

Planning for Professional Development in Child Care

**A Guide to
Best Practices
and Resources**

Developed by the
North Carolina Institute for
Early Childhood Professional Development
in cooperation with the
North Carolina Division of Child Development
and the
North Carolina Partnership for Children

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About the Institute

The North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development was established in 1993 by the North Carolina Division of Child Development (DCD). The Institute is a state-level advisory group of practitioners, agencies and institutions from throughout the state. The Institute is dedicated to defining and advocating for the implementation of a comprehensive early childhood professional development system that provides supportive, accessible, and individually appropriate education which is linked to compensation in order to ensure high quality care and education services for children and families.

Members of the Institute serve three year terms and include representatives from the following:

- Child Care Providers: teachers, directors and family child care providers
- Child Care Resource and Referral Service Agencies
- Head Start (State Collaboration Office and local agencies)
- Child Care Commission
- Interagency Coordinating Council
- Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services
- Community Colleges
- Four Year Institutions of Higher Learning (public and private)
- North Carolina Cooperative Extension
- Smart Start (state and local partnerships)
- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project
- Division of Public Health
- Department of Public Instruction
- Division of Child Development

Institute members serve on at least one of the following task groups: Regulations and Programs, Public Awareness, Leadership and Mentoring, Professional Development Infrastructure and Coordination, and Compensation and Education.

For more information on the Institute, contact the NCD CD at (919) 662-4499 or visit the website at www.ncchildcare.org.

Introduction and Acknowledgments

This manual was written for those individuals and organizations who are involved in designing, coordinating and promoting professional development opportunities for the child care workforce in their local community.

It is particularly designed for use by agencies and individuals participating in Smart Start, especially those working on professional development efforts. However, the approach to professional development outlined in this manual is based on the research and experience of many states and local communities, and should be useful to non-Smart Start initiatives as well.

Smart Start was initiated in 1993 to address the developmental needs of preschool children in North Carolina and to enable local communities to develop innovative and collaborative strategies to ensure their children arrive at school healthy and ready to succeed.

Smart Start funds are now available in all 100 counties, yet there is still much work left to be done to meet the needs of working families for high quality early care and education and related services. One of the most important components of providing high-quality early care and education services is planning for the education and training of staff. This manual is designed to serve as a guide to help local communities in this planning process.

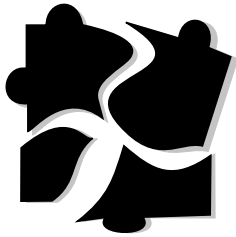
Please note: the planning process described in this manual is similar to, but not identical to, that required for developing and submitting a Smart Start strategic plan to the North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC). Some areas of overlap are noted in this manual. For questions about strategic plans, contact NCPC at (919)821-7999.

The manual was developed with the help of child care professionals from throughout North Carolina and includes:

- an overview of professional development: what it is, how a professional development system can help achieve the goal of high-quality child care, the relationship between professional development and licensing requirements and the connection between education, compensation, and the quality of care;
- how to build a professional development plan for a local community or region: what to include, and how to guide the planning process;
- examples of plan components;
- resources available for use in building a plan.

This manual can be used in a number of ways, depending on your local initiative’s activities and how long the collaboration has been in operation. Uses may be:

- to give collaborators who do not work directly in child care an overview of the importance of education and training in creating high quality care and education services for children;
- to guide a local professional development committee in building a plan for its workforce;
- to help committees evaluate existing plans and make improvements as needed.



The manual contains examples of both best practices in professional development and of tools that can be used in the planning process. Examples are noted by use of the puzzle graphic at left.

Acknowledgments

Many individuals and organizations have given generously of their time and wisdom to make this publication a reality. An earlier version of the manual authored by members of the Institute provided much of the material, and additional sections were provided by writer/ editor Elizabeth A. Nilsen. Among the many others who deserve heartfelt thanks are the Best Practices Committee and the Public Awareness Task Group of the North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development, and reviewers Peggy Ball, Marsha Munn and members of the Executive Committee of the Institute.

Note: in this manual the word “provider” is used to designate all those working in all types of child care settings, both centers and family child care homes.

Additionally, when the terms “child care” or “early care and education” are used, they are intended to be inclusive of child care settings serving young children of all ages, from those caring for infants to those serving school-age children. We regret that we have not yet found more precise terminology to reflect the diversity of our communities’ programs.

An Overview of Professional Development

Professional development refers to the ongoing, formal preparation that gives child care staff the knowledge and skills they need to best serve children and families. Well-designed professional development includes a broad range of activities and audiences:

- it benefits providers in all settings, both child care centers and family child care homes;
- it responds to the needs of providers at all levels, from entry-level assistants to multi-site directors;
- it spans a continuum of depth of knowledge, from short-term workshop-style training to college-level education.

In this manual, professional development will sometimes be referred to as “education and training.” Education is coursework taken at a college or university. As discussed below, the best quality care is provided by caregivers who have college-level preparation in early care and education. Training is usually designed to deliver a very specific body of knowledge or to teach a specific skill (such as playground safety or first aid). Training should be used as a follow-up to, rather than a substitute for, education.

The Importance of Professional Development

The last two decades have seen increasing interest in learning about the experiences of children in child care settings: what settings are good, which do not benefit children, and how child care influences later school performance and behavioral patterns. In particular, we have learned a great deal in recent years about why children need high-quality child care, and how to improve programs to reach that high quality.

First, we know that children who receive high-quality child care services benefit throughout their lives. They have better language and emerging math skills, and better social abilities than children in poorer-quality settings.* They enter school ready and eager to succeed.

The advantages of quality care endure to adulthood. Adults who received high quality child care services as young children:

- are less likely to have children out of wedlock;
- are less likely to be arrested;
- earn higher salaries;
- are more likely to complete high school.**

* Source: Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study Team (1995). *Cost Quality and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers*. Denver, CO: University of Colorado at Denver.

** Source: Schweinhart, L., et al (1992). *Significant Benefits: The High/Scope Perry Preschool Study Through Age 27*. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press.

While we know that good care is important, the *Cost, Quality and Outcomes* study (1995) indicates that the quality of care most children (including North Carolina's) receive is "barely adequate." There is still much to be done to give our children the care they deserve. One area which needs attention is the preparation of our workforce.

Working with children is a profession that requires knowledge of how children grow and develop, skills to communicate effectively with children and parents, and a great amount of dedication and love for the work. Contrary to what many believe, working in child care is not "just baby-sitting" or an extension of parenting—"women's" work. People are not born with the skills to effectively work in classrooms or to run a family child care business. Specialized education and training are essential for these individuals to succeed.

Recent research initiatives underscore two essential findings: that high-quality child care is important to good outcomes for children, and that caregiver education and training are key to providing good care. Here are some of the findings from the last 15 years:

- Staff education and training have been demonstrated to be among the most critical elements in preventing harm to children and in improving children's experiences and development in child care. (*How Safe? The Status of the State Efforts to Protect Children in Care*, 1995.)
- When family child care providers obtain training, researchers found children were more securely attached to their caregivers, more engaged in activities, and spent less time wandering about aimlessly (Galinsky, Howes and Kontos, 1995.)
- Children score better on tests of cognitive and social competence when their caregivers have higher levels of child related training and formal education (Clarke-Stewart and Gruber; 1984).
- Teacher preparation (both pre-service and in-service) significantly predicts program quality. Higher program quality is linked to more positive child outcomes, especially in terms of language and representational skills—both critical for school success (Epstein, 1994).
- Overall educational levels of caregivers appear to positively affect outcomes for children (Berk, 1985; Whitebrook, Howes and Phillips, 1989).
- Experience alone is not a predictor of effective caregiving (Howes 1983; Kontos and Fiene 1987) and has actually been linked to less cognitive and social stimulation of infants and increased apathy among infants (Ruopp, Travers, Glantz and Coelen, 1970).
- The education of child care teaching staff and their work environment are essential determinates of the quality of child care received. Teaching staff provide more sensitive and appropriate caregiving if they have completed more years of formal education and have received early childhood training at the college level (*The National Child Care Staffing Study*, 1988).

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- The quality of child care is primarily related to lower child ratios (the number of children per caregiver), staff education, and administrators' prior experience. In addition, certain characteristics distinguish poor, mediocre, and good-quality centers, the most important of which are teacher wages, education, and specialized training. Center quality increases as the percentage of staff with a high level of education increases (*Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes in Child Care Centers*, 1995).
 - Children's peer play and attachment security are enhanced when their teachers meet at least Child Development Associate (CDA) credential standards. However; the highest levels of complex peer play among children are found in classrooms with teachers who have college degrees in early childhood education or child development and advanced early childhood training. Children in classrooms with teachers who have college degrees and advanced training have higher adaptive language scores than children in classrooms with any other level of teacher background (*The Florida Child Care Quality Improvement Study: Interim Report*, 1995).
 - Global quality, teacher sensitivity and responsiveness are most likely to improve when programs have teachers with at least a CDA (Child Development Associate) credential, although the highest scores are obtained in classrooms with teachers with college degrees and advanced training (*The Florida Child Care Quality Improvement Study: Interim Report*, 1995).

The Need for Professional Development Systems

In response to this clear connection between provider preparation and the quality of care, there are many organizations in North Carolina working to make opportunities available for professional development for child care staff. For example, every community college offers courses in early childhood, and resource and referral agencies and Cooperative Extension agents regularly schedule workshops. Smart Start and the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project provide additional resources on a statewide level. These opportunities for professional preparation are shown in Figure 1.

