National Parenting Education Network (NPEN): National Effort to Advance the Field of Parenting Education

National Forum on Professional Development Systems for Parenting Education
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Committed to advancing the field of parenting education
NPEN DEFINED

NPEN is a national umbrella organization that encourages information sharing and professional development and networking for professionals, paraprofessionals and volunteers who serve as parenting educators throughout the United States and in other countries.
NPEN VISION

- The vision of NPEN is that all parents and families will have the information, resources and support needed to provide a nurturing relationship and an optimal environment that will encourage their children’s healthy growth and development.
NPEN GOALS

- Information Sharing
- Professional Development
- Networking
- Leadership
NPEN PRINCIPLES

- Inclusiveness
- Universal Access
- Embeddedness
- Support for Existing Organizations
- Participatory Approach
The NPEN listserv & website are central to the work of NPEN. They provide opportunities that include:

- Connecting with other parenting educators
- Keeping up-to-date on the latest parenting education professional resources
- Identifying options for professional development
- Participating in advancing the field of parenting education by joining an NPEN committee
- Linking to others in the field for a wealth of support, encouragement, and collaboration.
NPEN LISTSERV

- Lively and substantive discussions of hot topics of interest to parenting educators
- Go to place to ask about curriculum and other resources for parenting educators
- Announcements of availability of conferences, courses, and webinars related to parenting education and parenting
- Discussion of issues directly related to the field of parenting education
- Free to anyone in parenting education

We strongly encourage listserv subscribers to become NPEN members as an important part of their professional development and contribution to the field.
NPEN WEBSITE

Examples of Website Information:

- Parenting Education Networks, Organizations, & Programs by State
- Resources for Parenting Educators
- Conferences & Events
- Degrees & Certificates

www.npen.org
NPEN MEMBERSHIP

- All individuals and groups interested in supporting NPEN’s mission of advancing the field of parenting education are welcome to participate on the NPEN listserv and join NPEN.

- Visit NPEN website for membership information & listserv subscription [http://www.npen.org/join.html](http://www.npen.org/join.html)

- Membership fees are $25 for individuals and $100 for organizations.
NPEN ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- The NPEN Council of 20–25 volunteers drawn from NPEN membership provides governance to the organization.

- Committees headed by Council members & composed of Council & other NPEN members carry out the ongoing work of NPEN:
  - Communication & Website Resources for Parenting Educators
  - Leadership & Advocacy
  - Networking & Membership
  - Professional Preparation & Recognition
  - Nominating
  - Financial Resource Development
Charge of Committee: To address NPEN’s role in defining, identifying and providing guidelines for parenting educator competences and in providing information about professional preparation and recognition that promotes development of these competencies; explore development of a national parenting educator recognition system within NPEN.
The Profession Preparation & Recognition Committee was formally organized within NPEN in 2008, and its work has been a major focus of NPEN since then.

One of the first activities of the Committee was a survey done by NPEN Council Member Heidi Stolz and her colleagues at the University of Tennessee on *Professional Preparation Systems for Parenting Educators: Identification, Perceived Value, and Demand for a National Credential*.
Professional Preparation Systems for Parenting Educators

Study Purposes

- Identifying existing professional preparation systems for parenting educators
- Better understanding the perceived value of various types of professional preparation systems
- Assessing the level of demand for a national parenting education credential
Drawing from Cooke’s (2006) original conceptualizations, these researchers proposed that professional preparation systems designed to equip & empower parenting educators can be meaningfully categorized into six specific types:

1. Curriculum-Specific Training
2. State-Based Credential or Certificate
3. State-Based License
5. Undergraduate Degrees
6. Graduate Degrees
Professional Preparation Systems for Parenting Educators

Study Research Questions

- What professional preparation systems (PPS) of each type are offered?
- Do each of the six identified types of PPS contribute more to parenting educators’ *knowledge and skills* or parenting educators’ *professional identity*?
- Is there a relationship between level of formal education and level of demand for a national credential?
The following groups were contacted and invited to participate in an online survey:

- The National Parenting Education Network (NPEN) listserv ($n = 289$)
- The National Council of Family Relations (NCFR) Certified Family Life Educators (CFLE) listserv ($n = 1551$)
- 1 Extension professional (family relations &/or parenting focused) from each university listed in the 2008–2009 Family Science Directory of Cooperative State Research, Education, & Extension Service (CSREES; $n = 68$)
### Professional Preparation Systems for Parenting Educators

#### Study Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Preparation Systems Identified</th>
<th>Total Identified PPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 1 Curriculum-specific training</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 2 State-based credential/certificate</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 3 State-based license</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 4 National family life education</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 5 Undergraduate degree in a field highly related to parenting and/or family life education</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 6 Graduate degree in a field highly related to parenting and/or family life education</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Identified PPS</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
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### Professional Preparation Systems for Parenting Educators

**Study Results: Likelihood of Pursing a National Parenting Education Credential**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AA (n=1)</th>
<th>BS/BA (n=67)</th>
<th>MS/MA (n=163)</th>
<th>PhD (n=93)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Highly Likely</strong></td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>55 %</td>
<td>54 %</td>
<td>39 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Somewhat Likely</strong></td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>42 %</td>
<td>29 %</td>
<td>44 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Not Likely</strong></td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>3 %</td>
<td>17 %</td>
<td>17 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings showed:

- Curriculum-specific training and university degrees were perceived as contributing more to parenting educator knowledge and skills than to professional identity.

