

Appendix II

In-Depth Interview for Project Team

**In-Depth Interview
Project Team (90 minutes)
May 9, 2007**

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Introduction (2 minutes)

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me. My name is _____ and I work for Child Trends, an independent research organization. We are conducting a study for the U.S. Department of Education to understand better how the Early Childhood Educator Professional Development Program (ECEPD) projects are functioning in the field. We have already learned a great deal about your ECEPD program from an interview with the Project Director of your program, _____. We asked your Project Director if we could do a follow-up interview with key members of the program team so that we could go into greater detail on certain aspects of program implementation and activities. S/he gave us your names and contact information as key members of the team.

I want to assure you that the information you provide today will be kept anonymous. Specific comments will not be attributed to individuals or programs, nor will we share your comments with anybody outside the research team. We do, however, need to caution that because of the small number of ECEPD sites (18 in total) in the cohorts we are studying, it is possible that even without attributing information to individuals or sites, some people who are very familiar with the ECEPD programs will be able to identify the information you give us as related to your site. The information we gather from the ECEPD programs across the country will be used to write a report for the Department of Education. Our report will describe the range of program and evaluation activities being implemented through the ECEPD grants.

We would like to record our interview with you so that we can transcribe your responses and capture accurately the information you share with us. Do we have your permission to record this interview? [Interviewer: Confirm respondent's permission]

Do you have any questions before we get started?

Professional Background of Respondents and Role within the ECEPD Program (8 minutes)

1. To begin, could you each please tell me your name and your primary roles and responsibilities in this ECEPD program?

Rationale: Serves as an icebreaker and provides introductions to those participating in the call.

Project Structure (10 minutes)

In our earlier interview with the Project Director, we learned about which organizations are working together in your ECEPD project and the role each organization plays in contributing to the project. We'd like now to learn more about how the different organizations work together in your ECEPD project.

2. What would you consider to be the major strengths of your ECEPD partnership?

Rationale: Informs project structure and characteristics of projects that are effective.

3. What advice would you give future ECEPD projects about how to structure effective partnerships?

Rationale: Informs project structure and characteristics of projects that are effective.

Program Activities (20 minutes)

In our interview with your Project Director, we learned a lot about the professional development opportunities that are available through your ECEPD program. We'd like to learn more about the focus of the professional development activities you offer.

4. What are the requirements for participants in your ECEPD program? In other words, what is it that everyone has to complete?

Probe: Are there requirements in terms of hours or credits?

Probe: What content areas must be covered?

Probe: Are there any other kinds of requirements, such as a requirement for supervised practice or on-site consultation or coaching?

Rationale: Addresses intensity of professional development activities; provides information that can be compared across grantees

5. What about options that go beyond a core set of requirements? Are there ways in which participants in your ECEPD program can specialize?

Rationale: Addresses intensity of professional development activities; provides information that can be compared across grantees

6. What research evidence, if any, did you access when you were designing your professional development opportunities?

Rationale: Addresses extent to which professional development is research-based

7. When you were developing the content of your ECEPD program, did you use any state or local standards, like early learning standards or pre-service or in-service requirements? Did you use the professional development requirements of a career lattice or quality rating system? Did you use professional guidelines like NAEYC standards? What other state or local standards influenced the content of your program?

{Interviewer, please note all that are mentioned}

- Early learning standards
- Pre-service requirements
- In-service requirements
- Career Lattice
- Quality rating system
- NAEYC accreditation requirements
- Other (specify) _____

Rationale: Addresses the state and local context of partnerships and how ECEPD projects are bridging/incorporating different quality initiatives

8. What, if any, steps do you take to assure that the professional development provided through your ECEPD project conveys the content that you have chosen to focus on?

Rationale: Addresses steps that are taken to monitor fidelity of implementation

9. What, if any, are the minimum requirements in terms of experience and/or degrees for staff or faculty members who deliver the professional development in your program?

Rationale: Addresses quality of instruction, qualifications of staff providing professional development

10. What special preparation do staff members providing professional development in your ECEPD program have to address the cultural and language diversity of the educators in their trainings / classes?

Rationale: Addresses quality of instruction, qualifications of staff providing professional development with a particular focus on issues of culture and language diversity

Program Adaptation (20 minutes)

Now we would like to talk with you about adaptations you have made to your program over time.

11. What challenges did you encounter when implementing your program that required you to fine tune certain components or to make more substantial modifications to your ECEPD program?

Rationale: Addresses the capacity of the partnership to adapt and make modifications to the program while retaining the original goals/objectives of the project

12. What features of your program, if any, did you modify or change?

Rationale: Addresses the capacity of the partnership to adapt and make modifications to the program while retaining the original goals/objectives of the project

Characteristics of Participants/Supports and Incentives (20 minutes)

During our interview with the Project Director for your ECEPD Program, we asked about the characteristics of the early childhood educators who participate in your program. We'd like to follow up by asking about particular groups of participants, and about the factors that you think help them continue to participate and to complete their professional development goals.

13. Are there particular groups of participants in your program who you see as struggling most with completing their professional development goals?

Probe: What supports do you think are most helpful to this group?

Probe: Would you like to see other supports attempted?

Rationale: Addresses educator characteristics

14. Is there a particular group of participants who you see as most likely to complete their professional development goals?

Rationale: Addresses access to professional development and educator characteristics

15. What has been most helpful for English language learners participating in your program?

Rationale: Addresses access to professional development and educator characteristics with a particular focus on how programs are serving English Language Learners.

Promising Practices (10 minutes)

In concluding, I'd like to ask for some reflections.

16. First, from your perspective, what needs to be in place to launch a successful ECEPD program?

Rationale: Addresses perceptions of successful strategies partnerships use to implement programs – e.g., leadership, established relationships, particular partners, etc.

17. Given everything you have learned thus far from your ECEPD project, what would you say are the professional development strategies that are most likely to improve early childhood educator knowledge and practice as well as child outcomes?

Rationale: Addresses key characteristics of promising practices – what works best to address particular challenges

18. Finally, are there any *new* approaches that you are experimenting with in your program that you view as promising? For example, are there approaches that you have not yet had time to refine or to test the effectiveness of, but that you would like to see continued and strengthened? If so, please describe them for us.

Rationale: Addresses key characteristics of promising practices

Thank you very much for taking your time to complete this interview and for helping us to understand your ECEPD program in greater depth!