

## Creating Your Early Intervention Portfolio

Portfolios have gained widespread use as an alternative form of assessing knowledge and skill development. They have been used by students in primary grades, elementary and secondary education students, and in the field of special education (Mick, 1996; Paulson, Paulson, & Meyer, 1991; Wesson & King, 1996). Your *Baby Watch Portfolio* is a structured collection of your learning and experiences organized around the six early intervention competencies. Your portfolio will provide tangible evidence of your knowledge and skills in the field of early intervention. Because you will be collecting and organizing the documents in your portfolio, they will reflect your own individuality and unique learning styles.

Traditionally, test scores and course grades have been used to determine competence, but may not reflect all your skills and abilities. The portfolio model provides an alternative way to determine if you have achieved the competencies required to obtain the *BWEI Credential*. Developing a portfolio provides a realistic, broad-based measurement of your competence in providing early intervention services. The use of a portfolio also gives you greater control in identifying and charting your own course of continued development and demonstrates to others your skills and knowledge in the field of early intervention.

### Portfolio Contents

The content information in a portfolio will be different for each individual. However, all portfolios are required to follow a particular format and include the following information:

1. Training certificates from seven training workshops and the assignments from the self-study DVD.
2. Entries that address the sub competencies of the 6 main competencies. Each main competency area will be considered separately using a choice of **one** of the following methods:
  - \* (a) Description of a **work related activity or experience** that demonstrates implementation and application for each of the **subcompetencies** of particular main competency area,
  - \* (b) Evidence of a **college level course** covering the subcompetencies of a main competency area that has been pre-approved by BWEIP. **You or your mentor should arrange a transcript review with Baby Watch staff** see portfolio planning form (FORMS section B & C)

or,

Early Intervention Credentialing Guide and Portfolio Planner

- \* (c) An **exam** that covers a particular main competency area. A take-home exam based on a case scenario will be available for each of the main competency areas 4, 5 & 6.

Since each of the main competency areas can be addressed separately, the portfolio may be comprised of a combination of (a-c).

3. 2 letters from families with whom the provider has worked
4. A letter of recommendation from the program director

**Designated Baby Watch CSPD personnel will review your completed portfolio and verify that you have fulfilled the requirements for an early intervention credential.**



## How to Get Started

### 1. Review and record *Baby Watch* training requirements

To complete the training requirement for your credential, fill out the checklist called *Verification Checklist of Baby Watch Training* (see Forms section). As described earlier, you will need to show evidence that you have completed the nine required training topics through attendance at a training session and completed assignments for the self-study DVD. On the *Verification Checklist of Baby Watch Training* keep track of each training as you complete it. You will receive a certificate of attendance for each of the *Baby Watch* training workshops you attend--insert a copy of the certificate as well as the completed assignments following the verification checklist.

### 2. Review *Baby Watch* competencies and subcompetencies on pages 21-25

The *Portfolio Planning Form* that is included in this guide, or available at your program, lists all the competencies in each of the main competency areas and the methods of documentation you could use for each area:

- **work related activity or experience**
- **course work ( through Baby Watch Staff transcript review)**
- **exam**

Review the six main competency areas and decide what method you would like to use to demonstrate the competencies in each area. The *Baby Watch* staff will help you with your portfolio planning form. Schedule a meeting with the CSPD Coordinator to develop a plan that will enable you to get the most out of the portfolio process. During the meeting, past experience and education will be reviewed to determine which entry sheets you will complete. In addition, all credentialing personal are required to complete all the training workshops and self-study DVD assignments.

The second half of this guide contains the portfolio entry sheets and other forms that you will use for your final portfolio. You will notice that each section begins with **EI I (pink)** or **EI II (teal)** Competency Cover Sheets that list the main competency area and all the required subcompetencies that you will need to complete in that section. These *Competency Cover Sheets* can be used as an **initial checklist** to help you decide what types of documentation possibilities and activities you may want to include as your portfolio entries.

