

Topic 2 – Professional Development

Examples of success in providing professional development

- Co-develop staff professional development plan, focusing on the skills staff need to perform their job.
- Nurse Family Partnership is an example of providing professional development to home visitors.
- In home visiting, providing professional development on home visitor safety, Brazelton Touchpoints, and the Positive Indian Parenting curriculum.
- Developing a professional development strategy for home visiting models that use paraprofessionals.
- Adopting a policy of fitting home visiting models to the tribal/context need.
- Train home visitors in how to fit the curriculum to the needs of the client.
- Important to articulate the goal of professional development in community, a vision of a long-term goal regarding how professional development affects children.
- At Educare Winnebago new paraprofessionals are paired with a teacher.
- Circle of Courage curriculum offers important concepts for teachers, including social-emotional needs of children and self-regulation.
- Create professional development plans for each teacher in early learning programs.
- Working on clarifying purpose of certificates and credentials.
- Working on state licensing issues.
- Incorporating information from Domestic Abuse Project.
- Working with Tribal Colleges and Universities on 4-year degree program for early childhood development.

Barriers to providing professional development

- Having access to professional development trainings. Attending trainings can take lots of travel time because there is often not a local option.
- Finding people with the qualifications necessary for open positions, including cultural competency. This is particularly challenging in rural areas where there is often a lack of housing.
- Turnover – keeping teachers.
- Making professional development fit the needs – target population can be age bound and quality bound. First, effective professional development should address the age of children in teachers' classrooms. Second, professional development should be adapted to program needs. For example, for a program in a tribal community, professional development should be culturally sensitive and adapted to the values and practices of the community.
- Meeting requirements of policies and regulations.

- Meeting timeline for requirements.
- As professionals increase their training, they qualify for higher wages, but often funding for higher wages is not available.
- In home visiting, how to distribute caseload?
- Education prior to early childhood development career may have been substandard. Professional development can be challenged by earlier substandard education, but is also an opportunity to help professional increase skills and make up for earlier education experiences.
- Professional development can be viewed as a luxury, it is a foreign concept.

How communities can address barriers

Key ideas: First, professional development programs would benefit from co-planning offerings with teachers and parents to better fit their needs. Develop co-visioning and co-planning structures that intentionally and respectfully include those who would participate in professional development opportunities. Programs can gather teachers' and parents' thoughts and expectations and plan for purposeful professional development opportunities across important areas of collective work with young children and families. Second, carefully select contractors and consultants who are familiar with a diversity of Native communities and have demonstrated ability to craft and customize trainings to the needs of the early care and education centers and within these communities.

- Create knowledge together and find ways to help remove the overload.
- Develop a unifying theme/purpose.
- We can create strategic pathways to cultivate relevant professional development essential for meeting needs for a diversity of work.
- Reduce turnover by providing competitive salaries and promoting applicable credentials.
- Need tribal government support to modify the approach/model, especially if there are requirements contrary to culture.
- For home visitors, can alleviate caseload by implementing a stronger team approach as opposed to individual caseload assignments.
- Provide local support for professional development, make it more accessible.
- Support infrastructure to implement and adapt models.
- Ensure professional development at Tribal Colleges and Universities is based on high quality training/education. That is, set standards and expectations high so that education at Tribal Colleges and Universities is viewed as high-quality education.
- In education, professional development, and employment, it is important to feel valued, that you belong, and it is a place to thrive.
- Have methods to apply for professional development opportunities via the internet.
- Communicate and work with the local high school.
- When following guidelines, determine how to do so successfully.

Special topic: Parent access to professional development

- Need to be sure that parent input informs any professional development/continuing education plan.
- Help parents complete GED, fill out Free Application for Federal Student Aid, and enroll in community or tribal college/university.