



The Center To Inform

Personnel Preparation Policy And Practice

In Early Intervention & Preschool Education

Personnel Preparation: What we Know and What we Need to Know

Mary Beth Bruder, Ph.D.

University of Connecticut

Vicki Stayton, Ph.D.

Western Kentucky University

The Center to Inform Personnel Preparation and Practice in Early Intervention and Preschool Education

A five-year project established in January, 2003 and funded by the Office of Special Education Programs.

Information gathered will be utilized to identify critical gaps in current knowledge and design and conduct a program of research at the national, state, institutional and direct provider level to address these gaps. This program of research and policy formulation will yield information vital to developing policies and practices at all levels of government, including institutions of higher education.

The Center's Purpose

The purpose of this Center is to collect, synthesize and analyze information related to:

- (a) certification and licensure requirements for personnel working with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who have special needs and their families,
- (b) the quality of training programs that prepare these professionals, and
- (c) the supply and demand of professionals representing all disciplines who provide both ECSE and EI services.

The Center's Goals

- ❑ To compile a comprehensive database of current licensure and certification standards for all EI/ECSE personnel.
- ❑ To develop a comprehensive profile of current training programs for all types of personnel at the institutional, state, and national levels.
- ❑ To describe the current and projected supply and demand for personnel.
- ❑ To design and conduct a program of research to identify critical gaps in current knowledge regarding personnel preparation.
- ❑ To develop and disseminate recommendations regarding personnel preparation policy and practice based on research findings.

The Center's Completed Projects

- **Study I:** The National Landscape of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education
- **Study II:** The Higher Education Survey for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education Personnel Preparation
- **Study III:** The Analysis of Federally Funded Doctoral Programs in Early Childhood Special Education
 - Think Tank in Simsbury, CT September 11-12, 2006
- **Study IV:** The Impact of Credentials on Early Intervention Personnel Preparation (Credentialing Part C)
 - Think Tank in Washington, DC May 24-25, 2006
- **Study V:** Analysis of State Licensure/Certification Requirements for Early Childhood Special Educators (619)
 - Think Tank in Washington, DC June 11-12, 2007
- **Study VI:** Training and Technical Assistance Survey of Part C & 619 Coordinators
- **Study VII:** Confidence and Competence of 619/Part C Service Providers

The Center's Ongoing Projects

- **Study VIII:** Alignment of ECSE Higher Education Curricula with National Personnel Standards
- **Study IX:** Parent Perceptions of Confidence and Competence of 619/Part C Service Providers
- **Study X:** Case Studies Highlighting States from Study VI on Training and TA

Study I: The National Landscape of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education

- State Part C and Section 619 coordinators provided information regarding the organizational structure of their Part C/619 program, supply and demand of personnel and state requirements for personnel.

Reported supports to obtaining qualified personnel:

- Institutes of higher education
- Specific recruitment efforts
- Benefits
- Attractive geographic location
- Characteristics of the field, such as family-centered philosophy
- Training
- Supervision
- Certification
- Grants
- System financial reimbursement

Reported barriers to obtaining qualified personnel:

- A small pool of potential employees that are knowledgeable about the field
- Low salary for EI/ECSE personnel
- Remote/undesirable locations
- Competition with other states
- Lack of support to implement certification standards
- Training issues
- Difficulties with system financial reimbursement

Study I: The National Landscape of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education: Part C

