



Credentialing (Recognition Systems) in Parenting Education

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Workshop Goals:


- To describe **identified competencies** for parenting educators
- To describe current **recognition systems** for parenting educators
- To discuss the advantages/challenges of these systems
- To facilitate discussion with participants

When should professionals develop a recognition system?

According to DeBord & Matta (2002, p.2)

- When Parenting Education becomes a full time occupation
- When training schools and curricula are established
- When those trained establish a professional association

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- When a name, admission standards, a core body of knowledge/practice competencies are developed
 - When internal conflicts within the group and external conflicts from other professionals with similar concerns lead to a unique role definition
 - When the public served expresses acceptance of the expertise of Parenting Educators

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- When certification and licensure prove legally that the group is sanctioned
 - When a code of ethics is developed (NCFR, 2004)

Other sources: East, 1980; Czaplewski & Jorgensen, 1993

Why has this been difficult for parenting educators to do?

- Parenting Education is not a single field of study.
- It is embedded in many other fields of study (like Psychology, Nursing, Social Work, Education, etc.).
- It has been hard to reach an agreed upon body of competencies.
- There is not one single preparation system for Parenting Educators. (in-service vs. pre-service)

Today things have changed

- We have full-time parenting educators.
- Many schools/programs with training exist.
- We are agreeing on a core body of knowledge/competencies.
- We have a professional association (NPEN) which draws upon
- ethical guidelines for practice.

Why do we focus on competencies for parenting educators?

- “These competencies provide a means for parent educators from diverse professional backgrounds to assess their ability to do parent education.
- They also provide a standard for parents to judge the quality of their sources of information and support.

Why do we focus on competencies for parenting educators?

- Finally, they provide a basis on which to continue the discussion of developing certification and other accountability systems that will help assure the professionalism of the field of parent education.”

Source: Cooke (2006, p. 800)

What might the outcome of doing so be?

- “Such accountability programs will assure professionals with different primary professional identities that they are upholding the high standards of their profession in this related field.
- Only then can we move toward having a better recognized field with recognized practitioners working to achieve goals of improved parenting.

What might the outcome of doing so be?

- Only then can we assure parents of providing them with the information, skills, and other opportunities for growth that they need to nurture their children toward healthy adulthood.”

Source: Cooke (2006, p. 800)

What are some models of core knowledge/competencies ?

The Texas Professional Development Recognition System for Parent Educators and Professionals who work with Families identified a list of core knowledge for PE's working with families and children from 0-18 years of age.

http://www.cpe.unt.edu/career_dev/ccore.ph

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Core knowledge areas included:

- Child and Lifespan Development
- Dynamics of Family Relationships
- Family Life Education
- Guidance and Nurturing
- Health and Safety
- Diversity in Family Systems
- Professional Practice and Methods Related to Adult Learning and Family Support
- School and Child Care Relationships
- Community Relationships
- Assessment and Evaluation

What other bodies of knowledge and competencies have been identified?

- The National Extension Parenting Education Model and Framework have identified competencies for parents and parenting educators.
- http://cyfernet.org/ncsu_fcs/NEPEF/

NEPEF knowledge and competencies involve:

- **Content for parents:** care for self, nurture, understand, motivate, guide and advocate
- **Processes for parent educators** needed to work effectively with parents and children include grow, frame, develop, embrace, educate and build.

The Minnesota teaching license for parent and family educators:

- Requires knowledge and skills in the subject matter areas of understanding:
 - families,
 - parent-child relationships,
 - child development,
 - and adult development

They require Parent/Family Educators to meet practice standards in:

- student learning;
- diverse learners;
- instructional strategies;
- learning environment;
- communication;
- planning instruction;
- assessment;
- reflection and professional development; and
- collaboration, ethics and relationships.

<https://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/rules/?id=8710.3100>

Why review these competencies?

- Knowing what these core competencies are, and what a parenting educator already brings to the role from their previous experience and education, the parenting educator can then decide which **recognition system** would be most appropriate for them within their own State.

What professional categories or titles currently exist?

1. Voluntary registries or directories of parenting educators
2. Credentialed parenting educators
3. Certificate in parenting education- higher education
4. Certificate in parenting education- professional organizations
5. Undergraduate course credit in parenting education
6. Graduate credit/degrees in parenting education and support
7. State/teacher licensure in parent and family education

How have we defined these various categories?

Bryan, DeBord & Schrader (2006, p. 808) have defined them as follows:

- Registry: “a listing of active self-identified Parenting Educators”
(No standards/quality control; searchable database)

Example 1 Registry: Texas ROPER: Registry of Parenting Education Resources

<http://www.cpe.unt.edu/roper.php>

How have we defined these various categories? (cont.)

- Credential: A verification of one's personal competencies.

Example 2 Credential: North Carolina
Credentialing for Parenting Educators

<http://www.ncpen.org/credential.html>

How have we defined these various categories? (cont.)

- Certification: A seal of approval by a validating organization and could include a test or completion of a group of for credit courses but can be with or without a degree.

Example 3 Certification- Higher Education:

Iowa State Parenting Education Certificate.

