

IV. PERSONNEL

STANDARD IV.A. THE PROGRAM LEADERSHIP IS KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND BEST PRACTICES FOR QUALITY BIRTH TO THREE PROGRAMS.

The program leader is a skilled professional who manages program, staff, and budget. The training, background, and experience of program leadership provide expertise and knowledge of infant/toddler child growth and development. In addition, effective communication and interpersonal skills are necessary for quality programming.

Quality Indicator IV.A.1. The program supervisor/coordinator is an experienced early childhood professional with expertise in infant and toddler development and family enrichment.

Laying the Foundation

The program supervisor/coordinator is responsible for setting the climate of the birth to three program which includes creating a developmentally appropriate and nurturing environment for young children and their families, as well as a positive place where staff can work effectively. The quality of the services provided is based on the knowledge, competencies, and interpersonal skills possessed by this leader.

In order to create a nurturing environment for staff and families, leaders must have both theoretical and practical knowledge about how infants and toddlers grow and develop. They must keep abreast of all current research in the field. They must be able to effectively communicate sensitive information to families and staff.

The supervisor/coordinator is knowledgeable about theory and assists staff to understand the relationship between theory and practice. S/he also is available to staff as they work with families to understand the way all the areas of development are related and how families can assist with the child's continuous development and growth.

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In the early childhood setting, it is ultimately the leader who spells out goals, affirms values, maintains safety and is concerned about comfort. The leader encourages, clarifies, and points the way—always communicating respect for the work done and the people doing it. The foundation of teacher guidance and leadership rests on these four supports:

- Taking a clear leadership role
- Knowledge of child development and learning
- Knowledge of early childhood curriculum, service provision and practice
- Communication skills that are effective and show respect for staff, children, and families.

Getting Started

The job description of the program leader should include the degree and/or certification required, as well as desired additional education and experience. Qualifications should include a variety of ways by which the requirements can be met, including use of equivalent experiences.

- A master's degree in early childhood or related field is preferred.
- A bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field would be considered if the person is working toward the masters.
- Illinois administrative certification and/or the Illinois Director's Credential are desirable but optional.

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- The leader must have course work in infant/toddler development, parent and family involvement, and program management including supervision and evaluation.
- The leader must have experience in work with infants and toddlers and their families.
- The leader must have skills and abilities to relate to young children and their families, and also to staff.
- The leader must possess the following attributes:
 - Leadership ability, including credibility to gain the confidence of the staff and program participants
 - Good interpersonal and communication skills, including:
 - ability to work as part of a team
 - ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing,
 - ability to receive and provide feedback,
 - ability to manage dynamic interchanges in meetings, and
 - ability to develop and manage a budget
 - Experience in human services program management including:
 - program planning, operations, and evaluation
 - use of management information systems.

(Adapted from the U. S.
Department of Health and Human
Services 1996)

In hiring the program leader - the hiring agent should;

- Visit and observe the applicants in their current setting if possible.
- Validate references.

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- Check state references regarding abuse and criminal background check.

Once the new director has been hired, an orientation regarding the philosophy, policies and practices of the program is shared, discussed and provided in writing to the employee by the hiring official or another administrator. The new director needs to know that assistance and support are available from this administrator during the early months. The hiring agent also needs to provide assistance and support to the new director as collaborative relationships with the funding agency and other programs are established.

Moving Forward

Review books on early childhood administration.

Become familiar with the materials available through The Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National Louis University.

Become familiar with the Family Support Program materials, such as *How is Your Program?* by Ahsan and Cramer.

Review the administrative sections of the Head Start Performance Standards.

Quality Indicator IV.A.2. Program leadership is supportive of and works to fully implement best practices in birth to three programs.

Laying the Foundation

A quality program is based on both age appropriate and individually appropriate activities for each child within the group. This is known in the field as developmentally appropriate practice (DAP). All professionals realize that in the real world of early childhood education, knowledge must be tempered by experience.

The words *developmentally appropriate practice* by themselves carry little meaning if one does not know how to observe children in order to understand their current level of developmental abilities. Knowledge gained through formal education and orientation training must be applied in order to affect the quality of care and education offered.

Through the guidance of the leader, staff need to realize that when a program is "*individually appropriate ... each child is considered a unique person with individual patterns of growth, individual preferences for activities, and different family backgrounds. No two children develop on the same schedule or in exactly the same sequence. One child may walk earlier but begin using words later than other children of the same age. Some children will spend time with blocks and push and pull/wheel toys while others prefer quieter activities, such as puzzles or books. Staff should not expect each child to conform to a rigid timetable of growth or engage in the same activity*" (Koralek 1993, 2). Supervisors and staff need to work hand-in-hand to be sure best practices are always in evidence.

When one observes infants and toddlers at play, one sees children learning through "their senses - looking, touching, tasting, hearing, or smelling - as they crawl or walk about the environment. The key to an appropriate curriculum for children birth to three years of age and the best practices that implement that curriculum is the relationship young children build with the adults who care for them" (Koralek 1993, 1). It is

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through relationships that children learn about themselves and the world about them.

Getting Started

The leader knows education begins at birth and learning is facilitated when:

- children are given a chance to move freely,
- children play with toys of their own choosing,
- children manipulate toys in ways they choose and try new ways,
- children are asked open-ended questions that encourage language development and thinking skills,
- children see their parents valued by their teacher, and
- everyone learns - the child, the parent, the staff and the supervisor!

The staff of a good birth to three program recognizes the importance of the parent-child relationship. The program is viewed as a support to the family, not a replacement. Having parents involved as an integral part of the birth to three program is essential so that the values, cultures, and goals of the parents are incorporated into the program.

A developmentally appropriate environment for young children and their parents is warm and nurturing to help children feel comfortable and secure. In response to each child's individual needs, staff members respond lovingly, promptly, and consistently.

In addition, the birth to three program provides a balance between a toddler's conflicting needs for security and independence. Staff members respond to toddlers' struggles to become independent by allowing them to make simple choices and to do things for themselves (adapted from Koralek 1993, 17,39).

"Knowing about is different from knowing how. Knowing about means learning theory. Knowing how puts theory into action" (Gonzalez-Mena

(Personnel cont.)

1980, 3). The leader must encourage, support and enable staff to put theory into practice. It is the responsibility of program leadership to enable best practices.

Moving Forward

The recent trend toward formal academics for young children is based on misconceptions about early learning. Read more about how infants and toddlers learn most effectively through playful interactions with loving adults. The guidelines in *Developmentally Appropriate Practice* by editor Sue Bredekamp, is one resource that helps teachers, parents, program administrators, policy makers, and others make informed decisions about the education of young children.

Familiarize yourself with websites that promote best practices.

Become a member of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and read about best practices in the journal *Young Children*.

Become familiar with *Best Practices Briefs*, Betty Tableman, editor (tableman@msu.edu) from OUTREACH PARTNERSHIPS at Michigan State University.

