
An Overview of
Existing Professional Development Opportunities
for Early-Care Educators in Rhode Island

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INTRODUCTION

Professional development for early-care educators in Rhode Island is at an important turning point. As the state seeks to increase both the quality of early-care settings and the credentials of providers, it is also exploring how it can meet the professional development needs of practitioners in a more systematic manner to ensure that the workforce has access to research-based, high-quality training.

Several statewide initiatives have brought us to the crossroads where we now find ourselves. In 2009, the state launched BrightStars, a quality rating and improvement system administered by the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children. In 2010 the Rhode Island Department of Education issued new standards for approval for early childhood programs. And Rhode Island is now in the second year of its Pre-kindergarten Demonstration Project, which has seven sites across the state. All of these measures have increased the focus on quality in the classroom and the professional development of early-care educators.

In 2004 R2LP produced a document titled *How Ready Is Providence?*, which examined two dozen indicators of childhood well-being in the city of Providence. Among those indicators was one addressing existing professional development opportunities for early-care providers. In the intervening six years, the findings for that indicator have become grossly outdated. Not addressed, for example, is the role of higher education, which is increasingly important as the state seeks to strengthen the credentials of early-care educators.

Unlike the professional development indicator in *How Ready Is Providence?*, the following document is an overview of existing professional development initiatives across the state. It is critical, however, that we continue to recognize the unique needs of providers in our core cities – such as the availability of courses offered in Spanish as well as in English. R2LP invested in the production of this updated report because it believes that to understand where we want to go in the future, we first need to know where we are now and what is currently available.

Representatives from the early-care field, higher education and state agencies endorsed Ready to Learn Providence's leadership role in the development of this document, and members of R2LP's Professional Development Committee and the BrightStars Quality Network reviewed the list of organizations described in the report. (If an agency was inadvertently omitted, we will be happy to include that information in subsequent printings as well as in the PDF posted on the R2LP website.)

It was our intention at the outset of this report to combine the data provided to us into a synthesized analysis of all existing offerings. Because of the very different ways in which agencies document outcomes and deliver services, such an analysis was virtually impossible. Perhaps there is a need for more commonality in the way data is collected.

Another apparent need is a comprehensive study of the existing early-care workforce across the state. What credentials do early-care teachers currently possess, what are their existing education levels, what is their rate of participation in professional development programs? These are just some of the questions we have no way of answering right now. That data would seem essential in developing a professional development system that truly meets the needs of our early-care educators.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agencies and Programs

Childspan/Children’s Friend and Service.....	4
Local Initiative Support Corporation/RI Child Care Facilities Fund.....	5
Prevent Child Abuse Rhode Island.....	6
Project Launch/Early Childhood Clinical Research Center.....	7
Ready to Learn Providence.....	8
Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children.....	10
Rhode Island Early Childhood Program at CCRI.....	11
Rhode Island Early Learning Standards Project/RI Department of Education.....	12
Rhode Island Training and Technical Assistance Center.....	14
Successful Start/Child Care Support Network/ RI Department of Health.....	15

Higher Education

Community College of Rhode Island.....	16
Rhode Island College.....	17
University of Rhode Island.....	18

To download a PDF of this report, and to find studies conducted by some of the organizations included in this document, please go to the homepage of the Ready to Learn Providence website, www.r2lp.org, and click on “Professional Development Opportunities in RI” under the heading “News.”

CHILDSPAN/CHILDREN'S FRIEND AND SERVICE

Childspan's mission is to enhance the professional development of those who serve children – birth through age 16 – and to ensure availability of high-quality care and education services for Rhode Island's children, youth and their families. Childspan was established in 1991 under the auspices of Children's Friend and Service.

For the past 19 years, Childspan has offered educational trainings and programs to early-care and education providers statewide. On many occasions, early-care providers from nearby Connecticut and Massachusetts have attended its programs.

Childspan's targeted audience includes infant, toddler, preschool, kindergarten and pre-kindergarten teachers, teacher assistants, home child-care providers, and school-age and youth development staff. Its professional development audience also includes early-care and education administrators, health-care providers, social workers, and Family, Friend and Neighbor (FFN) caregivers. Childspan has a history of offering professional development programs in English and Spanish.

Participants in Childspan's professional development programs include both pre-service and in-service early childhood educators. Childspan has offered approximately 85 trainings annually, with a capacity of 20 participants in each training. Additionally, various themed conferences have been offered throughout the year, supporting up to 450 more participants. Examples of themed conferences include Keys to Quality (addressing the needs of preschool programs); Critical Issues in Child Care (birth to 16 years with a mental health focus); and I Am Moving, I Am Learning (a nutrition/exercise curriculum for preschool and kindergarten programs).

Childspan has offered professional development programs in each of the areas listed below:

Child Development Associate (CDA)

Literacy

Ethics and Professionalism

Diverse Learners

Stress Management

Needs of Exceptional Children and their Families

Family, School, and Community Relationships

Health and Safety

Curriculum, Teaching, and Learning

Observation, Assessment, and Planning

Program Design, Management, and Evaluation

Child & Brain Development

Teambuilding

Family and Parent Engagement



With its many two- and four-hour workshops, Childspan has been instrumental in helping providers complete the 20 hours of annual training that is required by the Department of Children, Youth and Families. In 2009, 2,278 people successfully completed at least one of Childspan's professional development activities. Approximately 82% attended two-hour trainings, many of which were offered as part of a series on a particular topic. About 13% attended three-hour trainings, and 4% attended trainings that lasted four or more hours.

