Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) Exam Study Guide

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P reparing for the National Council on Family Relations' (NCFR) Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) examination can be a daunting task. Family Life Education is a multi-disciplinary approach covering a wide range of topics. The list of recommended readings is extensive and can be intimidating. For this reason, we have created a comprehensive study tool based on the guidelines that represent the content of family life education and the knowledge, skills and abilities needed for best practice.

The idea for this method of preparation was initiated through the development of a learning contract in a human services related course at Central Michigan University. Dr. Deborah Bailey, CFLE, suggested we work on developing a study tool that would serve our mutual need for preparing for the CFLE exam. Additionally, because we are both currently working on program development as a part of a Non-thesis-Plan B, receiving the Certified Family Life Educator certification would strengthen our knowledge base and represent a progressive step in our learning contracts.

This study guide is based on the CFLE program guidelines that are available through the NCFR website and strictly follows the outline for each content area.
http://www.ncfr.org/sites/default/files/downloads/news/CFLE_Content_and_Practice_Guidelines_2010_0.pdf

In the study guide, each of the ten sections were broken down to identify examples of what a CFLE is equipped to do in practice, as well as, providing some of the theoretical frameworks commonly associated with human services work. We used several of the suggested resources provided on the NCFR website in our development of this guide.

By no means should this study guide be considered an exhaustive listing of requisite knowledge for CFLE professionals within the context of working with families. It should be adapted for further learning and updated as more current information becomes available. This guide was developed before we took the CFLE exam. Therefore, we have no way of knowing how relevant it is to the actual exam. For security purposes we will not be able to adapt the guide after taking the exam. Therefore this guide should be just that, a guide for knowing the basic information about the ten content areas which represent the profession of family life education.

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There are two parts to each of the following 10 content areas. The first is "Content" which gives an overview of the subject matter in this area from the NCFR *University and College Curriculum Guidelines*. The second component includes "Practice" which relates to the tasks expected of an entry-level CFLE.

I FAMILIES & INDIVIDUALS IN SOCIETAL CONTEXTS   13% of Exam

Content: Families in Society - An understanding of families and their relationships to other institutions, such as the educational, governmental, religious, and occupational institutions in society.

e.g., Research and theories related to: Structures and Functions; Cultural Variations (family heritage, social class, geography, ethnicity, race & religion); Dating, Courtship, Marital Choice; Kinship; Cross-Cultural & Minority (understanding of lifestyles of minority families & the lifestyles of families in various societies around the world); Changing Gender Roles (role expectations & behaviors of courtship partners, marital partners, parents & children, siblings, & extended kin); Demographic Trends; Historical Issues; Work/leisure & Family Relationships; Societal Relations (reciprocal influence of the major social institutions & families, i.e., governmental, religious, educational, & economic).

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

A). Identify the characteristics, diversity, & impact of local, national, & global social systems

- ❖ Characteristics, diversity, and impact
    - o Local – Small circles, individually focused, lacking diversity with the largest impact
    - o National – Larger affiliations, group focused, larger pool of diversity, possibility to effect change within one's own culture.
    - o Global – Globally identified affiliations (e.g., Christians), can transcend across cultural differences, world view that has the capability to effect social change.

B). Identify factors (e.g., media, marketing, technology, economics, social movements, natural disasters, war) influencing individuals & families from both contemporary & historical perspectives.

- ❖ Contemporary factors
    - o Technology – Has automated many tasks previously performed by individuals.
    - o Transportation – Allows for family mobility; possibility for nomadic existence. Counterproductive to extended family relationships.
    - o Social networking – Facebook revolutionized the way we communicate on a social level.

- o Natural disasters – Hurricane Katrina displaced hundreds of thousands of families.
- o Economics – Recession era producing undue hardship for families
- ❖ Historical factors
  - o Technology – Provided improved capabilities for industry allowing the opportunity for more family connection (families did not necessarily seize the opportunities).
  - o Transportation – Travel not a prominent feature of families, (until the auto industry boom) translating to more time spent w/ immediate family.
  - o Social movements – Gave oppressed populations more rights (e.g., suffrage, civil rights movement).
  - o Economics – The Great Depression impoverished families from the middleclass on down the socioeconomic chain.

C). Identify factors that influence the relationship between work & family life

- ❖ Dual income families marked an improved economy but equated to less family time or involvement.
  - o Less time spent on meal preparation and family dinners.
  - o More income for material goods and services, less family contribution.
- ❖ Within the face of a poor economy families work longer hours for less pay.
- ❖ Increased need for alternative child care also increases the family's financial burden.
- ❖ Increased demands on interpersonal relationships.

D). Identify social & cultural influences affecting dating, courtship, partner/marital choice & relationships, family composition, & family life

- ❖ Social/Cultural influences
  - o Social networking, ease of transportation options, increased access to goods/services and reduced parental control rigidity has changed the way in which young people date.
  - o Mate selection, generally, is determined at later developmental stages than in previous generations.
    - ▪ Young adults are waiting longer to get married to accommodate educational attainment and financial security.
    - ▪ Cohabitation also contributes to increased marital age and lack of urgency for traditional marriage rituals.
    - ▪ Sex education, birth control options and cultural acceptance of children to unwed parental units may extend courtship periods.
  - o Non traditional family composition is normative in current culture.
    - ▪ Eldercare and adult children's return to the parental home (sometimes w/ offspring of their own) may place four generations together under one roof.

o   Gender role expectations are vastly diverse compared to other historical periods.
- Women in the workforce.
- Women as primary wage earns of the household.
- Men as primary caregivers to offspring.
- Greater distributions of household maintenance across family unit members.