The availability of opportunities, however, does not necessarily mean that local providers are being well-trained and educated to serve children. There may be many reasons for this:

- the courses or workshops may not be scheduled at times or in locations that meet providers' needs, particularly in rural areas where distance makes training inaccessible;
- the topics may not be the right ones, or perhaps the same topics are offered every year, with no variety;
- the offerings are almost all workshops, with no opportunity for providers to earn college credit;

Figure 1: Early Childhood Professional Preparation in North Carolina

Graduate Level Curriculum (credit)								✓	✓
Pre-Graduate Level Curriculum (credit)							✓		
Four-Year University/College Curriculum (credit)						✓			
Community College Curriculum (credit)		✓	✓	✓	✓				
College (CEUs)	✓								
Other Training Institutions: Cooperative Extension CCR&R Head Start Professional Associations (CEUs or clock hours)	✓								
	Informal Workshop Training (clock hours/CEUs)	Credential(s) NCECC NCFCCC NCECAC CDA	Certificate (exit point in AAS degrees)	Diploma (exit point in AAS degree)	AAS degree	BA/BS degree	B-K license	MAMS degree	PhD degree



T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project
Scholarship Support

CEU

Continuing Education Unit

CCR&R

Child Care Resource & Referral

NCECC

NC Early Childhood Credential

NCFCCC

NC Family Child Care Credential

NCECAC

NC Early Childhood Administration
Credential

CDA

Child Development Associate Credential

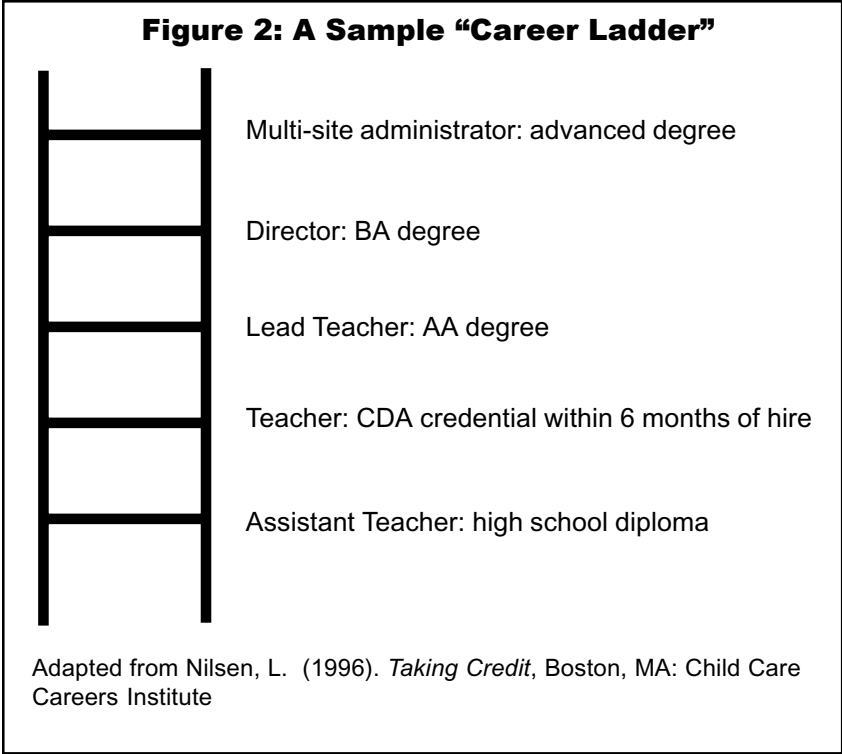
- the cost of education and training may be prohibitive;
- there may be opportunities for one level of providers—entry level teachers, for example—but none for other roles (such as directors);
- providers may not know the training or education is available.

A professional development system is a comprehensive approach to providing education and training opportunities that helps avoid these (and other) problems. When an effective professional development system has been built in a community*:

- there is a vision to serve all those working with children in all settings (centers, homes and school-age child care programs);
- there is a “core body of knowledge,” a set of information and skills that all providers need to know, and education and training is offered to make sure that this entire body of knowledge is transmitted;
- the requirements and incentives for providers to pursue professional development opportunities are clear;
- there is a continuum of education and training for all providers from entry-level to experienced. Education and training at one level can be used to progress to the next level;
- there is a system to make sure that the education and training itself is of high quality;
- there is a process to assess what education and training providers in a community need;
- information about education and training opportunities is widely available;
- information about what opportunities providers have already pursued is available for monitoring and planning purposes;
- the education and training opportunities are at times and in places where providers can attend;
- increased knowledge and competence are assessed and rewarded by increasing compensation;
- education and training is well-funded so that providers are able to attend, regardless of personal financial situations.*

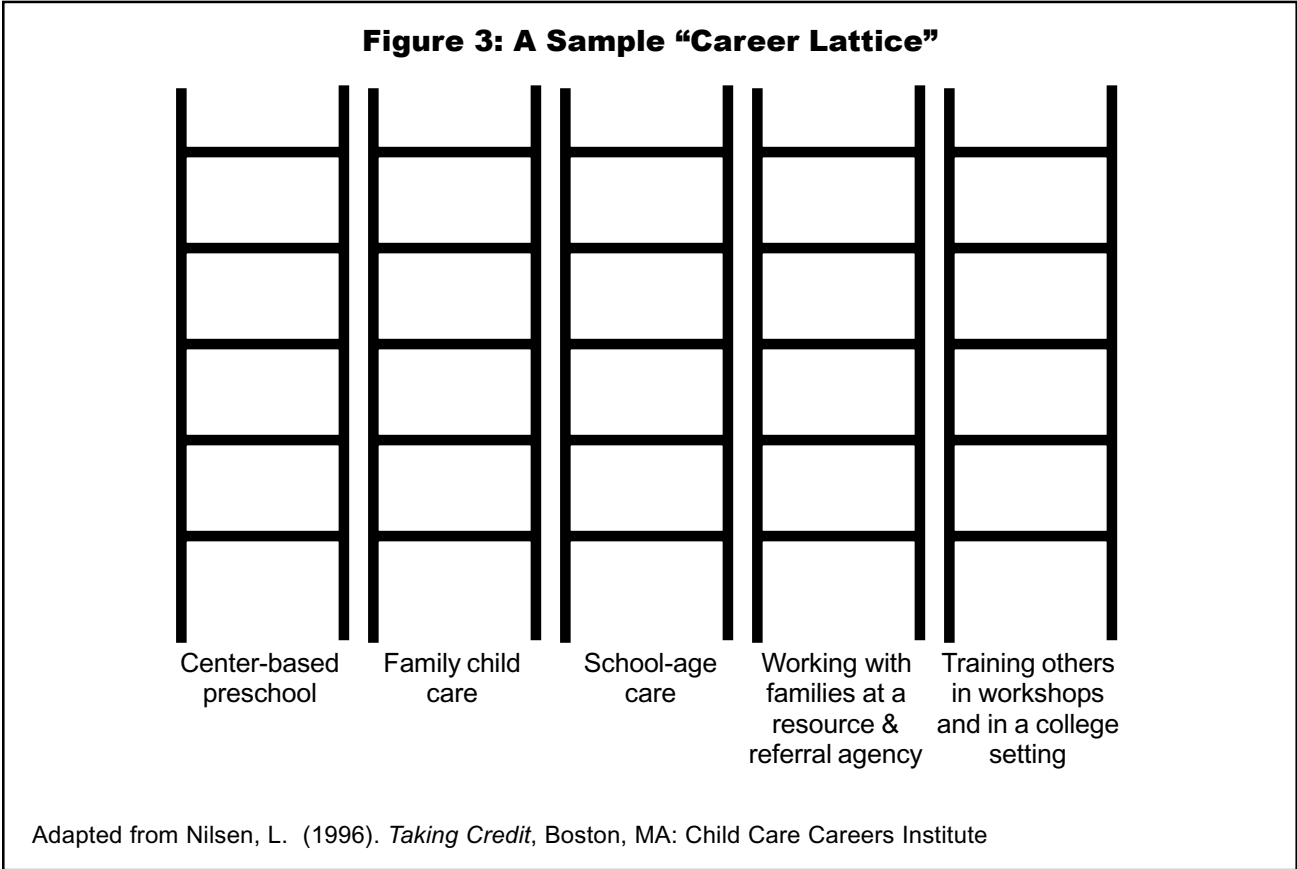
Professional development systems can be developed on a community, state and/or a national basis. For example, Head Start has an internal professional development system that is standardized throughout the country. Some aspects of a system are already in place in North Carolina: for example, the basic areas of the “core body of knowledge” have already been defined in the licensing requirements (although a local community may want to add other areas), the Division of Child Development maintains a “personnel registry” for providers to track the education they have completed, and the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] Project offers scholarship funds statewide. Other aspects of the system, however, can and should be addressed on a local level, particularly in the context of a statewide initiative such as Smart Start.

* Source: list adapted with permission from Genser, A. (1999). *Kicking off the Dialogue: Elements of a Career Development System for School-Age Care*, Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education.



Career Ladders and Career Lattices

In beginning to think about a professional development system, it is useful to view professional development from the perspective of a provider. A provider may enter the field as a classroom assistant, then become a teacher, then perhaps a "lead teacher" or even a director. This progression is often called a "career ladder." (see Figure 2). At each step, the provider needs to acquire additional skills and knowledge through



education and training. In the example, these requirements are based not on licensing requirements, but by the employing center.

