

Early Childhood News

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The North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development was established in 1993.

The Institute is dedicated to defining and advocating for the implementation of a comprehensive early childhood professional development system that provides supportive, accessible, and individually appropriate education which is linked to compensation in order to ensure high quality care and education services for children and families.

Institute members are volunteers representing the early childhood workforce, agencies, organizations and institutions that provide resources and support to the state's early childhood workforce and programs serving young children.

Task groups currently include:
Compensation & Education
Educational Certification
Professional Dev. Infrastructure
Research & Policy
Outreach & Support

To learn more about the Institute or to learn how you can contribute to the work of the Institute please visit www.ncchildcare.org.

Debunking the Myths about the Child Care Workforce

As more and more preschool children spend most of their day in early childhood settings, it is critical to have a well-educated, fairly compensated, and consistent workforce. Yet the need for an educated workforce is questioned. With the publication *Busting the Myths about the Child Care Workforce* the NC Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development identifies some of the myths about educating this workforce and provides research and facts to debunk false assumptions. Below is an excerpt from *Busting the Myths* which can be downloaded at no charge from the Institute's website (www.ncchildcare.org/busting_the_myths.pdf).

Myth #1

"Women do not need college classes to know how to love and take care of children."

The Truth: Because of historical precedence there is an incorrect perception that women can transfer child rearing skills into the provision of group care for children. There is a body of research that indicates parent education can improve outcomes for children.

The Truth: Adults of either gender that work with young children in group settings need education to be able to understand the complexities of child development, implement effective group management practices, and offer a high quality learning environment for children.

- The quality of child care is related to both the formal education levels and the specialized early childhood training of the teachers. (Vandell & Wolf, 2000, p. 14).
- Teacher behavior is one of the major influences of child development (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2001; Whitebook, Howes & Phillips, 1990).
- Data indicates that higher levels of education (of teachers) are associated with higher scores on Environmental Rating Scales (Cassidy, Hestenes, Mims & Hestenes, 2003).
- Teachers with more formal education (i.e., degrees, credentials) earn higher wages/compensation, and are more likely to remain in their child care program, resulting in better child outcomes (Peisner-Feinberg, Burchinal, Clifford, Culkin, Howes & Kagan, 1999, p. 14).
- The best predictor of a child's success in school is the education level of the mother (Haveman & Wolfe, 1995; Christian, Morrison & Bryant, 1998; Corcoran, Danziger, Kalil & Seedfeldt, 1999).
- High-quality programs depend on teacher effectiveness (Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Loeb, Fuller, Kagan & Carrol, 2004).
- The key to sustaining teacher effectiveness and promoting continuous growth is high-quality in-service professional development (Borko, 2004; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Stakeholder Strategies

- Download and disseminate copies of the *Busting the Myths* for use with boards, parents, funders and the workforce.
- Use the *Myths* document as a centerpiece for a professional development session, college class or staff orientation.
- Encourage the use of this resource in child care program start-up workshops.
- Encourage child care programs to use *Busting the Myths* as part of staff orientation.

Resources

- North Carolina Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development: www.ncchildcare.org
- *Busting the Myths about the Child Care Workforce*: http://www.ncchildcare.org/busting_the_myths.pdf
- At the Fulcrum: www.cornerstones4kids.org/images/teachers_report_0107.pdf



The North Carolina Institute
For Early Childhood
Professional Development