E). Recognize the reciprocal interaction between individuals, families, & various social systems (e.g., health, legal, educational, religious/spiritual)

- ❖ Healthcare
  - o   Needs to be accessible, affordable, and confidential in order to build trust.
  - o   Families & individuals need to be honest and compliant w/ healthcare providers.
  - o   Boundary awareness.
- ❖ Education
  - o   Needs to be strengths based, accessible, collaborative, diverse and inclusive while maintaining cultural awareness.
  - o   Families should support student learning, provide safe environments for learning, and collaborate w/ academic institutions.
  - o   Boundary awareness.
- ❖ Religion
  - o   Appreciation of individual family norms, traditions, values, and differences while providing spiritual guidance intended to strengthen family processes.
  - o   Mutual respect of doctrines governing religious organizations/affiliations.
  - o   Employing ethically sound practices for work with families.
  - o   Boundary awareness.
- ❖ Legal
  - o   Make families/individuals aware of legal rights and responsibilities.
  - o   Identify community based collaboratives designed to alleviate family stress.

F). Assess the impact of demographics (e.g., class, race, ethnicity, generation, gender) on contemporary families

- ❖ Class – Misperceptions that are conflict producing continue to pervade class distinctions.
- ❖ Race/Ethnicity – While tolerance has increased, families still view differences from a deficit model.
- ❖ Generation – Large aging population causing financial strain on social systems. Longevity associated w/ extended care may pose financial hardships for families. Sex is education becoming necessary for aging populations.
- ❖ Gender – Women becoming more instrumental in family financial stability may cause interpersonal conflict. Men becoming more responsible in caretaking duties affect relationship qualities.

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II INTERNAL DYNAMICS OF FAMILIES   12% of Exam

Content: An understanding of family strengths and weaknesses and how family members relate to each other.

e.g., Research & theories related to: Internal Social Processes (including cooperation & conflict); Communication (patterns & problems in husband-wife relationships &in parent-child relationships, including stress & conflict management); Conflict Management; Decision-making and Goal-setting; Normal Family Stresses (transition periods in the family life cycle, three-generation households, caring for the elderly, & dual careers); Family Stress & Crises (divorce, remarriage, death, economic uncertainty & hardship, violence, substance abuse); Special Needs in Families (including adoptive, foster, migrant, low income, military, & blended families as well as those with disabled members).

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

A). Recognize & define healthy & unhealthy characteristics pertaining to:

   1). Family relationships

   o   Healthy characteristics
       ▪   Interpersonal communication - Makes unit members feel valued
       ▪   Mutual trust and responsibility - Makes unit members feel secure
       ▪   Safe environments - Promotes physical and mental health
       ▪   Financial stability - Increases available resources
       ▪   Security (warmth and responsiveness dimensions) - Promotes unit connectedness
       ▪   Active response - Promotes a teamwork perspective, considers unit member contributions essential to conflict resolution, problem solving, and decision making
   o   Unhealthy characteristics
       ▪   Hostility/Abuse - Increases fear, instability; decreases physical and mental health
       ▪   Non-secure environments - Increases fear; decreases physical and mental health
       ▪   Substance use - Decreases availability and attention
       ▪   Non-communication across members - Individualistic perspective
       ▪   Poverty - Increases family stress
       ▪   Low educational attainment - Lessens parental skill and knowledge

- Reactive response - Lacks collaborative perspective; authoritarian leadership style

2). Family development

- o Healthy characteristics
  - Common goal oriented
  - Collaborative communication
  - Common values, norms, and traditions
  - Adaptability in transitional periods
  - On-time ontogenetic maturation
  - Connectedness to unit members, as well as, the unit as a whole
- o Unhealthy characteristics
  - Individualistic goals
  - Non-communication
  - Differentiated values, norms, and traditions.
  - Off-time development
  - Maladaptation in transitional periods
  - Emotional disconnectedness

B). Analyze family functioning using various theoretical perspectives

- ❖ Systems perspective - Family system affects the environment and in turn is affected by the environment.
- ❖ Ecological perspective - All systems are related and affect each other.
- ❖ Structuralist perspective - Preservation of the family structure is the most important goal.
- ❖ Conflict perspective - Deviation from family goals produces friction, therefore conflict; concerned w/ a return to homeostasis.
- ❖ Family life course perspective - Every aspect of the journey through life is important; from birth to death.

C). Assess family dynamics from a systems perspective

- ❖ Evaluate interpersonal relationships w/in the microsystem
- ❖ Observe family processes and functions w/in the microsystem
- ❖ Identify micro and meso system relationships and interactions
- ❖ Identify meso, macro, and exo system influences on the microsystem
- ❖ Identify microsystem influences on external systems

D). Evaluate family dynamics in response to normative & non-normative stressors

- ❖ Normative stressors:
  - o Time constraints

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- o Money management
- o Transitional phases – e.g., child birth, school entry, college departure, empty nest
- o Lack of family resources
- ❖ Non-normative stressors:
  - o Childhood death or serious illness
  - o Divorce, death or abandonment of a spouse/partner
  - o Job lose
  - o Natural disaster

E). Evaluate family dynamics in response to crises

- ❖ Family dynamics that either increase or decrease family stress

  - o Decrease – Open and collaborative communication, maintaining routines, identifying available resources

  - o Increase – Hostility, blame laying, no communication, substance abuse, giving up

F). Facilitate & strengthen communication processes, conflict-management, & problem-solving skills

- ❖ Barriers:
  - o Perceptions & prejudices
  - o Anxiety & defensiveness
  - o Conflicting agendas
  - o Language and/or culture
- ❖ Effective listening:
  - o Be fully present
  - o Interpret descriptively, not judgmentally
  - o Observe nonverbal cues
  - o Reflect disclosed content
  - o Accent & encourage

G). Develop, recognize, & reinforce strategies that help families function effectively