Childspan is in the process of exploring opportunities for tracking outcomes for children and/or educators.

As a program of Children's Friend and Service, Childspan expects to continue its offering of professional development training, learning opportunities and conferences for the early-care and education community regardless of funding sources.

LOCAL INITIATIVES SUPPORT CORPORATION/RI CHILD CARE FACILITIES FUND

LISC's mission is to organize capital and other resources to support initiatives that will stimulate the comprehensive development of healthy, stable neighborhoods and foster their connection to the socioeconomic mainstream of the region. LISC manages the Rhode Island Child Care Facilities Fund (RICCFF) and provides the capital and technical expertise that child-care programs need to improve the quality and capacity of their physical space.

Rhode Island LISC, established in 1991, serves all of Rhode Island, with an emphasis on the core cities.

LISC/RICCFF offers three to eight workshops a year, with the average workshop serving 40 to 60 people. These workshops are designed for child-care directors and administrators, nonprofit community developers, and professional development team members, such as architects. (Capacity for its workshops is higher when LISC partners with groups that are already convening child-care providers, such as RIDE or Head Start.)

RICCFF trainings cover all aspects of child-care facility and playground design, real estate development and finance, moderate renovations, the greening of child-care centers, and the connection between quality space and quality programming. In 2009, 140 people successfully completed RICCFF professional development activities.

RICCFF tracks its outcomes by examining:

- Dollars invested per program (i.e. low interest loans, equity investments, zero-interest pre-development loans, and planning grants)
- Number of child-care centers and family child-care programs funded by city and town
- Number of new or renovated quality facilities completed

- Number of new child-care spaces created
- Number of child-care spaces improved
- Number of children served in new and improved spaces; number of DHS subsidized children and private pay
- Number of organizations receiving one-on-one technical assistance
- Number of BrightStars and RIDE referrals and subsequent one-on-one technical assistance
- Number of RICCFF sponsored trainings delivered
- Number of professionals attending each training
- Additional dollars leveraged with RICCFF investments
- Funds raised for RICCFF operations and investments

RICCFF provides three closely linked resources and services:

Flexible and Affordable Capital in the form of grants, "recoverable grants," low-interest loans and, through New Markets Tax Credits, equity investments to fund the cost of investments in early learning centers;

Capacity Building, Training and Educational Resource Materials for early learning providers, non-profit community development agencies, architects and other key stakeholders, to increase awareness of the impact of the physical environment on program quality, operating efficiency, accessibility, and health and safety, and to offer concrete strategies for making strategic and cost-effective improvements; and

Individual Technical Assistance to walk early learning providers step by step through early feasibility, planning, financing and design, to successfully implement facilities improvement or expansion projects.



PREVENT CHILD ABUSE RHODE ISLAND

Prevent Child Abuse Rhode Island (PCARI) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that has been in existence for 30 years. As a chartered chapter of the national organization Prevent Child Abuse America, the agency's mission is to ensure the safety and well-being of children in Rhode Island through awareness, education and advocacy.

PCARI's child abuse and neglect prevention strategy is designed to mobilize the entire Rhode Island community to develop and institutionalize a comprehensive approach for raising public awareness of this public health issue; to increase the capacity for prevention programming; and to advocate for a change in public policy for child abuse prevention.

There is a growing recognition of the necessity for child maltreatment identification and prevention training for a wide array of professionals and paraprofessionals who come into contact with children ages birth to 18 years. PCARI's training efforts for professionals and paraprofessionals address the identification of the indicators of maltreatment, reporting mandates and procedures, intervention and prevention.

PCARI's Professional Development Program is designed for, but is not limited to: early-care providers (home- and center-based); teachers and administrators; human service staff (home visitors, case workers, case managers, protective services); emergency responders (fire and medical independent responders, emergency room staff); pediatric health professionals (nurses, nurse practitioners, and physicians); and law enforcement personnel (police, prosecutors, judges, CASA staff and volunteers).

PCARI's professional development ensures that child welfare professionals and paraprofessionals have a comprehensive knowledge of the indicators of abuse and neglect as well as an in-depth knowledge of reporting laws and procedures, and the prevention of child abuse and neglect in all of its forms. Its goal is to ensure that victims of child maltreatment are expeditiously and appropriately linked to intervention and treatment. PCARI offers a wide variety of training on topics related to child abuse prevention,

such as indicators and reporting, building the protective factors known to reduce and prevent child maltreatment, bullying, Internet safety, parenting and communication, parent engagement and support, child development, stress management and everyday child safety.

PCARI currently offers more than 30 different workshops. A full description of these offerings can be found on its website, www.preventchildabuse-ri.org.

PCARI typically charges a fee for its training, usually \$10 per person per session for workshops scheduled on its training calendar. If PCARI contracts with an early-care program to conduct a workshop on site for the program's staff, it charges \$150 to \$200 for up to 25 participants to cover staff costs and handouts. (In its Strengthening Families Rhode Island program, it tries to obtain grant dollars so that it can provide the training and technical assistance services at no cost.)



