

Strengthening Families Through Early Care and Education in New Hampshire



The Implementation of a Statewide Agenda for
the Strengthening Families Initiative

In New Hampshire

- There are approximately 93,000 children under six years old
- 65% of their mothers are employed outside the home, therefore over 60,000 young children need non-maternal care during some portion of the week
- There are approximately 36,000 licensed opportunities for children birth to six years



In New Hampshire

- There were 6,550 assessments of child abuse or neglect in 2004
- 3,775 (4% of the 93,000) children under six years old were involved
- 13% of the reports regarding young children were founded, including 491 children birth to six years



New Hampshire's Strengthening Families Initiative

- New Hampshire was one of the original 7 Center for the Study of Social Policy Pilot States
- NH Division for Children, Youth and Families administers both child protection and child care
- In January 2005, the State Lead was the Head Start State Collaboration Administrator who transitioned into the CCDF Administrator position in September 2006



Exemplar Child Care Programs

Ten Exemplar (pilot) Programs - These ten early care and education programs were chosen because they provide:

- High quality care and education for children
- Social connections for families
- Parenting education opportunities
- Resources and referrals in the community



Exemplar Child Care Programs

Ten Exemplar (pilot) Programs - These ten early care and education programs:

- Completed an intensive self-assessment
- Developed a program goal plan
- Focused on enhancing protective factors in families
- Became mentors to other early care and education programs in their communities
- Forged closer relationships with local child welfare offices



Strategic Decisions for Professional Development

- The State Leadership Team identified professional development as a means to transforming child care practice regarding supporting families
- The Leadership Team developed an independent Professional Development Committee to create and implement a two year plan



Professional Development Committee

- The Professional Development Committee had the following representation:
 - Parent of a child in child care
 - Child care resource and referral
 - 2 year college
 - 4 year college
 - Strengthening Families Exemplar Program
 - Child care providers organization
 - Head Start
 - Domestic Violence Prevention Program



Types of Professional Development

- Pre-service – 2 and 4 year colleges
- In-service – Workshops, conferences, etc
- Mentoring – Intense individual or small group, goal-directed professional development
- Technical Assistance – Intense program-based, goal-directed professional development
- Written material – Guidebook
- Co-training and fostering relationships



New Hampshire's Professional Development Model

Articulation
between training
& college credits

ECE Faculty

Professional
Development
System

Early
childhood training
organizations

Strengthening
Families
embedded in
child care practice

Child Care
R&R

Co-training
child welfare &
child care

Individual
credentialing

Child abuse
prevention
guidebook

Mentoring and
Technical Assistance

Child care
program
Quality Rating
System



Lessons Learned

- Timing is everything: Look for opportunities to leverage change. Don't be disappointed if there aren't any at that moment
- Don't under-estimate the power of status quo
- Relationships are key
- Everything is multi-level, multi-system

