



Professional Development Companion Guide for CCR&Rs



Designing a Professional Development (PD) Roadmap

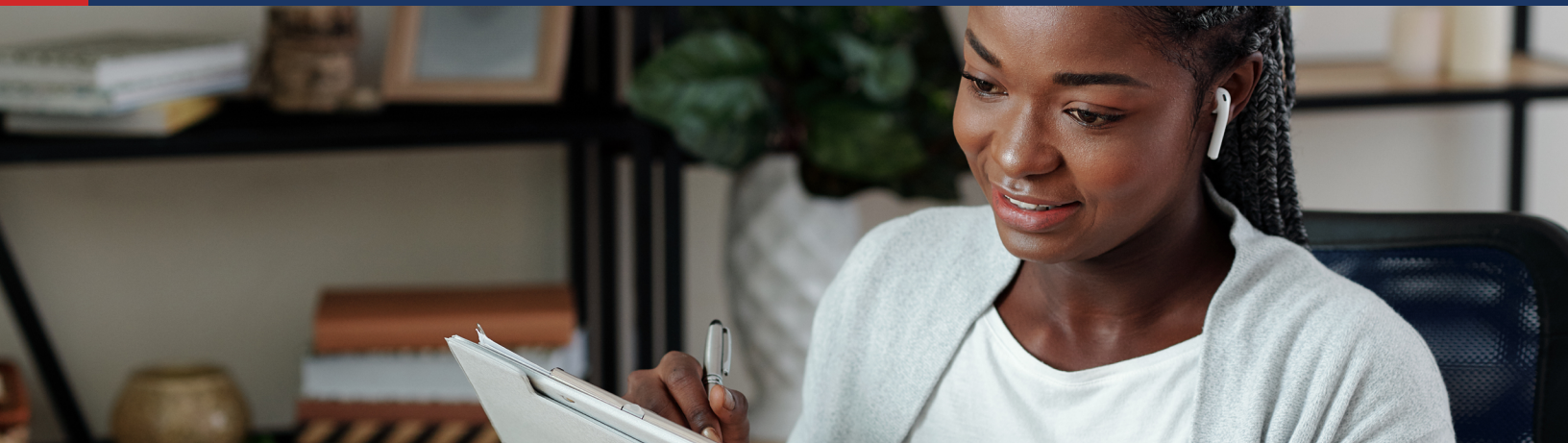
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★ Represents a Quick Guide

Quick Guides are resources that can be specifically used as standalone documents when providing information, technical assistance and/or for training purposes.



Introduction

The intended audience for this Professional Development (PD) Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Companion Guide is Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) agencies and their staff and can be used with providers and programs receiving CCR&R PD services. This PD Companion Guide may also be used as a tool for onboarding new CCR&R staff to the PD efforts of the agency. This PD CCR&R Companion Guide includes quick reference pages on [PD definitions](#), [methods](#) and [methodologies](#).

An individual may engage in all types of Professional Development (education, training and Technical

Assistance (TA)) over the course of a career. Whatever form professional development takes, it is imperative for the field to have a common understanding of each type of professional development in order to avoid confusion for the workforce and to meet state and local requirements designed to help child care professionals acquire and retain the skills and knowledge needed to be competent caregivers and educators and build an effective workforce. To that end, this document lays out a [roadmap](#) of definitions used in the field for both providers and receivers of professional development. It is a journey for both, those facilitators or guides along the route, and those who are on the road to a specific destination (career goal).

Purpose

The intent of this PD CCR&R Companion Guide is to develop a common understanding of the meaning of professional development (PD) in early childhood and the various approaches to implementing PD activities. Using this common understanding will help your organization and those who access your CCR&R services to:

- Understand and facilitate the development of professional development.
- Assist in recognizing various PD approaches and matching these approaches to learning opportunities.
- Evaluate the effect that PD has on professional practices to support shared understanding

As CCR&R agencies this guide may assist you in your efforts to:

- Design a [roadmap](#) to organize, plan and implement the PD journey of child care providers.
- Train new CCR&R staff for onboarding and staffing purposes and illustrate CCR&R PD opportunities for programs/providers.
- Assist practitioners to understand the various forms of PD they may take advantage of.
- Build common language and practices with community and state partners in order to educate and inform them on CCR&R services and [methods](#) used to provide PD opportunities to programs and providers within state systems.