Another way the provider may view her/his career, however, is to think about ways to develop as a professional without going “up the ladder,” but rather by moving into another setting. A teacher may decide to become a family child care provider, for example, or to work with parents in a resource and referral agency. Each of these other settings has its own series of career progressions, which could be viewed as a ladder.

One way of portraying both of these dimensions of career development is the “career lattice,” shown in Figure 3. In this model, a provider may move up, or “sideways,” or both. Addressing the needs of providers so that all of these kinds of “career advancement” are possible is a critical element in the design and implementation of a professional development system.

The Importance of Linkages

In developing a system, it is also important to view child care from the perspective of a child and family. Children do not exist only in the child care center or home—they may also be served by many other agencies and individuals. Early intervention, public health, social services and communities of faith are just a few of the services and agencies that may work with very young children. As children grow, they may leave the child care setting to begin school (although many may make the transition to a school-age child care setting). Depending on the children’s individual needs, the transition to school often means meeting another new set of service providers.

These “linkages” imply a holistic view of each community’s children. To best serve children, all of the participants in this partnership—all those providing services to children, including parents and families—must be aware of each others’ presence and know how to work together. In the context of developing a professional development plan, child care providers’ education and training must be offered with this holistic perspective. Representatives from fields other than child care need to be part of building the system, and some educational or training opportunities may even be offered in conjunction with others in the “partnership.”

The Relationship Between Professional Development and Regulation

Most child care facilities (centers and family child care homes which provide care for more than four hours per day) are subject to licensing in North Carolina. The licensing process, which is administered through the Division of Child Development, includes specific requirements with regard to education and training. The rated license system promotes and formalizes the concept that professional development is an integral part of quality child care. That concept is supported by the incremental staff education that is required to move to the next step and earn more “stars”.

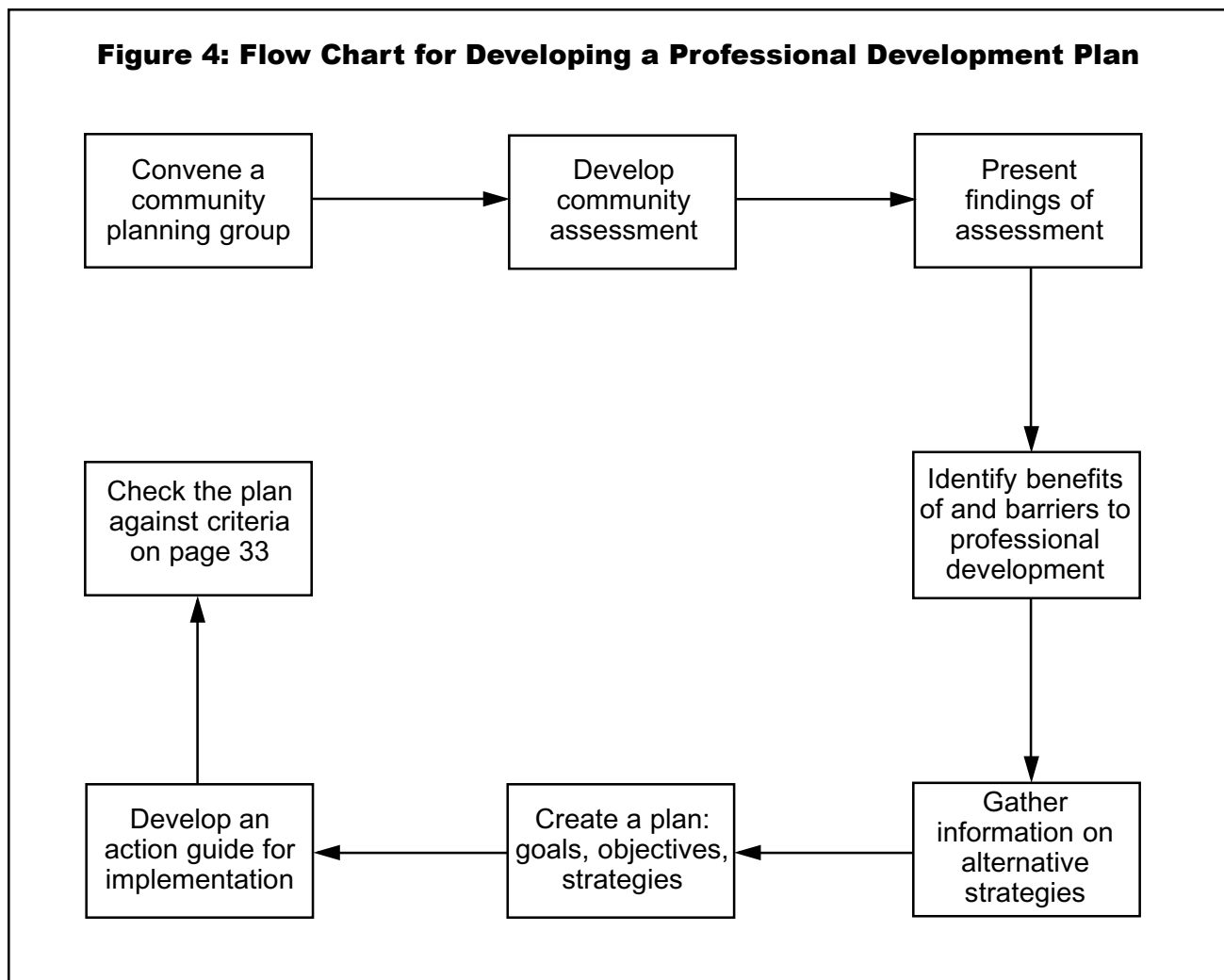
Regulations (particularly at the basic, “one star” level) provide minimum standards. They serve as the floor from which program quality, which is measured through performance standards, accreditation, certification or teacher credentialing, can develop.

However, the regulatory system is not a substitute for a professional development system in a local community. The purpose of regulation is to minimize the risk of harm to children through state license requirements, local zoning ordinances, fire, building, and sanitation codes; or to meet a particular funder’s requirements in programs such as Head Start. Regulations protect the health and welfare of children in out-of-home care but are not designed to measure the impact of the program policies on the child.

With regard to professional development, the licensing function does provide some incentive for child care centers to hire and retain staff with education and training levels above the required minimums, particularly for centers trying to achieve more “stars” under the rated license system. But the licensing function does not provide the infrastructure to make that achievement possible for individual providers and programs. It is up to other state and local institutions, including Smart Start and other planning initiatives, to make sure that education and training are appropriate, available, affordable and accessible, through the development and implementation of a professional development system.

Developing an Early Childhood Professional Development Plan

An early childhood professional development plan is simply an approach to building a professional development system that ensures that all providers in a community are best served by the education and training opportunities being provided so that children and families benefit from a skilled workforce. The list on page 8 included some “signs” that a professional development system is in place. This section of this manual is a step-by-step guide to preparing a plan that will lead to such a system. The steps are shown as a flow chart in Figure 4.



Convening a Community Planning Group

The first step in developing a professional development plan is also the most critical: assembling an inclusive community planning group so that the resulting plan truly reflects your community's needs. In keeping with the holistic vision of children discussed on page 10, the planning process itself must be collaborative to best serve the needs of the child care workforce, and eventually, the community's children and families.

Who should be included in this group? You will want to think broadly about which organizations in your community are concerned with the well-being of children. All of these participants are “stakeholders” as you discuss the shape of a professional development plan. Certainly you will involve those groups that have a direct interest in and/or a commitment to providing services which support the child care workforce. In particular, any planning group needs to include those working directly with children—teachers, directors and family child care providers. Keep in mind that it is equally important to involve a diverse representation of your community by including individuals and organizations with a less direct connection to child care. This makes the process richer and stronger and will allow for a larger group to build the model, develop commitments early on, and share the information with others.

Stakeholders might include:

- Child care teachers and family child care providers
- Staff from center-based programs serving children with special needs
- Child care directors and owners
- Instructors or administrators at educational institutions (universities and community colleges)
- Delegates from early childhood, school-age care, or related professional associations, particularly those associations which offer training
- Trainers or managers of child care resource and referral agencies
- Early intervention experts
- Cooperative Extension agents
- Head Start teachers or directors
- Smart Start Partnership board members
- Child care consultants
- Parents
- Representatives of public schools (school board members or principals)

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- Local Interagency Coordinating Council representatives
 - Members of interested civic groups (e.g., United Way, Jaycees)
 - Staff from larger child care systems in your community (e.g., the YMCA, YWCA, or military child care)
 - Business and industry human resource personnel

Fostering Collaboration

The word “collaboration” literally means “working together.” Collaboration is an active process through which people, groups, and organizations work together to achieve desired results. Starting or sustaining a collaborative journey is exciting and sometimes stressful. Each member of the collaborative effort brings his/her background, values, biases, and experience to the table.

As anyone who has served on a committee knows, not all groups are collaborations. Even groups which claim to be collaborative often are not. How can a group maintain a truly collaborative spirit? When beginning a collaborative project, it is critical that all existing and potential members share a common vision and purpose. This commonality brings members together to focus on achieving a mission. The catalyst that initiates a collaboration may be an unexpected change, a problem, a community need, a shared vision, or a desired outcome—and different stakeholders may join the collaboration for different reasons. Regardless what the catalyst may be, the group needs to quickly move from problem-driven to vision-driven if it is to accomplish its joint purpose.

