The Center To Inform
Personnel Preparation Policy And Practice
In Early Intervention & Preschool Education

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The Center to Inform Personnel Preparation and Practice in Early Intervention and Preschool Education

A five-year project established in January, 2003 and funded by the Office of Special Education Programs.

Information gathered will be utilized to identify critical gaps in current knowledge and design and conduct a program of research at the national, state, institutional and direct provider level to address these gaps. This program of research and policy formulation will yield information vital to developing policies and practices at all levels of government, including institutions of higher education.

The Center's Purpose

The purpose of this Center is to collect, synthesize and analyze information related to:

- (a) certification and licensure requirements for personnel working with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers who have special needs and their families,

- (b) the quality of training programs that prepare these professionals, and

- (c) the supply and demand of professionals representing all disciplines who provide both ECSE and EI services.

The Center's Goals

- To <u>compile a comprehensive database</u> of current licensure and certification standards for all EI/ECSE personnel.
- To <u>develop a comprehensive profile of current training programs</u> for all types of personnel at the institutional, state, and national levels.
- To <u>describe the current and projected supply and demand for personnel.</u>
- To design and conduct a program of research <u>to identify critical gaps in current knowledge</u> regarding personnel preparation.
- To <u>develop and disseminate recommendations</u> regarding personnel preparation policy and practice based on research findings.

The Center's Completed Projects

- **Study I:** The National Landscape of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education

- **Study II:** The Higher Education Survey for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education Personnel Preparation

- **Study III:** The Analysis of Federally Funded Doctoral Programs in Early Childhood Special Education
  - Think Tank in Simsbury, CT September 11-12, 2006

- **Study IV:** The Impact of Credentials on Early Intervention Personnel Preparation (Credentialing Part C)
  - Think Tank in Washington, DC May 24-25, 2006

- **Study V:** Analysis of State Licensure/Certification Requirements for Early Childhood Special Educators (619)
  - Think Tank in Washington, DC June 11-12, 2007

- **Study VI:** Training and Technical Assistance Survey of Part C & 619 Coordinators

- **Study VII:** Confidence and Competence of 619/Part C Service Providers

The Center's Ongoing Projects

- **Study VIII:** Alignment of ECSE Higher Education Curricula with National Personnel Standards

- **Study IX:** Parent Perceptions of Confidence and Competence of 619/Part C Service Providers

- **Study X:** Case Studies Highlighting States from Study VI on Training and TA

Study I: The National Landscape of Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education

- State Part C and Section 619 coordinators provided information regarding the organizational structure of their Part C/619 program, supply and demand of personnel and state requirements for personnel.

**Reported supports to obtaining qualified personnel:**

- Institutes of higher education
- Specific recruitment efforts
- Benefits
- Attractive geographic location
- Characteristics of the field, such as family-centered philosophy
- Training
- Supervision
- Certification
- Grants
- System financial reimbursement

Reported barriers to obtaining qualified personnel:

- A small pool of potential employees that are knowledgeable about the field
- Low salary for EI/ECSE personnel
- Remote/undesirable locations
- Competition with other states
- Lack of support to implement certification standards
- Training issues
- Difficulties with system financial reimbursement

Study II: The Higher Education Survey for Early Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education Personnel Preparation

- Multidisciplinary faculty (n=1,085) representing associate, undergraduate and graduate programs in each of the 50 states provided information about their preparation of EI/ESCE service providers.

