



## Professional Development Portfolio For Parent Educators

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**Louisiana  
Partnership**  
*for children & families*



## Professional Development Portfolio for Parent Educators

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**LAPEN**

## **Professional Development Portfolio for Parent Educators**

### **About LAPEN**

LAPEN works to advance the field of parenting education.

The goals of LAPEN are to:

1. Develop and support a statewide network of parent educators who offer parenting education services.
2. Promote best practices in parenting education.
3. Provide and promote continuing education and professional development opportunities for parent educators.

For more information about LAPEN, and for resources for parent educators go to [www.lapen.org](http://www.lapen.org).

### **LAPEN's Core Competencies**

Practitioners who provide parenting education come from a variety of backgrounds, training, education, perspectives and personal experiences. As parenting education develops as a recognized profession nationally, the need to assure high quality in the practice has emerged. Drawing from many resources, the LAPEN Core Competencies Committee, working over a two- year period, developed a set of Core Competencies to guide parent educators in their professional development. They were presented at the LAPEN Summit in March 2009. The Core Competencies are the foundation of this portfolio, and describe the knowledge, skills and attitudes you need to be successful in your work supporting families. The Core Competencies are designed for parent educators who help parents understand and support their children, improve their parenting skills, and reach their personal and family goals. You may not use all of the core competencies in your current job, but they are relevant for your professional development in the field.

### **Using Your Portfolio**

This Professional Development Portfolio is designed to help you keep track of your training and professional development experiences that relate to the core competencies. You may find this portfolio useful to demonstrate what you have done to advance your professional development. Most importantly, the portfolio and core competencies are designed to help you look at the big picture of your professional development. Are there areas you never seem to get training in? Are there other areas you gravitate towards? You can use the core competencies as a tool to help you organize your professional development, whether you want to focus on a particular area or broaden your horizons.

### **Contents of Your Portfolio**

There is a section for each of LAPEN's nine core competency areas where you will find a description of the attitudes, skills, and knowledge required of a parent educator. You will also find a "Professional Development Tracking Sheet" where you can record the trainings you attend that enhance your knowledge, skills, and attitudes in an area. You may also add to your Portfolio the certificates you receive for completing a training, as well as brochures or handouts. Of course, some trainings will relate to more than one of the core competency areas.



# LAPEN

## Professional Development Portfolio for Parent Educators

### Glossary

**Competent** - Adequately qualified for a given task or job

**Core Competencies** - A set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that individuals need to be successful in a field of work or type of job

**Professional Development** - The process of becoming more competent in a field of work. *Professional development often occurs formally through conferences, seminars, and courses. It also happens informally through work experience, supervision, networking, and reflection.*

**Parenting Education**- The definitions of parenting education in the literature are multiple and diverse, including a wide range of practices, programs, methodologies and philosophies. A common theme is that parenting education supports parents and caregivers while increasing their knowledge and skills in their complex role in the nurturing and successful development of their child.



## **Core Competency Area 1 Child and Lifespan Development**

*Parent Educators have instruction in theories of human growth and development; have tools to assist families in assessing developmental milestones and planning for usual and expected development; and demonstrate an understanding of “development in context” and the influences of family, culture, language, temperament and gender.*

### **Core Knowledge 1: Child, Adolescent and Lifespan Development**

- 1a. Theories of human growth and development
- 1b. Culture, gender, language, and family influences on human growth and development
- 1c. Child growth, attachment development, and learning, from the latest research, including:
  - Attachment and Parent-Child Relationship Development
  - Basic ages and stages of development from prenatal through adolescence
  - Tasks and sensitive windows of time of development
  - Cognitive, language, social, spiritual/moral, emotional, and physical principles of development and influences of one area of development on another
- 1d. Typical ranges of development
- 1e. Disabilities and special needs
- 1f. Principles, from the latest research, of adult behavior, growth and development throughout the lifespan
- 1g. Ongoing development of adult life skills, such as literacy, job skills, relationship skills, and others