Strengthening Families Rhode Island (SFRI)

recognizes the unique role child-care providers and other family support providers play in building protective factors in families with young children. This program, which is research- and evidence-based, prepares the provider to be a strong, competent mentor and coach for parents and other family members around issues of child development, parenting roles and responsibilities, and discipline. Child-care programs that participate in SFRI receive 16 hours of training and 24 hours of technical assistance.

In 2009, 10 child-care centers (125 staff members) participated in SFRI. Each participant received 16 hours of training. Over the course of eight months, each participating site received four hours per month of technical assistance. In 2009 PCARI offered a related two-hour workshop 12 times to 180 participants.

Other PCARI professional development programs of interest to early-care providers include **Brain Development Basics** (three 2-hour sessions), and **Brain Development and Children** (four 2.5-hour sessions).

Brandeis University has conducted several studies of the SFRI program. (Go to www.r2lp.org and click "Professional Development Opportunities in RI" on the homepage.)

PROJECT LAUNCH/EARLY CHILDHOOD CLINICAL RESEARCH CENTER

The overarching mission of RI Project LAUNCH is to build social-behavioral capacities into community early-childhood systems of care in the city of Providence, the state's main urban core. Specifically, the goal is to promote physical and mental health wellness for young children (birth to age 8) who are developing in the context of risk.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Association (SAMHSA) awarded RI Project LAUNCH to the RI State Department of Health and Bradley Hospital in 2008. As part of this initiative, The Bradley Early Childhood Clinical Research Center of Bradley Hospital provides professional development to support community child-care providers, educators, family support workers, and mental health professionals in the delivery of the *Incredible Years Series*, evidence-based programs (for children, parents and providers) aimed at reducing children's aggression and behavior problems and increasing school competence at home and at school.

The Teacher Classroom Management Program

The 36-hour Teacher Classroom Management Program training is offered to personnel who work with preschoolers in Providence's child-care centers (e.g. teachers, teacher assistants, mental-health providers and administrators). It focuses on strengthening the classroom management strategies of teachers, promoting children's prosocial behavior and school readiness skills, and reducing classroom aggression and noncooperation with peers and teachers. The training also focuses on ways teachers can effectively collaborate with parents to encourage school involvement and promote consistency from home to school. Training is typically provided during six 6-hour workshops spread over the academic year.

RI Project LAUNCH/ECCRC provided seven *In-*

credible Years teacher trainings in 2009, several of which began in 2008. A total of 95 teachers, teacher assistants, mental-health providers and administrators were trained. LAUNCH offers this training four to five times a year, with a capacity of about 15 participants in each training.

The Incredible Years Parent Training Intervention – Group Leader Training

The *Incredible Years* Parent Training Intervention is a series of programs that focus on strengthening parenting competencies (monitoring, positive discipline, confidence) and fostering parents' involvement in children's school experiences in order to promote children's academic, social and emotional competencies and reduce conduct problems. It targets parents of children aged 2 to 8.

RI Project LAUNCH's *Incredible Years* group leader training prepares clinicians (psychologists, social workers, etc.) to deliver the manualized parent training intervention directly

to parents. It is a three-day, 24-hour training. In 2009, LAUNCH offered this course once, training 16 clinicians. It is typically offered one to two times a year.

Data

RI Project LAUNCH assesses the impact of its Teacher Classroom Management Program with pre- and post-intervention evaluations of classrooms and children. These assessments identify changes in teacher practices, classroom quality, and child social and emotional competence.

With its Group Leader Parent Training course, RI Project LAUNCH monitors clinicians to determine how faithfully they follow the program they were trained to deliver. LAUNCH uses forms completed by the clinicians and questionnaires completed by the parents in their workshops to assess impact on parental behavior.

ECCRC shares its data in professional journals and conferences.



READY TO LEARN PROVIDENCE

Ready to Learn Providence is a community-based school readiness initiative that was founded in 2003 with the vision that all children in Providence will enter school healthy and ready to learn. In recent years, R2LP has provided services in Central Falls and Pawtucket as well as in Providence. With its growing expertise and capacity in the urban core, R2LP is now bringing some of its services statewide. While its geography is expanding, its focus on young children remains the same.

Since its start, R2LP has focused its energy on the early-care system that currently exists. To change the outcomes of inner-city children, R2LP has invested in the adults responsible for their care prior to kindergarten – center- and home-based providers, and family members. By offering all of its courses, materials and mentoring support in Spanish as well as English, R2LP has invested heavily in the Latino community. (60% of the educators participating in R2LP’s professional development identify Spanish as their primary language.)

To date, most of R2LP’s professional development programs for providers have focused on early literacy and on the emotional and social development of young children. By forging partnerships with the Community College of Rhode Island and the University of Rhode Island, R2LP has been able to offer four of its courses for college credit. This option gives participants who have no prior experience with higher education a critical “first door.” (Between 2003 and 2009, 1,416 college credits were granted for participation in R2LP professional development.)