Background

[Professional Development \(PD\)](#) in early childhood education (ECE) is the cornerstone of building a competent, strong workforce that includes gaining new knowledge, skills and abilities, along with experience and competencies that relate to one's profession, job responsibilities or work environment. PD is a set of facilitated learning opportunities that range from college coursework to topical workshops and training, to mentoring and coaching, to online engagement in the form of Cohorts, Communities of Practice and Peer Learning Communities. This facilitation can be in the form of professors with years of academic scholarship, teaching knowledge and experience, to early childhood professionals with experience, content expertise and coaching, to former classroom teachers and family child care providers offering peer support.

PD goes beyond training by helping child care professionals learn knowledge, skills and dispositions that can be transferred to settings and situations that can be used to enhance their current job performance or to advance their careers. PD opportunities may be in person or online, some may be more in-depth, some may be job embedded and offered over time, and some may award certificates, a credential or credits toward a degree upon completion.

Whatever form taken, PD may be thought of as a journey which can have many roads or paths leading to a final career goal destination. The route can be direct or indirect, the fast way, or the slow way. It may be curvy or go straight through, and it may even include a detour onto a more difficult route. But the greatest opportunities often come from finding your individual way forward and checking guideposts or GPS along the way. As professional development is specific to each individual, it is about how the [roadmap](#) is used and the route planned and facilitated along the way. This will improve the enjoyment of the process and the outcome at journey's end.

As set forth in the 2011 NAEYC/NACCRRA Early Childhood Education Professional Development: Training and Technical Assistance [Glossary](#), (TTA Glossary) all forms of PD are:

- Learning experiences specific to an area of knowledge or inquiry and related skills and dispositions.
- Delivered by professionals with expertise in relevant subject matter and adult learning principles.
- Delivered face-to-face or through distance, technology-based and hybrid method.



All professional development (education, training, and TA) should:

- be designed using evidence-based best practices; consistent with the principles of adult learning; and structured to promote linkages between research, theory, and practice.
- address the continuum of young children's abilities and needs.
- respond to each learner's background (including cultural, linguistic, and ability), experiences, and the current context of her role and professional goals.
- include resources to ensure access for all.

www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/our-work/public-policy-advocacy/glossarytraining_ta.pdf

CCR&R Professional Development Supports and Services

PD supports and services offered by CCR&Rs have a common goal to build an effective workforce. The following PD supports and services highlight how an effective workforce is strengthened by the efforts of CCR&Rs:

Relationship-based and Strengths-based Professional Development

CCR&Rs have a long history of cultivating and utilizing trusted and respectful relationships and interactions to provide services and supports to the providers/programs they serve. PD is one area of support that is strengthened through and by these relationships. By using a positive strengths-based approach to PD, CCR&Rs support providers to believe in and use their strengths which in turn builds confidence in their contributions, positive engagement in work tasks and processes, and ultimately satisfaction in their working lives. CCR&Rs that utilize a strengths-based approach to PD report benefits that include:

- higher levels of well-being and confidence of practitioners
- increased use of best practices in the classroom
- lower levels of staff turnover
- greater career satisfaction and fulfillment

When staff feel their strengths are recognized, they become inspired to further improve.

CCR&Rs that utilize relationship-based professional development (RBPd) are more effective in supporting staff to engage in learning opportunities, try new ideas and concepts, and make lasting changes in their caregiving practices. RBPd is defined as using professional relationships as a primary method to support the growth and development of adult learners.

According to Howes and Pianta (2011), RBPd has been found to be effective because it is primarily learner driven.



“Relationship-based learning is unique because it offers a collaborative partnership that is based on a foundation of mutual respect and understanding and an acknowledgment of the unique perspectives and approaches of individuals.”

Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families - Relationship-based Professional Development Standards (2019).

Retrieved from: www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/earlylearning-profdev/professional-development-strategies

Learners are able to:

- Decide on the direction of their professional development
- Receive individualized support based on strengths and context
- Engage in a reflection as they apply new information to practice
- Learn strategies for recognizing and interrupting automatic patterns of behavior

CCR&R relationship-based professionals honor the identity, voice and experiences that adults bring to the PD experience and seek to meet them where they are in their PD journey. To that end, understanding and using adult learning principles is imperative in RBPd activities offered by CCR&R staff.

CCR&R Professional Development Supports and Services (cont.)