### **Skills 1: Child, Adolescent and Lifespan Development**

- 1a. Incorporate current research findings on human growth and development into practice
- 1b. Incorporate adult life skills into practice
- 1c. Provide rationale for practice based on theories of child development

### **Attitudes 1: Child, Adolescent and Lifespan Development**

Attitudes exhibited include:

- 1a. Sensitivity to children’s needs
- 1b. Benefits of parent education programs to parents
- 1c. The importance of intrinsic motivation for parenting
- 1d. Critical thinking as an essential requirement for parenting education



## Professional Development Tracking Sheet

This worksheet was developed to help you organize and track your professional development activities in parenting education. It is suggested that you use this format to track your learning events. Attach attendance certificates or other documentation as appropriate, and maintain these to create your own professional portfolio.

### Area 1: Child, Adolescent and Lifespan Development

<b><u>Title and Topic</u> Seminar/Workshop/ Course/Work or Volunteer Experience</b>	<b>Organizational Sponsor</b>	<b>Date Attended</b>	<b>Clock or Semester Hours Earned</b>

This worksheet is available at [www.lapen.org](http://www.lapen.org)



## **Core Competency Area 2 Dynamics and Family Relations**

*Parent Educators are exposed to theories of family interaction and parenting stages; can describe effective communication strategies for families; have an understanding of how changes such as divorce and remarriage affect family members; and can assist families in dealing with typical changes.*

### **Core Knowledge 2: Dynamics of Family Relations**

- 2a. Developmental stages of parenting
- 2b. The impact of relationships on families and children including:
  - Ways in which family members communicate and relate to one another and how that affects a child's development
  - Importance and effects of the roles of mothers, fathers, grandparents, or other caregivers in children's lives
  - Effects of adult relationships on families and children, particularly premarital, marital and co-parent relationships
  - Effects of child and adult peer relationships on family members
- 2c. How and why changes in families take place
- 2d. Current issues that impact parenting and family life such as dual homes; family violence; family disruption, loss, and incarceration; chronic illness; disabilities and special needs; single-parenthood; and strategies to support the children
- 2e. Ways that culture and language impact child-rearing practices and relationships in the home
- 2f. Impact of work and employment on family life
- 2g. Impact of intergenerational relationships on family life and child-rearing
- 2h. Impact of the family as a system and as a subsystem in society
- 2i. Appropriate and effective communications within families
- 2j. Management of personal finances

### **Skills 2: Dynamics of Family Relationships**

- 2a. Explain the impact of interpersonal relationships on family members
- 2b. Teach and model effective communications within families
- 2c. Demonstrate respect and sensitivity towards parents and support their growth through the developmental stages of parenting
- 2d. Guide families in using conflict resolution and problem solving skills
- 2e. Respect individual families by using a variety of interaction techniques

### **Attitudes 2: Dynamics of Family Relations**

Attitudes exhibited include:

- 2a. Dedication to improving attitudes of parents regarding child-rearing
- 2b. Concern for perceptions, feelings, and attitudes toward nonresidential parents' roles
- 2c. The importance of appropriate parenting



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### Area 2: Dynamics and Family Relations

<b><u>Title and Topic</u> Seminar/Workshop/ Course/Work or Volunteer Experience</b>	<b>Organizational Sponsor</b>	<b>Date Attended</b>	<b>Clock or Semester Hours Earned</b>

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## **Core Competency Area 3 Guidance and Nurturing**

*Parent Educators identify positive guidance techniques for parents of children at various stages of development and explain the benefits of positive discipline; and work with parents to develop individual parenting plans.*

### **Core Knowledge 3: Guidance and Nurturing**

- 3a. Impact of nurturing behaviors on children's development, ages prenatal through adolescence
- 3b. Differences between positive and negative forms of guidance and discipline and their long-term effects
- 3c. Guidance techniques, such as responsiveness, creating a safe environment, setting limits, goal-setting, role modeling, and others
- 3d. Importance of home environments and parent-child activities on children
- 3e. Individual differences and effects of temperament and personality of adults and children
- 3f. Impact and importance of parental supervision and involvement for children, including school-aged and Adolescents
- 3g. Development and fostering of character, ethics, self-control, empathy and moral competence in parents and children
- 3h. Impact of violence on children and families and ways to encourage peaceful environments and relationships