The four courses R2LP offers for college credit are: *HeadsUp! Reading*, a course in early literacy instruction; *Early Literacy Curriculum*, a course (developed by R2LP) on the implementation of a research-based curriculum in early-care settings; *Mind in the Making*, a course on the social and emotional development of young children; and *How Ready Is Providence?*, a data-driven course (developed by R2LP) that examines indicators of childhood well-being.

Most of R2LP’s courses run 36 or more hours, reflecting

the organization’s belief in “depth, dosage and duration.” When shorter workshops are offered, they are generally tied to longer courses that participants have completed.

Providers who are currently working in the early-care field (home- and center-based) are the target audience for R2LP’s professional development programs. Between 2003 and 2009, some 1,700 early-care educators participated in R2LP professional development. These educators logged more than 91,568 hours in coursework and mentoring support. (Because research has shown that coursework alone is seldom enough to change teacher practices, R2LP includes mentoring support in nearly all of its professional development programs.)

R2LP’s capacity to deliver professional development to providers is contingent on grant funding. In 2009, R2LP served just under 500 providers, administrators and AmeriCorps members working in the field. This included: 150 providers in the final year of R2LP’s Early Childhood Educator Professional Development (ECEPD) grant; 20 providers in an ECEPD no-cost extension; 40 providers in the final year of a second Early Reading First grant; 200 providers in R2LP’s Club de Proveedoras; 15 administrators in a BrightStars-related program funded by The United Way of R.I.; and some 70 R2LP AmeriCorps members on two different teams (2008/2009 and 2009/2010).

R2LP works intentionally to recruit and train facilitators from the local community. Highly skilled facilitators are often paired with someone with less experience in R2LP courses.

Early Reading First

R2LP is just completing the first year of its third Early Reading First program, funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Over the course of three years, educators from five child-care centers (in Pawtucket, Central Falls and Providence) will receive the following courses coupled with extensive mentoring support: *HeadsUp! Reading*, *Early Literacy Curriculum*; and a course in the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards (RIELS). (Teaching assistants receive *Introduction to RIELS*; lead teachers take *RIELS*



Level II.) Additionally, R2LP will develop two courses, one in English language development and a second in literacy development through science.

With a no-cost extension of its second Early Reading First program, R2LP offered *Mind in the Making* and classroom coaching at five centers (about 30 educators) in the spring of 2010.

Early Childhood Educator Professional Development (ECEPD)

One of only three recipients of an ECEPD grant in 2006, R2LP fully launched this program in the fall of 2007 with 300 center-based, Head Start and family child-care providers who were randomly assigned to either a treatment group or a delayed treatment group. Participating providers received two courses – *HeadsUp! Reading* and *Early Literacy Curriculum* – and six on-site visits from mentors. Additional mentoring support and training were given to 40 educators during the no-cost extension in 2009/2010.

BrightStars

BrightStars is the state’s quality rating and improvement system. R2LP has been awarded several grants (from The United Way, Bank of America, and the Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children) to provide targeted training and mentoring support to home- and center-based settings looking to address needs identified in their BrightStars evaluation or to advance to the next star. R2LP provides a continuum of services, from helping programs prepare their applications to developing a quality improvement plan and professional development for staff.

El Club de Proveedoras de Cuidado Infantil de Rhode Island

El Club de Proveedoras provides an important network for 230 Spanish-speaking home child-care providers in Providence, Pawtucket and Central Falls. The monthly workshops, conducted in Spanish, give the providers a chance to strengthen their skills and to earn hours toward the renewal of their licensing.

All of the club members have completed at least one of the courses that R2LP offers for college credit.

Most of the six-hour monthly training sessions focus on early literacy instruction, environmental issues, and health.

R2LP staff members facilitate the classes in literacy, but outside speakers from Lifespan, Women & Infants, The Providence Center and the Environmental Justice League lead the other sessions. The day-long workshops are held ten times a year.

R2LP AmeriCorps Program

Each year, R2LP’s 35 AmeriCorps members – most of whom are assigned to child-care centers or libraries – receive three courses that are eligible for college credit: *Mind in the Making*, *HeadsUp! Reading*, and *How Ready Is Providence?* Many members say they want to pursue careers in the early-care field after completing their AmeriCorps service.

Data

R2LP collects data on all of its professional development programs, but the tracking varies according to funding source.

With ERF and ECEPD, classroom assessments were conducted using the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation (ELLCO) and the Child/Home Early Language and Literacy Observation (CHELLO) tools. Evaluators of both programs found statistically significant gains on critical measures of early literacy.

When funding allows, R2LP tracks the literacy outcomes of children with the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test and the PALS Pre-K. (To see detailed results from R2LP’s ERF and ECEPD programs, please go to www.r2lp.org and click on “Professional Development Opportunities in RI” under “News.”)

Participants of all R2LP trainings complete questionnaires evaluating the content of the course, its delivery, its usefulness, and the extent to which they’ve been able to implement what they learned.



RHODE ISLAND ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN

RIAEYC (Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children) has been an affiliate of NAEYC, which was founded in 1926, for more than 40 years. Like the national organization, RIAEYC is dedicated to improving the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for all children birth through 8. It serves the entire state.