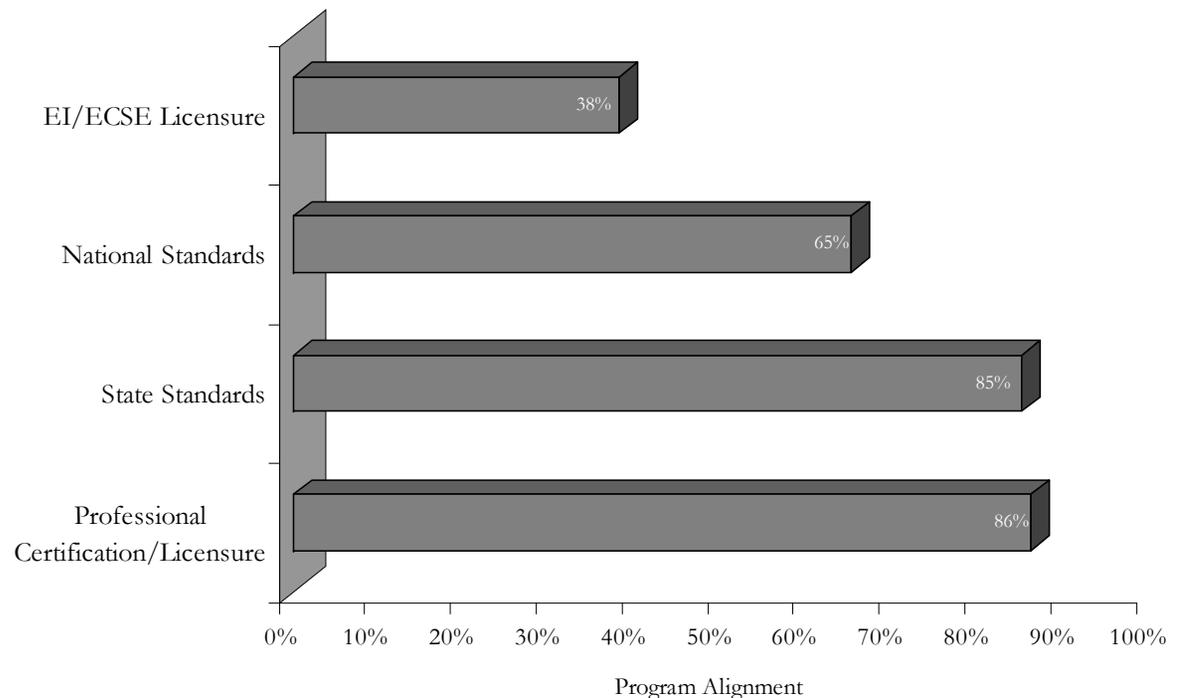
- Shortages across disciplines: SLPs (76%), OTs (51%), PTs (47%), special educators (40%)
- Need for additional training in early intervention across disciplines: SLPs (38%), OTs (36%), PTs (36%), special educators (29%)
- No CSPD specific to preservice (47%); no CSPD specific to inservice (44%)

Study I: The National Landscape of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education: Part B, 619

- Shortages across disciplines: SLPs (81%) OTs (48%), PTs (42%), special educators (56%)
- Need for additional training in preschool special education across disciplines: SLPs (21%), OTs (19%), PTs (19%), special educators (19%)
- No CSPD specific to preservice (69%); no CSPD specific to inservice (63%)

Study II: The Higher Education Survey for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education Personnel Preparation

- Multidisciplinary faculty (n=1,085) representing associate, undergraduate and graduate programs in each of the 50 states provided information about their preparation of EI/ECSE service providers.
- As depicted in the graph, participants indicated if their curricula were aligned with licensure and/or certification standards.



Study II: The Higher Education Survey for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education Personnel Preparation

- Programs offering courses in specific content areas: families (86%), research & evaluation (74%), team process (64%), inclusion/natural environments (59%), assistive technology (49%)
- Involvement of family members in the IHE program (30%)
- Cross-disciplinary collaboration in the IHE program (55%)
- Required field hours with children with special needs birth through 5 years (33%)
- Optional field hours with children with special needs birth through 5 years (57%)

Study II: The Higher Education Survey for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education Personnel Preparation: OSEP Funded Programs

- 48/107 responded (45% response rate)
- Selected content areas addressed by OSEP funded programs: team process (90%), families (87%), research and evaluation (87%), inclusion/natural environments (73%), assistive technology (70%)

Study III: The Analysis of Federally Funded Doctoral Programs in Early Childhood Special Education

- Principal investigators of 23 out of the 28 OSEP funded leadership projects addressing ECSE provided information via survey & phone interview
- On average, programs required 53 credits of coursework and seminars. On average, 11 credits were required with a focus on birth through 5 years, with 7 elective credits.
- Internships/practica – 83% allowed students to focus on birth through 5 years
- Research – 91% allowed students to focus on birth through 5 years.

