



Distance Learning Tip Sheet

The following tips are intended to be an “at-a-glance” guide for determining quality in an online program, course or training. For supporting research and more information view the full document: [The Guide to Effective Practices in Online Professional Development](#).

Assessing Quality in Online Professional Development

Programs and courses that meet the following criteria are more likely to offer quality learning experiences.

The organization or institution sponsoring the course will:

- Provide detailed information about the online program and classes
- Have clear expectations and instructions for participants, making coursework easy to understand and ease fears about online learning
- Have adequate and timely technological support for both instructors and participants and have technology that is up to date, easy to utilize and in working condition
- Have designated staff to oversee online education who are knowledgeable about all aspects of online education and provide support to instructors and participants
- Hire instructors that meet high standards in content, online course design and technological competencies, and make those standards available for review
- Utilize both instructor and participant evaluations, matching student learning with intended outcomes

The course design and instruction will:

- Build a community of learners by providing and encouraging ongoing interaction and feedback between students and between students and instructors
- Incorporate multiple strategies to provide understanding of key concepts, demonstration of best practices, application of theory into practice and feedback and coaching
- Provide timely and ongoing feedback from instructor to student and student to student
- Assess student learning throughout the course using multiple strategies (not relying solely on content testing)

The content of the course will:

- Deepen knowledge
- Foster cultural understanding and respect
- Be appropriate to the audience
- Use the most recent, accepted and accurate information available
- Intentionally present a balance of theories, models and/or approaches

Taken from: The Guide to Effective Practices for Online Professional Development, Appendix A, First Edition July, 2003, endorsed by the Minnesota Early Childhood & School-age Trainers Association



Distance Learning Opportunities

Distance learning is offered in many ways. Distance learning opportunities are avenues for professional development that often do not consist of face-to-face meetings. The table below will help you understand the different forms of training.

Types of Trainings	Facilitated <i>(real-time interactions included)</i>	Non-Facilitated <i>(real-time interactions not included)</i>
In-person	In-person: These trainings are face-to-face and include trainer/participant and participant/participant interactions.	
Distance Learning	<p>Live Webinars: An online method of training which should include at least one participant interaction, such as a live discussion, polling questions, Q&A, or chat session.</p> <p>Online Training Modules: Online modules are typically housed on a Learning Management System (LMS). At least one component of real-time facilitated participant interactions such as; scheduled live chats, group activities, and instant feedback from facilitator is included in this type of online training.</p> <p>Hybrid: This training method involves a combination of two or more facilitated training types or one facilitated training type and a non-facilitated.</p>	<p>Self-paced Online Training Modules: Online modules are typically housed on a Learning Management System (LMS). Self-paced modules allow participants to complete training as time allows. There is typically no start or end date to a training. There may be feedback or activity portions included. However, responses from a facilitator and/or other participants will not be immediate. Learning components must be included to assess whether the objectives of the training were met. Some examples include; learning games, case studies, graded quizzes, course forums.</p> <p>Multimedia-based Training (e.g. self-studies): This type of training method is typically presented on a CD-ROM, tape, or DVD using a variety of multimedia components including audio and video. Participants will review the training material and respond to at least one type of learning component to assess whether the objectives of the training were met. Some examples include; a graded quiz, reflection questions, or feedback form.</p>



Distance Learning Opportunities

Please note: This list is provided as a resource for other possible avenues to meet your professional development needs. This is not an exhaustive list of distance learning options. **Self-paced online training or self studies do not meet the QRS annual training requirement for licensed family child care homes.**

[Department of Children and Family Services*](#)

DCFS Mandated Reporter training

[INCCRRA and Illinois Gateways to Opportunity iLearning](#)

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and the Child Care Profession*

A Preventable Tragedy: Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS)*

Level 1 ECE Online Modules

[IL NET: Nutrition Education and Training Program](#)

Online training for child care providers and participants of the child and adult care food program.

[IL STARnet, Regions I & III](#)

Live webinars and Apples Video Magazines as webcasts that can be viewed online or via DVD loans.

[National Food Service Management Institute](#)

Child care courses to learn more about the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

[The Center's IRC: Early Childhood Professional Development](#)

View the Professional Development Workshops Calendar to find trainings offered via webinar.

All courses are *free*.

***Courses are required for IL DCFS Family Child Care pre-service licensing**