Programs

RIA EYC administers **BrightStars**, the state's quality and rating system (QRIS), which got under way in 2009. QRIS initiatives are designed to rate the quality or level of a child-care program, identify areas for improvement, inform consumers about levels of quality, and target quality improvement resources.

BrightStars is not a training program, but staff members do meet with participants individu-

ally to review the strengths and weakness identified in the assessment, and to discuss next steps. To date, 43 programs have successfully completed an initial evaluation.

(See Page 9 for details on the professional development opportunities Ready to Learn Providence is providing participating members of the BrightStars network.)



Conferences/Workshops

RIA EYC sponsors several professional development events each year – an annual conference and workshops/events in the fall and spring. The **Annual Early Childhood Conference** offers a variety of workshops on different topics of interest to early-childhood educators (birth to Grade 3). The workshops generally run 90 minutes, but some cover an issue in

more depth and run longer. In 2010, the day-long event was expanded to include a half-day preconference for program directors and administrators. The conference, which is open to all, attracts between 350 and 400 people. About 60 members and nonmembers typically attend the **Fall and Spring Workshops**, which focus on one topical issue.

Facilitated Groups

RIA EYC also sponsors a facilitated group for program directors interested in NAEYC accreditation. This group, which is open to anyone, functions much like a peer group, but workshops pertaining to accreditation are part of the program. Some 10 to 15 people participated in this group in 2009.

Data

Workshop and conference participants fill out evaluations after every event, which RIA EYC uses to inform its future work. RIA EYC will track the BrightStars program by looking at the number of programs participating and the number of children served by those programs. It will also look at changes over time in a program's assessments.

RHODE ISLAND EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM AT CCRI

The mission of the R.I. Early Childhood Program, which is housed at the Community College of Rhode Island, is to enhance the skills and knowledge of early childhood educators through education and mentoring. Since the program began in 2003, it has been funded with grants from the R.I. Department of Human Services.

The program targets educators who are working in the field of early childhood. It serves both center- and home-based providers in a geographic area that spans from Foster/Scituate to Newport. With the state's increased focus on college credentials for providers, the popularity of this program has grown and participation has become more competitive. As part of the application process, participants must demonstrate a minimum of a 9th grade reading level.

Program participants take the following courses for college credit at no cost:

Child Growth & Development

Characteristics and Needs of Special Populations

Guiding Children's Behavior

Creative Curriculum

Parent Child Relations

Field 1 Experience and Seminar

Since 2003, the Early Childhood Program has received five DHS grants:

2003-2004 (\$400,000 for a 24-month project)

- 18 participants completed the program; Eight early childhood centers participated.
- The program offered 18 college credits.

2005 – 2006 (\$400,000 for a 24-month project)

- 20 participants completed the program; 13 early childhood centers participated.
- Five of the participants went on to earn an associate's degree (AA); Two earned a bachelor's degree (BA).
- The program offered 18 college credits.

2007-2008 (\$400,000 for a 24-month project)

- 22 participants completed the program (16 center-based and six home-based providers).
- 12 early childhood centers participated.
- Three participants earned AA degrees.
- The program offered 18 college credits.

2009-2010 (\$240,000 for a 15-month project)

- 58 participants completed the program (48 center-based and 10 home-based providers.)
- 18 early childhood centers participated.
- Three participants earned an AA in 2010; nine are currently pursuing an AA in ECE; and three are working toward a RI Teaching Certificate.
- The program offered 18 college credits.

2010-2011 (\$240,000 for a 15-month project)

- 71 participants are currently enrolled.
- The program, which offers 18 college credits, began May 24, 2010, and will end August 2011.

Data

The Early Childhood Program submits quarterly reports to the Department of Human Services.

RHODE ISLAND EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS PROJECT/ RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Rhode Island Early Learning Standards (RIELS), published in 2003, provide guidance to families, teachers and administrators on what children should know and be able to do as they enter kindergarten. They are available in English and Spanish. A companion activity guide for families, *Fun Family Activities for Preschoolers*, was published in 2004 and is also available in English and Spanish.

The RIELS Project provides four professional development opportunities to help early-care and education professionals create high-quality, Standards-based programs for young children. It also offers a course for facilitators of *Fun Family Activities for Preschoolers*, a training program for families that focuses on the Standards and the activity guide.

Professional development participants receive training from experienced Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE)-certified trainers, work in small and large groups, share information, reflect on past and current practice, and complete assignments that lead to improved early childhood practices and program improvement.

Introduction to the RI Early Learning Standards

This training option is the preferred training option for early childhood professionals who want to learn more about the eight domains and learning goals of the Standards and on how to use them as the basis for enhancing classroom curriculum. Many center-based teacher assistants and home child-care providers take advantage of this training option. Participants in this 15-hour, five-session training learn about the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards, create activities that help children learn skills associated with school success and find new ways to encourage families to help children learn using *Fun Family Activities for Preschoolers*.

Upon successful completion of this training, participants receive a Certificate of Achievement from RIDE.

Level I: Using the RI Early Learning Standards as a Framework for Curriculum Development

This 30-hour, 10-session training focuses on strategies to enhance curriculum in all domains and learning goals addressed in the Standards. Participants explore the four components of a quality curriculum, content, process, teaching and facilitating, and context, and take a critical look at their current teaching practices in each of these areas. Teachers focus on curriculum development and implementation, and they practice effective, intentional teaching strategies to improve outcomes for children.