Review the practical suggestions in *The What, Why and How of High-Quality Early Childhood Education: A Guide to On-Site Supervision (1993)* by Derry G. Koralek; Laura J. Colker; and Diane Trister Dodge.

Review the principles of caregiving from *Infancy and Caregiving (1980)* by Janet Gonzales-Mena and Dianne Widmeyer Eyer.

Quote: "To be successful, the first thing to do is fall in love with your work." - Sister Mary Lauretta, A Roman Catholic Nun

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STANDARD IV.B. THE PROGRAM LEADERSHIP IS EFFECTIVE IN EXPLAINING, ORGANIZING, IMPLEMENTING, SUPERVISING, AND EVALUATING BIRTH TO THREE PROGRAMS.

Program leaders, as early childhood professionals, interact with a variety of constituents including children, parents, staff, funding sources, and the community. Effective communication and interpersonal skills are critical to implementing the program mission and goals, supervising and evaluating programs and staff, and collaborating with families and communities.

Quality Indicator IV.B.1. The program supervisor/coordinator is skilled in program management and supervision.

Laying the Foundation

The program supervisor/coordinator is in a unique position to influence the decision-making policies and practices in the birth to three program. A participatory manager implements management strategies as well as empowers staff and makes them partners in bringing success to the program.

“Regardless of the setting, directors who embrace a philosophy of participative management uniformly believe that their teachers have the potential to be leaders. They have a deep conviction that programs that tap the knowledge of their staff make more informed decisions, garner higher levels of productivity, and enjoy greater staff morale because of people’s increased sense of control and accountability.”

“It is important to remember, though, that involvement should be viewed as a means to an end, and not an end in itself. The goal of participative management is to improve program practices for children and families and the quality of work life for the staff” (Bloom 2000, 69). In the end, shared decision making is a delicate balance of

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meeting both the organizational needs and the individual needs”
(Bloom 1995, 60).

Supervision exists to provide a respectful, understanding and thoughtful atmosphere where exchanges of thoughts, feelings, information and actions about the things that arise around one's work can occur. The focus is on the children and families involved and the experiences of the one supervised. It is important that supervisors understand their own theoretical and philosophical view of their work with infants and toddlers and their families as well as their biases and expectations of others. Equally, supervisors must be aware of the reciprocal influence of these variables when working with their staff. The work of supervision is bringing these two perspectives together to effect a quality program.

Getting Started

The competence of a leader in a birth to three program has been described “as the ability to do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reasons”. The competencies needed to effectively carry out the leader's role varies by:

- the background and culture of the children and families enrolled,
- the types of services provided,
- education and experience of the staff,
- the philosophical orientation of the program, and
- the program funding.

A conceptualization of competence has three components:

1. Knowledge which includes:
 - child development
 - family systems
 - teaching strategies
 - group dynamics
 - organizational theories

2. Skill which includes:

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- human
 - conceptual skills needed to perform different tasks (such as developing a budget, motivating staff, solving problems)
 - technical
3. Attitude, which includes
- beliefs
 - values
 - dispositions,
 - emotional responses that support optimum performance.

Program management for infants and toddlers involves the interaction of staff, parents, children, and the community in activities that enhance quality service delivery. Supervisors/coordinators in collaboration with program constituents are responsible for:

- Program and budget development and implementation
- Supervision of the day to day operations of the program
- Communication with the various program constituents
- Evaluation of all program components.

As supervisor, the program leader facilitates the activities of the staff by

- encouraging collaboration and cooperation,
- identifying strengths,
- suggesting ways to improve or enhance services,
- nurturing staff,
- mentoring staff,
- modeling appropriate behavior and practices,
- encouraging continued professional development,
- requiring staff to have current itineraries on file, and
- requiring staff to be trained on safety awareness.

There is mounting consensus that the administration of birth to three programs needs to be recognized as a specialized area of expertise in early childhood education. This will only come about as the field:

(Personnel cont.)

- expands the availability to access to specialized training,
- increases the number of administrative resource networks, and
- promotes greater recognition and reward for the role (Bloom 1997, 35).

Moving Forward

Review literature from the Center for Early Childhood Leadership with particular attention to materials regarding participatory management.

Review articles regarding center management and supervision.

Consider the Illinois Director's Credential and the self-assessment portfolio that provide insight into one's own learning and accomplishments.

Learn about the efforts of GREAT START in Illinois as well as other professional development opportunities to provide support and compensation to well qualified and committed providers who stay in the child care field found in The Director's Link Summer 2002. 800/443-5522x7711.

Search for other materials and websites about management, supervision, and mentoring.

Quality Indicator IV.B.2. The program leadership models professionalism and conveys high expectations for all staff.

Laying the Foundation

Historically, there have been two separate and at times conflicting traditions in the United States that can be encapsulated in the terms child care and early childhood education. From the research literature we have now learned that care and education cannot be thought of as separate entities in dealing with young children. Parents are becoming aware of this paradigm shift and expect their child's program to prepare staff to provide both education and care in any birth to three program. The administrator must meet the responsibility of managing the program, but must also provide the leadership to address this new shift in thinking for both staff and parents.

Educational leaders are most effective when they understand children's growth and development, have plenty of experience with infants and toddlers, believe in the benefit of strong guidance for children and families, feel responsible for providing it and have humility, modesty and humor. All this is needed to assist with the new thinking that education and care belong together. The leader addresses the concept that "neither loving children nor teaching them is, in and of itself, sufficient for optimal development; thinking and feeling work in tandem" (Bowman 2000, 2).

Good leaders are firmly in charge. They never abuse power but also never feel weak or apologetic about assuming it. The leader values individual differences among all persons under his/her direction and believes in the dignity and respect due each and every one. The leader feels responsible to the entire group of children, the staff and the parents. Balance is important; the effective leader manages to clarify goals and rules while also projecting friendliness, good faith and optimism. The leader also has integrity as one of his/her attributes. The leader always tries to act in the best interest of the total program and

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provides the foundation necessary for birth to three programs to become a community that works for everyone.

Getting Started

In modeling professionalism and conveying high expectations, the effective early childhood leader:

- nurtures and supports staff,
- exemplifies integrity, fairness and consistency,
- sets high expectations for self and others,
- promotes team building,
- maximizes staff strengths and abilities,
- seeks and acknowledges staff contributions,
- fosters collaboration rather than conflict, and
- supports staff through reflective supervision.

The leader knows the importance of well-trained staff members who

- recognize their own values, vulnerabilities, and life experiences that may affect their work with families,
- understand and communicate the various components that impact infant development,
- focus on the infant or toddler and the parent,
- link families to additional services,
- balance idealism with realism, and
- use a systematic process to recruit and enroll families.

(Adapted from OUTREACH PARTNERSHIPS 1999-2000)

Moving Forward

Consider obtaining for your professional development library *Building Classroom Community: The Early Childhood Teacher's Role* by Jeannette G. Stone published by NAEYC.

