

Update on Director Development Initiatives

by Roger Neugebauer

So you want to become an early childhood leader? If a primary school principalship is what you have in mind, the path is relatively clear, wide, and well marked. Unfortunately, if any other leadership position in the early childhood field is your goal, the paths are neither clear nor obvious.

This dire depiction of director development in the United States was made only two years ago by policy analyst Anne Mitchell (Kagan and Bowman, 1997). If you think this characterization is overstated, consider this — today only six states require any form of administrative training for center directors in their licensing requirements. As a result, most states have little to offer directors in leadership training. But as consensus builds behind the notion that the leader is the key to the quality of an early childhood organization, attention to director development has intensified. Throughout the country promising developments are occurring.

Director Credentialing

Many advocates believe that establishing a director's credential is an effective way to spur director development. Twelve states, two national organizations, and 17 foundations agree and have launched credentialing initiatives:

- Eight states (Alabama, Arizona, California, Minnesota, North Carolina, Ohio, Texas, and Wisconsin) have already established director credentials.
- Four additional states (Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Oklahoma) are in various stages of plan-

ning and piloting director credential programs.

■ The National Child Care Association established the National Administrators Credential in 1996 and has awarded over 300 credentials.

■ The National Association for Child Development Education launched the Christian Director's Child Development Education Credential in collaboration with the Association of Christian Schools International in 1994.

■ Seventeen foundations funded *Taking the Lead: Investing in Early Childhood Leadership for the 21st Century*. A major objective of this project, being implemented by the Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College, is to explore future directions for director credentialing. Under the leadership of Cecelia Alvarado, *Taking the Lead* is assessing current credentialing initiatives as well as conducting director credential experiments.

In analyzing current credential initiatives, Bess Emanuel, staff liaison on director credentialing for *Taking the Lead*, has found tremendous variations. While these credentials have great similarities in content areas, they vary widely in hours required (from 18 to 188 credit hours) and in their cost (from \$195 to \$12,600). In addition, not all are required in state licensing laws and not all have college credit attached to their attainment. Ms. Emanuel observes that these initiatives are typically weak in addressing the impact of technology and working with culturally diverse families.

In coming years, it is anticipated that growing numbers of states will launch director credential initiatives to enhance quality of care. According to Ms. Alvarado the pace of

implementation for new states should be increased significantly as they can learn from the trials and errors of the pioneering states.

As more states and national organizations are getting involved with credentialing, there is growing concern about the need for consistency. "We see a great deal of interest, lots of discussions, about national credentialing standards," reports Alvarado. "However, people are reluctant to make the leap to mandated national standards — the variations in requirements and practices from state to state are just too great to be accommodated by a single national credential." One of the challenges the funders gave to *Taking the Lead* is to recommend directions for the field in this critical area.

In the works is a book on the state of director credentialing to be published by Teachers College Press in 1999. This yet untitled book, being edited by Mary Culkin, will look at the past, present, and future of director credentialing.

Other National Leadership Initiatives

In preparing a chapter for the director credential book, Roger Neugebauer and Marsha Poster surveyed 41 directors who had been on the job from 20-50 years about their training experiences. What we found was that these experienced directors had survived and thrived by taking their training wherever they could find it. Over 80% of them had participated in administrative training delivered by organizations outside the early childhood field.

Today directors are starting to have a few more training options within the field. Not only are training programs in place or in the works to support the state and national director credential projects dis-

cussed above, but initiatives such as the following are stimulating the availability of development opportunities:

■ The American Business Collaborative (ABC), a project funded by national corporations committed to increasing the supply and quality of child care in the communities where their employees live and work, has invested approximately \$1.5 million in the development and implementation of training for center directors. This funding has provided for 30 director training institutes in 18 communities. These institutes are operated by the Center for Career Development at Wheelock College and are an outgrowth of the *Advanced Seminars in Child Care Administration* which have been presented at Wheelock College for 20 years. The ABC director training are provided not only for the benefit of programs serving employees of funding corporations but also to positively impact the quality of those programs serving the wider community. Cumulatively, this work can support infrastructure changes that will lead to a higher quality system nationwide.

■ The Center for Early Childhood Leadership at National-Louis University offers a number of innovative training programs for center directors on a variety of management topics. For example, 180 directors have participated in its *Taking Charge of Change* training, a year-long leadership training program that includes a week-long residential summer institute and two weekend retreats. Topics focus on the nature of individual and organizational change and the role directors play as change agents in improving program practices. Participants are supported by mentors as they implement a program improvement plan and pursue NAEYC accreditation. The Center also offers grant-funded scholarships for a graduate

degree program in early childhood administration. The graduate program is offered in both a traditional on-campus format and a high tech/high touch format for directors outside the Chicago area.

