

National Professional Development Center on Inclusion

Helping states achieve an integrated professional development system that supports high quality inclusion



Summer 2011

What We Know About Professional Development

Contextual Information & Current Status of Professional Development

- Reaching consensus on defining professional development and associated approaches (e.g., coaching, consultation, mentoring) is an important and ongoing activity.
 - ✍ Maxwell, K. L., Feild, C. C., & Clifford, R. M. (2005). Defining and measuring professional development in early childhood research. In M. Zaslow & I. Martinez-Beck (Eds.), *Critical issues in early childhood professional development* (pp. 21–48). Baltimore: Brookes.
 - ✍ National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) & National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies (NACCRRA). (2011). *Early childhood education professional development: Training and technical assistance glossary*. Available at: http://www.naeyc.org/GlossaryTraining_TA.pdf
 - ✍ National Professional Development Center on Inclusion. (2008). *What do we mean by professional development in the early childhood field?* Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, Author.
- A national survey of Part C and 619 state coordinators indicated that workshops were the primary method for delivering training and technical assistance.
 - ✍ Bruder, M.B., Mogro-Wilson, C., Stayton, V., & Dietrich, S. (2009). The national status of in-service professional development systems for early intervention and early childhood special education practitioners. *Infants and Young Children*, 22(1), 13-20.
- Early childhood teachers are not adequately prepared in preservice for working with children with disabilities, with infants and toddlers, or with children who are culturally or linguistically diverse, according to survey data.
 - ✍ Chang, F., Early, D., & Winton, P. (2005). Early childhood teacher preparation in special education at 2- and 4-year institutions of higher education. *Journal of Early Intervention*, 27, 110-124.
 - ✍ Early, D., & Winton, P. (2001). Preparing the workforce: Early childhood teacher preparation at 2- and 4-year institutes of higher education. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 16(3), 285-306.
 - ✍ Maxwell, K. L., Lim, C-I., & Early, D. M. (2006). *Early childhood teacher preparation programs in the United States: National Report*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute.

- Graduate students in early childhood programs do not get adequate preparation on how to plan and implement professional development.
 - ✍ Maxwell, K. L., Lim, C-I., & Early, D. M. (2006). *Early childhood teacher preparation programs in the United States: National report*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute.
- Early childhood professional development initiatives are multiple and disconnected .
 - ✍ Winton, P., McCollum, J., & Catlett, C. (Eds.). (1997). *Reforming personnel preparation in early intervention: Issues, models and practical strategies*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes.
 - ✍ Kauerz, K., & Thorman, A. (2011). *QRIS and P-3: Creating synergy across systems to close achievement gaps and improve opportunities for young children*. Available at http://www.buildinitiative.org/files/QRIS_P-3brief.pdf

Research on Effective Approaches to Professional Development

- Research summaries on adult learning strategies and teacher development provide some empirical basis for designing professional development. Information from these syntheses indicate that effective professional development:
 - ♦ is intensive, ongoing, with multiple, sequenced, active learning experiences
 - ♦ is grounded in specific practice-focused content
 - ♦ includes large doses of learner self-assessment of his/her learning against a set of standards, criteria or expert feedback
 - ♦ is aligned with instructional goals, learning standards and curriculum materials.
 - ✍ Dunst, C. J.; Trivette, C. M. (2009). Let's be PALS: An evidence-based approach to professional development. *Infants and Young Children*, 22(3), 164–176.
 - ✍ Trivette, C. M., Dunst, C. J., Hamby, D. W., & O'Herin, C. E. (2009). *Characteristics and consequences of adult learning methods and strategies*. (Winterberry Research Synthesis, Vol. 2, No. 2). Asheville, NC: Winterberry Press.
 - ✍ Wei, R. C., Darling-Hammond, L., Andree, A., Richardson, N., & Orphanos, S. (2009). *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report on teacher development in the United States and abroad*. Dallas, TX: National Staff Development Council.
- Promising but unproven models of professional development include coaching, consultation, mentoring, communities of practice, and different forms of peer study groups.
 - ✍ Winton, P. (2006). The evidence-based practice movement and its effect on knowledge utilization. In V. Buysse & P. Wesley (Eds.), *Evidence-based practice in the early childhood field* (pp. 71-115). Washington, DC: Zero to Three.
- The body of teacher education and professional development research that addresses pupil or other desirable outcomes is relatively small and inconclusive.
 - ✍ Cochran-Smith, M., & Zeichner, K. (2005). Executive Summary. In M. Cochran-Smith & K. M. Zeichner (Eds.), *Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education* (pp. 1-36). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
 - ✍ Hyson, M., Horm, D. M., & Winton, P. J. (in press). Higher education for early childhood educators and outcomes for young children: Pathways toward greater effectiveness. In R. Pianta, L. Justice, S. Barnett, & S. Sheridan (Eds.), *Handbook of early education*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
 - ✍ Whitehurst, G. J. (2002, March 5). *Research of teacher preparation and professional development*. Address to White House Conference on Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers. Retrieved April 26, 2005, from <http://www.ed.gov/admins/tchrqual/learn/preparingteachersconference/whitehurst.html>