", smiled and ran off.



I wanted to say everything would be okay as I wanted to fix it right there and then, but I knew that wouldn't be the truth as families were struggling and teachers were as well. This would take time. A similar tone and several themes ran through all the classrooms as I visited that day, mostly worried about children and families and sheer exhaustion of the teachers. To be honest, I was becoming exhausted too. I knew I would be able to discuss my thoughts later in supervision, so for now I took a few deep breaths and began to think about the strengths shown to me today by the teachers.





"It looks like you are still that stable base for these kids," I said. "Yes, those hugs keep me going."

I put a hand on her shoulder and said we would talk more. I went over and sat next to Ms. Perry as she observed the children. "Boy they sure are into that clay today," I said. "Yes, they are." We both watched in silence. From first glance the kids were engaged and seemed enthusiastic about the activity; pounding clay, molding it and making all sorts of creations.,

What I did notice was a little less laughter between kids. This could have purely been because of the intentness they had on their project at hand, but I wondered if it might be an overall tone that was enveloping the class, indicating a slight level of stress.

Ms. Perry spoke quietly and said, "I worry about these kids, every night. I've been teaching for 20 years, and something has changed." We sat for another few minutes. She added, "When I go home each night, I hope everyone comes back okay, having been fed and loved up enough." I was starting to feel myself get a little emotional. I don't even know these children well but looking out at their faces together with Ms. Perry I could feel a slight piece of her worry and love. "That is a lot to hold unto Ms. Perry." I wonder how you get comforted," I said. "Well, I just go about my life. I get work done at home and try to tune it out the best I can." I put a hand on her shoulder and left it there for a moment saying, "Wow that must be hard for you." She gave me a little smile and I got up. I said I would be thinking about her, and we would talk on Friday.

I went and sat in Mr. Leighton's office and waited for our 3:30 appointment. I found my eyes begin to close. He walked in and I sat up and reached down for my notebook. He greeted me by asking, "So, what did you find out?" I began with, "Well, you have a very dedicated, passionate staff that is for sure. They love those children, and they are holding a lot of hard emotions in such as worry and fear." "I know," replied Mr. Leighton, but what can I possibly do to help? New toys, fun training, days off, they don't help." I replied, "I know you want to do what is best and I have an idea. Each person readily shared how they were feeling and mentioned some specific fears or worries. I wondered, if we could give it a try, for maybe the next few weeks, to use part of

Fridays, your usual professional development day, to do some group reflection together. I could facilitate it. This would be time just for the staff to share strengths, barriers, and hope. It wouldn't take away from their planning time as you usually do some kind of training for 1-2 hours right?" "That is true," replied Mr. Leighton. I went on to say, "Actually I have done this in another center and so far, staff has said they feel heard and just being able to share their feelings has alleviated some of the stress. Together we decided to try





it out this Friday and see how the teachers respond and get their feedback on continuing. It was the first step I hoped would work. On Friday at 9 A.M. I was in the staff room as teachers came in and sat down. Everyone looked up at me as if expecting me to get the power point rolling, as I had prior professional development experiences. I began, "I want to start out by thanking all of you for being so honest with me about this year's experiences. I learned a lot about the stress you all are carrying and a little about what that might be like for each of you. I learned that you all have a commitment to children; I can see it as you sit, play, and talk with children. I even caught a few smiles and laughter." I went on to say, "This morning is not going to be about training; it's going to be about supporting one another. Every Friday, if you are open to it, we will spend an hour or two sharing our strengths, barriers and hopes for the upcoming week so we can go on and give what we can to the children. How does that sound?" Ms. Boswell said, "You mean we don't have to work?" They all laughed.

We went on to talk about spending this time together and came up with some ground rules, such as" what is said here stays here, no interrupting, etc. Then, we moved on and began by each person sharing something good that had happened that day or something for which they were grateful. This step set a positive tone and then we moved into a few personal stories that illustrated some of their struggles or barriers, "Tell me more about life this year and what you all have been going through." One teacher raised her hand and told us her story about working with several children in foster care and how emotional it had been for everyone? her, the children, the parents and the foster care families. Another teacher gave her hand a gentle pat and smiled some reassurance. I could see several other teachers nodding their head in agreement. No one tried to solve the weighty problems at hand, each listened to one another. After several of the teachers had shared their stories, an hour had gone by and we moved to the last part of our experience; sharing our hopes for the next week. "I hope I can laugh a few times every day," Ms. Boswell shared. "I hope I can see the good inside all of the things going on this week," said Ms. Perry. I wrapped up this first meeting, saying, "OK, everyone, I hope we can each support one another this week and meet again next Friday. Let me know your thoughts on this experience. I will be popping into each of your rooms again on Tuesday."