Using Adult Learning Principles

High-quality evidenced-based professional development practices in CCR&Rs are grounded in the research around adult learning principles. Adult learners contribute a lifetime of experience to any professional development program. It is likely that the material is not entirely new to them even though they are learning something novel or up to date. Any learning process should start with activating existing knowledge because learning proceeds more swiftly and effortlessly when a student can recall prior knowledge before finding out new content. Dr. Malcolm Knowles' foundational work in the area of adult learning principles is considered best practice and should be used by CCR&R staff to plan, implement and evaluate the professional development being offered.

Six Foundational Adult Learning Principles

- Principle #1: Adults are internally motivated and self-directed. PD providers must actively involve participants in the learning process and serve as facilitators that guide participants rather than supply them with facts.
- Principle #2: Adults need to draw upon their own life experiences and knowledge. Consultants who deliver training/technical assistance (T/TA) must value this experience and help adults connect it to the theories and concepts that are introduced during T/TA activities.
- Principle #3: Adults are goal oriented. Adults appreciate learning when it is tied to specific professional or personal goals. Consultants should identify learning objectives, follow clear agendas and show participants how the activities are helping them to achieve their goals.
- Principle #4: Adults are relevancy oriented. Adults must be able to see how learning connects to their work.
- Principle #5: Adults are practical. Adults will want to focus on those aspects of the T/TA that will help them solve problems in their work. They like hands-on exercises that simulate real-world situations.
- Principle #6: Adults need to be shown respect. Adults need to be given a strong voice during T/TA experiences.

CCR&R Professional Development Supports and Services (cont.)

CCR&R Best Practices in Professional Development

CCR&R professional development activities are planned and conducted based upon assessments of individual, group and/or system needs. Professional development may be linked to statewide initiatives, licensing requirements, critical health and safety processes and best practices in the field. PD activities in CCR&Rs should be developed to build competencies that the workforce should know and be able to do in a thoughtful and capable manner in their roles working with children and their families (content, skills and dispositions).

In 2011, NACCRRRA's Best Practices for Local Agencies 2nd Edition¹ set forth criteria related to best practices across multiple service elements and outcomes for CCR&Rs. The relevant best practices for PD are summarized below with the full document linked [here](#):

- CCR&Rs offer training and technical assistance that meet the needs of the child care workforce.
- CCR&Rs include training, general technical assistance and on-site technical assistance in the annual provider needs assessment. Staff seek information on provider needs from providers, licensing representatives and partner agencies that train or educate providers.
- Services meet the needs of the diverse provider population and are available at times and locations convenient to providers. Services are available in the languages spoken by the child care workforce.
- CCR&Rs coordinate with other organizations that educate or train providers to avoid duplication and extend resources.
- CCR&Rs offer training and technical assistance in a variety of formats in order to meet the needs of the diverse workforce.
- CCR&Rs use research-based training curricula that is appropriate to the child care setting and educational levels of providers. Training delivery meets adult learning principles and practices. CCR&Rs offer providers the opportunity to earn certificates, continuing education units and college credits.
- Training and technical assistance are linked to external criteria such as licensing, accreditation, quality rating systems and local, state or national credentialing.



¹National Association for the Education of Young Children, & National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. (2011). Early childhood education professional development: Training and technical assistance glossary. National Association for the Education of Young Children; National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. www.naeyc.org/GlossaryTraining_TA.pdf

Categories of Professional Development

Roadmap to Build a Professional Development Plan

By keeping the above best practices in mind and using them as a guide, CCR&Rs can develop a plan of action or roadmap to developing a comprehensive PD plan for providers within their service delivery area.

★ QUICK GUIDE: Roadmap to Build a Professional Development Plan



As CCR&Rs develop their roadmap for PD, they need to keep in mind the greater PD system of the state in which they are crucial partners. State PD systems consist of many connected efforts, services and supports that CCR&Rs should be aware of as they design and facilitate ongoing PD for the workforce. CCR&Rs are part of the larger system and state PD System Frameworks can serve as a roadmap for both PD professionals and early care and education providers that live and work in the state. Many resources exist to assist CCR&Rs to learn more about [PD System Frameworks](#) and how they are a key in meeting many of the provisions of the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) as they work to define, describe, build and sustain the PD that is created for the early care and education workforce.



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Categories of Professional Development

Per the ²TTA Glossary, “PD is a continuum of learning and support activities designed to prepare individuals for work with and on behalf of young children and their families, as well as ongoing experiences to enhance this work. These opportunities lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices and dispositions of early education professionals. PD encompasses education, training and technical assistance.”

