

Early Childhood News

An Electronic Publication for Early Childhood Professionals in North Carolina

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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.

Professional Development Resources for the Latino/Hispanic Early Childhood Workforce

The main portal of entry into higher education for early childhood students in North Carolina is through the community college system. Data provided by the North Carolina Community College System for 2006/07 reveals that the number of students enrolled in early childhood courses statewide has grown from an estimated 4,000 students in 1997 to over 16,000 in 2006/07. Today the average age of a North Carolina early childhood student is 35.4 years. Early childhood students are predominantly female, 50% of color, including over 300 (2%) students who report their ethnicity as Hispanic. The majority (86%) of early childhood students are enrolled as part time students.

The number of Latinos/Hispanics living and seeking a college education in North Carolina is on the rise. According to recent data 14% of North Carolina's community college early childhood departments have experienced increases in the number of Latino/Hispanic students in their programs, 6% report an increased interest in their programs by non-English speaking students and 35% report offering English as a Second Language courses or supports. In addition data indicated that over 6% of colleges (8 of 52 reporting colleges) served a Hispanic student population of 10% or higher. In addition, a total of nine programs reported either an increase in the number of Spanish speaking students or increased interest in the program by Non-English speaking students.

Research reveals, however, that Latino/Hispanics seeking higher education face both language and information barriers. Access to professional development is afforded through individual ability, availability and affordability of as well as equitable access to options and portability of earned hours/credits.

In an effort to strengthen the ability of the professional development providers to reach out to this growing segment of the early childhood workforce the NC Institute for Early Childhood Professional Development has compiled current information coupled with strategies to inform the work of those providing early childhood professional development in North Carolina. Highlights from the Institute's publication: *Resources for Supporting the Professional Development Needs of the Latino/Hispanic Early Childhood Providers in North Carolina* are included below. More information about this growing segment of North Carolina's early childhood workforce, additional resources and references may be accessed at no charge at www.ncchildcare.org/pubs.html.

Stakeholder Strategies

- Become familiar with regulations on immigration status and in-state tuition or other forms of financial aid and the process of transcript review for students with foreign high school diplomas or college transcripts.
- Identify local bilingual or multilingual admissions counselors and advisors who are familiar with foreign secondary and postsecondary educational systems and can specialize in assisting immigrant students.
- Identify/provide mentoring programs and associations for Latino/Hispanic students to help them make connections with other students with whom they share common experiences.
- Blend opportunities to learn English as part of early childhood training and education offerings.
- Provide headsets that translate English to Spanish for use by providers.
- Seek out and share community resources that seek to increase the education level of Latinos/Hispanics (such as community groups, community colleges, literacy councils and civic groups).

Resources

- North Carolina Child Care Regulations in Spanish:
www.ncchildcare.dhhs.state.us/pdf_forms/faq_about_revised_rated_license_centers_spanish.pdf
www.ncchildcare.dhhs.state.us/pdf_forms/faq_about_revised_rated_license_homes_spanish.pdf
- Professional development sources in North Carolina in Spanish
www.ncchildcare.org/pubs.html#resources
- Hispanics and Child Care: The Changing Landscape
<http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/hispanic-cc/hispanic-cc.pdf>
- Early Childhood Research Institute on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate
<http://clas.uiuc>
- A study examining the linguistically and culturally relevant practices as reported by state administrators
www.fpg.unc.edu/~nuestros/pdfs/NNExecSummary.pdf



The North Carolina Institute
For Early Childhood
Professional Development