I checked in with Mr. Leighton to share my observations. I gave him some resources to use in the center (i.e. stress reduction posters) and some ideas for adult relaxation tips

that he might share with staff and families as well. We agreed to keep the group activity

alive for the next 6 months and then revisit the impact of this staff and program support. I packed up and headed for the door. As I walked down the hall, I noticed the teachers hadn't left the staff room. They huddled together, talking and actually laughing.





Maybe this group experience lightened their emotional load a bit. I knew more was to come, and other strategies would come into play, but for now seeing a few smiles was a good start.





Alliance Building Strategies Checklist

- ☐ Review the list. Check all that applies as you listen to and watch the coaching conversation role play.
- ☐ Restates and summarizes information conveyed by the coachee
- ☐ Asks open-ended questions
- ☐ Waits patiently and silently for coachee to respond or ask questions
- ☐ Affirms difficulty of change
- ☐ Uses non-evaluative language
- ☐ Reflects the feelings of what the coachee is saying or showing in their body language
- ☐ Refers to past situations or accomplishments
- ☐ Identifies and works toward the partners goals and needs
- ☐ Asks permission before sharing ideas or trying something new
- ☐ Shares information that shows expertise/deep content knowledge of the topic
- ☐ Explains complex information succinctly
- ☐ Physical postures are relaxed (e.g. leans slightly toward coachee, hands relaxed in lap)
- ☐ Shows an interest in what others are saying by smiling, nodding, etc.
- ☐ Accurately interprets gestures, facial expressions (e.g. gauges understanding, moods, or emotions of coachee)
- ☐ Respects preferences for personal space and eye contact by responding to social cues of coachee (e.g. coachee steps back or moves chair away from coach)
- ☐ Other:

Adapted from: The National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI) (2014)
Foundations of Coaching Module 2, Activity 4, Part 1 (2019)
Maine Technical Assistance Credential Portfolio Competency Area 3:
Building Relationships



Technical Assistance Match Game

Name:

Date:

Match the Technical Assistance Request to the Technical Assistance Role:

Enter the letter of the TA request (right) in the box next to the correct TA role (left). When you have completed your answers, in the box under each of the roles notes how you made your decisions. What information in the scenario helped you to make your selection?

Mentoring

How did you know?

A. "I'm a family child care provider and work alone. I have been doing this for many years, but do not have others to talk to about this work. I am interested in getting together with others working in child care to talk about what I am doing, share ideas, and learn about new resources. Is there any kind of support like this anywhere?"

Coaching

How did you know?

B. "I was recently promoted to a supervisor role in my child care center. This is a new role for me. I have never done this before. Is there someone who is in this role who I can shadow and learn from?"

Consulting

How did you know?

C. "We recently had several new children start in our child care program. A number of them are new to care and some have behaviors that are challenging us. Our program is really chaotic right now. Is there someone who can come into our program and help us figure out what is going on?"

Peer-to-Peer Networks

How did you know?

D. "I was recently trained in a research-based language and literacy curriculum called Opening the World to Learning (OWL) Curriculum. The group training helped me understand the curriculum and learn about the various components and strategies, but I need help figuring out how to use these practices in my Head Start classroom. Is there someone who can help me use this curriculum and try out the strategies?"



This checklist is designed to be used to observe and identify basic communication practices. For each item, check each time you observe a practice in the box provided. Make notes in the space provided about examples you observed within each of the three broad categories.



MAINE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CREDENTIAL



For the following items, make a check in the box **each time** you observe an example

Questioning Using different types of questions gives you information that helps to define preferences and strengths, as well as issues and concerns from the other's viewpoint.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Silence Waiting patiently and quietly gives another person time to think before answering a question and lets the speaker know you want to hear from them.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Clarifying and validating Restating the main message and asking if your understanding of what has been said is correct can help avoid misunderstandings.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Summarizing Pulling together the main points of the discussion into a brief statement is a good way of obtaining closure.	☐ Yes ☐ No
Make notes about examples of seeking and verifying you observed.	
What other communication strategies did you observe in this video clip? Check if observed and give examples. _____ Attending and Active Listening Examples:	



For the following items, make a check in the box **each time** you observe an example

Building

Adding to the speaker's ideas lets the other person know you value their input and that you have something to contribute.

Informing

Sharing information and knowledge enhances understanding and addresses the needs of others.

Seeking consensus

Reaching agreement is important to ensure that families and practitioners understand the goals and the ways of achieving them together.

Make notes about examples of **joining and supporting** you observed.

What other communication strategies did you observe in this video clip? Check if observed and give examples.

_____ Attending and Active Listening Examples:

_____ Seeking and Verifying Examples:

Summary reflection about the use of these communication practices and the feedback provided by the TA partner. What are you "take aways" from this assignment?

Adapted from CONNECT – 2010
<http://community.fpg.unc.edu>



What If Scenarios

Pick one of the scenarios and answer the questions.