■ The National Black Child Development Institute recently launched the *African-American Early Childhood Resource Center* to build diverse leadership in the early care and education field. Five programs will be offered: a Registry of African-American Early Childhood Leaders; the African-American Early Childhood Leadership Mentoring Program to nurture aspiring leaders through one-on-one relationships; the African-American Early Childhood National Leadership Network, a consortium of colleges and organizations created to create access to higher education and career development; Technical Assistance to Organizations; and a Database of Diversity Resources.

■ NOVA Southeastern University continues to offer its unique *Master's Program in Early Childhood Education Administration*. This program enables directors of existing programs throughout the world to pursue a degree without interruption of their professional responsibilities. The NOVA distance education format offers summer institutes, biweekly telephone conferences, internet interaction, and job-related assignments.

■ The Center for the Child Care Workforce has developed the *Early Childhood Mentoring Alliance*, a forum for information exchange among all those who are involved in creating, strengthening, and expanding early childhood mentoring programs. It provides support, resources, and training for mentoring programs. The Alliance is also designed to build the mentor's skill as a leader and advocate.

These are just a few examples of exciting programs coming on line to promote the education and development of early childhood leaders. With the increasing recognition of the value of strong leadership at the center level, look for continuing progress in addressing the serious need for such programs.

Reference

Kagan, S. L., and Bowman, B. T. (editors) (1997). *Leadership in Early Care and Education*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Buyer's Guide on Staff Development

The following is contact information for the director development initiatives described in the article above.

Tavia Mead
Advanced Seminars in Child Care Administration
The Center for Career Development at Wheelock College
200 The Riverway
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 879-2279

Claudia Wayne
Early Childhood Mentoring Alliance
Center for the Child Care Workforce
733 15th Street NW, Suite 1037
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 737-7700

Paula Jorde Bloom
Taking Charge of Change
The Center for Early Childhood Leadership
National-Louis University
1000 Capitol Drive
Wheeling, IL 60090
(800) 443-5522, ext. 5551

Melinda Green
African-American Early Childhood Resource Center
National Black Child Development Institute
1023 15th Street NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 387-1281

Dr. Ralph Hogges
Master's Program in Early Childhood Education Administration
NOVA Southeastern University
1750 NE 157th Street
North Miami Beach, FL 33162
(800) 986-3223, ext. 8702

Other Staff Development Resources

Educational Consultant
Active Parenting Publishers
810-B Franklin Court
Marietta, GA 30067
(800) 825-0060

Offers facilitator training across North America for its parenting education workshops, including the award-winning *1, 2, 3, 4 Parents!* (for parents of very young children). Also offers an intensive three-day seminar for inexperienced facilitators to enhance presentation skills, learn how to manage a group, and find ways to teach different kinds of parents.

Anne Read Smith
Bennerly Press Publishing Company
PO Box 8534
Berkeley, CA 94707-8534
(510) 525-4434

Building Children's Self-Esteem: A Creative Behavior Handbook for After-School Child Care is a training text to help children make long-term changes. Teachers learn how to create a safe, nurturing environment; help children accept responsibility; facilitate team teaching and staff meetings; and work with difficult parents. The book is \$25, plus shipping and tax if applicable.

California College for Health Sciences
222 West 24th Street
National City, CA 91950
(800) 221-7374, ext. 312

Complete your Associate degree the convenient way through distance education. California College for Health Sciences' Early Childhood Education program enables you to complete your degree at home. Endorsed by the National Child Care Association and nationally accredited by DETC. Open enrollment means you can begin today!

Michelle Newberry
C.A.R.E. Courses
PO Box 701106
Dallas, TX 75370-1106
(800) 685-7610

Wide selection of easy-to-understand, relevant correspondence courses in management, staff development, and child development. Low tuition (example: 20 clock hours, \$38). Certificate awarded. Accepted in many states for annual training requirement; accepted in Texas for director's qualifications. Recognized for training requirement for obtaining CDA. Call for free brochure.

Nikki Dones
Center for the Child Care Workforce
733 15th Street NW, Suite 1037
Washington, DC 20005-2112
www.ccw.org

Taking on Turnover is an action guide for center-based child care teachers and directors on managing and reducing the increasingly serious problem of job turnover in our profession. Based on the influential "Taking On Turnover" training series conducted by CCW, this workbook-style guide is packed with hands-on activities for teachers and directors and resources for further reading and action.

Sarah A. Mulligan
Child Care plus+
MUARID
University of Montana
52 Corbin Hall
Missoula, MT 59812
(800) 235-4122

Child Care plus+ offers on-site consultation and training to provide individualized assistance tailored to the needs and concerns of program and staff in early childhood settings. Includes activities such as making adaptations and modifications for a specific child, self and program assessment, and instruction on a myriad of early childhood topics.