- ❖ Develop:
  - o Establish routines and backup plans
  - o Model and encourage effective listening
  - o Structure family-time e.g., family game night
  - o When possible, establish decision-making collaboration
- ❖ Recognize:
  - o Identify and verbalize interactions that are healthy

- o Identify the uniqueness of individual family members , as well as, unique qualities of the family unit
- o Acknowledge behaviors that are deviation dampening or amplifying for goal attainment
- ❖ Reinforce:
  - o Acknowledge successes
  - o Encourage positive progression
  - o Model healthy behavior
  - o Promote education

III HUMAN GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT ACROSS THE LIFE SPAN 12% of Exam

Content: An understanding of the developmental changes (both typical and atypical) of individuals in families across the lifespan. Based on knowledge of physical, emotional, cognitive, social, moral, and personality aspects.

e.g., Research and theories related to: Prenatal; Infancy; Early and Middle Childhood; Adolescence; Adulthood; Aging.

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

A). Identify developmental stages, transitions, tasks, & challenges throughout the lifespan

- ❖ Early childhood - Ontogenetic maturation – socialization – gross & fine motor skills - potty training
- ❖ Early adolescences - Identity formation – puberty – decision making – peer acceptance
- ❖ Early adulthood – Exploration and commitment – launching - critical thinking - responsibility
- ❖ Middle adulthood – Professional development – reproductive decisions – group think, empathy – time, relationship, and family management
- ❖ Late adulthood – Twilight – retirement – decline in cognitive function – companion loss, care competence, decline in physical health

B). Recognize reciprocal influences

- ❖ Individual development on families
  - o Parental return to school /employment will change individual role expectations initially lending to unbalanced equilibrium.
  - o Offspring deficits (e.g., autism, chronic illness) may breed resentment amongst family member relationships.
  - o Declining capacities of aging family members may change the structure of the home environment for care purposes.

- o   Active parental involvement strengthens family stability
  - ❖ Family development on individuals
    - o   Established norms (e.g., designated chores), values (e.g., importance of education), and traditions (e.g., a family camping trip each year) w/in the family unit
    - o   Families in crisis may establish a developmental trajectory for adverse outcomes.
    - o   Continuity/discontinuity in behaviors lead to stability/instability

C). Recognize the impact of individual health & wellness on families

- ❖ Families that care about their health care about other social issues
- ❖ Healthy families engage in fewer risky behaviors
- ❖ Individual health models positive behavior
- ❖ Good mental health promotes family equilibrium
- ❖ Positive health/wellness may increase family financial stability

D). Assist individuals & families in effective developmental transitions

- ❖ Validate transitional challenges
- ❖ Vocalize concerns – client perspective
- ❖ Identify reciprocal affects – positive and negative
- ❖ Identify effective management strategies
- ❖ Provide resource and educational opportunities

E). Apply appropriate practices based on theories of human growth & development to individuals & families

- ❖ Early childhood – Education, socialization groups, gross and fine motor development, adequate nutrition and physical activity
- ❖ Adolescence – Education, socialization groups, community connectedness, effective communication, autonomy development, adequate nutrition and physical activity
- ❖ Early adulthood – Education, community connectedness and involvement, personal responsibility, effective communication, skill development, interpersonal relationships/connectedness
- ❖ Middle adulthood – Identify personal, professional, and community resources, identify family/individual strengths, socialization groups, personal/family responsibility, skill development, interpersonal relationships/connectedness
- ❖ Late adulthood – Care, health, and financial management, interpersonal relationships/connectedness, grief/loss management

IV. HUMAN SEXUALITY   **8% of Exam**
Content: An understanding of the physiological, psychological, and social aspects of sexual development across the lifespan, so as to achieve healthy sexual adjustment.
e.g., Research and theories related to: Reproductive Physiology; Biological Determinants; Emotional and Psychological Aspects of Sexual Involvement; Sexual Behaviors; Sexual Values & Decision-Making; Family Planning; Physiological & Psychological Aspects of Sexual Response; Influence of Sexual Involvement on Interpersonal Relationships.
Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

A. Recognize the biological aspects of human sexuality
- Sex is biological, gender is a social construct
- XX female XY male
- May be biologically male or female but choose to live as opposite
- External female genitals include mons pubis, clitoris, labia majora, labia minora; collectively known as vulva
    - Mons pubis covers pubic bone; in puberty starts to cover with pubic hair
    - Clitoris contains high concentration of nerve endings, extremely sensitive to stimulation; sole function is sexual arousal, enlarges when aroused, spasms associated with orgasm
    - Labia majora are two folds of spongy flesh extending from the mons pubis
    - Labia minora are smaller folds within the labia majora, sensitive and swell during arousal
- Internal female genitals include vagina, uterus, cervix, ovaries, and fallopian tubes
    - Vagina is a flexible muscle that serves two functions 1. Encompasses the penis during sexual intercourse to aid in sperm entering into the uterus 2. It is the birth canal
    - During arousal expands and lubricates to encompass the penis and make sperm able to survive
        - Hymen is a thin membrane containing blood vessels,
    - Uterus is a hollow thick-walled muscular organ in the pelvic cavity
    - Cervix
    - Ovaries one on each side of the uterus; ovaries are gonads, an organ that produces gametes (sex cells) for reproduction
        - Ova is the egg that ovaries produce
    - Fallopian tubes transport ova (egg)
- Female hormones- estrogen and progesterone
- Ovulation Cycle
    - Occurs in one ovary each month; approximately 28 day cycle
    - Follicular Phase
    - Ovulatory Phase
    - Luteal Phase
- Menstrual Cycle
    - Menstrual Phase-shedding of endometrium
    - Proliferative Phase-endometrium thickens