Values and Principles

At the beginning of the planning process, it will probably not be clear what activities will be undertaken. In fact, it is better if this is not crystal-clear at the beginning, since the group has not yet worked together to define the issues facing the community. Still, it is important that the group have some shared ideas when beginning work. Working to establish values and principles for the group is, therefore, a good first step to fostering collaboration. Values and principles are the beliefs the group holds. They serve as guides for creating working relationships and describe how the group intends to operate on a day-by-day basis. Creating a document outlining your guiding principles as early as possible will prove helpful in the ongoing work that will surround the plan.



One example of a group principle could be:

Planning for professional development is based on an understanding that progressive levels of skill and education should be rewarded with higher levels of compensation.

Ensuring Ongoing Participation

Maintaining a collaboration requires effort throughout the planning process, not just at the beginning of the project. As your group works, keep in mind these questions:

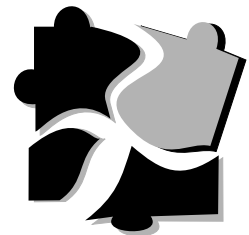
- Who is not currently working with the process that needs to participate in designing the plan and deciding the strategies and priorities?
- How can we get them involved?
- Whose support will be important to the long-term success of this process and plan?
- How can we begin to get that support now?
- What are the structures or forms of organization that we can create to improve participation (i.e., are meetings scheduled at a time of day which all members can attend? Do providers need substitute coverage in order to participate?)
- What guidance, training, and support might be needed to strengthen individual participation?

Community Assessment

When your group has been assembled and has a preliminary commitment to its work together through the definition of values and principles, the next task is to conduct a community assessment. The assessment will identify both needs and resources in the community, and provide objective data from which to make implementation decisions. In the assessment process, the group collectively and individually gathers and shares information about education and financial resources available, and brainstorms about service gaps and needs. The needs should be identified as specifically as possible.

Here is an example need statement:

Students graduating from the local community college's two year early childhood program can't transfer into the local four year university as third year students.



What kinds of information should you be gathering? The specifics will vary by community, but there are several topics you will certainly want to include which are described in depth in this manual:

- education and training
- systems coordination
- financing

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- compensation
 - community education and awareness
 - quality assurance

An overview of each of these areas is included below, and additional resources for further investigation are included at the end of the manual.

Education and Training

One of your first tasks will be to assess the existing education and training opportunities available. A good starting point is often to simply inventory all of the education and training available in a community. Include all of the following as appropriate:

- college courses, certificates, and degree programs (from both two- and four-year institutions)
- resource and referral training
- individual consultant training
- in-service program training
- TANF or JTPA training programs (check with your Department of Social Services)
- early intervention agency training
- Cooperative Extension training
- Division of Child Development training
- conferences sponsored by professional organizations

Note the content area of the available trainings, and what areas may be missing in your community. Are there trainings for particular groups of caregivers (for example, for Head Start) but not for others (family child care providers)? Is there a continuum of education and training for all staff working with children, from entry-level to very experienced?

Systems Coordination

Consider the multiple local services and systems that affect the lives of teachers and children. In a well-coordinated professional development system, all the community's resources would work in unison to support the goal of improving quality child care through teacher education. But in many communities, the resources are not as well-coordinated as they might be. Examples of coordination problems might include:

- several agencies offer training on the same topics for the same audience

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- workshops are offered on topics which could be included in a college-level course, but the local college has not been approached to pursue the possibility of offering such a course
 - courses are offered, but they are scheduled at a time or in a place when providers cannot attend
 - teachers cannot attend education and training opportunities because they do not have substitute coverage

In this part of your community assessment, you are focusing not so much on the content of the education and training opportunities (that should have been completed in the “education and training” component of the assessment), but on the factors that make teacher education more or less accessible, affordable, and available, or which influence the quality of its delivery. For example, you should gather information on transportation services, training scheduling, articulation (the way in which education transfers from one institution to another, for example, community college credit transferring to a four-year institution), how trainers or training are monitored to make sure the content is of high quality, scholarships, release time, and business and industry support.

Representatives from training agencies or individual trainers will be able to provide much of the needed information. In addition, seek out input from:

- Experts who have knowledge of state and federally funded child care programs in your community. A good first contact is the NC Division of Child Development.
- Local service providers of child care services such as Head Start, child care subsidy programs, child care resource and referral services, the local interagency coordinating council (LICC), etc. Make sure to also include the views of individual providers from centers and family child care homes.
- Organizations that address economic development, such as the Chamber of Commerce, local economic development board, etc.

A possible outcome for this part of your assessment would be an inventory that includes:

- a list of available community resources. If available, estimate the market value of each resource (for example, the value of free space for evening classes). You may be able to use this information later in developing public awareness tools (e.g. the value can be counted as an effort to improve the quality of care through teacher education initiatives)
- the gaps or barriers to fully utilizing teacher education opportunities, such as transportation problems, a lack of qualified substitutes, low wages, long work weeks, and conflicting family obligations.

Financing

A professional development system requires adequate, stable, well-coordinated funding in order to fully benefit the early childhood workforce of a community. Part of your community assessment should include an accounting of funding already available for professional development, potential sources of new funding, and an assessment of how funding is being used in your community.

Education for the child care workforce in North Carolina is supported by the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project. T.E.A.C.H. awards scholarships to individuals working in regulated child care programs who are pursuing a credential or degree in early childhood from a two- or four-year institution. However, participation in T.E.A.C.H. varies by community. As part of your assessment, you should investigate how widely the program is known and used by your workforce. If it's not being widely used, try to identify the reasons.

The financing of training opportunities is more diffuse. This is true both in North Carolina and nationwide. In assessing these funds, consider the following findings of a report about the training of early care professionals:

- Funds to support training appear to be extremely limited, sporadic, and largely uncoordinated;
- Available funds are used primarily for entry-level training and were most often used to pay for short-term training on very basic issues.
- Practitioners and trainers subsidize the true cost of training. Most training was offered at no cost to the participants with unpaid trainers. When training was offered for a fee, practitioners often paid for it out of their own pockets.
- Providers, administrators, and funders have few incentives to invest in training: “there was little incentive for early care and education practitioners to invest in their own training, due to low earning and the perception of the field as a dead-end.... minimum wage job.”*

Smart Start, T.E.A.C.H. and other initiatives are leading the way for early childhood professional development in North Carolina, but there are other potential funding sources as well. Assess the possibilities in the business, philanthropic, public, and religious sectors for opportunities to expand the resources available for teacher education.

* Source: Morgan, G., et al (1993). *Making a Career of It: The State of the States Report on Career Development in Early Care and Education*, Boston, MA : Center for Career Development in Early Care & Education, 1993. The report did not include state, local and corporate funding sources available to statewide early childhood professional development programs.

Compensation

In America, we pay people who haul away garbage, cut our hair, and park our cars more than we pay workers who care for our most precious resource—our children. According to one study, “on average, child care teachers with college degrees earn less than half as much as women in the labor force with similar levels of education and less than one-third as much as comparably educated men.”* In addition to that finding, the study also found, unsurprisingly, that there is a correlation between lower salaries and higher turnover—and higher teacher turnover, in turn, has an adverse effect on the care children receive. Despite exposure to illness on the job, the overwhelming majority of child care centers (73 percent) offered their teaching staff little or no health insurance, and during a four year period between the first study in 1988 and the second one in 1992, 70 percent of the teaching staff previously interviewed left their jobs.

The study also included specific recommendations:

- comprehensive, affordable health coverage should be provided,
- 25 percent of federal funds allocated for child care should be spent on quality enhancements and half of that amount should be earmarked for salaries,
- expansion of loan forgiveness, grants and other programs that reward those who choose to work with young children should be implemented,
- support for research that identifies actions that promote long-term stability and productivity in the child care workforce should be increased, and a national commission on the economics of child care should be established to provide comprehensive high quality early care to families of all incomes.

The issue of compensation for the child care workforce is a thorny one, but one which must be addressed as part of your professional development system planning process. To begin, investigate how the issue of compensation is already being addressed in your community, and what impact low compensation has on your child care workforce. In order to gather information about your local community, your planning group may decide to commission a “workforce assessment.” Such an assessment could provide information such as

- average wages for teachers, directors and family child care providers;
- educational level of the workforce;
- desire of the workforce to remain in the child care field;
- turnover rate in the workforce.

Names of agencies and organizations who are expert in these assessments are available through the North Carolina Partnership for Children.

* Source: *CDF Reports*, August 1, 1993. The CDF Reports article summarizes the findings from *The National Child Care Staffing Study Revisited*, published by the Child Care Employee Project in 1993.