### **Skills 3: Guidance and Nurturing**

- 3a. Model and encourage nurturing behavior among adults and children
- 3b. Teach and model appropriate forms of guidance and discipline including alternatives to corporal punishment
- 3c. Teach and foster development of character, ethics, self-control, empathy and moral competence
- 3d. Teach and foster a secure attachment relationship between parent and child

### **Attitudes 3: Guidance and Nurturing**

Attitudes exhibited include:

- 3a. Positive expectancy of parent's development
- 3b. The ability of the program to bolster the confidence of parents
- 3c. Commitment and caring attitudes toward parents





## Core Competency Area 4 Health and Safety

*Parent Educators recognize the signs of child abuse, child neglect, mental illness, substance abuse, and domestic violence and take appropriate steps to get help for families; are able to advise parents on making their homes and vehicles safe for children; have a general understanding of other health issues that affect children, parents, and families; and know where to find additional information when needed and where to refer parents for additional support. Mandated reporters of child maltreatment understand how to appropriately discuss that role with parents and how to encourage self-report whenever possible.*

### Core Knowledge 4: Health and Safety

- 4a. Awareness of and ability to locate and access information on:
- Nutritional needs of children and adults including special dietary or cultural needs
  - Emergency medical and first aid procedures and “universal health precautions”
  - Wellness care, including immunizations for children and adults
  - Common childhood medical conditions, symptoms and conditions of common childhood communicable diseases, and related reporting requirements and procedures
  - Effects of tobacco, drug and alcohol and treatment services for parents and children
  - State and federal laws pertaining to the health and safety of children
  - Parental influences on brain and neurological development
  - Preconceptual, prenatal, postnatal and intraconceptual care including effects of substance abuse and maternal depression
  - Disabilities and special needs
  - Health insurance
- 4b. Signs and definitions of child abuse and neglect, including state statutes and procedures for reporting child abuse and neglect, common causes of abuse, and characteristics of adults who abuse
- 4c. Characteristics and needs of parents, children and families at risk for abuse and neglect
- 4d. Impact of abuse on family members
- 4e. Impact of stress on the physical and mental health of children and parents
- 4f. Cumulative effect for children exposed to violence in the home, community, schools and the media
- 4g. Essential components of safe and healthy indoor and outdoor physical environments
- 4h. Ways parents can provide children with information & guidance on sexuality & associated issues
- 4i. Impact and effects of media on children and families

### Skills 4: Health and Safety

- 4a. Locate and access information about health and safety
- 4b. Provide appropriate resources and make referrals for health and safety needs
- 4c. Emphasize the impact of stress of physical and mental health of children and parents
- 4d. Relate ways to identify child abuse in a professional and sensitive manner
- 4e. Utilize “universal health precautions”
- 4f. Report suspected abuse and neglect in a respectful manner, following appropriate reporting mandates

### Attitudes 4: Health and Safety

Attitudes exhibited include:

- 4a. Interest in the emotional health of parents
- 4b. Prevention programs change lives of families who are at risk of abusing their children



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### Area 4: Health and Safety

<b><u>Title and Topic</u> Seminar/Workshop/ Course/Work or Volunteer Experience</b>	<b>Organizational Sponsor</b>	<b>Date Attended</b>	<b>Clock or Semester Hours Earned</b>

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## **Core Competency Area 5 Diversity in Family Systems**

*Parent Educators recognize and respect diversity among families; understand that parenting practices, traditions, and beliefs differ from one family to another; are aware of their own racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural background, and how that might affect their work with families; and use culturally appropriate strategies to ask about families' needs and support them in finding solutions.*

### **Core Knowledge 5: Diversity in Family Systems**

5a. Understand and respect diversity in families, including family rituals, values, and traditions

5b. Specific needs and characteristics of diverse family systems including, but not limited to:

- Adolescent parents
- Single, married, divorced parents, and blended families
- Families with members who have chronic illnesses or physical, emotional, learning, behavioral, or developmental disabilities
- Family members who are substance abusers
- Incarcerated parents
- Economically challenged parents
- Migrant, immigrant, and/or transitory status
- Parents from diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds -- understanding and respecting family history and cultural heritage
- Children who are adopted or in foster care
- Grandparents and/or extended families
- Families with gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered members
- Other unique family systems

### **Skills 5: Diversity in Family Systems**

5a. Communicate effectively with populations of different cultural backgrounds

5b. Demonstrate and practice respect for diversity in families

5c. Understand and respect family history and cultural heritage

### **Attitudes 5: Diversity in Family Systems**

Attitudes exhibited include:

5a. A desire to overcome language barriers

5b. Sensitivity to different cultural groups

5c. Understanding and discouragement of biases in groups

5d. Recognition of the importance of extended families

5e. Interaction with individuals in diverse groups in unbiased manner



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### Area 5: Diversity in Family Systems

<b><u>Title and Topic</u> Seminar/Workshop/ Course/Work or Volunteer Experience</b>	<b>Organizational Sponsor</b>	<b>Date Attended</b>	<b>Clock or Semester Hours Earned</b>

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## **Core Competency Area 6 Professional Practice and Methods Related to Adult Learning and Family Support**

*Parent Educators are aware of and strive to maintain professional boundaries; have a thorough understanding of confidentiality and other legal and ethical issues in family support; assess their own knowledge, skills and attitudes; pursue additional training in the field; and know when to ask for help in a professional situation. Parent Educators take appropriate steps to ensure their own personal safety and remove themselves from dangerous situations. Parent educators select effective, evidence-based programs for the population being served and implement those programs with fidelity.*

### **Core Knowledge 6: Professional Practice Methods Related to Adult Learning and Family Support** *Professional Practice*

- 6a. Self assessment of knowledge, attitudes, and skills
- 6b. Selection of effective, evidenced-based programs for the population being served and implementation with appropriate fidelity
- 6c. Professional boundaries and limitations
- 6d. Professional ethics in family support and parent education
- 6e. Integration of current research into professional practice
- 6f. The role of prevention in professional practice
- 6g. When and how to refer family members to other professionals for assistance
- 6h. Awareness of related professional support services
- 6i. Self-care
  - Maintains a healthy balance between work and family responsibilities
  - Uses time and resources well to manage personal stress
  - Knows when to seek emotional support from supervisor or other agency personnel
  - Plans for personal safety
- 6j. Effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills

### *Adult Learning*

- 6k. Effective strategies for adult learners with consideration for learning environments, learning styles, and teaching methods
- 6l. Group process and facilitation
- 6m. Adaptation of programs for parents and caregivers with special needs and challenges
- 6n. Adaptation of programs for parents with cultural and language differences
- 6o. Methods to develop, critique and evaluate effective programs, parenting and parenting curricula and related materials for parents and families
- 6p. Effective methods to keep parents and families involved in programs and learning
- 6q. Effective marketing & promotional techniques to recruit and involve families in parenting education

### **Skills 6: Professional Practice Methods Related to Adult Learning and Family Support**

- 6a. Practice ethical behavior.
- 6b. Recognize the need for and facilitate referral to professionals for assistance
- 6c. Set up appropriate environments for teaching families
- 6d. Use appropriate methods for teaching adults

- 6e. Involve parents in planning and implementation of family programs
- 6f. Emphasize active learning and development for adults
- 6g. Set goals and plan enrichment for parenting
- 6h. Teach positive parenting skills
- 6i. Critique and evaluate effective programs, curricula and materials for families
- 6j. Select effective, evidence based programs for the population being served and implement with appropriate fidelity
- 6k. Assess and apply research in the field of parent education and family support
- 6l. Develop effective methods to keep families involved in programs and learning
- 6m. Use marketing and promotion techniques to recruit and involve families in parenting education
- 6n. Develop and use effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills
- 6o. Practice self care
- 6p. Develop goals and a plan for professional enrichment
- 6q. Practice effective group process and facilitation