Study III: The Analysis of Federally Funded Doctoral Programs in Early Childhood Special Education

Cost Benefits OSEP Funding

- Recruitment & retention of students
- University relationships
- Curricular benefits
- Enhanced external relationships
- Benefits to the field at large

Implications of No OSEP Funding

- Decreased enrollment & matriculation
- Curricular implications
- Collaboration
- Knowledge base in the field
- Faculty recruitment

Themes From Telephone Interviews

- General recruitment strategies
- Recruitment strategies – underrepresented groups
- Retention and matriculation
- Cost benefits of OSEP funding
- Implications of no OSEP funding
- Faculty recruitment
- Primary roles of graduates
- Curriculum

Study III: Think Tank Simsbury, CT September 11-12, 2006

Policy Recommendations

- ❑ Find a mechanism for evidence-based leadership performance indicators; create common benchmarks for high quality programs
- ❑ Investigate supply and demand issues and EI/ECSE leadership in future Center studies
- ❑ Increase funding for leadership projects at a high enough level to attract and retain students
- ❑ Reinvest in student-initiated grants as a source of support for students
- ❑ Clearly define criteria for funding. Target funding for full-time students and to address critical faculty shortages.
- ❑ Target marketing of profession to diverse populations
- ❑ Improve student mentorship by demystifying and conveying positive aspects of leadership roles
- ❑ Find a mechanism to link projects together to share expertise
- ❑ Utilize existing resources and create a community of practice (e.g., encourage linkages between UCEDDs and leadership programs)

Study IV: The Impact of Credentials on Early Intervention Personnel Preparation (Credentialing Part C)

Credential: A process by which personnel demonstrate knowledge and skills in order to achieve a state or nationally determined level of competence

State Information

42% of the states (n=22) had additional requirements (credential or training).

57% of the states (n=30) had no additional requirements.

Type of Requirement	n	%
States with credential requirements beyond licensure	16	73
Training or supervision requirements beyond licensure	6	27
Total	22	100

Study IV: Think Tank Washington, DC May 24-25, 2006

Policy Recommendations

- Develop a uniform approach to become credentialed within each state
- Examine how adding a credential might impact the supply and demand of EI personnel
- Make the credentialing and training process more accessible to personnel through the use of advanced technology
- Promote information sharing between states to aid each state in creating credentialing programs specific to their needs while creating a standard model to follow

Study V: Analysis of State Licensure/Certification Requirements for Early Childhood Special Educators (619)

Certification – the set of regulated requirements that lead to initial preparation in ECSE

Endorsement – the set of regulated requirements that are in addition to the requirements for a specific certification (e.g., ECE, SPE)

Blended ECE and ECSE – the set of regulated requirements that lead to initial preparation in both ECE and ECSE through a single certification

Certification Models – Single Route (n=26/38)	n	%
ECSE	13	34
ECSE Endorsement	6	16
Blended ECE & ECSE	3	8
Special Education	2	5
ECSE & Special Education Endorsement	1	3
ECE & Special Education Endorsement	1	3

Study V: Analysis of State Licensure/Certification Requirements for Early Childhood Special Educators (619)

- 26 of 38 states responding have only one certification model with ECSE being the most common model (examples of others – ECSE endorsement, blended EC/ECSE)
- 11 different age ranges are represented by these models
- 20 states have competency or standards based models
- 12 of 38 states responding have two or more certification models for ECSE
- 10 different age ranges are represented by these models
- 9 of these states have competency or standards based models
- 26 states require a nationally or state validated exam to qualify for certification; with 17 states requiring one or more PRAXIS II exams for a total of 17 different PRAXIS II exams required
- 25 states require some type of induction to the field

Study V: Analysis of State Licensure/Certification Requirements for Early Childhood Special Educators (619)

- 17 of 38 state standards were analyzed to determine the extent to which they align with national standards
- 3 states' standards met or nearly met 100% of ECSE and CEC Common Core standards
- 2 states' met 56% and 81% of those standards
- 13 states' met 52% or less of those standards
- States' standards met more of the ECSE standards than the CEC Common Core standards
- Standards for four states with blended ECE and ECSE certification met 53% or more of the NAEYC standards

Study V: Think Tank Washington, DC June 11-12, 2007

■ Challenges

- Multiple systems of personnel preparation and/or certification
- Shortage of personnel
- Capacity building in IHEs to maximize impact on the field
- Alignment of preservice and ongoing professional development
- Insufficient data linking teacher preparation with child outcomes

■ Priorities

- Align state systems with DEC/NAEYC national standards
- Develop state crosswalks to ensure reciprocity
- Provide supports to IHEs in addressing national standards and certification changes
- Design recruitment programs with incentives for applicants representing diversity & rural areas
- Develop a system for mentoring new professionals
- Educate stakeholders about the certification process & define roles
- Involve ECSE experts in defining state certification standards
- Develop partnerships between IHEs and state agencies to align content and standards
- Design evaluation systems linked to standards