- o Secretory Phase-produces nutrients to sustain embryo
- Male external genitals are the penis and scrotum
    - o Penis is the organ through which sperm and urine passes; three sections root (attaches the penis within the pelvic cavity), shaft (hangs free), head (enlarged, passes urine)
    - o Scrotum pouch of skin that holds two testicles
- Male internal genitals
    - o Testes are reproductive glands for sperm production and hormone production
    - o Epididymis and Vas Deferens ducts that carry sperm from testicles to the urethra for ejaculation
    - o Seminal vesicles and prostate secrete fluid which makes up seminal fluid
    - o Cowper's glands secrete thick mucus prior to ejaculation
- Male hormone- testosterone
- Spermatogenesis (production of sperm)
    - o Formed in seminiferous tubules (takes 64-72 days)
    - o Immature sperm stored in epididymis; takes about 20 days to travel through the epididymis, which makes them become fertile and mobile
- Semen production
    - o Made up of secretions in seminal vesicle and prostate gland

1. Sexual functioning
- Female response
    - o Excitement (swelling of clitoris, vagina lubricates), plateau (same changes as excitement, clitoris highly sensitive), orgasm (muscle contractions), resolution (unaroused)
- Male response
    - o Excitement (penis becomes erect), plateau (muscles at base of penis have rhythmic contractions, testes retract), orgasm (ejaculation), resolution (unaroused; refraction period)
- Intimacy and closeness
- Reproduction

2. Reproductive health
- Sperm travels through the fallopian tubes, if there is an egg in the ovary the sperm fertilizes the egg, the fertilized egg moves into the uterus and grows into a baby

3. Family planning
- Use of birth control (condoms, pill, IUD, diaphragm, rhythm method, etc.)
- Use of birth control is more socially accepted today (some restrictions)
- Some religions do not condone the use of birth control
- In the US women are waiting longer to have children and having less children
- Cultural differences in access to birth control and/or wanting large families

4. Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Passed from person to person through sexual contact; both curable and non-curable
- Growing threat to public health; known as "silent" because undiagnosed/underdiagnosed
- Are the most common reported infectious disease in the US
- More serious for women in incidence and for impact on health
- Those 15-24 at greater risk due to risk taking and multiple partners

- Higher rates in African Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos
- Spread through: multiple sex partners, high-risk sex partners (someone who has had multiple partners), high-risk sexual behavior (anal intercourse, prostitute), inconsistent or no condom use, substance abuse, poverty, lack of access to health care

B. Recognize the psycho-social aspects of human sexuality
- Casual sex, sex outside of marriage, multiple sex partners is more common in society
- Gay and lesbian sexual relationships are more common, but may not be fully accepted by society
- Judgment from others or partner may impact sexual functioning and actions

1. Characteristics of healthy & ethical sexual relationships
- Both partners consent to sex, both of age
- Boundaries, being able to communicate with partner
- No partner has power over another (like domestic violence situations)
- Being able to communicate about feelings and attitudes especially about birth control

2. Interpersonal dynamics of sexual intimacy
- Sexual intimacy may be a source of conflict in couples (lack of sex, not satisfying)
- Couples who have had one partner have sex outside of marriage (affair) had ……..
- May bring great satisfaction into marriage
- Increase communication

3. Risk factors (e.g., substance abuse, social pressures, media)
- Media influences what people view as the norm for sex and relationships
- Peers influence decision making (have most impact)
- Parents also have large impact on sexual decision making
- Using drugs or alcohol can limit inhibitions to sexual intercourse; may lead to risky decision making when it comes to sex
- Purity pledges often from a religious context are often ineffective and can lead to unprotected sex due to lack of knowledge of contraception

C. Address human sexuality from a value-respectful position
- Sexual partners are diverse, recognize and respect sexual choices
- Lesbians, gay men, transgender…
- Know the practices and risks for these groups
- Recognize own bias
- Take into account cultural norms including religious values

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V. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS   **9% of Exam**
Content: An understanding of the development and maintenance of interpersonal relationships. e.g., Research and theories related to: Self and Others; Communication Skills (listening, empathy, self-disclosure, decision making, problem-solving, and conflict resolution); Intimacy, Love, Romance; Relating to Others with Respect, Sincerity, & Responsibility.
Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

A. Recognize the impact of personality & communication styles
- Three types of communication styles- passive, aggressive, assertive

- Communication styles can hurt or help a relationship
- Couples who are assertive will also become more self-confident and lead into a positive cycle of communication
- Couples who are passive (avoidant) one partner will become dominant and have a negative cycle of communication
- Self-disclosure-more self-disclosure will allow couples to become closer (not all partners are comfortable with high levels of disclosure)
- Listening-men and women listen and communicate differently

B. Recognize the developmental stages of relationships
- Single young adults leave home
- The joining of families through marriage
- Families with young children
- Families with adolescents
- Launching children
- Families in later life

C. Analyze interpersonal relationships using various theoretical perspectives
- Symbolic interaction-people communicate through symbols and interpret the words and actions of others
  - "Looking glass self" is how you see yourself by the way others treat you and what they say to you
  - Self-fulfilling prophecy is that someone defines a situation people act in a way that is expected
- Social exchange-maximizes benefits and minimizes costs
  - Costs are negative such as negative exchanges, complaints, critical remarks; rewards are compliments, agreements, compromises
  - When benefits outweigh the costs partners profit (positive relationship)

D. Develop & implement relationship enhancement & enrichment strategies
- Develop interpersonal skills
- Recognize/state the positive qualities of spouse
- Spouses privately write down reflections on a topic or question then discuss topic or question in depth with each other
- ACME program focuses on security and community building, development of individual and couple awareness, development of knowledge and skill, planning for intentional growth, celebration and closure