#### **Attitudes 6: Professional Practice Methods Related to Adult Learning and Family Support**

Attitudes exhibited include:

- 6a. Positive view of parent education
- 6b. Awareness of and attention to the needs of parents and the importance of interactive involvement when planning and implementing programs
- 6c. Importance of goals for parent education
- 6d. Sensitivity to parents' feelings and adaptability in teaching and working with parents
- 6e. Encouragement of problem solving through group discussion, in which conflict is positively addressed
- 6f. Responsible approach to parents and professional roles
- 6g. General positive regard toward others
- 6h. Attitudes of self-assurance
- 6i. The importance of close working relationships with families
- 6j. Commitment to attendance and completion of program

***For more information about professional practice and LAPEN's Code of Ethics visit [www.lapen.org](http://www.lapen.org).***



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### Area 6: Professional Practice/Adult Learning and Family Support

<b><u>Title and Topic</u> Seminar/Workshop/ Course/Work or Volunteer Experience</b>	<b>Organizational Sponsor</b>	<b>Date Attended</b>	<b>Clock or Semester Hours Earned</b>

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## **Core Competency Area 7 School and Child Care Relationships**

*Parent Educators understand how children learn, understand the importance of early learning, and recognize the overlapping roles of families, childcare providers, schools and communities in educating children.*

### **Core Knowledge 7: School and Child Care Relationships**

- 7a. How children learn: learning styles, preferences, modalities, strengths, weaknesses, and work habits
- 7b. Critical roles of parents/families as primary teachers in the early learning of children
- 7c. The importance of early literacy and family literacy in children's learning
- 7d. Ways parents can effectively advocate on behalf of their children
- 7e. Ways to facilitate parent involvement in schools/child care settings (including communication, learning at home, parenting, decision-making, volunteering and collaborating)
- 7f. Principles and skills for building effective partnerships and communication by and between parents, teachers, staff and administrators
- 7g. Methods of providing child development information to educators, administrators, and parents

### **Skills 7: School and Child Care Relationships**

Attitudes exhibited include:

- 7a. Facilitate parent involvement and advocacy skills in schools/child care settings
- 7b. Build effective partnerships and communication among parents, teachers, staff, and administrators
- 7c. Communicate child development information to educators and administrators

### **Attitudes 7: School and Child Care Relationships**

Attitudes exhibited include:

- 7a. Positive attitudes toward learning and reading
- 7b. Recognition of the importance of community relationships and support systems in child-rearing





## **Core Competency Area 8 Community Relationships**

*Parent Educators recognize the overlapping roles of families, childcare providers, schools, and communities in raising and educating children; and connect families with other resources available in the community.*

### **Core Knowledge 8: Community Relationships**

- 8a. How family, social institutions, and communities interact and depend on each other
- 8b. Roles of the community and its social institutions in collaborating, nurturing, protecting, and supporting families
- 8c. Roles of the family in the community, including advocacy, involvement, and volunteerism
- 8d. Professional advocacy in the community on behalf of children and families
- 8e. The roles and methods of parents in advocating for children
- 8f. Knowledge of community, financial, and human resources available to support families
- 8g. Methods to help families identify, access, and manage community, financial, health, and human resources for themselves
- 8h. Effective methods to attract and involve school and agency administrators, businesses and community groups in family support and parent education initiatives

### **Skills 8: Community Relationships**

- 8a. Collaborate, nurture, protect and support families
- 8b. Promote Involvement of children and families as advocates and volunteers in the community
- 8c. Help families identify and access financial and human resources
- 8d. Facilitate interactions among family systems, human resource agencies and the community
- 8e. Develop effective methods to attract and involve school agencies, administrators, and community groups in the field

### **Attitudes 8: Community Relationships**

Attitudes exhibited include:

- 8a. The importance of interconnectedness and communality in working with parents
- 8b. Dedication to developing partnership programs within the community
- 8c. Parents are more similar than different