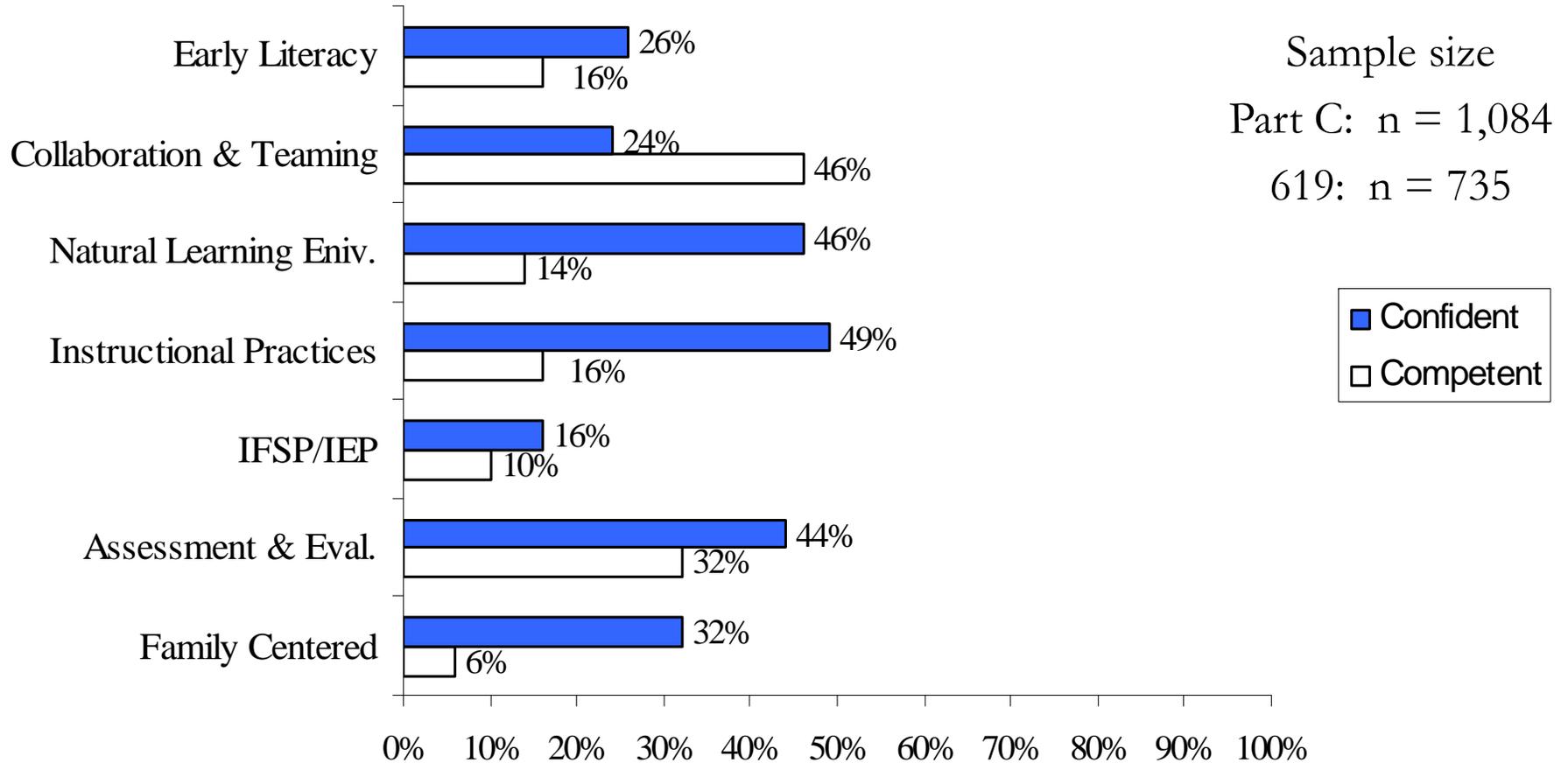
Study VI: Training and Technical Assistance Survey of Part C & 619 Coordinators

Definition of a Training System: (a) dedicated resources such as an agency budget line-item; (b) staffing; (c) a dedicated agency responsible for the provision of the training; (d) policies or procedures for determining professional development expectations; (e) training content; (f) quality assurance systems; (g) process for identifying and measuring outcomes; (h) on-going, needs based professional development that is provided over-time; (i) a structure for the delivery of content (training modules, etc.), and (j) work-place applicability.