E. Develop & implement effective communication, problem solving, & conflict management strategies
- Teaching couples to be assertive with each other can strengthen communication
- Teach couples the value of fair fighting and having fighting rules
- Practice "I messages" and active listening
- Work through a recent argument/problem
- Effective communication
  - Make communication a priority
  - Establish and maintain eye contact
  - Ask open ended questions
  - Use reflective listening

- o Use "I" statements
- o Touch
- o Use "soft" emotions (sad, hurt)
- o Avoid negative expressivity
- o Say positive things about your partner
- o Tell your partner what you want
- o Stay focused on the issue
- o Make specific resolutions to disagreements
- o Give congruent messages
- o Share power
- o Keep the process of communication going

F. Communicate aspects of relationships within the context of their developmental stages
- Single young adults leave home
  - o Young adult needs autonomy to separate from family and gain independence to establish goals in career, peer relations, and school
- The joining of families through marriage
  - o Couples must reorganize relationships with extended family and friends to accommodate new spouse
  - o Need to establish marriage new traditions or integrate traditions from family of origin
- Families with young children
  - o Adjustments in the marital system need to be made; change in roles
  - o Establishing or extending relationships to include grandparents
- Families with adolescents
  - o More flexibility for children to gain independence
- Launching children
  - o Empty nest-couples must rely on each other after children leave home
  - o Boomerang children (children come back after being away, after graduation or divorce)
  - o Move towards an adult-adult relationship with children
  - o Prepare to have relationships with in-laws and grandchildren
- Families in later life
  - o Maintain support with family members/spouse
  - o Dealing with loss of spouse, sibling, child, peer

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VI FAMILY RESOURCE MANAGEMENT   10% of Exam

Content: An understanding of the decisions individuals and families make about developing and allocating resources including time, money, material assets, energy, friends, neighbors, and space, to meet their goals.

e.g., Research and theories related to: Goal Setting and Decision-Making; Development and Allocation of Resources; Social Environment Influences; Life Cycle and Family Structure Influences; Consumer Issues and Decisions.

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

A). Identify personal, familial, professional, & community resources available to families

- ❖ Personal
    - o Work ethic, parenting style, communication style, temperament, values
- ❖ Familial
    - o Family processes, interactions, communication, decision making, traditions, norms, values
- ❖ Professional
    - o Assistance programs (food, housing, financial), mental health services (health departments, support groups), education (skills training, parenting classes)
- ❖ Community
    - o Religious affiliations, outreach programs (YMCA, AA, Al-Anon,), community action agencies, recreational organizations, socialization groups (Mom-to Mom, Big Brothers/Big Sisters)

B). Recognize the reciprocal relationship between individual/family/community choices & resources

- ❖ Examples
    - o Parenting classes will build parenting skills leading to more effective parenting practices
    - o Childcare assistance will increase employment availability increasing financial stability
    - o Skills training/development will lead to increased employability
    - o Healthcare accessibility increases overall family health increasing family functioning domains
    - o Housing assistance increases family stability

C). Apply value-clarification strategies to decision-making

- ❖ Define values:
    - o Intrinsic – People, e.g., teachers
    - o Extrinsic – Things, e.g., money
    - o Systematic – Ideas, e.g., religion
- ❖ Identify values:
    - o Desired values -- what we would like to value
    - o Stated values -- what we say we value
    - o Actual values -- what we actually value and act on
- ❖ Clarify:
    - o Example

- I say that family is important (stated value), I think that families should interact (desired value), I move far away for a new job (actual value)
    - Map possible outcomes of decisions based on value beliefs

D). Apply goal-setting strategies & evaluate their outcomes

- Define the end goal, identify paths to the goal, identify challenges to achieving the goal, take action
- Example: Removal of children from parental custody for drug use and trafficking offense
    - Define desired outcome
        - Regaining child custody
    - Identify immediate goals
        - Sobriety
        - Intervention programs
        - Visitation schedules
        - Discontinuing criminality
    - Identify intermediate goals
        - Relationship building w/ children
        - Gainful employment
        - Safe and secure housing
        - Adhering to court dispositions
        - Continuing sobriety
    - Identify long-term goals
        - Full child custody
        - Maintaining sobriety
        - Establishing healthy lifestyles
        - Healthy family relationships

E). Apply decision-making strategies

- Identify perceptions and feelings about the issue
- Define the issue
- Brainstorm options and desired outcomes
- Define the goals of the decision
- Select the most individual/family appropriate option
- Take action

F). Apply organizational & time management strategies

- Define goals/tasks
- Categorize goals/tasks by importance and deadline
- Map a timeline to for achieving goals/tasks

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G). Apply basic financial management tools & principles

- ❖ Establish a realistic budget based on:
    - o Identified resources necessary to achieve family goals
    - o Current financial obligations
- ❖ Organize budgetary needs in order of importance:
    - o Actual needs
    - o Projected needs
    - o Desired needs
- ❖ Design payment schedules:
    - o In order of priority
    - o To operate w/in the identified budget
- ❖ Reevaluate management plan:
    - o When employment statuses change
    - o Family structure shifts
    - o To measure budget performance
    - o To reprioritize expenditures/goals

H). Inform individuals & families of consumer rights, responsibilities, & choices of action/ advocacy

- ❖ United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection(1985)
    - o Basic Needs
    - o Safety
    - o Information
    - o Choice
    - o Representation
    - o Redress
    - o Consumer Education and
    - o Healthy Environment
- ❖ Responsibilities
    - o Stay informed
    - o Evaluate purchasing decisions
    - o Consider deleterious effects
    - o Honor obligations

I). Apply stress management strategies

- ❖ Identify your sources of stress – e.g., financial
- ❖ Identify current coping techniques – e.g., excessive spending
- ❖ Avoid needless stress – e.g., over commitment
- ❖ Modify stressful situations – e.g., delegate duties

- ❖ Reframe stressful contexts – e.g., identify a positive outcomes
- ❖ Adapt to things you cannot change – e.g., relinquish control
- ❖ Make time for fun – e.g., spend time w/ friends
- ❖ Adopt a healthy lifestyle – e.g., stay physically active and attend to nutritional needs

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VII PARENTING EDUCATION & GUIDANCE   11% of Exam

Content: An understanding of how parents teach, guide and influence children and adolescents as well

as the changing nature, dynamics and needs of the parent child relationship across the lifespan.

e.g., Research and theories related to: Parenting Rights and Responsibilities; Parenting Practices/Processes; Parent/Child Relationships; Variation in Parenting Solutions; Changing Parenting Roles Across the Life Cycle.