**Figure 5:
Vehicles for Increasing Public Awareness**

- **Word of mouth** — Spreading information to parents who frequent parent meetings, PTA gatherings and church sponsored events. Word of mouth is still the best and cheapest marketing strategy;
- **Public service announcement (PSAs)**, which many radio and television stations run for free;
- **Videos** — Developing brief videos for use in places where parents may spend time waiting in a lobby (medical offices and public agencies);
- **Business roundtables** — Linking business leaders' concerns for competitiveness and productivity, workforce development, work/life issues, and school readiness and education issues with the need to improve early care and education;
- **Editorial board visits** — Providing an opportunity for a team of community leaders to meet with the editorial boards of local newspapers to provide information and an opportunity for dialogue on improving the quality of care through professional development;
- **Press kit** — Providing reporters, local boards of directors, elected officials, and others with a breadth of child care professional development issues and the views of experts;
- **On-line web site** — Supplying information and contact numbers of available resources such as the local child care resource and referral organization, Cooperative Extension office, and/or Smart Start partnership;
- **Written materials** — Creating or soliciting newspaper articles and editorials, developing utility bill stuffers, making grocery bag advertisements and paper placemats used at restaurants;
- **Symposia** — Increasing the visibility, number and impact of state and local community/business partnerships addressing professional development by hosting one or more sessions on the need for a well-educated child care workforce;
- **Professional Recognition** — Hosting events that honor early childhood professionals and programs that have attained an increased level of licensure or accreditation.

Community Education and Awareness

Educating the public about the importance of educated child care teachers is imperative to an effective local professional development plan. Parents want to know that their children are receiving the safest, most appropriate early care and education possible. Giving parents (and other members of the community) the information necessary to select a child care program that supports and maintains a high quality teaching staff is necessary to create a healthy child care marketplace.

The strong relationship between a teacher's education and the quality of care and education a child receives is supported by research, as noted on page 5. Also clear is the connection between adequate compensation and teacher retention, also a key component of quality. In your assessment you will want to investigate how well these connections are understood by various segments of your community: local officials, business representatives, parents, etc. You will also want to investigate the many options for increasing public awareness; a few are listed in Figure 5. Note that at this point you do not want to choose a particular strategy; instead, you are investigating what resources might be available to help in this area.

Quality Assurance

Improving program quality so that children and families are better served is the underlying goal of any professional development plan. For this reason, the planning process should include close attention to quality assurance.

Quality assurance means different things to different people, even to individuals within the early care and education field. In answering the question, “What indicates high quality?” any or all of the following might be included as measurement tools, standards or guidelines:

- child care rules and regulations (NC Child Care Requirements and licenses);
- performance standards (used in Head Start);
- program accreditation by national professional organizations;
- environmental rating scales (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale [ECERS], Infant Toddler Environmental Rating Scale [ITERS], Family Day Care Environmental Rating Scale [FDCRS], School Age Care Environmental Rating Scale [SACERS]);
- teacher licensing (NC teaching licenses);
- credentialing (North Carolina credentials and CDAs);
- educational attainment (college degrees or certificates)

All of these varieties of quality measurement imply caregiver education and training, whether as a direct requirement or indirectly as an avenue of achieving particular skills. Whether quality is expressed as attaining a “5-star license,” achieving high marks on an environmental rating scale, or achieving Head Start performance standards, education and training is a key component of program excellence.

In the community assessment phase of the planning process, the planning group should investigate existing program quality in their community and identify areas which need attention. Information about program quality is more readily available through the rated licenses; your local Division of Child Development consultant should be able to provide you with valuable information in this area. Members of the planning group representing various stakeholders may also be able to provide information (for example, a Head Start representative may know what percentage of Head Start classrooms are nationally-accredited).

Presenting the Assessment

When you have finished collecting information for the community assessment, compile your findings into a brief, readable document. Now it is time to share your findings with all planning team members, particularly those who have not been active in the assessment process but whose ongoing participation is important. As a group, you will want to reach consensus on the following:

- What are our community's strengths in making professional development available? What do we already do well? What resources have we identified that we have not yet used?
- What are the areas in which there are service gaps or needs? Which segments of our workforce are not being well-served?
- Which needs are the most pressing? Which can be addressed at a later date?

Identifying Benefits and Barriers

As the group identifies needs and resources in the assessment process, it will become clearer how a professional development system would benefit the community. It will be useful for the group to spend some time identifying these benefits, as shown in Figure 6 (your planning group may identify others as well). Note that the benefits are focused on the long-term "outcomes" of improving professional development opportunities, rather than on specific activities that will be undertaken.

At the same time that the benefits to a system become clear to the group, so will the barriers. Identifying the barriers, as is shown in

Figure 6: Benefits of a Professional Development System
Benefits for the child <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Increases potential to form positive long term attachments to a caregiver■ Increased exposure to developmentally appropriate experiences■ Increased potential to enter school prepared to succeed
Benefits for the teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Increases self-esteem■ Provides opportunity for economic advancement■ Increased knowledge and skills■ Increased satisfaction with profession
Benefits for the child care program <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Improves overall quality of child care■ Decreases teacher turnover rate■ Creates marketing potential■ Increased community awareness helps spur parent involvement
Benefits for the community <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Strengthens the profession■ Strengthens the community's economic base and quality of life

Figure 7, is also an important task for the group to undertake. With the barriers “on paper,” groups often feel more able to undertake positive action, rather than spending time focused on what is holding progress back. Additionally, being specific about barriers can provide criteria for later work planning activities: some activities can be targeted directly at specific barriers.

Gathering Information About Alternative Strategies

In this step of the work, you will want to gather current information about other professional development efforts underway outside your community. How do other

communities address their professional development needs? You will also be gathering data that will be useful in helping garner support in your community.

Sources for this research could include this workbook (the “Best Practices” section and the resources in particular), the NC Partnership for Children, Cooperative Extension, and professional organizations. The members of your committee will also generate leads to be investigated.

Some activities to be undertaken in this step include:

- Gathering information on model programs/projects which address issues that you identified in your assessment;
- Consulting with groups that have already implemented professional development plans;
- Consulting experts in the field about solutions.

Figure 7: Barriers to a Professional Development System
<p>Barriers from service providers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turf issues ■ Poor history of collaboration ■ Lack of leadership ■ Overlapping or incompatible missions ■ Lack of funding ■ Lack of time
<p>Barriers from the child care system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Incompatible systems ■ Difficulty merging funding streams ■ Poor history of collaboration ■ Lack of resources (time, money, staff) to coordinate efforts
<p>Barriers from the community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lack of perceived need ■ Perceived lack of resources ■ Habit ■ Lack of focused leadership

Here are two examples of the kinds of alternative strategies that you may identify:



Some communities have augmented the T.E.A.C.H. scholarships offered in their communities with Smart Start funds, to increase the number of participants seeking a college degree and being compensated for their efforts.

A number of Smart Start programs have created professional development initiatives which incorporate increased compensation for workers via increased subsidies to child care facilities.

As you collect data, provide a forum for the community planning group to share information on other efforts. In addition to one or more meetings where findings are shared, you may also want to establish a resource collection, or make some other arrangement for exchanging information.

Creating a Plan

With information about the needs, benefits, barriers, and alternatives, it is now time for the community planning group to create its own plan. The plan will include goals, objectives, strategies, an action guide for implementation, and an evaluation plan.

As a prelude to considering specific activities, the planning group should develop a vision statement and a mission statement.

Vision is an image of what is desired—the ideal situation. It should be described in the present tense, as if it were happening now. When creating a vision statement think broadly and deeply; do not limit your vision by the present realities. Here is one example of a vision statement:



Each member of the child care work force in our county is valued and paid an equitable wage for their work of educating and caring for children.

A mission statement is more action-oriented than a vision statement. A mission statement has four parts - *who* will do *what* to *whom* for *what purpose*,

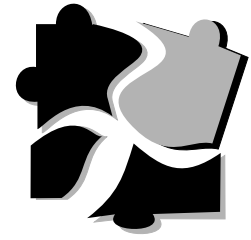


For example:

Our mission is to implement a comprehensive plan that enhances the skills, knowledge and career opportunities of the child care workforce.

—Or—

Our county will help child care providers pursue higher education as an important component of building high-quality child care.

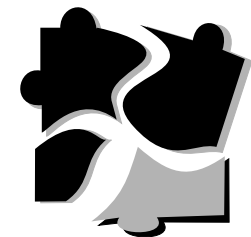


Also, at this time the group may need to return to its “Values and Principles” and refine those statements before beginning the next phase of work.

Developing Goals

Goals are the broad statements of where you are headed. They each address one aspect of the needs identified in your community assessment. What should occur as a result of this plan? This might include gains made in the education level of the workforce, combining training opportunities at the local level and implementing opportunities to improve the compensation of teachers. For example, if the assessment identified teacher turnover as a major issue, a goal might be:

To improve the quality of care for all children in our county by decreasing teacher turnover.



As in your community assessment, your goals should include efforts in the areas of education and training, compensation, systems coordination, financing, consumer awareness, and quality assurance.

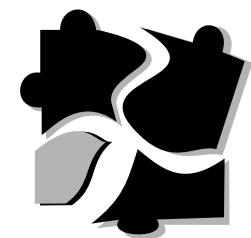
Education and Training

Your assessment may have identified basic needs in the supply of education and training, which you should now address by developing goals which respond to those needs.

Two needs which many communities identify are the need for qualified substitutes so that staff can attend education or training, and the need for articulation between two- and four-year higher education institutions. Sample goals for these issues might be phrased as follows:

No member of the child care workforce will be unable to access education or training because of a lack of a qualified substitute for his or her program.

All students completing the two-year early childhood program at the local community college will be able to enroll at a four-year institution as a third-year student.