- State-based credentials/certificates, state-based licenses, and a potential national parenting education credential were thought to contribute more to professional identity than knowledge and skills.
A generally positive perception was found regarding the usefulness and value of the NCFR–CFLE credential for both domains of professional development.

Additionally, there was a relatively high demand for a national parenting education credential (if one were developed) at all levels of education.
Findings from this study generated a list of professional preparation systems.

Findings indicate an interest in developing a national parenting education credential and a significant interest in obtaining such a credential by professionals across all levels of formal education.
Findings provide information that can assist parent education and family life professionals in:

- Knowing which professional development opportunities are valued by those in the field
- Developing effective professional preparation systems for future parenting educators
- Providing resources for program administrators and trainers to prepare new employees to be parent educators
- Identifying professional development opportunities for current parenting education professionals
ADDIITIONAL PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION & RECOGNITION COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES


- Examination of Parenting Educator Professional Preparation and Recognition Systems for Core Competency Themes – Dana McDermott, DePaul University

- Matrix of Professional Preparation and Recognition Systems – Stephanie Jones, North Carolina State University

- National Forum on Professional Development Systems for Parenting Education
Provides information about *five existing types* of professional preparation & recognition available for parenting educator practitioners.

Information includes descriptions of each type, the standards associated with each type & examples of each.

It is a Working Draft, continually reviewed & updated by the NPEN Professional Preparation & Recognition Committee.
Type 1. Voluntary Registry or Directory: Voluntary addition of name to searchable database of parent educators

Standards: Self-report; no standards/quality control

Example: Texas Registry of Parent Educator Resources (ROPER) – statewide network of professionals who work with parents; a searchable database of parenting professionals that parents and professionals can use to locate parent educators by location, language, and expertise; led to development of Texas Professional Development Recognition System
FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING PARENTING EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION & RECOGNITION

Type 2. Parenting Education Professional Development Training

a. Completion of courses, workshops, conferences, etc. designed to enhance parenting educator competencies

b. (1) Completion of training in an evidence-based curriculum or program – without follow-up
(2) Completion of training in an evidence-based curriculum or program – with follow-up

Standards: Defined by delivering/sponsoring agency; expertise may be in the materials rather than person delivering

Examples:

a. Child Abuse Prevention Workshop; Fathering Conference
b. (1) The Incredible Years
   (2) Parents as Teachers
Type 3. Verification of Parenting Educator Competencies (generally referred to as a credential): Verification or validation of qualifications or competencies by a third party based on defined criteria – usually education & experience; often requires portfolio or exam & has a renewal process

Standards: Defined by state or national organization/institution; may be awarded as steps or levels of credentialing/certification (see definitions with Framework document)

Examples:
- North Carolina Parenting Educator Credential (4 levels)
- Connecticut Parenting Education Credential (4 levels)
- Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE)
FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING PARENTING EDUCATOR PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION & RECOGNITION

Type 4. College Course or Program Completion:
   (a) Course(s) in Parenting Education – Completion of course or series of courses – credit or non-credit
   (b) Graduate Certificate in Parenting Education – Completion of 12–20 hours of graduate credit
   (c) Graduate Degree in Parenting Education – Completion of graduate courses resulting in a graduate degree

Standards: Based on criteria within credit or non-credit courses, certificate program, or degree program

Examples: See Framework document
Type 5. STATE TEACHER LICENSE: Official or legal permission to practice granted by an appropriate authority; competency-based, renewable; passing pre-professional skills test required

Standards: Based on assessment of an established set of competencies acquired through course completion

Example: Minnesota Parent & Family Education Teacher License required to be a parenting educator in the public school Early Childhood Family Education programs
Goal: Promote NPEN as the leader in setting standards for professional development and recognition systems.

Objectives:
- Develop and adopt core competencies and standards for parenting educators.
- Create a template for states/organizations to use to develop their own professional recognition system.
- Produce and disseminate a White Paper that documents the proceedings of this Forum.
- Investigate the feasibility of operationalizing a national professional development and recognition system.
Overview of NPEN

Overview of NPEN Professional Preparation and Recognition Committee work including:
- Survey Study of *Professional Preparation Systems for Parenting Educators &*
- *Framework for Understanding Parenting Educator Professional Preparation & Recognition*

We’ll continue to talk about the work of this NPEN Committee & NPEN throughout the Forum.

THANK YOU