Review the blue *Competency Cover Sheets* for HEALTH 1.0. As you are getting started, use these blue cover sheets to familiarize yourself with the

Early Intervention Credentialing Guide and Portfolio Planner  
particular competency and its subcompetencies. Ideas for activities are listed under each subcompetency. Begin thinking of the kinds of training activities, materials, and related activities that you have already completed that relate to the subcompetencies found in the HEALTH 1.0 competency. Read each subcompetency and jot down how you could document it based on your previous activities, experience, or college level course work.

Your mentor or supervisor can serve as a valuable resource in helping you to identify many of your work-related responsibilities that relate to specific subcompetencies. Your mentor can be particularly helpful in giving you ideas on how to fill in gaps in your portfolio if you begin to run out of ideas. You may want to exchange ideas with co-workers on the kinds of documents and activities each of you have been including in your personal portfolio.

### **3. Begin Collecting and Storing Your Materials**

Start collecting items such as certificates, workshop outlines, handout materials, transcripts and everyday work materials. Begin inserting them after the *Portfolio Entry Sheets* they correspond with. For example, if you have taken a First Aid and CPR course, put the certificates you received after the subcompetency HEALTH 1.3, which relates to basic knowledge of health and safety. Many items may fit under several subcompetencies, so use your best judgment on where you want to insert them. Talk with your mentor, supervisor, or BWEIP staff person to make sure you are on the right track. Become familiar with the competency areas and related subcompetencies and keep them in mind as you participate in and plan your daily work activities such as lesson plans, team and family meetings, home visits, etc.

## Portfolio Entry Requirements

The number of portfolio entries will depend on the method of documentation you select for each main competency area. (This will be determined during your transcript review with Baby Watch CSPD staff). The following table indicates the number of portfolio entry sheets and accompanying documents required for each main competency area.

| Competency Area                                | Number of Portfolio Entries |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1.0 Health                                     | 4 entries                   |
| 2.0 Child Development                          | 2 entries                   |
| 3.0 Development in Children with Special Needs | 4 entries                   |
| 4.0 Interaction with Families                  | 7 entries                   |
| 5.0 Evaluation and Assessment                  | 6 entries                   |
| 6.0 Program Implementation                     | 9 entries                   |
| 7.0 Team Coordination                          | 1 entry <b>(EI II only)</b> |

You may work on the competencies in any order. Some find it easier to work on one main competency area at a time, while others fill in portions of all subcompetencies that they are familiar with and then go back to fill in portfolio entries for any remaining subcompetencies. It's up to you.

If you are using a **BWEI pre-approved college level course** to document competencies, then the course may cover all the subcompetencies in that area. Any subcompetency that has not been covered in the course may be documented with a description of a work-related activity through an entry sheet.

If you choose to take an exam in area 4, 5, or 6, all of the subcompetencies in these areas will be covered in that exercise.

## Work Related Activities and Experiences

There are a number of documents you could include in your portfolio such as certificates, lesson plans, and observation reports. The types of documents listed on the next few pages relate to your everyday, work-related tasks and responsibilities as an early intervention provider. These suggestions do not include all the possibilities, but they should give you a good start! The suggestions will give you ideas on how you can use them in developing your portfolio so that they meet the competency standards. Each description contains two features:

1. a definition of the document and how it relates to early intervention services
2. an explanation of how the type of document demonstrates your knowledge and/or skills of early intervention.

If you include reports or IFSPs for the children and families you work with, always **maintain confidentiality** by deleting all references to their names. Review the following list to begin thinking about the many possibilities of items you can include in your portfolio. Although only one form of documentation is required for each subcompetency, you may want to include more than one for particular subcompetencies, such as a photocopy of your CPR certification and a description of your center's emergency plan. The decision on how much to include is up to you and your mentor. Just be sure to include things that would demonstrate your understanding and/or skills of the particular topic being addressed. **For competency entry ideas see "Activities"**.

## Completing the Portfolio Entry Sheets

A *Portfolio Entry Sheet* provides information so that the person(s) reviewing your portfolio will be able to determine how the activity described relates to that particular subcompetency. After you have selected and inserted a form of documentation (e.g., your First Aid and CPR certificates in the example above), you will need to fill out the corresponding *Portfolio Entry Sheet*. Each entry sheet should be written legibly or typed. You need to fill out each *Portfolio Entry Sheet* completely as described on the following page. Compare it to the completed sample of a *Portfolio Entry Sheet* on the following page.