Compensation Goals

To effectively address professional development, a system must address the issue of compensation, and the comparability and equity of child care positions and other jobs requiring similar skill and knowledge. There are many who believe that child care professionals with comparable qualifications, experience, and job responsibilities should receive comparable compensation regardless of their job setting. This means that a teacher working in a community child care center, a family child care provider, and an elementary school teacher who each hold comparable professional qualifications should also receive comparable compensation for their work. In addition, there are those who believe that compensation for child care professionals should be equivalent to that of other professionals with comparable preparation requirements, experience, and job responsibilities. This means taking into account other professionals and their workforce systems in the community. Your planning group should take the time to discuss these attitudes about compensation and formulate your own goals in this area (for Smart Start planning groups, goals in this area are required as part of your strategic plan). One sample compensation goal could be:



The child care workforce in our community will receive a salary and benefits commensurate with other professionals serving children in the community, based on experience, education and job responsibilities.

Systems Coordination Goals

Systems coordination may pose a particular challenge at this stage of your work, but the benefits of addressing this issue are worth the effort. While time consuming, coordinating how multiple resources can be used in the professional development plan will provide you with creative ways to address all of the other areas, including financing and consumer and public engagement.

The planning group itself plays an integral part in coordinating existing systems that directly impact teacher education. The planning group includes providers of professional development opportunities, and while these are the local experts in delivering their particular service, they may also be the controllers of the dollars that currently support the existing system. There may be resistance to making changes.

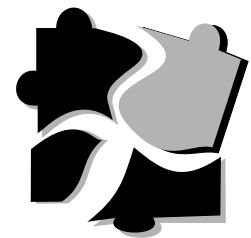
It is important to listen to concerns about the effectiveness of current systems during each gathering. It is often difficult, if not impossible, to address the long term vision of a community when pressing needs occupy the minds of the planning group.

Think about the best way for the planning group to discuss paramount issues in a nonthreatening, formal manner that will result in realistic steps that will lead to the elimination of a barrier or problem. It may be useful to consider allowing an unbiased party that has no conflict of interest (that is, will not directly gain from changes) to facilitate discussions about systems change. Issues of “turf” and ownership will undoubtedly surface as open conversations begin about potential service improvements. A neutral party can effectively facilitate productive conversation, suggest ideas without seeming territorial, and provide a sense of neutrality during tense discussions.

Consider also the developmental level of the community in addressing problems as a group and accepting changes to the current professional development delivery system. Existing leadership, past experiences, funding stream barriers, differing missions, competition between service entities for the same target population are very real and can hinder or stop efforts to coordinate services.

A goal responding to a systems coordination need could be:

When space is available, educational and training opportunities sponsored by any organization in our community will be open to all members of the child care workforce.

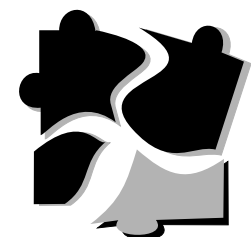


Consumer and Public Engagement Goals

The entire community is affected by the quality of care a child receives. Parents, elected officials, child care owners, directors and teachers, businesses, and the general public each have a stake in preparing our young children to enter school prepared to succeed. Your challenge is to educate each of the groups with a message that is clear, consistent, and action-oriented. Put on your creative hat and think about how you can capitalize on this opportunity to try out “tried and true” as well as innovative approaches to educating the public about the important link between the professional development of a child care teacher and the quality of care. Check Figure 5 again for additional ideas.

An example goal in this area might be:

All new parents in our community will receive information about the importance of high-quality child care, and the role of education and compensation in high-quality child care programs.



Quality Assurance Goals

Goals related to teacher education/staff qualifications, teacher turnover, staff wages, staff benefits, and rewarding staff for higher education as avenues to improving program quality require careful planning. Other hallmarks of quality, including parent involvement, accreditation, or meeting Head Start performance standards could also be a part of the planning process. Again, Smart Start planning groups must also address this issue as part of the development of a broader strategic plan, and can draw on that work in formulating goals for professional development.

A quality assurance goal could be stated as follows:



All child care programs in our community will have at least a “three star” license.

Financing Goals

Most local communities will identify a need for additional financial resources to make an effective professional development system a reality. Your assessment may have revealed that already-available resources are not being fully utilized. Alternatively, the need may be to identify new sources of funding. Perhaps the corporate community can be encouraged to participate at the local level after a plan has been created. Some businesses are eager to help families with work/family issues including child care.

A sample goal in this area might be:

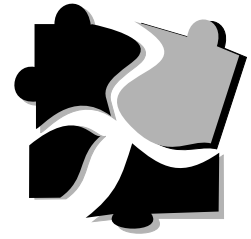


All child care programs in our community will have adequate resources to provide education and training opportunities to their staff.

Developing Objectives

Objectives emerge from goals. They are specific, time limited and measurable statements that indicate progress toward the goals. The goal of reducing teacher turnover might include an objective such as:

By the year 2003, the teacher turnover rate in our county will be less than 30 percent.



An important part of developing objectives is to identify the outcomes to be used in evaluating the success of your efforts, and how you might measure the outcomes. As in the community assessment phase of developing the plan, a formal workforce assessment might be an appropriate tool for determining progress. In this process, you are looking ahead to the evaluation of the plan, and will need to make objectives measurable and specific so that you will know if you have succeeded. For example, will this plan be inclusive of just those who work in child care centers, or will it include all who provide care for children? See page 31 for more information on the evaluation process.

Developing Strategies

Strategies are paths that get you from where you are now to your preferred destination. Strategies are means by which you will achieve your objectives and goals. In this step, the information you gathered about other communities' efforts is particularly important, as they may give you ideas about new strategies to reach specific objectives. One strategy to accompany the teacher turnover objective might be:

Child care programs will receive technical assistance on how to access financial resources that will allow them to adequately pay their staff.

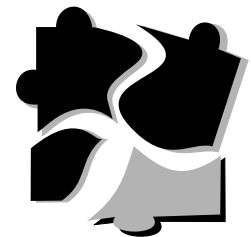


Figure 8 shows a matrix that your planning group can use to think about strategies. The matrix is a particularly effective tool for use in a group setting, as it can be filled in without a great deal of text, and it allows the group to see the plan at a glance. The strategies are listed on the left, and some indication of when they might be implemented is made by checking the appropriate column. The strategies listed are some already being used by communities in North Carolina. Of course, not all these strategies may be appropriate for all communities, and your group may come up with others that need to be added.

Figure 8: A Sample Strategies Matrix

Strategies to be used in our professional development system	Already have	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Workforce study						
Public awareness efforts through local hospital						
Training efforts tied to semester college hours						
Community college registration tied with T.E.A.C.H. enrollment (for credentials)						
Implementation funds (materials & equipment)						
Challenge exams for required coursework between two and four year institutions						
Reduced costs for degree programs						
On-site consultation for programs on staff development						
Substitute pool						
Child care and travel reimbursements for students						
Salary supplements						
Subsidy enhancements tied to teacher education levels						
Mentoring						
Basic training available at reduced cost (CPR, First Aid, playground safety, etc.)						

Implementing the Professional Development Plan

Developing An Action Guide

Turning your goals, objectives, and strategies into an action guide is the critical final step in the planning process. The action guide is really a more detailed version of the matrix just completed, organized around goals. Each goal becomes an activity (you may choose to give the goal a project or activity name), and is then supplemented with:

- Descriptor: the need for the activity and a brief description of the activity
- Strategies: a list of the strategies that will be used
- Outcomes: changes expected as the strategies are implemented. The outcomes will be closely tied to the objectives.
- A timeline
- A budget

The “Best Practices” in the next section of this workbook are shown as activities that could be included in an Action Guide. Refer to them as examples as you develop your own action plan.

Including Evaluation In Your Action Guide

Part of your plan’s development should include specific activities through which you will evaluate whether or not your plan successfully addresses your community’s needs—that is, whether or not you have met the outcomes you have outlined. Building a sustainable, effective professional development system will require objective information about whether your activities result in the outcomes your planning group had hoped.

An initial question to be addressed in the planning stage is whether your community has “baseline” data for each of the goals and objectives identified in the plan. That is, is there quantitative information about the current state of the workforce? In many cases, the assessment will have provided this data, particularly if you commissioned a “workforce assessment.” If you do not have baseline data on your workforce, you will need to build in additional “assessment” activities to the plan, prior to the strategies being implemented, so that the evaluation phase can measure whether or not the strategies effectively addressed the issues targeted.

Some key questions to be addressed in planning for evaluation are:

- Who will be responsible for the evaluation process — design and implementation?
- Will outside monitors be needed to conduct some or all of the evaluation (some funding sources may require this method)?
- What local or other resources are available for the evaluation?
- How often will the information be gathered?
- Who will do the analysis of the information and who will be responsible for interpreting the results?
- What is the time line by which tasks need to be accomplished?

Once these questions have been answered, the instruments used to gather the information should be developed. If you used a workforce study in your assessment phase, you may use similar or the same instruments used by the group doing that workforce study.

After the evaluation components are developed, they should be shared with all stakeholders. In addition, for Smart Start planning processes, the purpose of the evaluation will need to be shared with and adopted by the local partnership board. It is also important that there is agreement in how to use the information gleaned from the evaluation.

Questions to consider include:

- In what format will information be collected and reported?
- How will the results be reported and/or used?
- Who will be given the results?
- Who will use the results?
- What part of the information will be reported or used?

Are We Done Yet?

Developing a professional development system plan is a time-consuming but important task in ensuring a skilled workforce and quality care for children. Once you have assembled all the components of your plan, examine it using the check list beginning on the next page, to determine if all the necessary elements for an effective professional development plan are in place. Keep in mind, of course, that barriers to professional development cannot all be addressed overnight, and that implementing a professional development system is an incremental process.

