# 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. | **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.  **1b:** Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on early development and learning  **STANDARD 2. BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children’s families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children’s families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children’s development and learning.  **2a:** Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics |
| 1. Use relationship-based principles and practices that support children and families. | **STANDARD 2. BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children’s families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children’s families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children’s development and learning.  **2a:** Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics  **2b:** Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships  **STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children’s ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child’s development and learning.  **4a:** Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with young children |
| 1. Use infant and early childhood mental health observation and reflective practice skills in case studies and in early learning settings. | **STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children’s ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child’s development and learning.  **4d:** Reflecting on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child  **STANDARD 6. BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.  **6c:** Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice; using technology effectively with young children, with peers, and as a professional resource  **6d:** Integrating knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education |
| 1. Explain typical features and challenges during the transition to parenthood and ways to support new parents. | **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  **STANDARD 2. BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children’s families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children’s families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children’s development and learning.  **2c:** Involving families and communities in young children’s development and learning |
| 1. Explain individual differences in sensory processing and temperament and ways to support children with different profiles. | **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  **1c:** Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments for young children  **STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children’s ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child’s development and learning.  **4c:** Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching /learning approaches |
| 1. Describe the causes of challenging behavior in infants and toddlers and effective ways to respond. | **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.  **1b:** Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on early development and learning  **STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children’s ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child’s development and learning.  **4a:** Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with young children  **4b:** Knowing and understanding effective strategies and tools for early education, including appropriate uses of technology  **4c:** Using a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate teaching /learning approaches |
| 1. Explain attachment theory and patterns and their implication for your work as an early childhood educator. | **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.  **1c:** Using developmental knowledge to create healthy, respectful, supportive, and challenging learning environments for young children  **STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children’s ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child’s development and learning.  **4a:** Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with young children  **4d:** Reflecting on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child |
| 1. Apply an equity lens in considering issues that affect children and families. | **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.  **1b:** Knowing and understanding the multiple influences on early development and learning  **STANDARD 2. BUILDING FAMILY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that successful early childhood education depends upon partnerships with children’s families and communities. They know about, understand, and value the importance and complex characteristics of children’s families and communities. They use this understanding to create respectful, reciprocal relationships that support and empower families, and to involve all families in their children’s development and learning.  **2a:** Knowing about and understanding diverse family and community characteristics  **2b:** Supporting and engaging families and communities through respectful, reciprocal relationships |
| 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. | **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  **STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children’s ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child’s development and learning.  **4a:** Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with young children  **4d:** Reflecting on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child  **STANDARD 6. BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.  **6e:** Engaging in informed advocacy for young children and the early childhood profession |
| 1. Explain steps you can take to manage your own stress and promote resilience while working as an early learning professional. | **STANDARD 4. USING DEVELOPMENTALLY EFFECTIVE APPROACHES**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs understand that teaching and learning with young children is a complex enterprise, and its details vary depending on children’s ages, characteristics, and the settings within which teaching and learning occur. They understand and use positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation for their work with young children and families. Candidates know, understand, and use a wide array of developmentally appropriate approaches, instructional strategies, and tools to connect with children and families and positively influence each child’s development and learning.  **4a:** Understanding positive relationships and supportive interactions as the foundation of their work with young children  **4d:** Reflecting on own practice to promote positive outcomes for each child  **STANDARD 6. BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL**  Candidates prepared in early childhood degree programs identify and conduct themselves as members of the early childhood profession. They know and use ethical guidelines and other professional standards related to early childhood practice. They are continuous, collaborative learners who demonstrate knowledgeable, reflective and critical perspectives on their work, making informed decisions that integrate knowledge from a variety of sources. They are informed advocates for sound educational practices and policies.  **6c:** Engaging in continuous, collaborative learning to inform practice; using technology effectively with young children, with peers, and as a professional resource  **6d:** Integrating knowledgeable, reflective, and critical perspectives on early education |

**References**

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