Review the leadership section in *Eager to Learn: Educating our Preschoolers* by the National Research Council and note Recommendation

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No. 5: "All early childhood education and child care programs should have access to a qualified supervisor of early childhood programs".

Become familiar with the Professional Associations that can assist leadership. A list is provided in the *"Who's Caring for the Kids"* published by INCCRRA and the Center for Educational Leadership, June 2001.

Join a professional association and take a leadership role, serving on a committee, commission, presenting at a conference, or serving on a board.

Consider going for an advanced degree.

Quote: "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among us who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found out how to serve." - Albert Schweitzer

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STANDARD IV.C. THE PROGRAM LEADERSHIP HIRES QUALIFIED STAFF WHO ARE COMPETENT IN WORKING WITH INFANTS AND TODDLERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

The effectiveness of the program depends on the staff. Staff must have an in-depth knowledge of infant and toddler development and be able to competently match activities to each child's developmental level and potential. Staff should also understand the complex needs of families and be able to relate to them with sensitivity and understanding. Furthermore, staff is in the unique position of teaching parents to teach their children and must have skills in facilitating the parent/child dyad. The rewards of having a qualified staff are multiplied when staff is encouraged to regularly mentor each other to continue to improve their skills and level of effectiveness.

Quality Indicator IV.C.1 The program staff members meet the minimum entry-level requirements for their role/responsibilities established by the funding agent.

Laying The Foundation

Several research studies conducted over the last few years show a direct correlation between positive outcomes for children and the educational level and quality of the staff. The importance of staff with knowledge about infant/toddler development and working with families cannot be overstated.

Each funding entity has requirements for staff working in programs with infants and toddlers and their families. Illinois State Board of Education specifies the staffing requirements in the annual Request for Proposal and furthermore supports Developmentally Appropriate Practice as defined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). "Developmentally appropriate practice requires that teachers integrate the many dimensions of their knowledge base" (NAEYC 1997, 16). "Regardless of the resources available, professionals

have an ethical responsibility to practice, to the best of their ability”
(NAEYC 1997, 24).

Early Head Start is required to meet the requirements that are specified in The Head Start Act which has been reauthorized through fiscal year 2003.

The law states:

“STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND DEVELOPMENT

Section 648A. (a) Classroom Teachers—

(1) Professional Requirements. The Secretary shall ensure that each Head Start classroom in a center-based program is assigned one teacher who has demonstrated competency to perform functions that include-

- (A) planning and implementing learning experiences that advance the intellectual and physical development of children, including improving the readiness of children for school by developing their literacy and phonemic, print, and numeracy awareness, their understanding and use of language, their understanding and use of increasingly complex and varied vocabulary, their appreciation of books, and their problem solving abilities;
- (B) establishing and maintaining a safe, healthy learning environment;
- (C) supporting the social and emotional development of children; and encouraging the involvement of families of the children in a Head Start program supporting the development of relationships between children and their families.

(2) Degree Requirements.

- (A) In General.—The Secretary shall ensure that not later than September 30, 2003, at least 50 percent of all Head Start teachers nationwide in center-based programs have—
 - (i) an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in early childhood education; or
 - (ii) an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in a field related to early childhood, with experience in teaching preschool children.

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- (B) PROGRESS.—The Secretary shall require Head Start agencies to demonstrate continuing progress each year to reach the result described in (A).
- (3) ALTERNATIVE CREDENTIALING REQUIREMENTS.—
 - (A) A Child Development Associate (CDA) that is appropriate to the age of the children being served in center-based programs;
 - (B) A State-awarded certificate for preschool teachers that meets or exceeds the requirements for a child development associate credential; or
 - (C) A degree in a field related to early childhood education with experience in teaching preschool children and a State-awarded certificate to teach in a preschool program."
- (4) WAIVER.—there are additional waiver stipulations cited in the law.

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (IDCFS) lists minimum requirements for licensing day care centers. The early childhood teacher will:

- (1) Be at least 19 years of age.
- (2) Have a high school diploma or equivalency certificate (GED).
- (3) Have thirty semester hours (or 45 quarter hours) of credit from an accredited college or university with six semester hours (or 9 quarter hours) related to school-age child care, child development, elementary education, physical education, recreation,, camping or other related fields; or
- (4) Have completed a training program accredited by the American Montessori Society or Association Montessori International that may be substituted for the courses directly related to child care and/or child development required by this Section. Persons holding a Montessori pre-primary credential may supervise children though the age of 6.

The early childhood assistants will:

- (1) Be at least 19 years of age.
- (2) Have a high school diploma or equivalency certificate (GED).
- (3) Work under the direct supervision of an early childhood teacher and will not assume full responsibility for a group of children.

Getting Started

Program leadership is responsible for employment of staff. In this role they must:

- Familiarize themselves with the funding agency's requirements or licensing standards for hiring personnel.
- Prepare an advertisement for the position available clearly detailing the minimum requirements and preferences beyond the minimum.
- Disseminate ads to and network with the early childhood and local communities.
- Include, in the hiring interview, questions about infant/toddler development.
- Check references and background carefully.
 - College transcripts
 - Personal and professional references
 - State required fingerprinting and background checks.
- Clearly state education and training expectations in the interview and include them in the contract.
- Look at differential compensation for staff with more experience and education.

Moving Forward

Obtain and review copies of other funding agencies' requirements for hiring early childhood personnel.

Check with the leadership at other programs to share job descriptions and hiring practices.

Consider staff training needs and budget accordingly.

Look at career lattices in different programs.

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Quality Indicator IV.C.2. Staff members have formal training in child development theory and practice. They are able to demonstrate an understanding of how infants and toddlers develop and learn in the context of their families.

Laying The Foundation

Finding staff that can work effectively with infants and toddlers and their families is a challenge for program leadership. Every once in a while, one encounters "a natural" in working with very young children. They are nurturing and responsive to both the babies and their parents. Nurturing or the ability to nurture is a very important characteristic of staff working with young children. By itself, it is not enough.

In order to provide for the children's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development, staff must have formal training in child development theory and practice. Research has shown that the more formal training a staff member has received, the better the quality of the program.

Formal training is a systematic program of instruction that provides the learner with opportunities to acquire knowledge and practical experience in infant/toddler development. The venue for providing this training can be varied from formal coursework at an accredited college or university to professional development provided by statewide training and technical support groups. Program leadership has the responsibility to implement the program's policy that defines formal training.