Participants choosing this option should have previous training in child development, experience working with preschool age children, and be prepared to complete assignments comparable to a first- or second-year college course.

Upon successful completion of the 10-session training, participants receive a Level I Certificate of Achievement from RIDE. Between March 2009 and June 2010, 122 participants completed Level 1 training.

Level II: Implementing a Standards-based Program

This intensive, competency-based training for lead teachers and experienced early childhood professionals is designed to improve teaching practice by implementing a quality curriculum aligned with the Standards, engaging in authentic assessment, using a variety of teaching strategies that build upon children's interests, learning styles and developmental levels, and engaging families in their child's education. Participants in this training develop a Practitioner Portfolio to document their progress in implementing Standards-based practices in the area of curriculum, assessment, differentiated teaching and learning, and family engagement.

Participants in this session should have a strong early



childhood background with knowledge and experience in the areas of curriculum and assessment. Individuals should have an early childhood educational background that includes a minimum of 12 higher education credits in Early Childhood Education or Child Development.

Training includes 10 three-hour sessions throughout the year. Participants who successfully complete the 30 hours of training receive a Level II Certificate of Achievement through RIDE. Participants who complete 30 hours of core training plus 15 hours in the Next Steps series are eligible to receive three undergraduate/graduate credits at the 400 level through the University of Rhode Island.

Between March 2009 and March 2010, 92 participants completed Level II training.

Level III: The Administrator's Role in Implementing a Standards-based Program

This intensive training for administrators of early-care and education programs builds upon the core elements of implementing a Standards-based program and focuses on program-wide implementation, policy and management issues, supporting teaching staff, and the dynamics of systems change.

Administrators participating in this training develop a Program Portfolio to document their progress in implementing a Standards-based program. Participants who successfully complete 30 hours of training receive a Level III Certificate of Achievement through RIDE. Participants who complete 30 hours of core training plus 15 hours in the Next Steps series are eligible to receive three graduate/undergraduate credits through the University of Rhode Island.

Between March 2009 and March 2010, 35 participants completed Level III training, and 18 others were near completion of the Level III plus 15-hour Next Steps.

Next Steps

The Next Steps Workshop Series offers a menu of three-hour sessions designed to extend the learning of both administrators and practitioners who are engaged in RIELS

Level I, Level II, and Level III training. Level II and Level III participants will want to attend sessions that support the goals they have identified in their Practitioner and Program Portfolios.

Between March 2009 and March 2010, 246 participants completed the Next Steps training sessions. The sessions are offered 12 times a year, evenings and Saturday mornings.

Data

A study, conducted by the RIELS Project and presented in January 2009, explored the impact of the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards on policy and practice in the state. To explore effects on policy, interviews were conducted with 13 individuals, including early-care policy makers, advocates, educators and academics. To explore effects on practice, a survey was sent to several hundred individuals who participated in RIELS professional development over the past five years. A PDF of this report is available on the R2LP website: www.r2lp.org. (Click link on the homepage for "Professional Development Opportunities in RI" under "News.")

RHODE ISLAND TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

The R.I. Training and Technical Assistance (TTA) state-based staff works with groups or clusters of Head Start grantees within Rhode Island while also working closely with other members of the state's early childhood community. The RI TTA Center works in an environment that promotes cross-organizational collaboration to enable the delivery of high-quality support and services.

The services of the RI TTA Center are provided by the Education Development Center (EDC) and are funded through the Office of Head Start. The initial contract began March 2009; the current contract will end Sept. 11, 2010. The RI TTA Center serves all of Rhode Island.

The RI TTA Center is responsible for:

- Collaborating with the Head Start State Collaboration Office, Head Start Association, State Advisory Council and other state leaders to build linkages, develop State Memoranda of Understanding, and track and respond to state and national early childhood education trends and issues.
- Providing training and technical assistance for groups of Head Start and Early Head Start programs, their partners, and other early childhood education programs, based on national, regional, state and local priorities, issues and data.
- Sponsoring and/or coordinating the design and delivery of state training events to address the professional development needs of staff as well as national and state priorities.
- Supporting the development of state-level public/private partnerships, including work with higher education institutions, to ensure a coordinated and effective system for early childhood education.

The following are examples of trainings conducted by the RI TTA Center in 2009/2010:

- CLASS: 2-day reliability trainings
- Individualized CLASS trainings on Emotional Support, Classroom Management, and Instructional Support Domains

- CLASS Professional Development Series
- Infant/Toddler curriculum
- Early Head Start start-up planning and implementation
- Assessment & Curriculum
- Reflective Supervision
- CSEFEL – supporting children's social-emotional competencies
- Dual Language Learners assessment tools
- Using SOLAR in your early childhood programs

Webinars that have been offered through the RI TTA Center include: Reduced State Revenues: Meeting Non-Federal Share Requirements; Homelessness; Emergency Preparedness and Planning; Parent Engagement; Home-based Services; Using CSEFEL Resources to Support

Teaching Staff for Children; Creating Systems to Support Family Literacy; Coaching: Advancing Teaching Practices; Understanding and Responding to Families Experiencing Postpartum Depression; Serving Children with Autism.