- As depicted in the graph, participants indicated if their curricula were aligned with licensure and/or certification standards.
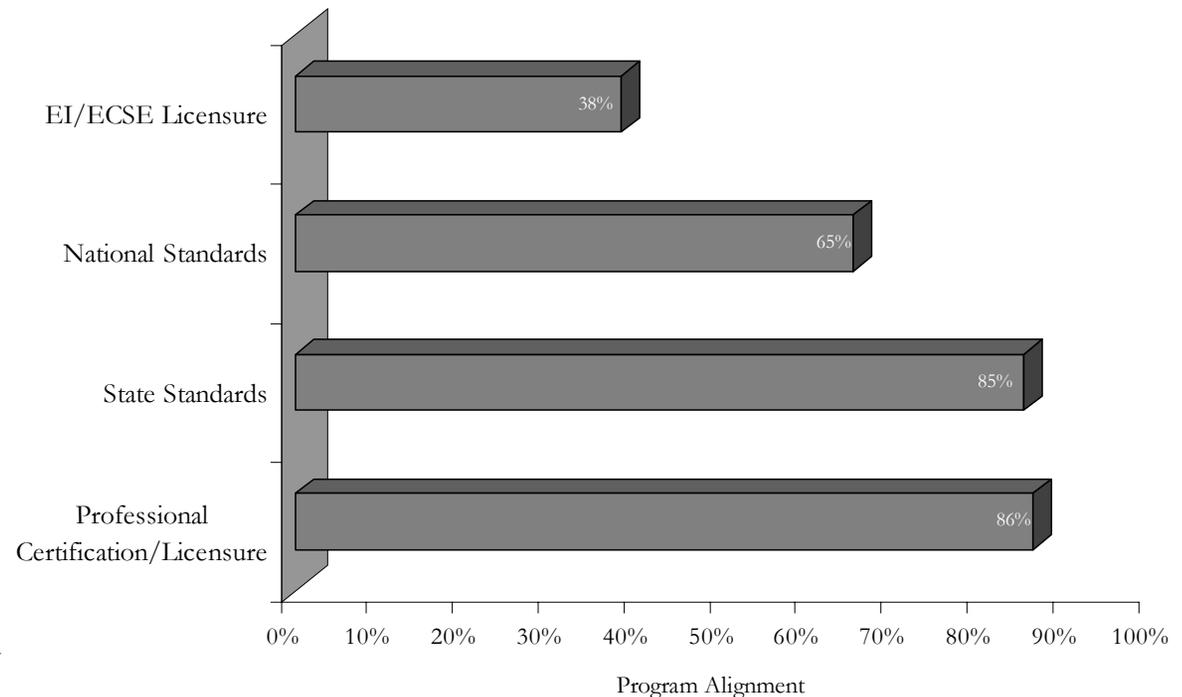
Horizontal bar chart titled "Program Alignment":
- EI/ECSE Licensure: 38%
- National Standards: 65%
- State Standards: 85%
- Professional Certification/Licensure: 86%

Study III: The Analysis of Federally Funded Doctoral Programs in Early Childhood Special Education

Cost Benefits OSEP Funding

- Recruitment & retention of students
- University relationships
- Curricular benefits
- Enhanced external relationships
- Benefits to the field at large

Implications of No OSEP Funding

- Decreased enrollment & matriculation
- Curricular implications
- Collaboration
- Knowledge base in the field
- Faculty recruitment

Themes From Telephone Interviews

- General recruitment strategies
- Recruitment strategies – underrepresented groups
- Retention and matriculation
- Cost benefits of OSEP funding
- Implications of no OSEP funding
- Faculty recruitment
- Primary roles of graduates
- Curriculum

Study III: Think Tank Simsbury, CT September 11-12, 2006

Policy Recommendations

- Find a mechanism for evidence-based leadership performance indicators; create common benchmarks for high quality programs

- Investigate supply and demand issues and EI/ECSE leadership in future Center studies

- Increase funding for leadership projects at a high enough level to attract and retain students

- Reinvest in student-initiated grants as a source of support for students

- Clearly define criteria for funding. Target funding for full-time students and to address critical faculty shortages.

- Target marketing of profession to diverse populations

- Improve student mentorship by demystifying and conveying positive aspects of leadership roles

- Find a mechanism to link projects together to share expertise

- Utilize existing resources and create a community of practice (e.g., encourage linkages between UCEDDs and leadership programs)

Study IV: The Impact of Credentials on Early Intervention Personnel Preparation (Credentialing Part C)

Credential: A process by which personnel demonstrate knowledge and skills in order to achieve a state or nationally determined level of competence

State Information

42% of the states (n=22) had additional requirements (credential or training).

57% of the states (n=30) had no additional requirements.

Type of Requirement	n	%
States with credential requirements beyond licensure	16	73
Training or supervision requirements beyond licensure	6	27
Total	22	100

Study IV: Think Tank Washington, DC May 24-25, 2006

Policy Recommendations

- Develop a uniform approach to become credentialed within each state

- Examine how adding a credential might impact the supply and demand of EI personnel

- Make the credentialing and training process more accessible to personnel through the use of advanced technology

- Promote information sharing between states to aid each state in creating credentialing programs specific to their needs while creating a standard model to follow

Study V: Analysis of State Licensure/Certification Requirements for Early Childhood Special Educators (619)

Certification – the set of regulated requirements that lead to initial preparation in ECSE

Endorsement – the set of regulated requirements that are in addition to the requirements for a specific certification (e.g., ECE, SPE)

Blended ECE and ECSE – the set of regulated requirements that lead to initial preparation in both ECE and ECSE through a single certification