Getting Started

The responsibility for ensuring that staff members have formal training in child development theory and practice with ability to demonstrate specific infant/toddler development rests with the program supervisor. In undertaking this responsibility, the leader must:

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- Know and understand the program's policy regarding "formal training."
- Clearly define "formal training" for the infant/toddler program.
- Outline, in the job description, the requirements regarding formal training expected from the candidate.
- Determine how you will evaluate a candidate's knowledge of infant/toddler development.
 - Develop a set of open-ended questions to ask candidates.
 - Review credentials.
 - Follow-up on letters of reference and recommendation.
- Set up a real experience as part of the interview process to observe the candidate's interaction with infants/toddlers and their parents.
- Ensure that continued formal training is ongoing and clearly state what expectations are as a condition for continued employment.

Moving Forward

Become familiar with the training that is available in the field.

Obtain catalogues from local colleges and universities that offer course work in child development and/or early childhood education. Review and update periodically.

Ask organizations, groups, and educational institutions for calendars of their training activities and courses they offer.

Become familiar with the quality of the training programs in the field.

Quality Indicator IV.C.3. Staff members demonstrate the ability to establish meaningful, working relationships with parents and other family members.

Laying The Foundation

Effective infant/toddler programs provide relationship based, individualized services to children and their families. Recognizing parents as the first and most influential teachers of their children, quality programs respect and value families. Programming and services, therefore, are family centered.

What is family centered? The infant or toddler is a member of a family. Although the structure of the family differs widely for each child, those individuals primarily responsible for the nurturing of the child have the greatest impact on that child's overall development. A family centered program focuses on that relationship by finding individualized and meaningful ways to provide services to each family. Planning is done with and around the family. Staff must be able to effectively work with parents and other family members, including siblings.

Getting Started

The responsibility for employing staff that establish meaningful working relationships with parents rests with the program leader. In carrying out this responsibility, the leader must do the following.

- Look for a candidate's ability to establish and maintain supportive relationships with children, families, and colleagues. To determine this ask these questions:
 - Does the candidate show genuine warmth and respect for others?
 - Can the candidate empathize with other's feelings?
 - Can the candidate reflect on his/her own beliefs, values, strengths, and weaknesses?
 - How does s/he handle stress?
 - How does s/he solve problems?

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- Does s/he exhibit a sense of humor?
- Observe the candidate's interaction with children and families, if possible.
- Get feedback from reference sources. Ask for the name of a parent with whom they have worked to interview.
- Provide a copy of the mission statement and goals.

Moving Forward

Establish a mentoring relationship to share ideas with like programs in the community.

Elicit assistance from one of the ISBE program consultants.

Develop with staff program activities that support trust building and camaraderie.

Quality Indicator IV.C.4. Staff members demonstrate knowledge of and respect for the unique ways in which adults learn, acquire skills, and adjust to change.

Laying the Foundation

In birth to three programs parents are active partners in promoting the growth and development of their children. Just as with the children, staff must identify the needs of parents and individualize the kinds of education programs provided for them. The staff needs to know the learning styles, abilities, and interests of family members in order to design an effective family plan. They must be knowledgeable of adult learning principles and practices. Elizabeth Jones in her book, *Growing Teacher, Partnerships in Staff Development*, believes that "Developmentally appropriate practice in early childhood education is also a good model for effective practice in teacher education. Adult learners, like children, need to play—that is they need to take initiative, make choices among possibilities, act and interact. And, as adults, they need to engage in reflection and dialogue about their experience. They do need baseline social knowledge—training—to get started, to know how to behave, but then they need continuing opportunity to make intellectual and moral judgments, to observe children's behavior, and to put their experience into words that are taken seriously by other adults, both peers and teacher educators" (Jones 1993, 146).

Getting Started

In working with parents and other adults, staff should:

- Establish trust and build confidence with parents.
- Let parents know that information they share with you will be kept confidential.
- Conduct parent interviews that get to know the family better by including the following questions:
 1. What do you see as your greatest strength?

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2. What is your child's greatest strength?
 3. What are your favorite things to do? Your child's?
 4. What is your favorite book? Your child's favorite book?
 5. What is your favorite pastime?
 6. What did you enjoy most about school?
 7. What is the last grade you completed in school?
- Value their input and listen to what they have to say.
 - Respect their opinions.
 - Encourage active participation in developing and implementing a family plan.
 - Support their ability to make choices, decisions, and solve problems.
 - Introduce new information in the context of the parent's past knowledge and experiences.
 - Plan activities at a variety of times and places to encourage parent participation.
 - Respect and honor the primary language and culture of the family.
 - Set high, but doable programmatic expectations for the parents.

Moving Forward

Review *Growing Teachers: Partnerships in Staff Development* by Elizabeth Jones.

Become familiar with the Family Partnership sections of the Head Start Performance Standards.

Review other latest research on involving families in infant/toddler programs that may be found on Internet websites and in other sources.

Quality Indicator IV.C.5. Staff members have knowledge of and respect for cultural and linguistic diversity.

Laying the Foundation

The communities in which we live are diverse. That diversity manifests itself in many perspectives - cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and socio-economic. Just as each of us have differing learning styles and intellectual strengths, each of us has our own different culture. For some of us, more than one culture defines who we are.

Culture is larger than family; it provides the broad context of shared beliefs and behaviors in which all persons grow. Before beginning to have knowledge of and respect for the diversity of the children and parents served, the staff members must have knowledge of and respect for their own culture. Their own attitudes may impact and influence interactions with infants/toddlers and their parents.

The following statement, though written as applying to teachers and schools, can be readily applied to birth to three staff members and programs.

"Multicultural education is a highly complex and political issue. It must be more than something teachers add to their curriculum during the celebration of seasonal and religious holidays. It must go beyond the understanding and appreciation of real cultural differences. It should represent a perspective that permeates all of the curriculum every day of the year, and is reflected in culturally responsive interaction in mutually directed activity. Responsive teachers engage children in egalitarian and meaningful ways in culturally relevant activities like sharing stories, doing art, preparing foods, and other experiences and projects that build on diverse ways of learning, perceiving, and using language. Such activities provide opportunities for connectedness and a sense of belonging that should prevail over the idea of differences. Finally, a pedagogy of caring, which promotes in children feelings of self-worth, love, and care of others, must be at the heart of any

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developmentally and culturally appropriate curriculum. A pedagogy of caring requires teachers to be reflective and to not lose sight of social, historical, and political conditions that have shaped the life experiences of people from different cultural groups" (Hart et al. 1998,).

Getting Started

- Examine your own cultural and historical experiences to understand what informs your beliefs and practices. This can be done through reflection on questions such as:
 - What do I believe?
 - How have I come to believe this? Where do these beliefs come from?
 - What do my daily actions say about what I believe and value?
 - What contributes to the tenacity of my beliefs? (What has influenced me to maintain certain beliefs?)
 - How do my beliefs determine how I make choices and take actions that would move me toward greater multicultural understanding?

(Questions adapted from Hart et al. 1998)

- Learn about and recognize the cultures of the families served.
- Value and use the cultural resources your staff and families bring to the program.
- Provide opportunities for staff development to learn about teaching in a multicultural environment and implementing activities for children and families that enhance the richness of diversity.
- Use foods, celebrations, and field trips as part of a family's expression of its culture.
- Learn about the families' daily practices and activities reflective of their culture.

