

# Guidelines for Writing Reflective Competency Statements

*(Aligned with the Birth to Five CDA Credential)*

The **Birth to Five CDA Credential** requires candidates to demonstrate competence across all areas of early childhood development for children from **birth through age five**. One of the most important parts of your Professional Portfolio is the **Reflective Competency Statements**. These statements are your opportunity to explain *how* you meet the CDA Competency Standards and show your ability to provide high-quality care and education for all three sub-age groups:

- **Infants** (Birth–17 months)
  - **Toddlers** (18–36 months)
  - **Preschoolers** (3–5 years)
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## What are Reflective Competency Statements?

Reflective Competency Statements are **written summaries of your skills, knowledge, and experiences** as an early childhood educator. Each statement focuses on one CDA Competency Standard and addresses all relevant Functional Areas. The purpose is to:

- Show **self-reflection and growth** as a teacher or caregiver.
  - Provide **real examples of your work** with children and families.
  - Demonstrate **understanding of child development** and best practices for health, safety, learning, and relationships.
  - Highlight your readiness to meet **Birth to Five CDA requirements**.
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## The Six CDA Competency Standards & Functional Areas

Each of your six statements will align with one of these standards and its corresponding functional areas:

1. **Safe, Healthy Learning Environment**
  - Safe | Healthy | Learning Environments



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2. **Physical and Intellectual Competence**
    - Physical | Cognitive | Communication | Creativity
  3. **Social and Emotional Development & Positive Guidance**
    - Self | Social | Guidance
  4. **Relationships with Families**
    - Families
  5. **Program Management**
    - Program Management
  6. **Professionalism**
    - Professionalism
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## Requirements for Each Statement

Each of your six Reflective Competency Statements should:

1. **Start with a strong introductory paragraph** explaining how your practices meet the specific Competency Standard.
  2. **Address each Functional Area** separately with a clear paragraph for each.
  3. **Include specific examples** from your work with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, demonstrating how you adapt practices for different ages.
  4. Be **approximately 500 words** in length (1–2 typed pages).
  5. Be **typed in 11–12 pt font**, proofread, and written in clear, professional language.
  6. **Reflect the Birth to Five setting**—demonstrate your understanding of all three sub-age groups, even if your daily work focuses on one group.
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## How to Write Your Reflective Competency Statements

1. **Review the Birth to Five Competency Standards Book**
  - This book is required for your CDA application and Verification Visit. Use it to guide your writing.
2. **Reflect on Your Experience**
  - Think about how you create safe and supportive learning environments, build relationships, and encourage child development.
3. **Use Real Examples**
  - Share stories of classroom experiences, teaching strategies, or family partnerships that illustrate your competencies.
4. **Show Growth and Self-Awareness**
  - Use reflective language: “I learned...”, “I realized...”, “I adapted this approach when...”.



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## 5. Connect to Best Practices

- Reference developmentally appropriate practices, inclusion, cultural responsiveness, and safety standards.

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## Suggested Template

**Competency Standard:** (Write the title of the standard)

**Functional Area: Safe**

Describe how you keep the environment safe for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

**Functional Area: Healthy**

Explain your approach to promoting health, nutrition, and wellness.

**Functional Area: Learning Environments**

Detail how you create spaces that support exploration, play, and growth.

(Repeat this structure for each Functional Area under the relevant standard.)

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## Portfolio Connection

Your Reflective Competency Statements are a **key component of your Professional Portfolio**. Alongside resource collection items, family questionnaires, and your philosophy statement, these reflections show your readiness for the CDA Credential. During the **Verification Visit**, your PD Specialist will use your portfolio to guide observation and dialogue.