Certification Model	n	%
ECSE	14	37
ECSE Endorsement	6	18
Blended ECE & ECSE	3	8
Special Education	2	5
ECSE & Special Education Endorsement	1	3
ECE & Special Education Endorsement	1	3

Study V: Analysis of State Licensure/Certification Requirements for Early Childhood Special Educators (619)

- 26 of 38 states responding have only one certification model with ECSE being the most common model (examples of others – ECSE endorsement, blended EC/ECSE)
- 11 different age ranges are represented by these models
- 20 states have competency or standards based models
- 12 of 38 states responding have two or more certification models for ECSE
- 10 different age ranges are represented by these models
- 9 of these states have competency or standards based models
- 26 states require a nationally or state validated exam to qualify for certification
- 25 states require some type of induction to the field

Study V: Analysis of State Licensure/Certification Requirements for Early Childhood Special Educators (619)

- 17 of 38 state standards were analyzed to determine the extent to which they align with national standards

- 3 states' standards met or nearly met 100% of ECSE and CEC Common Core standards

- 2 states' met 56% and 81% of those standards

- 13 states' met 52% or less of those standards

- States' standards met more of the ECSE standards than the CEC Common Core standards

- Standards for four states with blended ECE and ECSE certification met 53% or more of the NAEYC standards

Study V: Think Tank Washington, DC June 11-12, 2007

- **Challenges**
  - Multiple systems of personnel preparation and/or licensing
  - Alignment of preservice and ongoing professional development
  - Efficacy data: teacher preparation to ensure child outcomes
  - Stakeholder issues
  - Recruiting and retention
  - Capacity in higher education: need qualified IHE personnel, availability of coursework to diverse students, and time to deliver the content
  - Tension of professionals with depth of knowledge vs. employment flexibility: IHE impact, recruitment and retention, systems issues, and accountability

- **Priorities**
  - Redesign higher education personnel preparation system
  - Need to look at alternative and flexible training methods in order to reach the best students from diverse backgrounds
  - Examine a variety of service delivery models
  - Recommend use of DEC/NAEYC national standards in state framework: for continuity of core competencies across states
  - Determine the critical elements within the NAEYC/DEC standards in relationship to teacher efficacy

Study VI: Training and Technical Assistance Survey of Part C & 619 Coordinators

Definition of a Training System: (a) dedicated resources such as an agency budget line-item; (b) staffing; (c) a dedicated agency responsible for the provision of the training; (d) policies or procedures for determining professional development expectations; (e) training content; (f) quality assurance systems; (g) process for identifying and measuring outcomes; (h) on-going, needs based professional development that is provided over-time; (i) a structure for the delivery of content (training modules, etc.), and (j) work-place applicability.

Definition of a Technical Assistance System: (a) dedicated resources such as an agency budget line-item; (b) staffing; (c) a dedicated agency responsible for the provision of the training; (d) policies or procedures for determining professional development expectations; (e) training content; (f) quality assurance systems; (g) process for identifying and measuring outcomes; (h) work-place applicability; (i) provides ongoing TA; (j) individualized professional development; (k) problem solving services, and (l) assists individuals, programs and agencies in improving their services, management, policies, or outcomes.

- Part C: 20 states (39%) had a training system & 12 states (23%) had a TA system
- 619: 23 states (58%) had a training system & 20 states (42%) had a TA system