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

A). Promote healthy parenting from a systems perspective

- ❖ Parental unit - Attending to mind, body, and soul will have a trickle-down effect
    - o Parental daily activity encourages child daily activity (i.e., modeling)
- ❖ Family unit - Decisions that affect one member affect all members
    - o Buying a new car may mean giving up Friday night pizza
- ❖ Positive actions elicit positive feedback across systems
    - o Cultivating academic skills at home may improve college opportunities

B). Promote healthy parenting from a child's & parents developmental perspective
- ❖ Development is a lifespan process for all individuals
    - o Parents and children develop through ages, stages , normative events, non-normative events, and transitions
    - o Parenting should be consistent, responsive, sensitive to developmental stages, provide high-quality physical care, and promote interpersonal interaction

C). Apply strategies based on the child's age/stage of development to promote effective developmental outcomes

- ❖ Optimal mental/physical function
    - o Normalized sleep patterns - Consistent routines
    - o Adequate nutrition - Meal/snack planning
    - o Age appropriate socialization - Activities/opportunities for peer/community interactions
    - o Regular wellness checks/medical care - Improves physical health

D). Identify different parenting styles & their associated psychological, social, & behavioral outcomes

- ❖ Authoritative - High demand/high response
  - o Promotes achievement, responsibility, social conscientiousness, stability and security, positive self-perception, active participation, healthy lifestyles
  - o Demonstrates optimal adaptive outcomes
- ❖ Authoritarian - High demand/low response
  - o Promotes conformity, conflict, personal responsibility, self-perception ambivalence, reactive behaviors, moderately healthy lifestyles
  - o Demonstrates moderate adaptive outcomes
- ❖ Indifferent/neglectful - Low demand/low response
  - o Promotes low self-esteem, capability ambivalence, insecurity, negative peer conformity, risky behaviors, unhealthy lifestyles
  - o Demonstrates poor adaptive outcomes
- ❖ Permissive - Low demand/high response
  - o Promotes irresponsible, risky, and reactive behaviors, unhealthy lifestyles, selfish attitudes, non-compliance in group activities
  - o Demonstrates worst developmental trajectories

E). Promote various parenting models, principles, & strategies

- ❖ Contextual model of parenting
  - o Parental goals and values influence parenting styles leading to child outcomes
- ❖ Dysfunctional model of parenting
  - o Tough love, control, authority, manipulation and compliance
- ❖ Functional model of parenting
  - o Cooperation, communication, responsiveness, warmth

F). Evaluate the effectiveness & appropriateness of various parenting strategies

- ❖ Strategies that are effective in eliciting desired behaviors
  - o Effective use of time-out
  - o Clearly communicating expectations
  - o Consequences for behavior
  - o Be present in communication
- ❖ Strategies that are not effective in eliciting desired behavior
  - o Deprivation
  - o Corporal punishment
  - o Avoidance/withdrawal

G). Recognize various parenting roles (e.g., father/mother, grandparents, other caregivers) & their impact on & contribution to individuals & families

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- ❖ Mother/Father
  - o Instrumental in overall child development
    - ▪ Responsible for physical care, emotional wellbeing, socialization, safety, security, attachment, establishment of traditions, values, norms, social responsibility, connectedness
- ❖ Grandparents
  - o Generally provide a supportive role to parental dyads
  - o Provide historical context, socialization, fellowship, opportunities for service to others, physical care
- ❖ Other caregivers – extended family, childcare providers, babysitters
  - o Should provide a supporting role to family of origin care
  - o Socialization, responsibility, connectedness, fellowship, physical care

H). Recognize parenting issues within various family structures (e.g. single, blended, same-sex)

- ❖ Single parenthood reduces physical availability, financial stability, and increases parental role and work load
- ❖ Blended families integrate individuals that may have differing values, traditions, beliefs, and norms which can cause conflict
  - o Family of origin loyalty can produce negative interpersonal interactions between relationships in new family formations
- ❖ Same-sex families need to navigate through community perceptions of family structure
  - o Children may not have exposure to a maternal/paternal figure
  - o Peer relationships may be compromised due to stigma

I). Recognize the impact of societal trends on parenting (e.g., technology, substance abuse, media)

- ❖ Technology
  - o Social networking sites keep children connected to peer groups continuously
    - ▪ Makes children more accessible to predators
  - o Cellphones given to young children prior to maturational readiness
- ❖ Substance abuse
  - o Home-based cook labs are producing substances that are unidentifiable, difficult/impossible to counteract, and are highly volatile
  - o Exposure to manufacturing of substances is physically and developmentally harmful
  - o Parental drug related offences are placing responsibility of childcare on extended family
  - o Substance use precipitates violence, unemployment, poor parenting practices, maladaptive behaviors, criminality
- ❖ Media

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- o Provides excessive exposure of personal information
- o Provides inaccurate information
- o Cultivates unhealthy self-images
- o Desensitizes children to social issues