Definition of a Technical Assistance System: (a) dedicated resources such as an agency budget line-item; (b) staffing; (c) a dedicated agency responsible for the provision of the training; (d) policies or procedures for determining professional development expectations; (e) training content; (f) quality assurance systems; (g) process for identifying and measuring outcomes; (h) work-place applicability; (i) provides ongoing TA; (j) individualized professional development; (k) problem solving services, and (l) assists individuals, programs and agencies in improving their services, management, policies, or outcomes.

- Part C: 20 states (39%) had a training system & 12 states (23%) had a TA system
- 619: 23 states (58%) had a training system & 20 states (42%) had a TA system

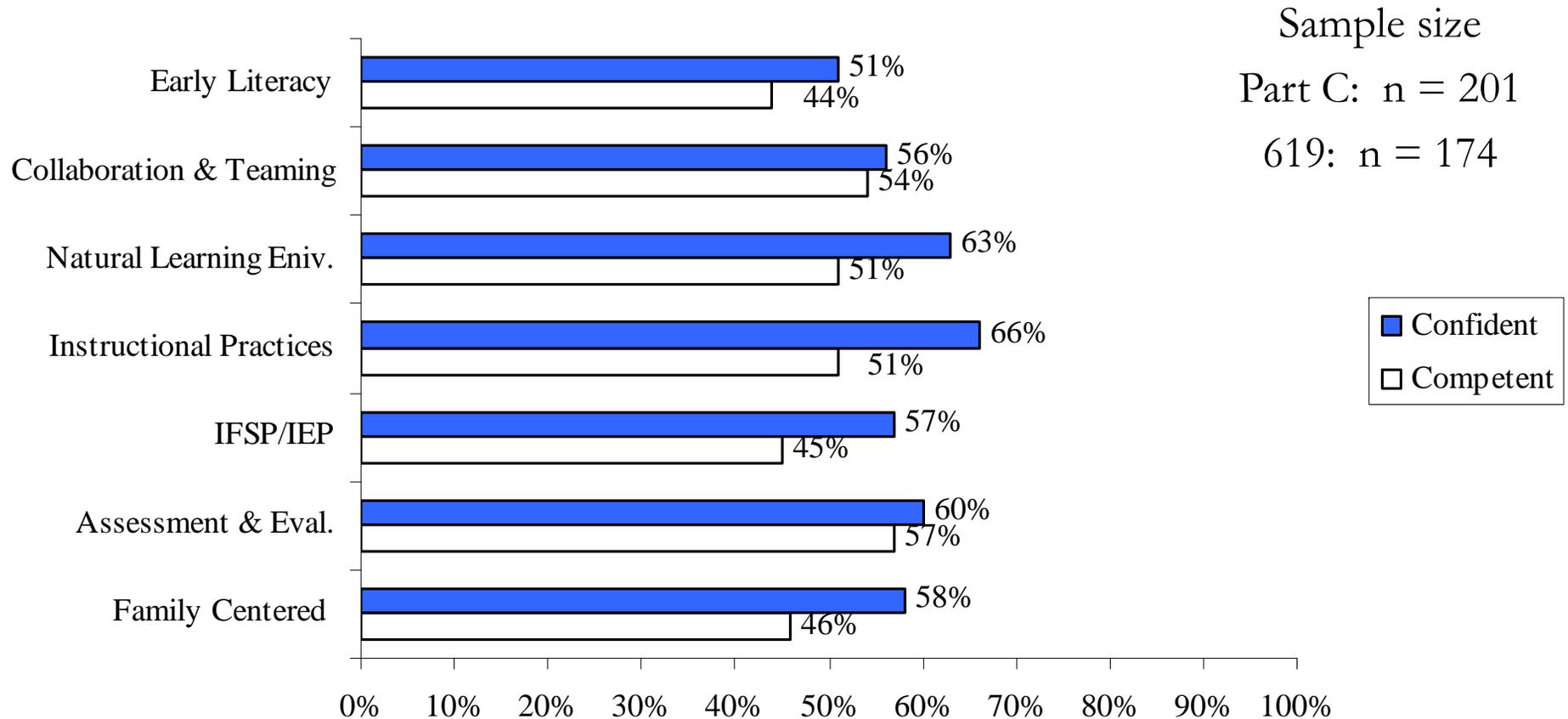
Study VII: Confidence and Competence of 619/Part C Service Providers



Study VIII: Alignment of ECSE Higher Education Curricula with National Personnel Standards--ONGOING