See <http://npen.org/resources/degrees-cert.html#gc>

How have we defined these various categories? (cont.)

- Certification: A seal of approval by a validating organization and could include a test or completion of a group of for credit courses but can be with or without a degree.

Example 4 Certification- Professional Organization:

Nationally Certified Family Life Educator-NCFR
undergraduate degree req. www.ncfr.org

How have we defined these various categories? (cont.)

Undergraduate course credit- Provides course completion from a subject matter program but there may not be a terminal degree.

Example 5 Higher Education: Iowa State University www.extension.iastate.edu/pwp

How have we defined these various categories?(cont.)

Example 6 Graduate Degree :

- DePaul University 5 graduate course certification within a M.A. Degree in Applied Professional Studies: Parenting Education and Support

<http://www.sn1.depaul.edu/prospective/parenting.asp>

How have we defined these various categories? (cont.)

- License: Official or legal permission to practice granted by an appropriate authority

Example 7 Licensure: Minnesota Bd. of Teaching License-Teachers of Parent and Family Education

www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/rules/?id=8710.3100

www.cehd.umn.edu/CI/Programs/FYC/parent.html

But isn't NPEN built on the concept of inclusiveness?

Many people who identify themselves as parent educators may not meet the requirements of certification and licensure programs (e.g. CFLE, licensure programs, or other higher education certification and degree programs). Is there a PE role for them? See Powell & Cassidy, 2007, p.233.

Are there recognition systems that can address this concern?

- The **University of North Texas at Denton** developed the following broad system based on knowledge of their core body of knowledge:

http://www.cpe.unt.edu/dev_recognition.php

Parent Educator 1

- Training: Certificate of attendance/ course transcripts verifying 30 clock hours education/ training in at least 2 Core Knowledge and Skills areas.
- Experience: 30 clock hours providing direct and/or volunteer or professional parent education, parent involvement and/or family support services.
- Education: Must be 18 years or older and have a high school diploma or GED.

Parent Educator 2

- Training: Holds certificate of attendance/course transcripts verifying 90 clock hours education/training in at least 8 Core Knowledge/Skills areas.
- Experience: 90 total clock hours providing direct volunteer and/or professional parent education, parent involvement and/or family support services.
- Education: Associate degree or equivalent in a field related to parent education.

Parent Educator 3

- Training: Certificate of attendance/course transcripts verifying 120 clock hours of training in 10 Core Knowledge/Skills areas.
- Experience: 300 clock hours in providing direct volunteer or professional parent education, parent involvement and/or family support services.
- Education: B.A. degree, or at least 15 credit hours of graduate study in a field related to parent education.

Parent Educator 4

- Training: Attending workshops, seminars, conferences, and courses.
- Experience: Provide direct volunteer or professional parent education, parent involvement and/or family support services and presenting. or leading parent education either in a classroom or as a home visitor/mentor.
- Education: Masters or Doctoral degree in a field related to parent education.

PE Credential in North Carolina

- Applicants may apply for one of four levels of credentials based on education in each of the 12 National Extension Parenting Education Framework areas plus their experience working with families. A panel of credentialed parent educators reviews credentials portfolios two times per year.

Four credentials in NC

- **Credentialed Parenting Educator 1:** Four year degree in a related field, plus references and a philosophy statement
- **Credentialed Parenting Educator 2:** Four year degree in related field or 5 years experience and outline of knowledge in each of the 12 NEPEF areas

Four credentials in NC (cont.)

- **Credentialed Parenting Educator Associate 3:** Two years of experience working with families, high school completion, references, outline of experiences in NEPEF categories
- **Credentialed Parenting Educator Resource Assistant 4.** Two years experience working with families, supervisor letter, references, outline of experiences in NEPEF areas

What do parenting educators say about the credential in NC?

From Bryan, DeBord & Schrader (2006, p. 813)

- “I have no children and this credential let the participants understand that I knew what I was talking about.”
- “[I] get more respect by other agencies.”
- “valuable to me and to my employer. It offers me a higher degree of professionalism.”

What do parenting educators say about the credential in NC?

- “Completing the application helped me think through the work that I do.”
- “The process helped me to realize I need to continue updating in this arena.”
- “It helps me using a framework such as NEPEF to track my professional development.”

Are there other Parenting Education recognitions?

- Other programs, certificates, degrees, etc. are located at our NPEN website at:

<http://npen.org/resources/degrees-cert.html#gl>

Is there room for para- professionals in the field of PES?

- According to Heath & Palm (2006, p. 889):
Yes, if clearly defined roles and boundaries for practice are “carefully defined so that professional parenting educators and ‘para-professionals’ will complement each other in building a stronger and tighter web of education and support for all parents.”

Is there room for para- professionals in the field of PES?

- According to Heath & Palm (2006, p. 889):

Yes, if “clear ethical standards help to define appropriate levels of involvement for both groups so that the preparation and skill levels match the roles that are being performed.”

Discussion: What recognition system (s) make sense in Oregon?

- Registries/directories?
- Certifications?
- Credentials?
- College courses?
- College degrees?
- Licensure?

Thank you

- Please tell us what you think at

<http://npen.org/about/council-list.html>

References

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