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### Area 8: Community Relationships

<b><u>Title and Topic</u> Seminar/Workshop/ Course/Work or Volunteer Experience</b>	<b>Organizational Sponsor</b>	<b>Date Attended</b>	<b>Clock or Semester Hours Earned</b>

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## **Core Competency Area 9 Assessment and Evaluation**

*Parent Educators understand the key concepts of assessment and evaluation for staff and programs, value assessment and evaluation for continual program and outcomes improvement, and integrate assessment and evaluation into program planning.*

### **Core Knowledge 9: Assessment and Evaluation**

- 9a. Understanding key concepts and terms related to assessment and evaluation
- 9b. Identification of key assessment and evaluation tools in the field of parent education and family support
- 9c. Integration of needs assessment in the initial and continuing design of programs
- 9d. Measurement and evaluation to assist planning, problem solving, and resolution to meet the needs of individual families
- 9e. Conducting an effective program evaluation
- 9f. Use of evaluation results for continual program improvement
- 9g. Administration and supervision issues in conducting and evaluating programs and staff

### **Skills 9: Assessment and Evaluation**

- 9a. Conduct effective program evaluation
- 9b. Apply theoretical concepts and terms related to assessment and evaluation
- 9c. Identify and utilize key assessment and evaluation tools in the field
- 9d. Integrate needs assessment into the initial and continual design of programs
- 9e. Select and use appropriate measures to evaluate programs.
- 9f. Conduct evaluation of staff
- 9g. Use evaluation results for staff development
- 9h. Use evaluation results for continual program improvement

### **Attitudes 9: Assessment and evaluation**

Attitudes exhibited include:

- 9a. Assessment and evaluation can lead to more effective growth and change in parents and program
- 9b. The helpfulness of assessment and evaluation in understanding families



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### Area 9: Assessment and Evaluation

<b>Title and Topic Seminar/Workshop/ Course/Work or Volunteer Experience</b>	<b>Organizational Sponsor</b>	<b>Date Attended</b>	<b>Clock or Semester Hours Earned</b>

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## Professional Development Portfolio for Parent Educators

### Acknowledgements

The core competencies and professional development portfolio were developed to:

- Ensure high quality parenting education programs in Louisiana
- Increase recognition of the professional experience, training, and education that parent educators bring to their work
- Encourage high standards for quality training for professionals who work with families

The development of the core competencies relied heavily on experience and models from other states, especially the “Core Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills for Parent Educators” developed by the University of North Texas Center on Parent Education. See <http://www.ce.unt.edu/cpe>

The development of the LAPEN Professional Development Portfolio relied heavily on the Wisconsin Children’s Trust Fund Professional Development Portfolio for Parent Educators, Home Visitors and Other Professionals Who Work with Families. See <http://wctf.state.wi.us/home>

### Please Join the LAPEN Registry of Louisiana Parent Educators

If you are a parent educator, we encourage you to join the LAPEN Parent Educator Registry. This searchable database was created to facilitate communication and networking among parent educators, to link programs for better sharing of ideas and support, and to provide a means to identify parent educators, including their location, training and areas of expertise. *It is free to register and should only take 5 minutes to complete. Please go to <http://www.lapen.org>.*

### LAPEN Core Competencies Committee

Beverly Grant, MEd, 2009 Co-Chair  
West Feliciana Family Service Center

Pam Wall, LCSW, 2009, Co-Chair  
West Feliciana Family Service Center

Donna Newton, MEd, 2008 Chair  
Parent Educator, Consultant

Melanie Bronfin, JD, BrightStart Initiative, Tulane  
Institute of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health

Kasundra Cyrus, PhD, Southern University Ag Center

Louise Dukes, West Feliciana Family Service Center

Kaye Eichler, CCC-SP, Preschool Programs Section,  
Louisiana Department of Education

Karen Faulk, Office of Community Services, Department  
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Dana Gillet, MS, LSU Ag Center

Gatha Green, RSW, Children’s Coalition of NE LA

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