Checklist to Determine If All the Necessary Elements For an Effective Professional Development Plan Are in Place

Community Assessment

- Have you completed a child care workforce assessment?
- Have you collected other data and analyzed how those data and the workforce assessment summary impact the quality of child care in your community?
- Have you arranged to have your plan evaluated on a regular basis so you will be able to move forward with your professional development plan?
- Have you studied state and national research regarding professional development available through child care professional organizations and educational institutions of higher learning?
- Have you assessed the participation rate of child care providers in the community in the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood[®] Project and identified the barriers to greater participation?

Collaboration

- Have you organized a group of stakeholders in your community to meet on a regular basis to collaborate on the development and implementation of your plan?
- Does this group include all stakeholders, not just those in the education and training fields, to ensure that you have adequate cross-system linkages represented? You should have at least one player representing each of these groups:
 - Legislators
 - Community college policy makers
 - Cooperative Extension
 - Parents and children
 - Head Start
 - Communities of faith
 - School board policy makers
 - Child care resource & referral

-
- Special needs community
 - Providers of early care and education
 - Business and industry human resources personnel
 - Child care professional organizations
 - Instructors from an institution of higher learning
- Has your agency provided an opportunity for all of the stakeholders to access state and national research regarding professional development via child care professional organizations and educational institutions of higher learning?

Education and Training

- Does your community have a plan for a child care career lattice in place which:
- provides best practices knowledge and skills to providers, based on current research about child care quality?
 - is available and accessible to all providers in your community?
 - provides certification to the practitioners?
 - is cumulative? Does it ensure the provider takes a number of courses that builds on their knowledge base rather than taking the same course time after time after time?
 - leads to a recognized credential or college certificate, diploma, degree?
- Are there articulation agreements in place within the educational institutions and between educational institutions in the community?
- Do the educational offerings provide up-to-date information on current research findings as well as knowledge and skill development in the current best practices in early care and education?
- Do the educational offerings provide up-to-date information on current research findings related to inclusion (providing early care and education to children with and without disabilities in the same classroom)?

Compensation

- Is compensation linked to formal education in all professional development activities included in your community plan?
- Has the community stakeholder group addressed the comparability and equity issue relative to persons who teach children?

Financing

- Is the financial support for scholarships available through the T.E.A.CH. Early Childhood® Project effectively used in the community?
- Are there professional development scholarships available in the community other than T.E.A.C.H.?
- Are there examples of collaborations between public agencies, the business and child care communities and educational institutions to provide coordinated, expanded, blended and/or leveraged funding to support the community child care professional development plan?

Consumer and Public Engagement

- Can you demonstrate corporate and community support for your child care professional development plan?
- Can you demonstrate public/private and public/public partnerships relative to your plan?
- Are faith communities actively involved as a stakeholder in the plan development?
- Have you provided examples of the most current research regarding professional development to the public via the media or other public awareness strategies?

Quality Assurance

- Have you used the stakeholder group and the media as venues to address North Carolina's child care regulations and how programs can voluntarily implement higher standards with encouragement and local resources?
- Have you established goals for quality improvement and provided resources for programs to upgrade their centers or family child care homes?

Examples of “Best Practices” Activities

The following pages include some examples of “best practices” in professional development in North Carolina: activities, strategies and outcomes that could be adopted as part of a community’s professional development plan. The activities are listed under “goal areas” rather than specific goal statements, since each community’s goals should be unique to the needs identified in a community assessment. Note that an individual strategy could be included under more than one goal. Also, in order to be implemented in an Action Guide, additional information about timeline and budget would need to be added to the activities.

These activities are only examples, but all are based on activities actually being undertaken by one or more North Carolina communities. See the contact information or contact the North Carolina Partnership for Children to learn more.

Goal Area: Education and Training

Title of Activity:

Higher Education Articulation*

Descriptor:

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro accepts the AAS degree from all North Carolina community colleges for 60 hours of credit. Although the number of hours remaining for completion of a BS degree in Birth-Kindergarten Education may vary depending on the community college from which a student transferred, in general most students transferring with an AAS degree in Early Childhood/Child Development can complete their four-year degrees with an additional 65-75 hours of coursework.

Strategy:

- Articulation agreement between UNC-Greensboro and community colleges

Outcomes:

- Increase in students completing four-year degrees
- Increase in students matriculating at four-year institutions
- Greater career satisfaction for providers

* If UNC-Greensboro is not a viable option in your community (due to travel distance), contact your nearby four-year program to determine the status of their articulation agreements with community colleges, and/or their willingness to develop an agreement similar to that used by UNC-Greensboro. For more information, contact Dr. Deborah Cassidy at deborah_cassidy@uncg.edu.

Goal Area: Education and Training

Title of Activity:

Education for Early Care and Education Teachers*

Descriptor:

This activity will provide for the education and professional development of individuals working directly with children and their families. This includes family child care providers, teachers and directors working in regulated settings. Individuals will develop a professional development plan, and will receive individual consultation on selecting coursework, accessing scholarships through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project, and balancing school, work, and family life. As part of the T.E.A.C.H. Project, staff will receive increased compensation as a result of completing additional education.

Strategies:

- Staff education
- Scholarships through the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project
- Compensation for staff, including wages and other benefits

Outcomes:

- Increase in the number of teachers with a knowledge and understanding of the early childhood professional development system
- Increase in the number of family child care providers enrolled in early childhood education
- Increase in the number of child care center teachers and directors enrolled in early childhood education
- Increase in the number of staff from the community receiving T.E.A.C.H. scholarships.
- Increase in the average wage received by staff participating
- Increase in the quality of care for young children

* This activity is based on the success of thousands of child care teachers, directors, and family child care providers who have participated in the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Project. For more information on T.E.A.C.H., call (919) 967-3272.

Goal Area: Education and Training

Title of Activity

Comprehensive Training Services

Descriptor:

This activity provides comprehensive training services for family childcare providers, teachers and directors working in regulated settings. Individuals will participate in an on-site profile consultation to evaluate their training needs and interests and develop a career ladder plan of content and timelines to meet those needs and interests. Training opportunities will focus on model early care and education best practices. Workshops and classes will be made available at convenient times and in accessible centralized locations. The content of training will include:

- Rating scales: The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R); Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS); Family Day Care Rating Scale (FDCRS); School-Age Care Environmental Rating Scale (SACERS)
- Inclusion of children with special needs
- Cultural diversity
- Health - CPR, First Aid
- Safety - Playground
- Basic School Age Care (BSAC)

Individuals participating in the training workshops and classes will have access to funds that provide for substitute support. Each program will provide substitutes for their staff and the funding for such will be apportioned to the total number of individuals in all site settings.

Strategies:

- Staff education and training opportunities
- Technical assistance and consultation to program directors
- Training of a qualified substitute pool

Outcomes:

- Increase in the number of family child care providers enrolled in training
- Increase in the number of child care center teachers and directors enrolled in training
- Increase in the quality of care for children

Goal Area: Compensation

Title of Activity:

Child Care Wages Supplement*

Descriptor:

This activity provides incentives and financial compensation for completion (beyond high school) of higher levels of education of individuals working directly with children and their families. This includes family child care providers, teachers and directors working in regulated settings (both early childhood and school-age care). Wages of the teachers and directors will be increased by supplements scaled to the level of licensure and accreditation. For example, an additional percentage amount (10 percent) will increase the wage supplement to those individuals working in a “three star” licensed facility. After a two year length of time has elapsed, if an individual provider demonstrates a commitment to staying in the field by remaining continuously enrolled in courses leading to higher educational levels, an additional percentage amount (5%) will increase the wage supplement to those individuals. The participating childcare homes and centers may offer these additional financial compensations as workplace benefit options.

Strategies:

- Staff education, including technical assistance, consultation, training substitutes
- Additional compensation for staff including wages and other benefits
- Quality improvement to the early education system or maintenance of previous quality improvements

Outcomes:

- Development and implementation of a standardized and tiered pay scale which is linked to completion of higher levels of education
- Increase in annual net wages available to full time staff: teachers, directors, and family child care providers
- Increase in the availability of workplace benefits
- Increase in family friendly early care and education work environments
- Decrease in the rate of staff turnover
- Increase in the quality of care for children

* This activity is based on one of the most successful and most replicated compensation efforts in North Carolina, originally established by the Orange County Partnership for Young Children and called WAGE\$. It is a special initiative designed to provide low paid preschool teachers and directors in child care centers and homes with salary supplements that are tied to their individuals levels of education, and is now available statewide.

Goal Area: Compensation

Title of Activity:

Health Insurance Subsidies*

Descriptor:

In many North Carolina counties, almost one-half of the child care teachers do not have health insurance from any source. The T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Health Insurance Program is an initiative to help fund the cost of health insurance for teachers and some administrative staff working in child care programs. Eligible child care programs may receive up to 1/3 of the cost of individual health insurance coverage. Participating programs must agree to cover at least 1/3 of the cost of the health insurance and employees may be charged the remaining 1/3. Participating programs may elect to cover both the employer and employee costs of insurance. Child care providers may choose their own health insurance carrier, although Blue Cross/Blue Shield has agreed to make some health insurance available to programs that have not found an insurance carrier that meets their needs. Programs must be currently participating in the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Scholarship Program (participation requirements vary depending on the size of the program and the educational qualifications of the staff).