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- Become acquainted with the community at large and identify resources needed to provide effective quality services to children and their families.
- Understand the varying roles of families within each child's culture.
- Acknowledge, appreciate, and respect the diverse family structures inherent in the community served.
- Involve parents in all aspects of planning a program for their children.

Moving Forward

Work with similar programs in your community to develop a resource guide for diversity and multicultural activities.

Review the latest research on social, cultural, linguistic, and ethnic diversity.

Set up a cultural exchange with another program.

Quality Indicator IV.C.6. The program staff is knowledgeable of and sensitive to the social, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the community.

Laying the Foundation

One of the key strengths of Head Start is the involvement of parents in the total program. Parents are recruited as staff by the program to work with the children. There are wonderful stories of women and men who started their career path as a parent volunteer in a Head Start classroom. They were encouraged and supported to go to college to receive CDA training or a degree in early childhood and become teachers. Some have gone on to obtain a master's degree and become administrators of early childhood programs.

A program staff that reflects the social, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the community provides valuable role models for the children to emulate.

Getting Started

The following strategies may be used by programs to reflect the richness of the community in its staff.

- Disseminate position ads and job descriptions to churches, cultural organizations and other groups within the community served.
- Assess and use the human resources in the community.
- Assess parent strengths and use them in the program as paid staff or volunteers.
- Include a clear statement on non-discriminatory hiring practices in your job descriptions and advertisements.

(Personnel cont.)

Moving Forward

Conduct a review of the social, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the community and make a comparison with the makeup of the program staff.

Make a concerted effort to employ new staff members that are representative of the diversity of the community.

Provide opportunities for collaboration among parents and staff representing diverse cultures.

Establish a formal career path for staff members including parents employed by the program.

Quote: "It's a funny thing about life: If you refuse to accept anything but the very best you will very often get it." - W. Somerset Maugham

STANDARD IV.D. THE PROGRAM LEADERSHIP PROVIDES ONGOING SUPERVISION THAT PROMOTES STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCES QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY.

Supervision of staff needs to take place formally as well as informally. The essential ingredients of supervision include reflection, collaboration, and regularity. Collaboration refers to the mutual, respectful activity that takes place between supervisor and staff member. This collaborative activity leads to the formation of a plan to support professional development based on the reflective activity that has taken place, which in turn promotes quality services. Regularity is defined beyond timely and systematic to address individual staff needs.

Quality Indicator IV.D.1. Program leadership creates and maintains an atmosphere that is nurturing and supportive of staff.

Laying the Foundation

Nurture and support are key words in early childhood. They are words that convey caring and concern, warmth, personal commitment, and involvement. They are active, not passive words. The responsibility of an effective leader is to nurture and support the following in the program staff:

- Self-confidence and belief in their capabilities and competence.
- Critical inquiry, creative thinking, decision making, problem solving, and cooperative interaction
- An appreciation for the spoken and written language, a love of books, and a sense of wonder.

Getting Started

The effective program leader can use the following to nurture and support the program staff:

- Provide opportunities for staff to share their expertise and talents through:
 - Recognizing individual strengths.
 - Involving staff in program planning, curriculum development, and other activities.
 - Establishing opportunities for bonding, teaming and collaboration.
 - Reaching out to staff for assistance with a concern or problem.
 - Establishing a mentoring program for staff.

- Support staff through:
 - Being available.
 - Listening to their concerns.
 - Granting comp-time and/or flex-time for services provided above and beyond the norm.
 - Acknowledging the needs of their families.
 - Involving staff families in some program events.
 - Providing opportunities for staff development.
 - Encouraging continuing education.
 - Developing a calendar for the year that identifies all activities, schedules, and events.

- Acknowledge success through:
 - Giving credit where credit is due.
 - Saying thank you.
 - Encouraging efforts.
 - Celebrations.

Moving Forward

Create unique ways to say thank you, such as placing a personal note or flower in a mailbox.

Acquaint yourself with the things other programs do to support and nurture staff.

Plan a special event or recognition ceremony periodically.

Quality Indicator IV.D.2. Program leadership regularly conducts a self assessment.

Laying the Foundation

Regular self-assessment is a good way to determine the impact program leadership has on the staff and ultimately on the program. Self-assessment can take place through different activities. It can include: introspection, self and staff questionnaires, interviews with staff members, climate surveys, and feedback from families and outside sources.

The overall purpose of a self-evaluation is to go through a process which will help the leadership identify what worked, didn't work, and why? How is leadership perceived? What needs to be changed? A successful leader must look at the results of the self-assessment honestly and objectively, then make changes needed to improve leadership effectiveness.

Getting Started

The following suggestions may be helpful in determining leadership performance:

- Develop and administer a climate survey at least once a year to assess the overall atmosphere of the program. Some of the things that might be included in this survey are:
 - Does staff teaming exist and is it encouraged?
 - How does staff get along with one another?
 - How does staff perceive their colleagues?
 - How does staff perceive their leader.
 - How does staff feel about opportunities for growth.
 - Does staff think they are respected and supported?

(Personnel cont.)

- Develop an anonymous staff questionnaire that addresses specific areas of program leadership and the resulting impact on the staff. Areas could include any or all of the following:
 - Fairness
 - Objectivity
 - Commitment
 - Ethics
 - Integrity
 - Management skills
 - Early childhood expertise
 - Issues and crisis management

- Prepare a short evaluation to be completed after each staff development activity. Make it short and simple, but open-ended. Questions, such as the following may be used:
 - What idea or activity will be most useful or helpful in your work?
 - What idea or activity would you eliminate from the program? Why?

- Conduct interviews with staff. The establishment of trust is critically important for an honest exchange of information. Questions such as following could be included as part of the interview process.
 - Is the atmosphere or climate of the program conducive to open communication? Is it positive and stress-free?
 - Does the leadership style allow for free interchange with staff members?
 - Does the leadership model value openness and promote active listening?
 - Are communications to the staff clear, timely, and helpful?
 - Are the personal needs of staff members considered such as comp time or flex time?

- The strategy of introspection requires the program leader to spend time forming answers from a personal perspective to all

(Personnel cont.)

questions asked in any of the activities conducted. A more personal process could involve answering the following questions:

- Did I meet my goals?
- If so, how well?
- If not, what should I change?
- What worked well and how can I build on that?
- Where can I go for help?

Moving Forward

Ask leaders of other programs in your community about their self-assessment tools.

Build in a pro-active rather than reactive model of leadership as a result of the self-assessment.

Review available climate surveys.

Ask for input from ISBE consultants

Quality Indicator IV.D.3. The supervisor in partnership with each staff member develops a formative supervision plan.