Study VII: Confidence and Competence of 619/Part C Service Providers
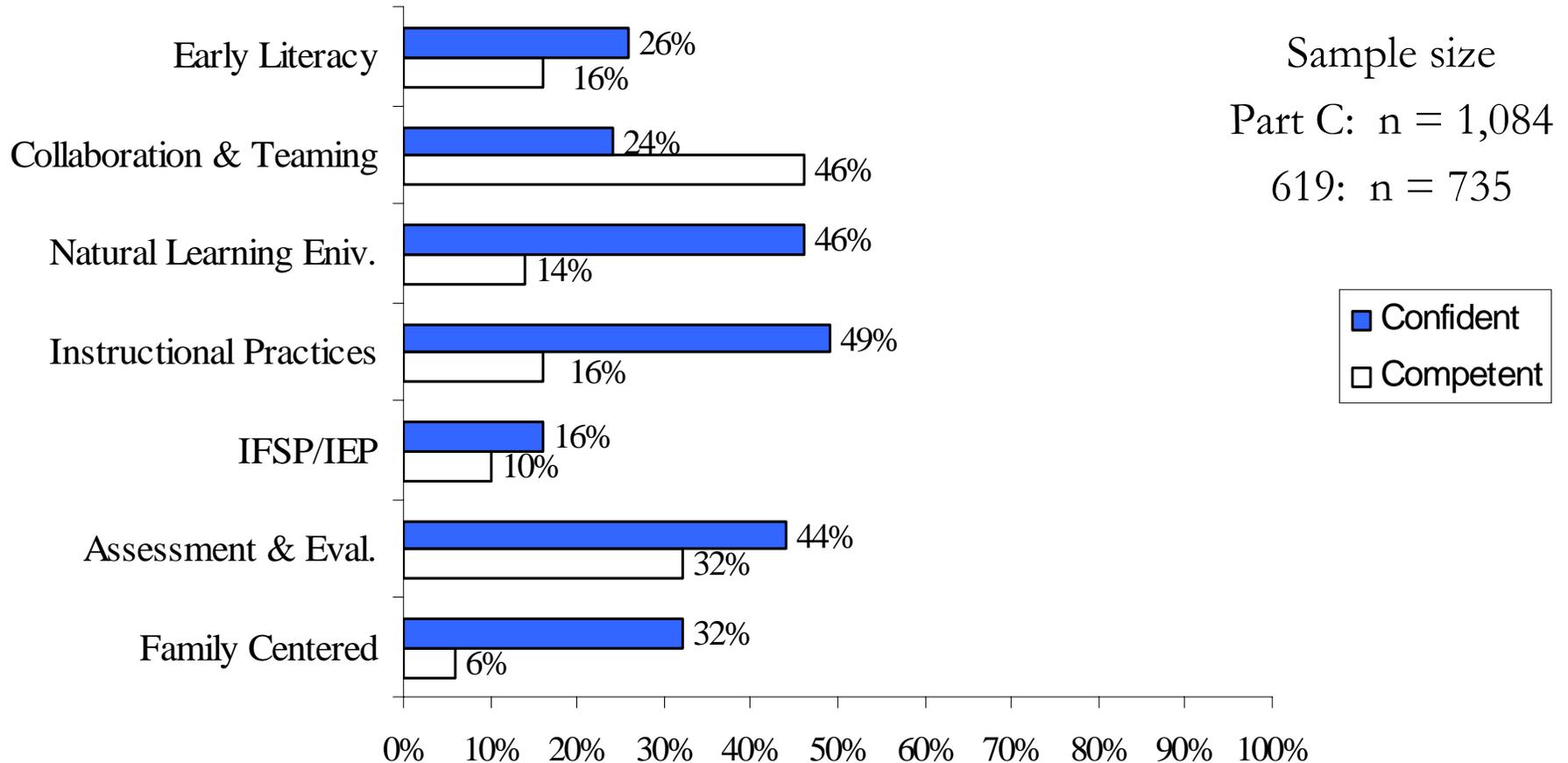
Sample size
Part C: n = 1,084
619: n = 735

Legend:
- ■ Confident
- □ Competent

Chart data:
- Early Literacy: Confident 26%, Competent 16%
- Collaboration & Teaming: Confident 24%, Competent 46%
- Natural Learning Eniv.: Confident 46%, Competent 14%
- Instructional Practices: Confident 49%, Competent 16%
- IFSP/IEP: Confident 16%, Competent 10%
- Assessment & Eval.: Confident 44%, Competent 32%
- Family Centered: Confident 32%, Competent 6%

Study VIII: Alignment of ECSE Higher Education Curricula with National Personnel Standards--ONGOING

- Content analysis of higher education syllabi in 15 states in relationship to NAEYC, DEC, CEC standards

- Three states per each of 5 certification models: ECSE, Special Education, Blended ECE and ECSE, ECE endorsement on ECE, ECSE endorsement on special education

- Great variability exists for the representation of national standards across models, states and universities

- National standards are more likely to be represented in ECSE models and least likely to be represented in special education models of certification

Study IX: Parent Perceptions of Confidence and Competence of 619/Part C Service Providers --ONGOING

Sample size
Part C: n = 201
619: n = 174

Chart categories with Confident (blue) and Competent (white) values:

- Early Literacy: Confident 51%, Competent 44%
- Collaboration & Teaming: Confident 56%, Competent 54%
- Natural Learning Eniv.: Confident 63%, Competent 51%
- Instructional Practices: Confident 66%, Competent 51%
- IFSP/IEP: Confident 57%, Competent 45%
- Assessment & Eval.: Confident 60%, Competent 57%
- Family Centered: Confident 58%, Competent 46%