Scenario 1: (Mentor Role)

During one of your scheduled mentoring sessions, your mentee tells you that her lead teacher left her alone in the toddler room on two occasions for more than 20 minutes. She told you she is aware that this is in violation of childcare licensing rules. The first time she mentioned this to the lead teacher, the teacher told her she shouldn't worry about it since sometimes childcare rules are flexible, and no one will know anyway. Your mentee tells you she is uncomfortable with her response and worried that this will continue but doesn't know what to do.

- What do you do?
- How might you respond?
- Why did you choose this scenario?

Scenario 2: (Coach role)

You are a coach in RSU 123. You are scheduled to visit the Pre-K classroom to meet your coachee Ethel, the lead teacher. Before going to the meeting, you spent time thinking and planning the session. As the coach, your goals are to begin to establish a learning partnership with Ethel. You want to build trust and at the same time set expectations for the relationship. You jot down points you want to touch on to start off your work together. You are feeling prepared and excited to begin. When you meet Ethel at the appointed time you introduce yourself and ask her if this is still a good time to meet. Ethel responds that no time is a good time to meet because she never has much time to talk but she agrees to talk for a few minutes. As you continue to talk, Ethel says *“you should know right off that I had no idea about this”* (arms crossed and voice raised). You express surprise as you shared that your conversation with the principal included a discussion with the teachers about who would be involved in coaching. Ethel interrupts you and says, *“well welcome to my world”. It doesn't surprise me that you don't know what's going on. I don't know what's going on for half the time around here. And another thing, whose idea was to have you come to 'coach' me. Whatever that means!”*

- What do you do?
- How might you respond?
- Why did you choose this scenario?

Scenario 3: (Consultant role)

This Out-of-School Time (OTC) program has requested consultant assistance in addressing some issues with challenging behavior. The program exists in a school building where they share space (sometimes with reluctance on the part of the school).





The school is willing to have the OTC program use the gym, and one 2nd grade classroom, both of which must look exactly as they were left at 3:00 pm, when your children leave at 5:30 pm. You have your own equipment and materials, but storage is very limited. Teachers have heard “through the grapevine” that two of the children in their program who present behavioral challenges have one-on-one aides at school. The OTC program has not seen any IEPs. You, the consultant, have spent some time in the program building relationships with the staff and children. The OTC is invested in setting goals that will “fix” the children who are causing the problems. You, the consultant, think that the goals should begin with addressing the issues of environment and coordination/relationship building with the school.

- What do you do?
- How might you respond?
- Why did you choose this scenario?

Scenario 4: (Peer-to-Peer Network Facilitator role)

You are the facilitator of a CoP. You meet monthly and have a consistent membership. This has been your 5th session. You are facilitating the December scheduled CoP. One member comes into the session and greets you with “*I am off tonight. Just before I left work today, I had to fire a staff person. You know me, I have been doing this work for almost 12 years and have been a director for 5 years. This has been the hardest situation I have ever had. I am not sure how to process this, but I felt it would be helpful to be with others who have been doing this work too.*”

- What do you do?
- How might you respond?
- Why did you choose this scenario?

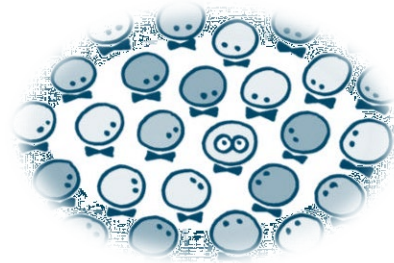
*Maine Technical Assistance Credential Portfolio Competency
Area 4: The Technical Assistance Process*



Scenario: Too Much of a Good Thing

If It's Thursday, It Must Be the Literacy Consultant

Today is Thursday in Sonia's Child Care Center. Sonia stops by the infant classroom to remind Badia that the literacy consultant will be in her classroom from 1:00 to 2:00. When Sonia leaves, you see Badia turn to her co-worker and say:



“Another consultant—that’s the fifth one this month! Last week we met with both the behavior specialist to discuss the biting situation and the infant mental health consultant for our regular monthly meeting. On Monday, the health consultant spent two hours here giving me recommendations on improving our diapering procedures. And today it’s the literacy consultant! And tomorrow, the accreditation consultant is coming. How am I supposed to spend time with the children when I have to be with these consultants? And to top it off, some of them are saying different things—one says to move the shelf this way, so you have better visibility of the biter, and another says I need to turn the shelf the other way to create a cozy reading corner. And to be honest with you, I don’t think some of them have ever worked with infants before. It is good that we have consultants to work with, but it’s hard to do that and give my undivided attention to the babies. I am so frustrated!”