Laying the Foundation

Supervision of staff is an important role for administrators. It can be used effectively to help staff grow and flourish professionally. Supervision is perhaps one of the most difficult responsibilities of the leader. That is because traditional supervision is often equated with evaluation. People tend to be anxious when they know they are being evaluated, especially if negative evaluations threaten their jobs.

Formative supervision is interactive rather than directive, democratic rather than authoritarian, and teacher or staff centered rather than supervisor centered. Good formative evaluation is a key technique for promoting professional development of staff.

Techniques in the Clinical Supervision of Teachers: Preservice and Inservice Applications lists the following goals of supervision:

- To provide program staff with feedback on service delivery and job performance.
- To diagnose and solve problems.
- To help staff develop skill in using a variety of strategies that are effective in promoting learning, motivating children and parents, and managing program activities.
- To evaluate staff regarding promotion, increased compensation, tenure, or other decisions.
- To help staff develop a positive attitude about continuous professional development (Acheson and Gill 1987).

Getting Started

Formative supervision is primarily a three stage process: the planning conference, observation, and the feedback conference.

(Personnel cont.)

The planning conference sets the stage for effective supervision.

- Meet with each staff member at the beginning of the year.
- Start to establish trust.
- Discuss personal and professional goals and how they relate to program goals.
- Establish a set of criteria for evaluating staff.
- Identify areas that need improvement or are of concern with assistance from the staff member. Ask questions to guide staff thinking about concerns. This could be done with a checklist.
- Help staff translate concerns into observable behaviors. Ask questions to help staff focus on terms used and clarify their meaning.
- Identify strategies staff will use for improving service delivery. These procedures may include, but are not limited to:
 - Practicing self-directed behavior.
 - Reading the literature about the latest trends that address this concern
 - Attending workshops.
 - Enrolling in classes.
 - Peer mentoring.
- Assist staff in setting self-improvement goals.
- Select times for observations, an observation technique to use, and what you will record during your observations.
- Clarify the context for recording observations.
 - What will be observed?
 - What is expected from the parents/child in this activity?
 - What strategies will be used?
 - Is there anything to be aware of as this activity is presented?

After the planning conference, including setting dates and times for observation, make the observation visit. Record data needed for the follow-up conference. Information that relies on memory is less persuasive than information that is objectively recorded.

(Personnel cont.)

At the feedback conference the supervisor is now ready to work with the staff member to develop specific strategies for improvement. The supervisor must:

- Provide objective observational data to the staff member in a non-evaluative and non-threatening manner.
- Analyze the data cooperatively and reach agreement on what is happening.
- Elicit staff reaction to the data and consider possible causes and consequences.
- Reach decisions about future actions.
- Create a professional development plan.

Moving Forward

Familiarize yourself with various strategies for supervisory meetings.

Familiarize yourself with a variety of observation techniques.

Read current literature and attend workshops on staff supervision and evaluation.

Review current National Association for the Education of Young Children materials on staff supervision and evaluation.

(Personnel cont.)

Quality Indicator IV.D.4. Sufficient time for supervision is allotted in the program leader's schedule.

Laying the Foundation

The leadership of birth to three programs is responsible for establishing priorities regarding time and tasks in formulating his or her schedule. Time management is critical to the task of organizing and carrying out the responsibilities assigned to the role of birth to three program leader or administrator. There are many areas that demand attention, but supervision of the staff members is one of the areas that must be accounted for and needs an adequate allotment of time. Each individual administrator or director has his or her own strengths and styles of work effectiveness that must be considered when establishing schedules and timelines. What works for one person in a given situation may not work for another in a different situation. Individualization is as important in this process as it is when programming and services are provided for infants and toddlers and their families.

Recent focus group findings on recruitment and retention sponsored by the Birth to Three Project, Training and Workforce Development Committee, identified supervision as one of the areas of concern among birth to three care and education professionals. Lack of communication and support by supervisors in regard to the expectations of staff were identified as a barrier to retaining staff. Professionals expressed the concern that they wanted supervision to be more than a formal, scheduled event that includes direct observation of program practice. The professional should be able to express concerns about the process of care and education of young children and have access to dialogue with leadership as well as to use these individuals as a sounding board and mentor. Staff members look to leadership for recognition and encouragement for a job well done. Taking time for these "celebrations," whether formal or informal, is critical to the morale and well being of the staff member.

Getting Started

Program leadership is personally responsible for the time spent in management activities and must commit to the time needed for appropriate staff supervision. The following process could be helpful when establishing this time commitment.

- Review and organize tasks required to give leadership to a birth to three program.
- Identify the time necessary for supervision of the program staff after evaluating the staff structure and its impact on supervision.
- Review and organize tasks required to give leadership
- Share what model of supervision is being considered and what has been learned with the staff.
- Ask for input from the staff regarding their ideas for the program supervision model including what areas might be accomplished by someone other than the program supervisor.
- Share and discuss the timeline needed for supervision of each staff position and ask for ideas regarding how to make that time dedicated to the supervision task effective, efficient, and without interruption and what constitutes a "real emergency."
- Spend time with each individual staff member in debriefing and sharing in a manner that meets the needs of leadership and the professional.

(Personnel cont.)

Moving Forward

Review and evaluate the current personal calendar particularly in the area of time spent in supervision, documenting the type of activity, and adjusting future timelines as necessary.

Attend a workshop or seminar on time management. These may be available through the business community as well as course work, seminars, retreats and conferences.

Establish a relationship with another birth to three program administrator to share and discuss the challenges presented in supervision of staff.

Quote: "Our chief want in life is somebody who will make us do what we can." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

PROGRAM STANDARD IV.E. THE PROGRAM LEADERSHIP PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES FOR ONGOING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

Research on quality programs demonstrates a high correlation between educational training and quality. Effective leaders recognize that professional development is a continuous process that meets the individual needs of each staff member as determined by a formative evaluation. Opportunities are provided for each staff member to participate in a variety of staff development activities. Nurturing is a key concept in early childhood. Leaders must provide a nurturing environment to maximize the unique strengths and abilities of the staff so that they may in turn nurture children and families.

Quality Indicator IV.E.1. A professional development plan, based on the needs identified through formative supervision and the interests of each staff member, is on file.

Laying the Foundation

The purpose of providing ongoing professional growth and development is the enhancement of service delivery to parents and children, as well as enhancement of the self-esteem and confidence of staff.

The path each staff member takes toward their professional growth and development will differ and will be determined by the strategies included in the formative evaluation plan. Because there are a myriad of possible strategies for professional development, the effective leader will need an organized plan for staff development. Using presenters, consultants, and/or peer mentors requires some creative thinking about scheduling and budget issues.

Getting Started

The program leader must consider the many kinds of professional development strategies possible to meet the needs of the staff.

(Personnel cont.)