Approximately 1,500 people successfully completed professional development activities through the RI TTA Center in 2009/2010. Some 70 percent of those participants were Head Start staff. In most cases, any early childhood program in the state can participate in the trainings as long as slots are filled by Head Start staff as well.

Most trainings are three-hour sessions, but the center offers full-day trainings as well. With multi-session trainings, technical assistance almost always follows the training.

Data

The RI TTA Center collects data on the number of participants, early childhood programs/agencies represented, follow-up sessions participants would like offered, trends and priorities, and participant evaluations of training sessions.



SUCCESSFUL START/ CHILD CARE SUPPORT NETWORK – HEALTH

Successful Start, Rhode Island’s Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems plan, is funded by the Health Resources and Service Administration through the R.I. Department of Health (HEALTH). It is a statewide collaborative effort to strengthen Rhode Island’s system of services for young children and families.

Successful Start is managed by HEALTH’s Perinatal and Early Childhood Health Team. Staff members from this team are also responsible for managing specific programs, including the **Child Care Support Network**, **Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation** and **Watch Me Grow RI**.

CCSN Mental Health Consultation

The goal of the Child Care Support Network (CCSN) is to enhance the quality of child care for all children, including children with special health-care needs. The CCSN Mental Health Consultation program, which was developed in 2001, connects child-care programs with early childhood mental health consultants. It is available to all licensed child-care professionals working in home- or center-based programs in Rhode Island. (If there is a waiting list for participation, CCSN gives preference to programs with high needs.)

About 30 classrooms participate in the 12-month program each year. In 2008, the last year for which the data have been fully compiled, the program provided training for 168 early-care providers and administrators.

HEALTH contracts with the Bradley Hospital Early Childhood Clinical Research Center and The Providence Center Early Childhood Institute to provide mental health consultation to child-care providers. These clinicians conduct classroom observations, provide staff with feedback, conduct evidence-based parent and teacher training programs, develop program improvement plans, and facilitate

the implementation of a curriculum that addresses the social and emotional needs of children. They also connect parents and educators with resources in the community. Consultants visit their settings at least once a week.

Outcomes are tracked with an observational rating tool (the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale) administered before and after the intervention. The program also tracks the expulsion rate for challenging behaviors. Evaluation data from CCSN show that mental health consultation increases the quality of the child-care environment.

Child-Care Health Consultation

Child-care health consultants in this program are trained pediatric registered nurses. Over the course of six months in an early-care setting, consultants follow a national model to examine the setting’s existing health policies and to train staff on updated policies. They ensure that all student health records are up-to-date and that developmental concerns are identified early. Consultants facilitate early access to intervention services, and they strengthen communication among parents, child-care providers, health-care providers and community services.

Consultants track the number of completed referrals as one measurement of the program’s impact.

Watch Me Grow RI

Watch Me Grow RI focuses on the health and developmental needs of children birth through age 6. The program provides training and technical assistance to child-care providers to implement a system of standardized developmental screening and follow-up in their settings. Staff members often provide information on related topics.



COMMUNITY COLLEGE OF RHODE ISLAND/ DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

The CCRI Department of Human Services teaches students to function as competent, ethical human services practitioners and educators. Students are prepared to fill a variety of entry-level positions in a diverse society, and to pursue baccalaureate degrees in their chosen professions.

Each concentration within this department includes courses designed to facilitate professional development and job market preparation, as well as courses that reflect the more traditional requirements of a well-rounded liberal arts education.

Successful graduates of the department's **Child Development and Early Childhood Education** program receive an associate in arts (A.A.) degree. The program offers 10 courses in early childhood education, including three semesters of field placements in agencies providing various services in early care and education. (Students majoring in this concentration earn a total of 30 to 34 credits in "general education" courses and 27 to 30 credits in courses focused on early childhood.) The capacity for this program is unlimited.

Students are trained to work with families, parents, young children and those who impact the development and well-being of children. The three internships provide

students with critical opportunities for competency-based professional development.

Approximately 350 students are currently matriculated in the Child Development and Early Childhood Education program. CCRI has granted 50 to 60 early childhood education degrees each year for the past five years. The program is geared primarily to students who are not yet working in the field.

CCRI has six locations across the state. At the Warwick and Lincoln CCRI campuses, it is possible to complete the required courses for the degree on one campus. It is not possible to complete the degree exclusively during non-traditional hours (evenings and weekends).

The **Early Childhood Education Certificate**, launched in 2008, is for the working student who wishes to improve or upgrade his or her knowledge and skills in early childhood development and child care. Courses are offered days and evenings, and all courses apply toward the A.A. degree described above. Students earning this certificate complete six courses for a total of 18 credits. Several of the courses are offered through Ready to Learn Providence.



RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE/FEINSTEIN SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Early Childhood Undergraduate Program

Rhode Island College's early childhood teacher preparation program seeks to develop professionals who are prepared to serve effectively as teachers and leaders in the field of early care and education. The undergraduate program caters primarily to pre-service candidates seeking initial teacher certification.