- Content analysis of higher education syllabi in 15 states in relationship to NAEYC, DEC, CEC standards
- Three states per each of 5 certification models: ECSE, Special Education, Blended ECE and ECSE, ECE endorsement on ECE, ECSE endorsement on special education
- Great variability exists for the representation of national standards across models, states and universities
- National standards are more likely to be represented in ECSE certification and ECSE endorsement on SPE models and least likely to be represented in special education certification and ECSE endorsement on ECE models

Study IX: Parent Perceptions of Confidence and Competence of 619/Part C Service Providers --ONGOING



Study X: Case Studies Highlighting States from Study VI on Training and TA --ONGOING

Methodology

- States were chosen for this study based on data gathered from Study VI - met the definition for having a training and technical assistance system
- 4-8 people per state were interviewed – Part C and 619 coordinators, parents, IHE professors, directors of training networks, and others
- State (# of people interviewed)
 - Nebraska (8)
 - Wisconsin (6)
 - Minnesota (7)
 - California (6)
 - Pennsylvania (6)
 - Kansas (7)

Emerging Themes

- Commitment of relatively stable funds
- Longevity of leaders in the system
- Efficient use of resources through collaboration across agencies
- Collaboration is supported through long standing relationships and multiple roles
- Technical assistance is important in the implementation of changes
- Training AND follow-up to training is necessary

Preservice Recommendations:

(Studies II, VIII)

- Require alignment of curriculum with DEC, CEC, NAEYC, and other discipline standards (as appropriate).
- Require field experiences across the age range addressed by the IHE program
- Support and encourage “active” family involvement in planning, implementing and evaluating IHE programs.
- Fiscally support and encourage collaboration across disciplines within IHE programs to implement common core content and training
- Develop valid and measurable competencies for student and program evaluation.

Preservice Recommendations:

Cross-Discipline (Study II)

- Require alignment of curriculum with DEC, CEC, and NAEYC (as appropriate) standards (Study IV, Think Tank)
- Require field experiences across the age ranges addressed by the IHE program
- Fiscally support and encourage collaboration across disciplines within IHE programs to implement common core content and training
- Support and encourage “active” family involvement in IHE programs
- Develop valid and measurable constructs for program evaluations (Study IV, Think Tank)

Preservice Recommendations:

Leadership (Study III)

- Increase the level of funding to recruit and retain students through program completion.
- Target funding to address critical faculty shortages and specific to EI/ECSE.
- Fiscally support projects to link and share expertise to facilitate a unified direction for the field.
- Encourage linkages with UCEDDs and LENDs.
- Decrease and clarify OSEP service obligation.
- Create/require common benchmarks for high quality programs.
- Develop valid and measurable competencies for student and program evaluation.

Inservice Recommendations:

Training and TA (Studies VI, VII, IX, X)

- Support training and TA for faculty in IHEs to align curriculum with national standards and evidenced based practice.
- Require state improvement grants/plans to include EI and ECSE training systems that link with the state credential/certification/standards.
- Require that training and TA through state improvement grants be based on national standards.
- Support and encourage “active” family involvement in planning, implementing, and evaluating of training.
- Support training and TA for evidenced based practice and specializations in EI/ECSE
- Encourage alternative training/learning delivery formats.
- Develop valid and measurable competencies for participant and program evaluation.

Certification/Credential/Standards Recommendations (Study V)

- Continue to support projects that lead to certification/credential/standards, while allowing for specializations for specific disciplines/roles.
- Support projects that meet national standards when there are no state credential/certification (e.g., paraprofessionals, early intervention).
- Support and encourage reciprocity across states (e.g., common standards, state crosswalks).
- Require competency based standards as the basis for state certification/credentials.

OSEP Recommendations

- Sponsor think tanks on service delivery issues and the relationship to quality personnel preparation.
- Fund a Training and TA Center for higher education specific to EI/ECSE.

Recommendations for IDEA: CSPD

- Multiple Audiences
- Needs Assessment
- Preservice
- Inservice
- Technical Assistance
- Personnel Standards
- Evaluation

Web Site Information

Center Information

<http://www.uconnuceedd.org/>

Data Reports

http://www.uconnuceedd.org/projects/early_childhood/publications.html

Contact Information

Mary Beth Bruder, Ph.D.

(860) 679-1500

bruder@nso1.uchc.edu

Vicki Stayton, Ph.D.

(270) 745-3450

vicki.stayton@wku.edu