- Course work- offered at a college or university usually for credit. Assist staff in developing a plan so that course work eventually leads to moving up the career ladder.
- Seminars - A topic covered from many perspectives often in several sessions and utilizing an "expert" on the staff or in the field. Can also be offered by institutions of higher education.
- Workshops - One or two hour presentations on a particular subject given by staff or other expert in the field.
- Retreats - Organized around a specific plan to deal with a subject that affects the entire staff. They are often more than one day and take place away from the work place where staff can network and collaborate.
- Peer mentoring - The linkage of one staff member with another for the purpose of providing support, modeling, technical assistance, and/or nurturing.
- Program visitation - Opportunities for staff to visit quality programs that provide similar services.
- Professional reading - Set up a staff library of journals, books, and periodicals.
- Web sites - Identify web sites that contain accurate and useful information for staff.
- Other activities - Presentations, inservice sharing, focus groups, and professional organization memberships can be effective strategies to use in professional development.

(Personnel cont.)

- Provide portfolios or journals for the staff to document participation in activities that support the professional development plan.

Moving Forward

Maintain ongoing dialogue with local colleges and universities regarding opportunities for staff development.

Be active in your professional organization to keep abreast of conferences and available workshops.

Peruse the literature and web sites to obtain information useful for staff development.

Quality Indicator IV.E.2. Sufficient time and funding are provided for staff to participate in appropriate staff development activities.

Laying the Foundation

Although just about everyone recognizes the importance of professional development, the fiscal and human resources necessary to support such a program are often overlooked or scaled down when there is a budgetary concern. A successful professional development plan must be a major part of overall program goals. In addition, budget and scheduling issues need to be factored in when the annual plan is developed.

Getting Started

The program leadership needs to identify resources and accessibility to them so that time and funding needed by staff members to attend and participate in staff development activities are available. The following strategies are suggested:

- Include professional development in program goals.
- Budget funds to provide quality staff development.
- Provide release time for staff to participate in professional growth activities.
- Provide incentives for continuing education.
- Collaborate with higher education on
 - Available classes.
 - Scheduling
 - Accessibility
 - Affordability
 - Scholarships

(Personnel cont.)

Moving Forward

Obtain information about upcoming professional development activities.

Research the availability of scholarships, and other funding for staff.

Ask for input from ISBE consultants.

Collaborate with the Illinois Resource Center.

Learn more about the TEACH Program

Quote: "There comes that mysterious meeting in life when someone acknowledges who we are and what we can be, igniting the circuits of our highest potential." - Rusty Berkus

STANDARD IV.F. THE PROGRAM LEADERSHIP PROMOTES CONTINUITY IN STAFFING THROUGH PROVISION OF A SUPPORTIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT, COMPETITIVE WAGES AND BENEFITS, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT.

A career ladder permits staff members to assume greater responsibilities with greater rewards as they gain experience, knowledge, and skills. Opportunities for staff development should include goal setting, peer mentoring, workshops, and classes, culminating with the opportunity to develop their own staff development portfolio. A supportive work environment, including appropriate physical space and material resources, will enhance the staff's effectiveness. In addition, opportunities to exercise and expand their individual skills in a wide range of programming options allow staff to demonstrate their capabilities in working with children and families. Furthermore, staff satisfaction and continuity will be ensured with adequate compensation including a benefit package. When staff are valued, supported, and have the opportunity to be secure and grow, their self worth will be enhanced, and their ability to make significant contributions to the program will be maximized.

Quality Indicator IV.F. 1. The program leadership provides each staff member with a workspace and schedule appropriate for implementing their job responsibilities.

Laying the Foundation

Leadership and staff must have adequate and pleasant surroundings in which to work. There needs to be individual work spaces and necessary materials and equipment. The staff member needs to take advantage of "teachable moments" and be able to find particular items that will answer questions, solve dilemmas, and/or motivate continued learning; therefore, the space must be organized and adequate. Effort must also be given to the determination of each staff member's work schedule. Consideration should include the position and its responsibilities as well as any agreement reached between the management and staff member

(Personnel cont.)

regarding scheduling when finalizing the program and staff members' work schedules. Accommodations in the program schedule to meet the needs of the participants and community may include evening and weekend hours. Staffing to meet these needs may require some creative strategies.

Program leaders need to be sure staff are allowed time before the program year begins and periodically throughout the year for "organizational duties".

Getting Started

The following suggestions can assist the leadership to implement supports needed by staff members to fulfill their job responsibilities.

- Arrange office and resource space in center-based programs close to the physical space where activities are conducted for families and children.
- Make boxes, cartons or other storage containers (preferably on wheels) available for the staff when they conduct home visits.
- Encourage collaboration and sharing of ideas and materials by locating staff in close proximity to each other.
- Request input from staff regarding scheduling and resource sharing.
- Develop realistic schedules to accommodate both group and individual responsibilities.

Moving Forward

Network with other birth to three programs and share ideas about scheduling, storing, and/or transporting materials.

(Personnel cont.)

Attend local conferences and visit the exhibits. Note how exhibitors organize, store, and transport their materials.

Check professional journals and early childhood periodicals for ideas regarding the use of available space and storage of materials.

Quality Indicator IV.F.2. The program leadership advocates and works to secure a competitive wage and benefit package for personnel based on their position in the program and their expertise and experience.

Laying the Foundation

"The National Association for the Education of Young Children believes that all of society -- children, families, employers, communities, and the nation as a whole -- benefits from the provision of high-quality early childhood services. Currently, early childhood program costs are disproportionately borne by staff who forego good wages to work with young children and by children who ultimately pay the price of poor quality. It is time that all sectors of society contribute their fair share of the costs of this essential public service" (National Association for the Education of Young Children 1987, 31).

All programs for young children should provide staff equitable salaries and benefits commensurate with their qualifications and job responsibilities. Compensation packages (salaries and benefits) should be sufficient to recruit and retain qualified, competent staff. Ensuring a sufficient number of well-prepared, competent, and adequately compensated staff greatly increases staff stability and the probability of a high-quality program for children. Salaries of professionals and paraprofessionals in birth to three programs vary greatly according to state regulations, the type of program, the staff member's educational background and experience, the source of funds for the program, the staff member's responsibilities, and the community in which the program is located.

One way to improve the early childhood work force is to address the issues related to retaining staff. A recent study found that staff who remained on the job earned significantly higher wages. Because of low pay and poor benefits, the early childhood field experiences turnover rates that are much higher than the national average in other areas. This reality has a detrimental effect on the profession because staff

(Personnel cont.)

leave the field rather than continue to develop skills to further their careers. High turnover can also hinder children's development because it can interrupt the continuity of early care and education.

Staff who experience job satisfaction and fulfillment are more likely to express positive feelings toward children. They are also more likely to remain in their positions for a longer period of time. With general operating costs and health insurance increasing faster than grant and other incoming funds, fringe benefits for staff are generally one of the last budget items to be considered.

High quality early childhood programs recognize that there is a direct relationship between the quality of work life experienced by the teaching staff and the quality of care and education that staff provide for children. Prioritizing staff needs to ensure for their well being is a critical task for the leadership, but often the hardest to provide.