Dion Dubois
Childcare Products & Services
1703 Klamath Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403
(800) 200-KIDS (5437)

CPS provides support services to child care center owners/directors. CPS pro-

vides management/administrative tools — handbooks, policies, procedures, ideas, and forms that are guaranteed to relieve pressure, free up time, improve cash flow, and keep your employees accountable. The *New 1999 Comprehensive Employee Handbook* will be available for shipping in February.

Polly Prendergast
Concordia University, St. Paul
275 Syndicate Street North
St. Paul, MN 55104-5494
(800) 211-3370

Concordia University, St. Paul offers a Master of Arts in Education with an emphasis in early childhood. Our programs are designed for working adults and are offered through distance education using the World Wide Web. Classes are delivered through media such as chat rooms, internet bulletin boards, and e-mail.

Tricia Lirette
Grant MacEwan Community College
PO Box 1796
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 2P2
(780) 497-5171 / (780) 497-5617

Our post-diploma certificate program is designed to meet the demand for skilled, educated, and qualified management level personnel. Study administration, with emphasis on supervision and human resource management; financial and physical resources management; managing organizational change, plus trends and issues analysis. Distance delivery courses available through self-study with e-mail/telephone support.

Gavin Haque
High/Scope Educational Research Foundation
600 North River Street
Ypsilanti, MI 48198
(734) 485-2000, ext. 218

High/Scope's preschool educational approach is an open framework that organizes the children's and teacher's environment, daily routine, and interactions. The framework gives the teaching team a systematic method for planning, organizing, and carrying out their preschool responsibilities.

Elbert Solomon
"I Care" Products & Services
PO Box 492
Americus, GA 31709
(800) 797-5818

"I Care" Positive Parenting Curriculums help parents help their children achieve more at home and school. Parents are provided positive character building activities that are fun and easy to do with their children. The positive impacts of parental involvement can be measured empirically monthly for each child, classroom, and learning center.

Julie Wassom
The Julian Group
14387 East Layton Drive
Aurora, CO 80015
(303) 693-2306 / (800) 876-0260

A recognized authority on child care marketing and enrollment building, Julie Wassom has trained thousands of managers in child care companies and associations nationwide. An industry veteran, Julie presents customized seminars, consults on-site or by telephone, and is author of the *Enrollment Building Success Library* of print and audiotape marketing resources.

Claire Kim
Missouri Montessori Teacher Education Program
1100 White Road
Chesterfield, MO 63017
(314) 469-6622

Missouri Montessori Teacher Education Program is a not-for-profit corporation composed of dedicated Montessori professionals. Montessori training programs are designed for adults who wish to further their growth and knowledge of working with young children. At the end of a successful year, students will receive American Montessori Society Teaching Credential.

Nichole Kobia
National Association of Child Care Professionals
207 West Main Street, Suite 1
Christiansburg, VA 24073
(800) 537-1118

NACCP is committed to strengthening the professional skill level of child care

directors, administrators, and owners — without regard to their center's tax status or corporate sponsorship. We believe that effective management is the critical link to superior child care.

Suzanne Grace
National Child Care Association
1016 Rosser Street
Conyers, GA 30012
(800) 543-7161

NCCA's National Administrator Credential is an exciting 40-hour course designed specifically for child care program directors. In classes limited to 20 participants, directors from every sector of the child care community study, discuss, and examine all facets of their job responsibilities.

Nellie Edge
Nellie Edge Seminars
PO Box 12399
Salem, OR 97309-0399
(800) 523-4594
Nellie Edge Seminars and Kindergarten Summer Institutes provide training in early language and literacy development. Current brain research and language learning theory are woven into practical, child-centered activities, providing a joyful look at "Good First Teaching." Developing phonemic awareness and phonics skills within the context of songs and rhymes is emphasized.

Lorraine Long
Periwinkle Park Educational Productions Inc.
PO Box 21
Woodstock, GA 30188
(888) 757-3436

The Sing to Read Adventure is predictable books with sing-alongs for the emergent reader. These original books and tunes incorporate rhyme, colors, numbers, and phonics. Story themes include farm, ocean, pond life, and nutrition. A professional book for teachers also integrates science, math, and art activities with the story themes.

Nelle Peck
Southern Early Childhood Association
7107 West 12th Street, Suite 102
Little Rock, AR 72204
(800) 305-7322

SECA has developed professional development training institutes in assessment, quality program indicators for licensing staff, infant/toddler programs, developmentally appropriate practices for pre-school children and for primary grades, and in-home child caregivers. In addition, SECA has the resources to develop specialized seminars to meet the needs of a particular site.

Cheryl A. Shaughnessy
Teikyo Post University
25432 Aldine Westfield
Spring, TX 77373
(281) 353-4565

We provide a distance learning program with the best educational program available. The program is not unduly complicated or difficult. It only requires that you apply yourself seriously and, of course, that you care about children. The staff is prepared to work with you, whatever your situation or circumstances, to assist you in meeting your goals.