1. Fill out the Portfolio Entry Sheet completely.
2. Write your descriptions in complete sentences.
3. Provide some form of documentation as needed behind each portfolio entry sheet (e.g., course outline, lesson plan, case study, I.F.S. P., assessment).
4. Make sure your mentor or supervisor reviews, comments, and signs each of your portfolio entries.

## Portfolio Entry Sheet Instructions

### Portfolio Entry Sheet - 1.0 Health

**Subcompetency (1.3 for EI Specialist I):** Demonstrate basic knowledge of health, safety, and nutrition practices and procedures that facilitate growth and prevent disease--this describes a specific aspect of health that should be covered by this portfolio entry.

**Subcompetency (1.3 for EI Specialist II):** Implement and apply current theory, research, and best practice regarding basic health, safety, nutrition practices and procedures that facilitate growth and prevent disease and injury--this describes a specific aspect of health that should be covered by this portfolio entry.

**Type(s) of documentation included:** Write in what it is that you did to address the subcompetency listed above. In this example, a copy of the First Aid and CPR certificate should be inserted after this portfolio entry sheet. Depending on the type of documentation, you might include a copy of a lesson plan, a brief summary of a video you watched, or a write-up of your observations made during a home visit. **See “Activities”**

**Date(s) completed:** Write in the date on which you attended the training or when you implemented the activity at work.

**Describe the setting(s) in which the activity occurred:** Describe the setting or place where you participated in the activity.

**Describe the activity and explain how it relates to your work setting:** In a paragraph or two, describe how you were able to apply the activity (i.e., your attendance at a First Aid course) in your work setting. The description of this subcompetency would explain the information learned during the inservice, you took a written test, practiced first aid skills and CPR on practice models, and shared information with parents at a home visit.

**Mentor signature and date:** Make sure your mentor or supervisor reviews, makes comments, signs, and dates each sheet.

**Comments:** The person who helps you develop your portfolio entries should review each of your cover sheets and the additional documents you provide. This person should write a paragraph about her impressions of your efforts on the specific subcompetency.

Additional examples of completed *Portfolio Entry Sheets* specifically for EI I's and EI II's can be found in the back of the corresponding **Competency Entry Sections**. Since each person's work experiences are unique, be creative in the activities you select for your portfolio entries. However, you will want to have them reviewed on a regular basis so that your mentor or supervisor can help guide you if you have any questions or difficulties.

## **Checking Portfolio Entry Sheets for Adequacy**

Each portfolio entry sheet will be reviewed to determine whether it addresses the subcompetency listed. As you work on your entry sheets, take time to look them over before you submit them for review.

1. All the sections of the portfolio entry sheet filled in.
2. The activity is clearly specified and the description is in complete sentences
3. It is easy to understand how the activity described relates to the subcompetency.
4. The activity described applies to current or future job responsibilities.
5. The description of the activity specifies how the information learned or the skill demonstrated relates to working with children, families, or other team members.

Early Intervention Credentialing Guide and Portfolio Planner  
**Final Steps in the Credentialing Process**

Prior to submitting your portfolio to your program director, it is recommended that you use the checklist on the following page to see if your portfolio is complete and ready for its final review by the *Baby Watch CSPD* team.

Before you turn your portfolio over to your program director for their final signature on the *Baby Watch Early Intervention Credential Application*, it is recommended that you put all the portfolio materials you have gathered into a separate notebook for final review. You may want to separate the main competency areas with a divider page and a tab. Make sure that you keep all the required materials in the same order as they are in this guide to ensure the success of the final review process. It would be wise to make a copy of your portfolio just in case the unimaginable happens.

Make sure you get the last signature from your program's director. You are finished! Your director will see to it that your portfolio reaches the *Baby Watch CSPD* reviewers. When you receive your early intervention credential from the state office, the credentialing process is complete.

