

Background Readings in Preparation for a Research Study to Identify the Competencies for Sponsor Monitors of Family Child Care Homes

An Annotated Bibliography

The Family Child Care Homes (FCCH) program operates within the guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the purpose of providing funds for healthy meals and snacks served to eligible children. Sponsoring organizations of FCCH are required to provide operational personnel, referred to as monitors, for effective management and monitoring of the program. The monitor of the FCCH functions as the direct link to the FCCH provider and the sponsoring organization. In today's world, quality child care is important and FCCH function as one avenue to provide that care. Those involved in FCCH view the monitor's role as a vital component of the program's success, therefore, it is important to know the skills and knowledge needed for effective monitors. No research studies were found that identify the competencies required of effective sponsor monitors of FCCH. In an effort to provide a supporting foundation for a research study to be conducted by the Applied Research Division of the National Food Service Management Institute, the following studies were identified as important resources.

This annotated bibliography is a review of six research studies and one training manual. The citations appear in alphabetical order.

Azer, S. (1997). *Competencies of Early Childhood Directors: Draft for Discussion*. Boston, MA: Wheelock College, Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education.

The author of this report adapted a list of competencies of early childhood directors from other work. Seven competencies are presented in outline form. The competencies presented for early childhood directors are: develop and maintain an effective organization; plan and implement administrative systems to carry out the program's mission, goals, and objectives; administer effectively a program of personnel management and staff development; foster good community relations and influence child care policy; maintain and develop the facility; possess legal knowledge for effective management; and possess financial management ability.

Dombro, A. L., & Midigliani, K. (1995). *Family Child Care Providers Speak about Training, Trainers, Accreditation, and Professionalism: Findings from a Survey of Family-to-Family Graduates*. New York, NY: Families and Work Institute. (Eric Document Reproduction Service No. ED 388 384)

The purpose of the study was to identify how family child care providers perceived Family-to-Family training and determine how training impacts practice, attain family child providers' perspective of effective training and trainers, and secure family child care providers' view on what is meant by being a professional. An eight-page survey questionnaire was developed with three major categories (training,

trainers, and ongoing professional development). The survey was sent to 7,459 family child care providers with a response rate of 28%. Of those responding to the survey questionnaire, 66% indicated that working with a mentor was a technique to enhance learning. Visiting other family child care homes was at the top of the respondent's list of useful techniques to enhance learning. The results of the survey found that family child care providers have an understanding of what constitutes effective training and trainers. They also value the positive influence training has on their operation.

Perreault, L. (1988). Developing Your Employee Handbook: Job Description. *Child Care Information Exchange*, 62, 43-46.

This article reports the importance of job descriptions for those personnel employed in child care settings. The job description, when used effectively, can function as a tool for supervision, training, and evaluation. The author provides information for a simple approach to writing a job description that conveys the importance of the job and contributes to the overall success of the child care setting.

Robinson, L. A. S. (1999). Increasing Family Child Care Providers' Professionalism through Certification and a Professional Network. (Doctoral dissertation, Nova Southeastern University). (University Microfilms No. ED437209)

This paper discusses the increasing professionalism of Family Child Care Providers (FCCP). In today's world, the American family is relying more on nonparental child care and early education settings. This need has warranted the implementation of effective measures to assure trained FCCP. The purpose of this study was to address the lack of available training for FCCP in the southeastern part of the United States. A curriculum to prepare family child care providers for state certification through course work at a community college and evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum was the method selected for enhancing their professional skills and providing an organized professional network. A nationally recognized curriculum designed for family child care providers (FCCP) was the instrument of choice for certifying FCCP. The researcher determined the following causative factors for the problem: In the geographical area, colleges had not given high priority to specific course work designed for FCCP training and licensing, practical skills or information through continuing education was not provided; the recommended curriculum for FCCP was not taught through the existing training sessions; and current credentials offered through training did not meet the specific needs of FCCP.

Training was found essential for FCCP to provide opportunities for enhancing skill development for providing quality care of the child, and for raising their professionalism through education. The results indicated FCCP benefitted from the training curriculum designed for FCCP. Nineteen of the 20 FCCP participating in the study completed the Knowledge and Skills portion of the curriculum with a scoring range of 89-100, therefore, exceeding the standard of 70 or greater. The three most common barriers of FCCP seeking professional development were low pay, poor benefits, and low status. Mentoring support through home visits proved beneficial in informing and assisting the providers in realizing the benefits associated with being a FCCP.

Tatum, P.S. (1994). *Promoting Wellness: A Nutrition, Health, and Safety Manual for Family Child Care Providers*. Atlanta, GA: Save the Children.

The purpose of this manual is to serve as a provider friendly and trainer friendly resource for sponsoring organizations of the Family Child Care Providers (FCCP) enrolled in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The information in the manual addressed the characteristics of adult learners and training techniques such as: how adults learn, strengths and limitations of different training methods, and facilitating providers skills. Although the major focus of the manual is nutrition, there are six chapters addressing topics that would be helpful to the FCCP in managing an effective program. There is also a section addressing responsibilities of the Family Child Care Provider (FCCP) in addition to the responsibilities of the sponsoring organization, federal, and state governmental agencies.

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (1999). *Family Child Care Homes and the CACFP: Participation After Reimbursement Tiering (FANRR Publication No.3)*. Washington, DC: Author.

This report serves as an interim report of the Family Child Care Homes Legislative Changes Study. The objectives of this portion of the study were to measure the effects of the two-tier structure of reimbursement in the FCCH programs participating in the CACFP, the number of CACFP sponsoring agencies, and the total number of licensed child care homes, independent of their participation in the CACFP. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) of 1996 established a two-tier structure of meal reimbursement rates for family child care homes participating in USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The results of the mandated study are to be presented in two reports; this report serves as report one. Tier 1 homes are those located in low-income areas and defined operationally as either an area where at least half of the children live in families with incomes below 185% of the poverty guideline, or an area served by an elementary school in which at least half of the enrolled children are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, and homes where the provider's income is below 185% of the poverty guideline. Tier 2 homes include those that are neither located in a low-income area nor operated by a low-income provider. The change in reimbursement structure has its greatest impact on the providers of FDCH. In 1996, the number of FCCH providers blossomed to 195,000. In 1998, following the PROWORA, the number of participating providers of FCCH declined to 178,000. The results of the PROWORA added administrative duties for determining the tier classification of providers and households.

The final report will be available in early 2001.

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