

Overview:
**Working Towards a Recommended Common Core
Of Measures of Early Childhood Professional Development**
July 5, 2007
Child Trends

Limitations with existing measures of early childhood professional development, and a lack of a common set of definitions and measures, are creating gaps in our knowledge of the size and characteristics of the early childhood workforce at both the state and national level. The Office of Planning Research and Evaluation of the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has set as a goal to address this set of issues through the identification of a Recommended Common Core of Measures of Early Childhood Professional Development.

A White Paper¹ has been written to:

- provide background on this set of issues, summarizing key papers and presentations that have discussed the problems with definition and measurement;
- identify specific areas of difficulty in the definition and measurement of the early childhood professional development; and
- make preliminary recommendations for addressing these areas of difficulty.

Following up on the White Paper, a survey has been developed as a preliminary draft of the Recommended Common Core of Measures of Early Childhood Professional Development. The survey draws on a review of existing measures of early childhood professional development, selecting those items from existing surveys that best address the specific issues in definition and measurement summarized in the White Paper, adapting existing items or developing entirely new items as needed. The draft survey notes the sources where items have been either adopted or adapted from existing surveys. Where adaptations have been made, the original survey items drawn upon are listed in an appendix.

Feedback into this preliminary Recommended Common Core of Measures of Early Childhood Professional Development is being actively sought from researchers, policymakers and practitioners. This feedback can provide a basis to revise and refine the Recommended Common Core. The eventual goal will be to provide the Recommended Common Core as a resource for local, state and federal data collection on issues of early childhood professional development, so that items can be used that address the problems with definition and measurement that have limited previous efforts to describe the workforce.

¹ The White Paper, authored by Martha Zaslow, Tamara Halle, Michelle McNamara, Debra Weinstein, and Ayonda Dent of Child Trends, is titled “Working Towards a Recommended Common Core of Measures Of Early Childhood Professional Development: Issues and Preliminary Recommendations.” The paper is available through the Child Care and Early Education *Research Connections* website, www.childcareresearch.org.