Getting Started

The NAEYC Self Study Administrator's Report gives several suggestions regarding the welfare of early childhood teachers, administrators, and support staff. Use these suggestions as a guide for grantees, governing boards, or agency administrators who seek to improve practice within their own programs.

- Write job descriptions for full and part-time staff.
- Write personnel policies including: salary scales with increments based on professional qualifications, length of employment and performance; description of benefits; resignation and termination policies; and grievance procedures.
- Provide benefit packages for full-time staff including paid leave (vacation, sick, and personal), medical insurance, and retirement.

(Personnel cont.)

- Assure the annual program evaluation examines the adequacy of staff compensation, benefits, and rate of staff turnover.
- Develop a plan to increase salaries and benefits to ensure recruitment and retention of qualified staff.
- Check to be sure planning time is incorporated into staff schedules based on the role and responsibility of each staff member.

Adapted from The Director's Link, Published by the
Center for Early Childhood Leadership,
National Louis University, Winter 2001

Moving Forward

Review the Quality, Compensation, and Affordability Report found on the NAEYC web page at

www.naeyc.org/resources/positionstatements/psqca98.htm

Reflect on the comparison of the duties and compensation of a child care director in a large program with an elementary school principal described in the newsletter, The Director's Link, Spring 2000, www.nl.edu.cecl.

Quality Indicator IV.F.3. The program leadership provides opportunities for career advancement.

Laying the Foundation

Part of the responsibility of the program leadership is to encourage staff members to continue their professional growth. Each higher level of training opens up advancement opportunities within the program, school district, cooperating programs, community agencies or related areas. Staff should be aware of employment opportunities, advancement opportunities, and levels of compensation.

When staff members enroll in a college credit course and take an active step regarding their own professional development, the administrator may see new enthusiasm in the staff member. Sometimes problems that may have concerned the staff member regarding his or her effectiveness are addressed by the professor or other members of the class. While the individual is benefiting from finding new job satisfaction, the whole program is also benefiting from the results. The children usually receive more appropriate care and education, families are better served, and other staff members may be motivated and inspired by the example.

Getting Started

The following suggestions may assist program leadership to identify opportunities for staff career advancement:

- Encourage staff members to take college courses selected from a suggested list researched by the administration.
- Urge eligible staff to use the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Illinois funds to pay for their course work.
- Urge eligible staff to check with the local Child Care Resource and Referral agency to access their professional development funds. (July is the beginning of a new funding cycle.)

(Personnel cont.)

- Maintain a professional bulletin board for posting all relevant course announcements, notices, and bulletins.
- Advertise opportunities for related areas such as positions of consultant, researcher, administrator, college instructor, infant-development specialist, or home and family living instructor in a secondary school. This informs the staff about career ladder opportunities.

Moving Forward

Familiarize staff with the opportunities such as TEACH and GREAT START.

Visit other child care and education programs including corporate programs to learn about incentives that encourage staff development and retention.

Quote: "A leader is not an administrator who loves to run others, but someone who carries water for his people so they can get on with their jobs."-Robert Townsend

(Personnel cont.)

STANDARD IV.G. THE PROGRAM LEADERSHIP AND STAFF ARE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT PROGRAMS AND AGENCIES IN THE COMMUNITY THAT PROVIDE SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

Programs function within the context of the community. Leaders must know what resources are available in the community and support collaboration that enhances service delivery. They share their knowledge with staff and provide opportunities for them to have "hands on" experiences with other programs/agencies.

Quality Indicator IV.G.1. The program leadership provides access to information about a variety of agencies in the community that provide educational, health, and social services to children and families.

Laying the Foundation

Many reports indicate the necessity for collaborative ventures in today's society. Each individual program does not have the resources necessary to provide a comprehensive service system to meet the complex needs of families. A competent administrator knows about the existing community health, social, and educational services and provides staff members with the information necessary for their work. The leadership also builds community networks and coalitions through effective communication including the use of media resources, public speaking, and personally written materials for both internal and external use. Working within and between programs and communities requires the ability to build relationships, set clear goals, and use negotiation skills.

Getting Started

Birth to three programs along with local councils, businesses, and private foundations can collaborate to identify existing resources and services as well as gaps and duplication. The program leader should check with the local library or Chamber of Commerce to see if a directory is available of

(Personnel cont.)

all the early childhood programs and services available in the community. If no directory is available, a committee from the community can develop one. Staff members in each program should:

- Know the services and available resources provided by the program and be able to share that information with community members.
- Become a broker of this important information with program participants and the community.
- Become familiar with existing community services, who provides them, and how the birth to three program fits into the total picture.
- Discuss with families what needs can be met by the birth to three program or one of the other community providers.
- Become familiar with the ways programs can collaborate to provide services for children and families, special programs, and staff development.

Moving Forward

Read articles on community services and collaboration strategies.

Join the local early childhood interagency council or other collaborative groups.

Offer to work with the local agencies as they develop an early childhood fair.

Invite a staff member from another program to attend a conference or professional association event with you.

Offer to help develop the local early childhood service directory.

(Personnel cont.)

Start an early childhood resource library to be shared by all early childhood programs in the community.

Become familiar with the "All Our Kids" Network sponsored by many County Departments of Health in Illinois.

Quality Indicator IV.G.2. The program leadership arranges for staff members to visit and interact with birth to three providers and programs elsewhere in the community.

Laying the Foundation

The old African proverb, "it takes a village to raise a child" is still true today. Staff members will be enriched in their own program roles when they have the opportunity to visit other similar, local programs. Each program in the community will profit from sharing, learning about each other's experiences, and working together. In addition, families often move within the community and value the information provided by a program that tells them about services and resources in their new neighborhood. Staff can do this accurately if they have actually visited the program. Sometimes it is advantageous for two programs to conduct cooperative planning. This teamwork will also allow staff from each program to know one another.

Getting Started

In many communities, the local councils, libraries, clinics, and hospitals provide opportunities for families and programs to know each other. The various community "fairs" are one example of this and can often serve as public awareness opportunities for individual programs. The program leadership facilitates interactive opportunities for staff members within the community.

- Develop a schedule so each staff member can visit at least one program during the year and invite other programs to visit your facility.
- Encourage staff to participate in community events to meet members of the community and learn about services provided by other programs so duplication and gaps can be identified and addressed.

(Personnel cont.)

Moving Forward

Form a small group of local providers who meet regularly to share ideas and strategies.

Engage staff members in a 'shadowing" activity with the staff of another program.

Have a "staff exchange day" with another program.

Read about the early childhood programs in France, Great Britain, Italy and Sweden and compare their efforts to what is happening in early childhood in the United States.

Quote: "Some people come into our lives and quickly go. Some stay for awhile and leave footprints on our hearts. And we are never, ever the same."-Unknown