These three categories of PD are summarized from the glossary in the chart below for quick reference and at-a-glance understanding of each.



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Categories of Professional Development

Education	Training	Technical Assistance (TA)
Offered through a state-approved, professionally accredited school, college or university	Can be a one-time event or organized into a training program with a planned sequence of sessions	Provides targeted, customized supports, often job embedded <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on processes, knowledge application or implementation of services • Delivered by professionals who may need to meet the qualifications required by an employer or a state technical assistance system <i>*Methods of TA include Mentoring, Coaching, Consultation, PD Advising, Peer-to-Peer Support</i>
Occurs between faculty, students and student peers	Delivered by professionals who may need to meet the qualifications required by an employer, training agency, conference organizer or a state trainer approval system	TA: Mentoring Occurs between colleagues in similar professional roles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal: To increase personal or professional capacity, resulting in greater professional effectiveness
Requires satisfactory performance on standards or outcomes-based assessments	Preservice or initial training: Refers to PD in which an individual engages prior to beginning a position. Preservice training may be required for early childhood professionals to serve in a role	TA: Coaching Occurs between colleagues in similar professional roles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal: To build capacity for specific dispositions, skills and behaviors focused on goal setting and achievement for an individual or group
Delivered by professionals who meet qualifications required by the state, accreditor and institution	In-service or ongoing training: PD in which early childhood professionals engage to enhance their skills and remain current regarding knowledge and practice in the field. In-service training may be required for early childhood professionals to continue serving in a role	TA: Consulting Occurs between an external consultant and individual(s) from a single program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal: To facilitate assessment and resolution of an issue-specific concern or to address a specific topic

²National Association for the Education of Young Children, & National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. (2011). Early childhood education professional development: Training and technical assistance glossary. National Association for the Education of Young Children; National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. www.naeyc.org/GlossaryTraining_TA.pdf

Categories of Professional Development (cont.)

Education	Training	Technical Assistance (TA)
<p>Credits & CEUs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credits are earned after completing the requirements of an academic course • Continuing Education Units (CEUs) may be earned after completing a course that does not meet credit requirements or is not part of a degree program • Direct Assessments award credit or CEUs based on passing an assessment that demonstrates proficiency in course requirements 		<p>TA: PD Advising</p> <p>Occurs between an advisor and an individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal: To assist individuals to make informed decisions and gain access to increased professional growth and career options
<p>Credentials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credentials include certificates, diplomas, degrees and licenses awarded to individuals who complete a PD program • Degrees are awarded by educational institutions in accordance with state regulations • Professional certification is awarded by a national, non-governmental professional association • State certification or licensure is awarded by a state agency and may recognize or require degrees and/or professional certifications 		<p>TA: Peer-to-Peer Support</p> <p>Occurs in communities of colleagues in similar roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal: To provide access to expert knowledge base in the field, learn from an exchange of professional challenges, rewards, problem-solving experiences and practitioner repertoire of tools and strategies
<p>ECE apprenticeships:</p> <p>an arrangement between employee and employer that allows the worker to remain employed while they participate in on-the-job learning and pursue related coursework or training.</p> <p>Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employer involvement • structured on-the-job learning • related instruction • rewards for skill gains • industry recognized credential 		



Relationship-Based Group Professional Development

These above-referenced categories of PD may be, and often are, offered by CCR&Rs through group professional [learning communities](#), both online and face to face. CCR&Rs use this more innovative approach to PD to assist providers to dig deeper and reflect upon their early care and education practices. The [benefits](#) (2020) of professional [learning communities](#) include: collaborative learning, reduced isolation of teachers, knowledge of evidence-based practices, better informed and committed educators, and creating a culture focused on the goal of improving early learning for children.

Group professional [learning communities](#) fall into different types such as Peer Learning Communities, Communities of Practice, Learning Cohorts or Networks/Hubs. CCR&Rs use these with various audiences on a variety of topics which are aligned to meet the learning needs of the group.

According to the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, “[learning communities](#) provide a space and a structure for people to align around a shared goal. Effective communities are both aspirational and practical. They connect people, organizations and systems that are eager to learn and work across boundaries, all the while holding members accountable to a common agenda, metrics and outcomes. These communities enable participants to share results and learn from each other.”

