

Increasing Professional Development Participation of Iowa Early Childhood Programs

A 2015 study by Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest found that home-based programs participating in Iowa Quality Rating System (QRS)¹ experienced more challenges to participating in professional development than center-based programs. How can Iowa QRS administrators encourage increased professional development participation from home-based program staff?



Center-Based Programs

Offer education or care in a group setting, standalone location, school, or community center.



Typically have multiple staff members including teachers, assistant teachers, and administrators



Home-Based Programs

Offer education or care in a group setting at the care provider's home



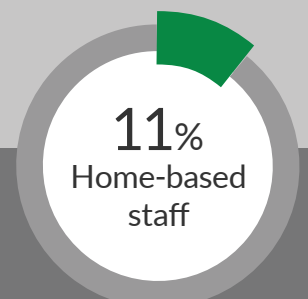
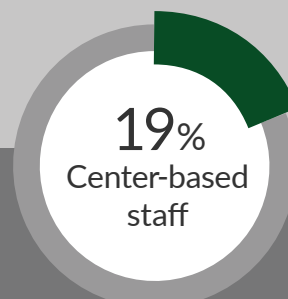
Some home-based programs have a provider and an assistant; other programs have no staff other than the care provider.

65%

Best practices indicate that coaching should occur frequently for maximum effectiveness. In Iowa, **65% of both center-based and home-based program staff have received some form of coaching.**





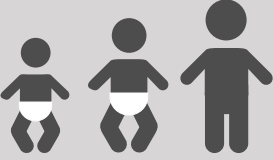


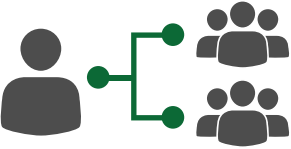
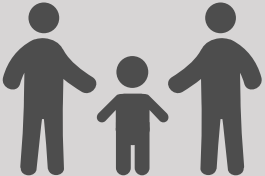
Center-based staff in Iowa were more likely than home-based staff to receive ongoing coaching (defined as coaching at least once a month).



Center-based staff participate in more professional development across multiple topics.

Center-based staff were more likely than home-based staff to receive professional development across seven key areas.



		Center-Based Programs	Home-Based Programs
	Health and Safety Practices	95%	89%
	Classroom Practices	88%	64%
	Child Development	87%	82%
	QRS Participation	71%	60%
	Program Self-Assessment	68%	43%
	Program Management	64%	44%
	Family Engagement	50%	44%

Home-based program staff face challenges with scheduling and traveling for professional development opportunities.

Home-based program staff report the cost of professional development activities, traveling long distances, and finding time to attend as barriers. Scheduling is a particular challenge, as many home-based programs do not have additional staff to cover while the provider is attending professional development activities.



Cost of PD Activities



Traveling Long Distances



Finding Time to Attend

By providing flexibility and financial support, states can encourage more professional development participation from home-based program staff.

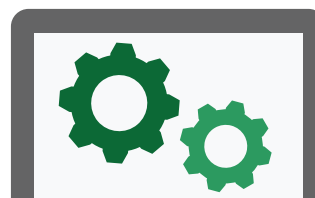
If states wish to increase participation in professional development activities among home-based programs, they may consider providing additional financial supports specifically targeted to home-based programs and professional development opportunities that accommodate the schedules and travel limitations of home-based program staff.



Additional Financial Supports



Accommodate the Schedules and Travel Limitations



Online Trainings and Coaching

¹ The Iowa QRS is a voluntary system of evaluating early childhood education programs and providing quality improvement supports. The QRS contains a Professional Development rating category, which includes measures of staff training hours, credentials, and education level.