The early childhood undergraduate program offers six core early-childhood education courses that all students are required to take. (The program is currently seeking the approval of elective courses to be offered through Ready to Learn Providence and the Rhode Island Early Learning Standards/RIDE.)

Students must be matriculated in the early childhood education program to register for the core courses. Currently, 86 students are enrolled the program. There is no cap on enrollment.

In 2010 RIC granted 14 early childhood degrees. (In 2009, it granted 14; 2006, 13; in 2007, 26; and in 2008, 19.)

At the present time, RIC does not offer its required undergraduate courses nights, weekends or on-line.

Master of Education in Early Childhood Education

The M.Ed. in Early Childhood Education prepares early childhood educators for leadership positions in the field. The program stresses the importance of the early years, from birth to age 8. It advocates for the optimal development and learning of children, and stresses the critical role of research in developing a strong knowledge of theory and practice. Cultural competence is intrinsic to the program.

Courses address the integration of a meaningful curriculum, developmentally effective approaches, and content knowledge in early education settings. The program promotes comprehensive developmental and learning out-

comes for all children through reflective practice, pedagogy, knowledge, diversity, assessment and professionalism. M.Ed. students acquire a deep understanding of how children grow, develop and learn within a constructivist framework of hands-on learning and respect for the diversity of every child's culture, learning style and language.

The program primarily serves in-service early childhood educators with bachelor's degrees, as well as others who are interested in the courses. There is no cap on enrollment.

The program offers seven courses. ECED 502: Curriculum, Developmental Play and Programs; ECED 503: Infants and Toddlers in Early Care and Education Programs; ECED 505: Early Childhood Education and Developmental Issues; ECED 512: Working with Families: Building Home-School Partnerships; ECED 661: Directing Early Care and Education Programs; ECED 662: Seminar in Early Childhood Education Research, and ECED 509: Emergent Literacy – Infants through Grade Two.

In the Spring 2010 semester, 17 students were enrolled in graduate classes. (This number varies each semester.) There are currently ten matriculated students in the M.Ed. Early Childhood Education program. In addition, there are two students enrolled in the Early Childhood Special Education M.Ed. program. In Spring '10, there were 14 non-matriculated students enrolled in classes.

In 2010, RIC granted two M.Ed. degrees. (In 2009, 1; in 2008, 3; in 2007, 1; in 2006, 3.)

By enrolling in on-line courses and in classes that are offered from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., it is possible to complete an M.Ed. during non-traditional hours. Currently no weekend courses are offered, but could be in the future. The M.Ed. program offers some "hybrid" courses, which combine web-based instruction, on-line meetings, and on-site meetings.

The M.Ed. website is http://www.ric.edu/elementary-education/eccProgram_med.php



UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND/ EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

The mission of the **Early Childhood Education (ECE) Program** at the University of Rhode Island is to enable undergraduate students – and post-graduate students in the Teacher Certification Program (TCP) – to earn certification in grades preschool through two. It can serve up to 42 students. Most of the students enrolled in the program (about 75%) are not yet working in the field.

The program offers nine core early childhood education courses, most of which include a related practicum in the field.

In 2009/2010, 17 students were enrolled in the program. In the spring of 2010, the program accepted 31 new candidates. Students must be enrolled at the university in order to be accepted into the program. (With an interview and advising, non-matriculated students may take courses that lead to enrollment.)

All undergraduate students in the ECE program are Human Development majors and take additional courses in Human Development and Family (HDF) Studies and Education. TCP graduate students come from related fields to earn certification. (Most TCP students have HDF undergraduate degrees or degrees in psychology or elementary education.)

Admission into the HDF program is contingent upon application acceptance, GPA, successful completion of required courses, and exit from university college (the academic home to all first and second year students). ECE students must complete core courses at URI's Kingston campus, but can complete previous coursework at other sites, such as URI's College of Continuing Education or the Community College of Rhode Island.

It is not possible to complete the degree exclusively during non-traditional hours because many of the courses contain an affiliated field practicum and students must be available for this work with young children during the day. (Students complete six practical/field work experiences before student teaching.) Most courses, however, have evening, weekend and summer options.

In 2011, URI expects to grant 31 early childhood education degrees. (In 2010, it granted 17; in 2009, 14; in 2008, 24; in 2007, 19; in 2006, 25; and in 2005, 36.) ECE students earn an undergraduate degree in HDF and also earn certification in early childhood education through the School of Education.

The program is both state approved and nationally accredited.

For more information on courses, requirements and admission, go to www.uri.edu/hss/education/index.html.

THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND

About Ready to Learn Providence



Ready to Learn Providence, a program of The Providence Plan, is a community-based school readiness initiative that was founded in 2003 with the vision that all children in Providence will enter school healthy and ready to learn. In recent years, R2LP has provided services in Central Falls and Pawtucket as well as in Providence. With its growing expertise and capacity in the urban core, R2LP is now bringing some of its services statewide. Between 2003 and 2009, some 1,700 early-care educators participated in R2LP professional development programs. An active research and data department analyzes the impact of R2LP programs and also produces reports on issues related to early childhood and the early-care field. R2LP is a participant in the state's Pre-kindergarten Demonstration Project and administers a 35-member AmeriCorps program.

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