J). Recognize the influence of cultural differences & diversity

- ❖ Cultural differences
    - o Individual experience impacts interpersonal relationships
    - o Are frequently misunderstood
    - o May appear to be deviant by contemporary standards
- ❖ Diversity
    - o May cause conflict
    - o Can open minds
    - o Educate

K). Identify strategies to advocate for children in various settings (e.g. schools, legal system, healthcare)

- ❖ School
    - o Seek out programming to support child learning
    - o Meet with faculty
    - o Identify accessible school, community, and family resources
    - o Identify alternative materials, settings, educators to support student learning
- ❖ Legal system
    - o Identify rights and policies
    - o Devise collaborative resource management plans
    - o Employ community –based corrections alternatives when appropriate
- ❖ Healthcare
    - o Identify available resources
    - o Explain procedures to reduce anxiety
    - o Identify healthy lifestyle practices

L). Recognize the various pathways to parenting & their associated issues & challenges, (e.g. assisted

reproduction, adoption, childbirth, blending)

- ❖ Assisted reproduction
    - o Heredity may not be traceable
    - o It may take many attempts to produce desired outcome
    - o Can be very costly

o   Requires third party involvement
- ❖ Adoption
    o   Biologic children may not welcome adoptee
    o   Developmental progression may be unknown
    o   Developmental deficits may necessitate costly remediation
    o   Discriminatory practices in adoption policies
- ❖ Childbirth
    o   Routine establishment
    o   Sibling acceptance
    o   Physically taxing
    o   Emotionally taxing
    o   Financially draining
- ❖ Blending
    o   Differing values, traditions, and beliefs produce conflict
    o   Parent of origin availability may decrease
    o   Sharing space with non-relative family members may produce conflict
    o   Step-sibling resentment/jealousy

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VIII. FAMILY LAW & PUBLIC POLICY   **8% of Exam**
Content: An understanding of legal issues, policies, and laws influencing the well-being of
families.
e.g., Family and the Law (relating to marriage, divorce, family support, child custody, child
protection and rights, and family planning); Family and Social Services; Family and Education;
Family and the Economy; Family and Religion; Policy and the Family (public policy as it affects
the family, including tax, civil rights, social security, economic support laws, and regulations.)
Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

A. Identify current law, public policy, & initiatives that regulate & influence professional
conduct & services
- Code of ethics- Protects clients from ethical issues; guide for work in FLE
- HIPPA- Protects the privacy of health information
- FERPA- Protects the privacy of educational information
- IRB- Protects humans in studies

B. Identify current laws, public policies, & initiatives that affect families
- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
    o   Amount of sick leave, paid leave to care for family members
- Same sex marriage laws (prop 8, civil unions, marriage)
    o   Few states grant same sex marriage, some allow civil unions, and some provide
        rights to unmarried same sex couples
- Defense of Marriage Act
    o   Marriage should be between a man and a woman
- Food Assistance Program

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- o Have to meet eligibility requirements, for those in poverty; food stamps
- Medicaid
  - o Health coverage for low-income families, long-term elderly, and other specialized populations
- Medicare
  - o Health services to the elderly
- Social security
  - o Can get services at age 65, in the next 50 years social security will run out
- Immigration/illegal immigration
  - o Children born to illegal immigrants, who should be granted citizenship, should the government provide for illegal immigrants
- Women's rights (birth control, abortion)
  - o Who has access to birth control, who has it paid for with insurance, is abortion acceptable, at what point, Plan B pill
- IDEA act and IEP
  - o Educational learning for those with learning, physical, mental disabilities
- EITC (earned income tax credit)
  - o For those in poverty who meet guidelines receive money from government based on income
- Child tax credit
  - o Tax breaks dependent on number of children

C. Inform families, communities, & policy makers about public policies, initiatives, & legislation that affect families at local, state, & national levels
- Lobby for policy that affects families at all levels
- Make policy easy for families, communities, and policy makers to understand (short, common vocabulary)
- Make presentations, flyers, displays at different functions to make everyone aware of policy and how it affects them
- Teach about policy in any classes with children, families, or couples

IX. PROFESSIONAL ETHICS & PRACTICE   **5% of Exam**
Content: An understanding of the character and quality of human social conduct, and the ability to critically examine ethical questions and issues as they relate to professional practice.
e.g., Research and theories related to: Formation of Social Attitudes and Values; Recognizing and Respecting the Diversity of Values and the Complexity of Value Choice in a Pluralistic Society; Examining Value Systems and Ideologies systematically and objectively; Social Consequences of Value Choices; Recognizing the Ethical Implications of Social and Technological Changes, Ethics of Professional Practice.
Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

A. Demonstrate professional attitudes, values, behaviors, & responsibilities to clients, colleagues, & the broader community, that are reflective of ethical standards & practice
- Values-beliefs and attitudes that provide direction to everyday living
- Ethics-beliefs we hold about what is right conduct
- Use professional principles/code of ethics for Family Life Education
  - o List of Ethical Principles some are…

- - Help family members set goals, respect diversity, do no harm, advocate for child, follow mandated reporting, support ongoing knowledge in FLE, knowledge about community resources, uphold laws that relate to FLE
  - Six moral principles for the foundation of ethical performance
    - Autonomy- promotion of self-determination; the freedom to choose own direction
    - Nonmaleficence-avoiding doing harm; refrain from actions that hurt clients (intentionally or unintentionally)
    - Beneficence-promoting good for others
    - Justice- provides equal treatment to all people regardless of age, sex, race, etc.
    - Fidelity- make honest promises and honor commitments to those served
    - Veracity- truthfulness