The literature repeatedly gives attention to [five attributes](#) that characterize professional [learning communities](#): 1. supportive and shared leadership; 2. collective creativity; 3. shared values and vision; 4. supportive conditions; and 5. shared personal practice.



Defining Professional Learning Communities

★ QUICK GUIDE:

Defining Professional Learning Communities

Type	Purpose/ Outcome	Elements	Benefits	Audience
Peer Learning Community (PLC)	PLCs enable participants to share results and learn from each other, thereby improving their ability to achieve rapid yet significant progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connects people Sets goals and measures collective progress Enables shared learning Supports distributed leadership Accelerates progress toward impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Support Sharing of best practices Collaborative discussion and development opportunities Networking 	Anyone in early childhood with an interest in the topic under discussion
Communities of Practice (CoP)	<p>CoPs are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly.</p> <p>Individual members advance their own work, but also contribute to the larger field.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shared domain of interest that is relevant and a priority Engagement in joint activities and discussions Not limited by formal structures: they create connections among people across organizational and geographic boundaries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relational interactions in support of learning Exchange of knowledge and information Innovate and create new ideas/knowledge Problem solving 	A core group of practitioners with a shared practice... with resources experiences, stories, tools and ways of addressing problems
Cohort	A cohort is a collaborative learning style in which a group of learners enter a program together and remain together throughout its duration to create a deeper understanding of shared goals and achieve results.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Led by facilitator or instructor with subject area expertise Fixed start and end date Peers with similar interests, goals, and experience Frequent group discussions Provides structure to the learning process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small groups Networking and supportive engagement Relationship building More opportunities to engage with facilitator/instructor Accountability to the group 	Small groups of ECE professionals around a subject/topic or common learning endeavor

Defining Professional Learning Communities (cont.)

Type	Purpose/ Outcome	Elements	Benefits	Audience
Collaboratives	The learning collaborative model brings together a large number of early care and education (ECE) programs to participate in a learning system to make quality improvements in a focused area.	<p>Facilitated learning sessions held at regular intervals</p> <p>Technical Assistance during and between sessions</p> <p>Action Periods with self-assessments of current practices, strengths and areas for improvement</p>	<p>Creates a network of shared ideas and mutual support.</p> <p>Provides access to high-quality resources for quality improvement.</p> <p>Offers opportunities to build important skills: implementation of best practices, nurturing a collaborative and productive ECE program team, as well as leadership and training.</p>	Designated number of ECE programs that wish to make policy and practice changes aligned with a particular initiative
Networks/Hubs	Organizations that bring together programs and offer quality improvement services and business supports, including professional development in the form of training, technical assistance, peer support delivered by paid staff.	<p>Relationship-based practices combined with high-quality early childhood content</p> <p>Facilitated peer interaction activities that support provider leadership and growth</p> <p>Reflection and feedback opportunities</p> <p>Business sustainability practices</p>	<p>Reach many programs at once</p> <p>Flexible to community needs</p> <p>Improve quality of care</p> <p>PD can be deployed quickly</p> <p>Emotional and psychological well-being of participants</p> <p>Opportunities for mentorships</p>	<p>Practitioners with common focus, challenges and concerns.</p> <p>Program leaders</p>



PD Methods, Modalities and Measures

CCR&Rs offer PD through a variety of means and approaches to best meet the needs of learners and to increase the likelihood that PD will transfer to everyday application in early childhood settings. By including all four modalities in planning PD, learners will have the opportunity to learn through their preferred method. This helps to create a more inclusive, fair and equal opportunity for all learners.

CCR&R PD staff must also take the time to ensure PD goals are developed, assessed and measured to ensure that there is an evaluation of the PD being offered to determine the effectiveness and outcomes of those efforts. The quick guide below provides a summary of the various methods, modalities and measures commonly used by CCR&Rs.

★ QUICK GUIDE:

Methods of PD Delivery

PD is delivered in three primary ways:



1. Face-to-face

This is essentially a [teacher-centered method](#) of PD. Content and learning material are taught in person to a group. This allows for live interaction between a learner and an instructor. It is the most traditional of the PD methods.



2. Technology-supported (commonly called [virtual or distance learning](#))

This method is the use of virtual approaches and learning management systems to help deliver learning opportunities. Virtual PD takes place at a distance through the internet rather than in the traditional classroom setting. A learning management system (LMS) is a software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, automation and delivery of educational courses, training programs, or learning and development programs. It also delivers and manages all types of content, including video, courses and documents.