Strategies:

- Subsidies for an additional portion of the health insurance coverage, so that programs and individuals do not have to pay a full one-third of the cost, making insurance more affordable
- Distribution of information about the availability of T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® scholarships, the importance of an educated workforce and the new availability of help with the cost of health insurance
- Sponsorship of a health insurance vendor fair in the community
- Training and technical assistance to child care programs on how to develop good personnel policies and compensation plans

Outcomes:

- Increased education of the child care workforce
- Reduction of uninsured child care teachers
- Increased number of insured children of child care teachers
- Reduction in staff turnover

* This activity is based on the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Health Insurance Program, made available statewide through the Division of Child Development and administered by Child Care Services Association. Contact CCSA at (919) 967-3272 for more information.

Goal Area: Community Education and Awareness

Title of Activity:

Learning for a Lifetime*

Descriptor:

This activity provides a public awareness approach to the general population's knowledge and appreciation that high quality programs positively influence the developmental outcomes for children. Trained presenters provide seminars that are adapted to fit various time frames and audiences and are targeted to community groups, parents and providers. Additionally, this activity will provide for an understanding and appreciation of the direct relationships between:

- educational level of child care providers and quality of child care
- negative impact of a high teacher turnover rate on the development of children
- lower staff-child ratios and improved quality of child care
- equitable wages for child care providers and quality of child care

The scope of this issue will be framed in current numbers of children enrolled in child care programs and will include supporting research about early childhood professional development. Each of the above factors will be explored within the context of the child care work force in the local community.

Strategies:

- Seminars on current research to support how high quality programs influence positive outcomes for children
- Public awareness about the rated license and quality implications
- Additional compensation for staff, including wages and other benefits

Outcomes:

- Increase in the general population's knowledge and understanding of the link between professional development, compensation and quality child care
- Increase in community awareness about the rated license and its impact on quality
- Increase in local support for child care providers to access scholarships and wage supplements

* This activity is sponsored by the NC Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development and is implemented through the NC Child Care Resource and Referral Network. For more information, contact Mary Bushnell at (919) 933-5090.

Goal Area: Quality Assurance Capacity-Building

Title of Activity:

Early Care and Education Capacity Building

Descriptor:

This activity provides technical assistance and funding to family child care homes and child care centers for developmentally appropriate materials and equipment to implement quality improvement plans. This includes indoor and outdoor environmental improvements. In addition, technical assistance and funding will be made available to support the planning necessary to create early childhood education and training resources within the community. Assistance and funding will be targeted to programs who have made substantial commitments to upgrading the education and training levels of their provider staff.

Strategies:

- Quality improvement or capacity building expenses directly related to child care, including improving facilities, equipment, supplies or curriculum
- Capacity building funding to expand the number of college-level courses offered at the local community college

Outcomes:

- Increase in the number of accredited programs
- Increase in the number of courses in early care and education being offered
- Increase in enrollment in courses in early care and education
- Increase in the quality of care for children

Resources

General Information:

There is a large body of research available in the field of child care professional development. Much of the research about child development, quality and professional development occurs in professional organizations or through the leadership of organizations like the Families and Work Institute. Some of the most familiar sources include:

Bredekamp, S. and Copple, C. (1997). *Revised developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood programs*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Bredekamp, S. (1987). *Developmentally appropriate practices in early childhood serving children from birth through age 8*. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Hofferth, S.L., Brayfield, A., Deich, S.G. and Holcomb, P. (1991). *The National Child Care Survey 1990*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute.

Kontos, S. (1992). *Family day care: Out of the shadows and into the limelight*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC

Roupp, R., Travers, T., Glantz, F., and Coelen, C. (1979). *Children at the Center: Final Report of the National Day Care Study (Vol. 1)*. Cambridge, MA: Abt Associates.

Whitebook, M., Howes, C., and Phillips, D. (1989). *National Child Care Staffing Study*. Oakland, CA: Child Care Employee Project.

References on Quality

Bredekamp, S. (1997). *Accreditation Criteria and Procedures*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study Team (1995). *Cost, quality, and child outcomes in child care centers, executive summary*. Denver: Economics Department, University of Colorado at Denver.

NC Division of Child Development (1997). *Improving Child Care in North Carolina*. Raleigh, NC: NC Division of Child Development.

Morgan, G. (1996). *Child Care Licensing: Training Requirements for Roles in Child Care Centers and Family Child Care Homes in 1996*. Boston, MA: The Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education.

Morgan, G. (1996). *Licensing and Accreditation: How Much Quality is “Quality?”* Boston, MA: The Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education.

Roman, J (1998). *The NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care*. Boston, MA: National School-Age Care Alliance.

NC Division of Child Development (1998). *North Carolina Child Day Care Requirements*. Raleigh, NC: NC Division of Child Development.

NC General Assembly (1997). *Senate Bill 929/House Bill 464: An Act to Enhance and Improve Child Care in North Carolina*. Raleigh, NC: General Assembly of North Carolina.

Wright, T. (1996). *History of Licensing in North Carolina*. Raleigh, NC: NC Division of Child Development.

Systems Coordination Sources

Morgan, G. (1991). *Career Development Systems in Early Care and Education: A Concept Paper*. Boston, MA: The Center for Career Development In Early Care and Education.

Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education (1996). Why Create a Career Development System. From *Building and Maintaining an Effective Child Care/Early Education System in Your State: A Collection of Issue Briefs*. Boston, MA: Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education.

Morgan, G., et al. (1996). *Making a Career Of It: The State of the States Report on Career Development in Early Care and Education*. Boston, MA: The Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education.

References on Compensation:

Edelman, M.E. (1993). Our Child Care Teachers: Underpaid and Undervalued. In *CDF Reports, August 1993*. Washington, DC: Children’s Defense Fund.

Morgan, G., et al. (no date). *Making the Connection: State Planning for Early Childhood Career Development: Part B—Compensation Linked with Training*. Boston, MA: The Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education.

Morgan, G., et al. (1996). *Making a Career Of It: The State of the States Report on Career Development in Early Care and Education*. Boston, MA: The Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (1990). Position Statement on Guidelines for Compensation of Early Childhood Professionals. From *Young Children (November 1990)*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

References on Consumer and Public Engagement

Publications, how to articles, and on-line information abound and can be found in public, community college, and university libraries. Specifically check out publications and information sheets developed by the North Carolina Partnership for Children and the National Child Care Information Center which provide excellent tips and models for creating an effective public awareness campaign.

“Smart Start Communications Guide”, North Carolina Partnership for Children, 1100 Wake Forest Road, Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27604. (919) 821-7999

National Child Care Information Center, 301 Maple Avenue West, Suite 602, Vienna, VA 22180

“Child Care Bulletin,” US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families

National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force, 733 15th Street N.W., Suite 1037, Washington, DC 20005, (202) 737-7700 or 1-800-UR-WORTHY

Bellm, D., Burton, A., Shukla R., and Whitebrook, M. (1997). *Making Work Pay in the Child Care Industry: Promising Practices for Improving Compensation*. Washington, DC: National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force.

Whitebrook, M., Howes, C., and Phillips, P. *Who Cares? Child Care Teachers and the Quality of Care in America*. Oakland, CA: National Center for the Early Childhood Work Force.

Cost, Quality, and Child Outcomes Study Team (1995). *Cost, quality, and child outcomes in child care centers, executive summary*. Denver, CO: Economics Department, University of Colorado at Denver.

Cassidy, D., Buell, M., Pugh-Hoese, S., Russell, S. (1995). The Effect of Education on Child Care Teachers’ Beliefs and Classroom Quality: Year One Evaluation of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Associate Degree Scholarship Program. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 10, 17-183 .

National Association for the Education of Young Children (1994). *The Early Childhood Career Lattice: Perspectives on Professional Development*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Holcomb, B. (1997). Child Care — How Does Your State Rate? *Working Mother July/August 1997*.

Willer, B. *Reaching the Full Cost of Quality in Early Childhood Programs*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Copple C. (1990). *Quality Matters: Improving the Professional Development of the Early Childhood Work Force*.

A great deal of research that is translated into practice occurs in teacher training programs at the community college and university level, through the Child Development Associate program and through the Cooperative Extension who offer child care training in counties across the nation. Much of the child care information for Cooperative Extension is placed on the National Network for Child Care database on the Internet.

Useful Web Sites for Child Care Professional Development

Address	What's there
http://www.ccw.org	Center for the Child Care Workforce
http://www.nccc.org	Cooperative Extension System's National Network for Child Care
http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/about/	Head Start
http://www.iamyourchild.org/	I Am Your Child a national public awareness campaign about the importance of the early years
http://www.naeyc.org	National Association for the Education of Young Children
http://www.nafcc.org	National Association of Family Child Care
http://nccic.org	National Child Care Information Center
http://www.nhsa.org	National Head Start Association
http://www.ncccs.cc.nc.us/colleges_map.htm	North Carolina Community College System
http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dcd/	North Carolina Division of Child Development
http://www.nc4h.org/sacc/	North Carolina 4-H School-Age Care Project
http://www.ncchildcare.org/	North Carolina Professional Development Systems
http://www.smartstart-nc.org/	Smart Start in North Carolina
http://www.childcareservices.org/	T.E.A.C.H.
http://ericps.crc.uiuc.edu/ccdece/institute.html	Wheelock College Institute for Leadership and Career Initiatives