Louisiana’s Parenting Education Professional Development System

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BrightStart

- Federally funded initiative from the Maternal and Child Health Program

- Purpose: Create a comprehensive early childhood system in Louisiana that will coordinate and integrate services for children ages 0–5

- Five Priority Areas:
  - Parenting Education
  - Others: Access to Health Insurance and Medical Homes, Mental Health and Social–Emotional Development, Early Care and Education and Family Support
Parenting Education in Louisiana

- BrightStart Strategic Plan
  - Includes goals and strategies for improvement in parenting education in Louisiana

- Identified a need for more information on what is offered throughout the state
  - Conducted a Parenting Education Program Survey
    December 2006–January 2007
Survey Conclusions

- Nationally recognized models being utilized but there were issues of fidelity and intensity
- Few educators or programs were accredited, certified or credentialed in any way
- No specific training requirements for parent educators
Survey Conclusions

- No statewide organization to support parent educators in Louisiana

- State funding for these programs spanned four different state departments, but there was no coordinating body for parenting education
Louisiana Parenting Education Network

- Determined that the first step should be to create an association for Louisiana parent educators
- LAPEN formed in February 2008 at the first annual summit – over 150 parent educators attended
Top 3 Priorities Identified by Participants

- Core Competencies
- Web Site
- Best Practices in Parenting Education Programs / Tie funding to Quality
Components of the Professional Development System

- Web Site
- Parent Educator Registry
- Core Competencies
- Professional Development Portfolio
- Linking Professional Development sponsored by LAPEN with the Core Competencies
LAPEN Website lapen.org

- Created by Website committee to inform about LAPEN and provide resources for the membership
- Links to other websites and articles related to parenting education
- Parent Educator Registry
- Core Competencies
- Professional Development Portfolio
LAPEN Registry

- Open to all parent educators
- Information is by self report
- Searchable database
- Identifies parent educators by
  - Location
  - Training
  - Area of Expertise
Core Competencies

- Core Competency knowledge, skills and attitudes developed by volunteer committee

- Researched models of other states—Connecticut, Wisconsin, Texas, North Carolina

- Adapted the Texas model

- Code of Ethics adopted—Ethical Thinking and Practice for Parent and Family Educators
  Minnesota Council on Family Relations
LAPEN Core Competencies

- Nine Core Competency Areas that define knowledge, skills, and attitudes for the profession
  - Child and Lifespan Development
  - Dynamics of Family Relations
  - Guidance and Nurturing
  - Health and Safety
  - Diversity in Family Systems
  - Professional Practice and Methods
  - School and Child Care Relationships
  - Community Relationships
  - Assessment and Evaluation
Professional Development Portfolio

- Developed by LAPEN Core Competencies Committee
  - Wisconsin Children’s Trust Fund

- Allows an educator to track training and professional development experiences that relate to the Core Competencies
Professional Development Portfolio

- Nine sections

- Knowledge, skills and attitudes for each core area

- Professional Development Tracking Sheet for each area

- Tracking sheet provides an area for
  - Title and Topic
  - Organizational Sponsor
  - Date Attended
  - Hours Earned
Linking Professional Development with Core Competencies

- Intentional effort by LAPEN Guidance Team to plan trainings based on areas of competency
- Nationally Recognized speakers
- Annual Summit
- Regional Training each year
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