The [key benefit](#) of any technology-supported learning is flexibility—educators can control the time, place and pace at which they learn.



3. Blended learning or hybrid (a combination of face-to-face and distance learning).

In blended learning, participants complete some components online and do others in person. During hybrid learning, facilitators or PD staff teach remote and in-person learners at the same time using technology such as video conferencing.



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Modalities:

To effectively reach all learners, CCR&R PD professionals should consider the various ways in which people learn and make meaning of information being provided. One effective way to reach all learners is using a range of learning modalities within the PD to give the greatest opportunity to reach as many learners as possible.



Visual Learners are those who learn by seeing. They need to see PowerPoint presentations, visuals within text, diagrams, graphs and charts, as well as print resources such as white papers, blogs and summaries to assist them in understanding a concept.



Auditory Learners learn best by listening and talking in order to fully comprehend and make meaning of the information. These learners respond well to lectures, discussions, read-a-louds, share-outs and opportunities to share their thoughts verbally.



Kinesthetic Learners are those who need to be active participants in their learning. They are those who “learn by doing” and learn better if movement is involved. They enjoy role playing and music activities, and love to create things such as in “make-it, take-it” sessions.



Tactile Learners learn by feel and touch through hands-on experiences and tend to learn more effectively if some type of physical activity is involved. They appreciate learning activities that have manipulatives such as games and using the internet. They also appreciate fidget toys and doodling while listening to lectures.



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Measures:

CCR&Rs have long assessed the kinds and types of PD being provided and used that information to develop and enhance PD offerings in their agencies, but a more important factor should be to evaluate all PD processes that are in place in order to evaluate if the system is working for all concerned, ECE professionals and stakeholders alike.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “you and your stakeholders want to know if your PD is working and why (or why not). [Evaluation](#) is a systematic process you can use to learn if your activities are achieving their intended purpose. The results of evaluation can be used to demonstrate successful outcomes to your stakeholders, garner additional support for your activities, identify specific ways to improve implementation, and make strategic decisions about what activities to continue or change moving forward.”

CCR&Rs should be asking the following questions to evaluate their PD activities and their overall PD plan:

- What questions are addressed in your evaluation plan? Are they aligned with your PD goals and outcomes ([SMART Goals](#))?
- How are the PD needs of your providers assessed? Was the representative sample assessed or the entire provider population?
- How will information be gathered? What data will need to be collected and how will it be collected? (Data)
- What is measured or assessed? Are you assessing your CCR&R’s PD [infrastructure](#) and [practices](#)? Does your PD [design action plan](#) reflect what is to be measured or assessed? (Action Plans) How will information be used? How will the evaluation results be used for continuous improvement and shared with relevant stakeholders? (Evaluation)

The CDC also offers an infographic with a section on evaluating PD Processes which are highlighted below.

- Develop a plan to measure the SMART objectives stated in the cooperative agreement work plan.
- Identify or develop instruments to collect evaluation data from multiple sources.
- Assess needs of the target audience, as applicable.
- Collect process data.
- Collect outcome data.
- Maintain evaluation data in an organized data management system.
- Identify or develop a data entry protocol.
- Use evaluation data to:
 - Revise PD plans.
 - Revise/refine training designs.
 - Revise/refine TA protocol.
 - Inform the design of follow-up support.
 - Report indicators of success.
 - Inform decision makers/stakeholders.

Equity

CCR&Rs have been on the forefront of deepening the understanding of early care and education (ECE) professionals on a variety of topics and reaching the hard-to-reach and underserved child care provider populations. CCR&Rs must continue to be leaders in supporting ECE professionals, particularly in diversity, equity and inclusion issues, and encourage the recruitment of providers into the field who reflect the racial, cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity of the children in their care.

CCR&Rs should also ensure that PD offerings made available to early care and education providers be of high quality that engages the providers to reflect on their own biases, become culturally and linguistically competent, and support them to effectively work with children and families from various backgrounds, differences and abilities that are unlike their own. Planning and facilitating PD that fosters a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion requires parallel training and education by PD professionals themselves, as professionals that teach others must expand their own knowledge and practices. This ultimately leads PD professionals to be more effective as early care and education providers, and the families they serve, become increasingly diverse.