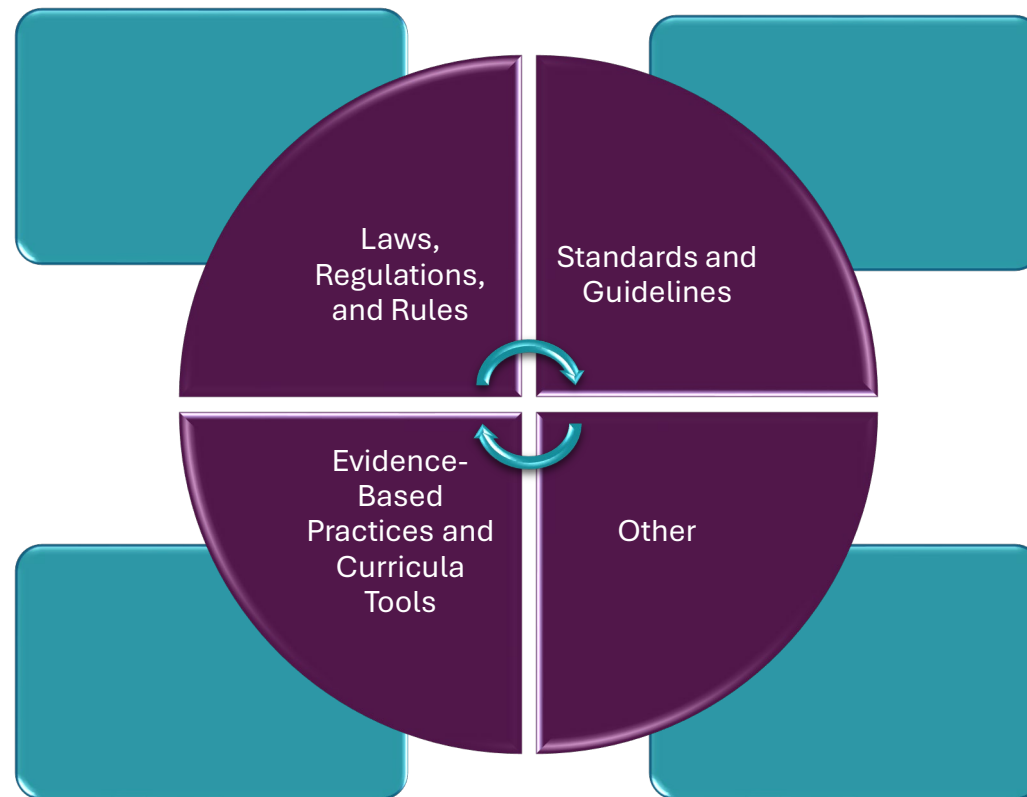
Adapted from: Child Care Bureau, ZERO to THREE, National Infant and Toddler Child Care Initiative (2010). Coordinating Child Care Consultant: Combining Multiple Disciplines and Improving Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Settings.

Tools I Use

Name:

Date:

Complete the template below to list the key resources from your early childhood setting or sector that you would refer to and use with your TA partner to support accurate compliance with laws, regulations, and rules and the standards, evidence-based practices, and curricula tools that help to guide the development of the TA plan.





Appendix G: Contributors

Special thanks to the following individuals for their valuable contributions to this publication:

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential Core Work Group

Jill Downs, Technical Assistance Manager, Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network, University of Southern Maine

Linda Labas, Early Childhood Coordinator
University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies

Jami Pollis, Early Childhood Coach/Supervisor, Child and Family Services
Kennebec Valley Community Action Program

The Maine Technical Assistance Credential Leadership Team

Jill Downs, Technical Assistance Manager, Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network, University of Southern Maine

Tracye Fortin, Director, Child and Family Services,
Kennebec Valley Community Action Program, Executive Director Educare Central Maine

Sonja Howard, Director, Maine Roads to Quality Professional Development Network,
University of Southern Maine

Rhonda Kaiser, Program Director, Educare Central Maine.

Linda Labas, Early Childhood Coordinator,
University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies

Sarah Lavallee, Program Director, Early Head Start, Child and Family Services, Kennebec Valley Community Action Program, Educare Central Maine

Jami Pollis, Early Childhood Coach/ Supervisor, Child and Family Services,
Kennebec Valley Community Action Program





Appendix G: Authenticity Statement

The Applicant should review and sign the following statement and include a signed copy with the Portfolio:

I hereby certify that the material in this Maine Technical Assistance Credential represents solely my own work, that no one has written it for me, that I have not copied another individual's work, and that all sources that I have used have been noted in the appropriate section(s). Artificial intelligence (AI), such as ChatGPT, may be used to inform assignments. However, directly quoting or minimally revising responses generated by AI is also considered plagiarism. I understand that any misconduct concerning the authenticity of my work may lead to my disqualification as an Applicant for the Maine Technical Assistance Credential.

Applicant Name (print)

Applicant Signature

Date