B. Evaluate, differentiate, & apply diverse approaches to ethical issues & dilemmas
  - Steps in thinking through ethical dilemmas
    - Identify the problem of dilemma
      - Gather as much information as possible, try to look at problem from different perspectives
    - Identify the potential issues involved
      - List and describe the critical issues, evaluate the rights and well-being of all affected
    - Review the relevant ethics codes
      - See if codes offer any solutions to the problem; seek guidance from others in the field
    - Know the applicable laws and regulations
      - It is important to know current laws/regulations especially with issues of confidentiality, reporting child abuse, testing/assessments
      - Know the rules and regulations of the organization you work in
    - Obtain consultation
      - Consult with other professionals or colleagues to get a new perspective
    - Consider possible and probable action
      - Brainstorm, list possible courses of action
    - Enumerate the consequences of various decisions
      - Think about each course of action and the implications they may have to the client, others involved, and as the practitioner
    - Decide on what is the best course of action
      - Take all information into account and choose what you feel is the best course of action; evaluate and follow up

C. Identify & apply appropriate strategies to deal with conflicting values
  - From the webinar…
    - List of relationships involved
    - See what principles in FLE apply
    - Identify the contradictions in the principles
    - Application of virtues
    - Look for possible solutions
    - Implement solution
  - Consult with coworkers to brainstorm strategies
  - Take client needs, resources, culture, and values into account

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- Follow principles of CFLE to ensure best practices in ethical situations

D. Demonstrate respect for diverse cultural values & ethical standards
- Know that other cultures place value on different things
- What may not be important in your culture may be very important to another culture
- Must take culture into perspective when working with clients

X. FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION METHODOLOGY   12% of Exam

Content: An understanding of the general philosophy and broad principles of family life education in conjunction with the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate such educational programs.

e.g., Research and theories related to: Planning and Implementing; Evaluation (materials, student progress, & program effectiveness); Education Techniques; Sensitivity to Others (to enhance educational effectiveness); Sensitivity to Community Concerns and Values (understanding of the public relations process).

Practice—A CFLE is prepared to:

A. Employ a variety of current educational strategies
- Use a variety of teaching techniques
- Use of small group discussion, small group activity, partner work, videos, mini lecture
- People have different ways of learning information; using a variety of these techniques will help participants gain information in their own learning style

B. Employ techniques to promote application of information in the learner's environment
- Having participant actively engage in the program makes information stay with them longer
- Giving time to practice skills through role play activities or other active activities
- Giving homework to practice skills at home and report on how the implementation went

C. Create learning environments that are respectful of individual vulnerabilities, needs, & learning styles
- Give everyone time to reflect on questions and to write down responses
- Use a variety of methods for teaching (video, discussion, activities)
- Give all participants the opportunity to participate, but do not pressure them to share
- If serious issues surface (i.e. disclosure of sexual abuse), refer participant to needed services

D. Demonstrate sensitivity to diversity & community needs, concerns, & interests
- Some needs or specific issues may need addressed more with one audience over another
- Making connections in the community you will be working in, will help people trust you and you to see needs
- Using people from the community and culture as leaders or speakers can help in determining relevant needs
- When developing classes or programs always take diversity into account

E. Develop culturally-competent educational materials & learning experiences
- Some material may not be culturally relevant to all cultures
- Talk to a community leader of your target audience (culture) to see what adaptations need to be made or what may need to be added.
- Community leader will also guide on respect for culture (don't look directly in eyes)

- Some cultures do not believe in seeking help, research to see how to market program for participation

F. Identify appropriate sources for evidence-based information
- Use internet resources of approved evidence based information
- Resources like NCFR will have information of EBP
- Information that is based on theory will be better used in development of EBP

G. Develop educational experiences
- Have information that is educational and that families/couples can learn and apply
- Learn from own experience and the experiences of others; sharing of experiences helps people learn and relate

1. Needs assessment
- Talk to target audience to see what needs there are
- Have audience fill out questionnaire to find needs
- Talk to someone who works with target population or in the community to gain information/find needs of the population

2. Goals & objectives
- Goals and objectives may be pre developed by facilitator or by the nature of the program (i.e. court mandated parenting classes)
- Goals and objectives may be developed with the interaction of program participants
- Goals and objectives need to be clear to all participants
- Important to establish goals, outcomes, and objectives so participants know what to expect and what they will be learning

3. Content development
- Sometimes content is developed by the facilitator on specific topics
- Sometimes participants help guide the leader towards content they would like to discuss
- Use resources that are research based (evidence based practices)
- Use material and content that is easy for everyone to read and understand

4. Implementation
- Use language that is appropriate to all individuals (usually 8th grade vocabulary)
- Be sure material and implementation is culturally sensitive if needed
- Allow enough time for sessions, but don't overload sessions with information
- Have objectives, outcomes, and goals of the program

5. Evaluation/outcome measures
- Few programs have rigorous evaluation
- Having an evaluation of programs strengthens the validity of the program
- Use of logic models
  - Inputs-resources dedicated or used by the program (money, staff, volunteers, supplies)
  - Activities-strategies, techniques, treatment that makes up the program
  - Outputs-direct product of program activities, measured in volume of work accomplished (number of classes held, brochures distributed)
  - Outcomes-benefits to individuals or group that emerge after participation; initial, intermediate, and long-term outcomes
- Pre-test and post-test of knowledge/skills/attitudes before and after program

H. Promote & market educational programs

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- Advertise programs in appropriate locations, especially when trying to reach a target population
- Use word of mouth to get more participants
- Have participants write down or share information of another family or couple that may want to participate
- Make connection of leaders in community to help advertise program in community

I. Implement adult education principles into work with families & parents
- Andragogy- process of education with adults
- Highly effective methods with adult learners
  - Buzz/task orientated groups
  - Role playing
  - Discussion group (3 to 15 participants)

J. Establish & maintain appropriate personal & professional boundaries
- Know how much self-disclosure is appropriate when working in a group
- Know when to refer participants to other resources (counseling)