“To effectively advance equity and embrace diversity and full inclusion, early childhood educators need work settings that also embrace these goals —not only for the children and families served but also for the educators themselves. Early childhood educators should be well prepared in their professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions to teach in diverse, inclusive settings. They also need to be supported by, and to advocate for, equity- and diversity-focused public policies.

NAEYC [Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education Position Statement](#), 2019.

Accessibility

Making professional development opportunities available at different times, locations or through virtual or self-study methods will make timely or crucial topics more readily accessible to providers and support agencies in reaching those who typically are not participating in PD experiences.

PD offered through professional [learning communities](#) can be supportive of ECE professionals in making connections, learning from each other and feeling a sense of belonging. This in turn assists in creating a more equitable child care system where the voice of every provider is elevated and heard in a community of learners that care about the success of each other, and the children and families that they care so much about.

There is also a need for PD and other resources to be available in multiple languages, which helps reduce barriers to child care access to these resources as providers seek to enhance their knowledge and skills.

CCR&Rs often provide translation of resources into multiple languages or work with community partners to assist in translation of materials and resources. It is crucial that when either doing translations in-house or using a third-party translator, CCR&Rs ensure accuracy and quality in translated documents and materials. Child Care Aware® of America (CCAoA) has a tip sheet entitled “Tips for CCR&Rs Completing Translations.” These tips are designed to promote efficiency, accuracy and quality in CCR&R translated documents and materials.

Also, The National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants and Migrants (NRC- RIM) [Toolkit](#) for Written Translation (2021), provides “resources and best practices to consider when having materials translated into other languages. A good translation involves more than just putting the text into another language. The document should be assessed for plain language and to make sure it will be understood in any language. Staff should also take time to plan for what languages a document is translated into based on their target audience and overall communication goals.”

A full listing of recommendations for those facilitating educator preparation and PD can be found [here](#) as outlined in the NAEYC publication, *Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education Position Statement* (2019).

Advocacy

CCR&Rs bring the voices of children, families and child care professionals to the attention of the public and policymakers by providing resources, data and innovative new ways to meet those needs. This data includes information on the quality and impact of PD activities and informs federal, state and local investment in enhancing PD systems and services in order to effectively meet the educational and career goals of providers. This type of data is analyzed and used by CCR&Rs to advocate for additional funding for innovative PD activities as well as increased compensation based on career advancement linked to quality PD.

According to a CCR&R in North Carolina (CCSA), “by supporting quality improvement programs, helping create financial incentives for education, partnering with higher education and advocating for better compensation for providers, CCR&Rs help improve the quality of care for all children.”

As noted in a CCAoA [blog](#) post, Child Care Resource and Referral: The Secret Solution (CCAoA, 2018), “CCR&Rs have near-immediate access to parent and child care provider voices from every corner of the country – true stories documenting real-life impacts of policies and funding.” This is especially relevant as providers share feedback on the impact of the PD being offered as well as access and quality of the PD. CCR&R use this feedback to advocate for funding, staffing, collaborative partnerships in PD, innovative approaches and improvements to state PD system supports. This is crucial as quality PD and compensation initiatives that are linked to increased education and/or completion of PD result in workforce stability.



PD Journey Conclusion

Whether you are new to CCR&Rs or have extensive experience, understanding PD terms and using common language and definitions related to PD is extremely important.

As you support providers along their PD journey, and assist them in developing their personal career [roadmap](#), it is imperative to remember that PD in CCR&Rs is about enhancing learning rather than just delivering content. It is about being advocates for authentic learning, learning which is facilitated by reflecting real-life context, equipping providers with practical and useful skills, and addressing topics that are relevant and applicable to the audience. By having a common understanding of what is meant by PD, everyone benefits. Providers who register and partake in the offerings will have a greater understanding of what is being offered and will be better able to make informed decisions that will best meet their individual needs. PD specialists will be speaking the same language with colleagues, providers and stakeholders which will reduce misunderstandings and communication issues regarding the numerous types and kinds of PD available across the service delivery area. Also, funders will develop a greater understanding of the goals and outcomes of the various PD offerings and be able to advocate for and fund innovative approaches to PD.

While many early care and education professionals encounter different expectations for professional learning throughout their PD journey, it is up to the CCR&R to reduce confusion and eliminate barriers to accessing PD. CCR&Rs are critical to designing [roadmaps](#) for professional growth and maximizing success. By offering resources and PD opportunities that reach providers where they are and that have meaning for their work, the PD journey may not seem as long, arduous or daunting for providers.



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