Legend: ■ Confident □ Competent
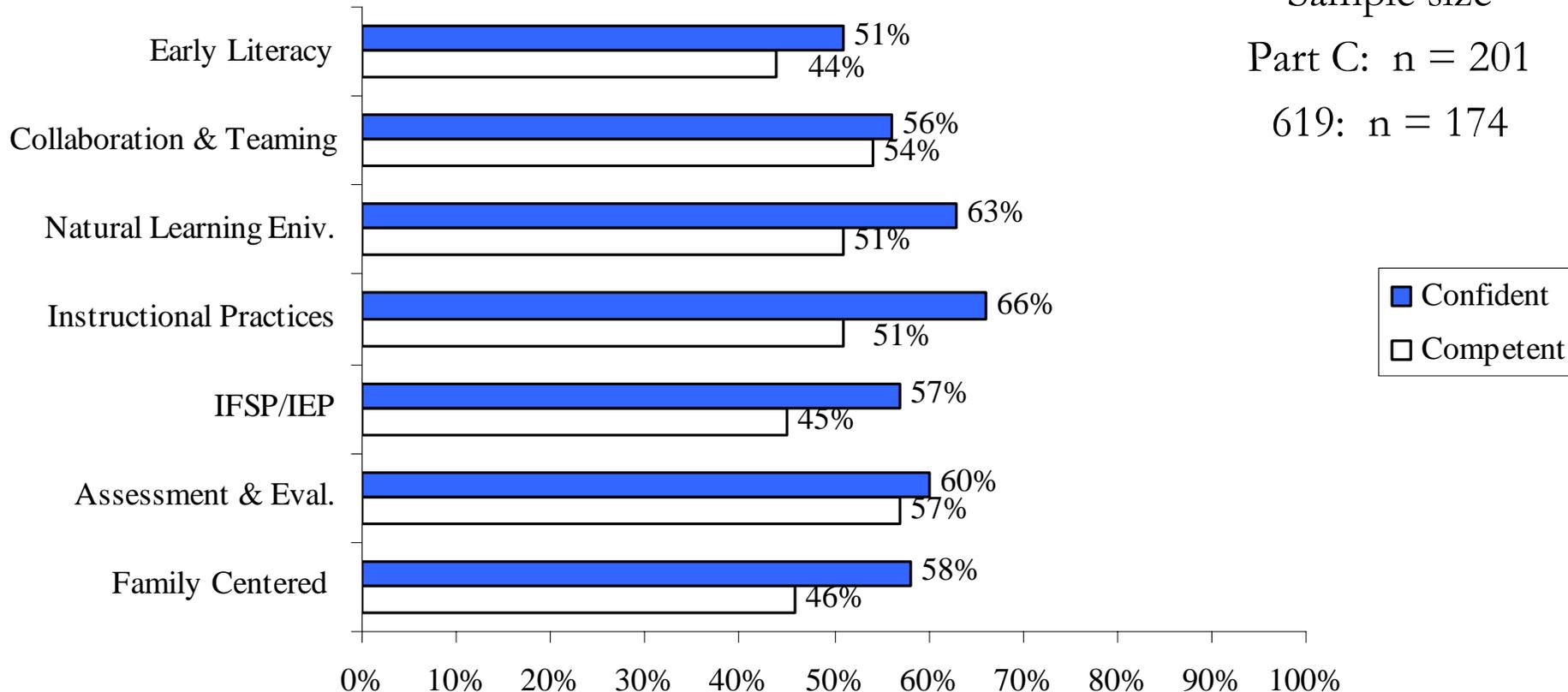
Study X: Case Studies Highlighting States from Study VI on Training and TA --ONGOING

- States were chosen for this study based on data gathered from Study VI - met the definition for having a training and technical assistance system

- 4-8 people per state were interviewed – Part C and 619 coordinators, parents, IHE professors, directors of training networks, and others

- State (# of people interviewed)
  - Nebraska (8)
  - Wisconsin (6)
  - Minnesota (7)
  - California (6)
  - Pennsylvania (6)
  - Kansas (7)

- Data analysis is ongoing
  - State summaries
  - Similarities and differences across the states

Dissemination of Research Results: Next Steps

- Webinars

- Manuscripts

- Policy Recommendation Summaries for OSEP and Other Key Stakeholder Groups

- National Conference

Web Site Information

Center Information

http://www.uconnucedd.org/

Data Reports

http://www.uconnucedd.org/projects/early_childhood/publications.html

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