# Infant Mental Health

# *Competencies*

Courses from the EarlyEdU Alliance focus on a set of course objectives. Objectives describe what students should know and be able to do as a result of participating in the course. Course objectives align with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Professional Standards and Elements. Most states have their own professional competencies or standards. This chart shows how the course objectives align with NAEYC standards.

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| **Course Objective** | **NAEYC Standard**  |
| 1. Describe early development, starting in utero, and responsive caregiving practices.
 | **STANDARD 1. PROMOTING CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING**Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs are grounded in a child development knowledge base. They use their understanding of young children’s characteristics and needs, and of multiple interacting influences on children’s development and learning, to create environments that are healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging for each child.**1a:** Knowing and understanding young children’s characteristics and needs, from birth through age 8**1b:** Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on early development and learning |
| 1. Apply a socio-ecological model to explain how risk and protective factors affect children, families, and outcomes in early childhood.
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| 1. Use relationship-based principles and practices that support children and families.
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| 1. Use infant and early childhood mental health observation and reflective practice skills in case studies and in early learning settings.
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| 1. Explain typical features and challenges during the transition to parenthood and ways to support new parents.
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| 1. Explain individual differences in sensory processing and temperament and ways to support children with different profiles.
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| 1. Describe the causes of challenging behavior in infants and toddlers and effective ways to respond.
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| 1. Explain attachment theory and patterns and their implication for your work as an early childhood educator.
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| 1. Apply an equity lens in considering issues that affect children and families.
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| 1. Describe links between early toxic stress and trauma, learning, and lifelong health, and ways to respond to the needs of young children who have experienced trauma.
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| 1. Explain steps you can take to manage your own stress and promote resilience while working as an early learning professional.
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**References**

Lutton, A. (Ed.) (2012). Advancing the Early Childhood Profession: *NAEYC Standards and Guidelines for Professional Development. Washington*, DC: NAEYC.