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A Profile of Early Care and Education Trainers
in Nevada: Who are They and
What are Their Professional Development
Needs and Interests?



The Path to Brighter Futures.

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Executive Summary

A survey of all Early Care and Education (ECE) trainers in Nevada was conducted in 2008 by University of Nevada Cooperative Extension in collaboration with The Nevada Registry.

Survey

The online survey was designed to collect information on ECE trainer demographics, teaching techniques and perceived professional development needs. Questions assessed number of trainings conducted per year, training topics taught and resources used to develop training. Trainers rated how often they used different teaching techniques such as icebreakers and small group activities. The professional development skills and interests of ECE trainers were explored and trainers rated their interest levels on receiving training on 15 topics related to teaching adult learners.

Results

Three hundred and twelve ECE trainers were identified. An online survey was sent utilizing SurveyMonkey. Thirty-five surveys were undeliverable. Of the 277 surveys successfully sent, 166 trainers responded to the survey (60 percent response rate).

The ECE trainers completing the survey were primarily female (97 percent) and Caucasian (83 percent). The majority of the trainers had worked in the field of ECE for 10 or more years (72 percent) and had a Bachelor's or Master's degree (73 percent). Of those indicating they had a degree, 61 percent stated it was in the field of ECE. Twenty-five percent of the trainers had completed a CDA (Child Development Associate) credential.

ECE trainers held a variety of employment positions, including administrator or director (42 percent), trainer/consultant or higher education (22 percent), ECE teacher (13 percent), resource and referral or licensing specialist (9 percent), family or group home care provider (2 percent), and additional positions such as Literacy Coach or Head Start Supervisor (11 percent).

Sixty percent of the trainers stated they presented less than 12 trainings per year and trained less than 100 people. Sixty-five percent did not charge for their training and 55 percent indicated their trainings were open to the public. The greatest number of trainings were conducted in the Core Knowledge Area of Environment and Curriculum, followed by Positive Interaction and Guidance, and Human Growth and Development.

Teaching Adult Learners

Almost one-half (49 percent) of ECE trainers stated they had taken a class or received specific training about teaching adult learners. Eighty-two percent indicated they were interested in taking a class on adult learning principles in the future. Eighty-nine percent of the ECE trainers were interested in receiving monthly e-mails containing trainer tips and ideas and 73 percent were interested in participating in quarterly networking round table discussions designed for trainers to share ideas.

Trainers were asked to rank how they would prefer to receive professional development in the future and the top two choices were online training modules and 2-to-3-hour training sessions. There was less interest in all day or 2-3 days of training or having training in connection with the Nevada Early Childhood Conference.

The top five topics trainers indicated they were interested in receiving training included:

1. Utilizing the latest research in ECE
2. Understanding adult learning principles and styles of learning
3. Teaching techniques
4. Designing and/or presenting effective training for adult learners
5. Creating a positive emotional climate for involving participants.



History of The Nevada Registry

In April 2002, the Nevada State Child Care Advisory Committee formally adopted a voluntary Child Care Career Ladder and set of ECE Core Knowledge Areas. The adoption of these systems was based on recommendations received from the Child Care Quality, Training and Licensing subcommittee and hundreds of ECE professionals from across Nevada. However, an entity was needed to implement these systems.

The Nevada Registry was created to provide a statewide system of career development and recognition for professionals in the field of ECE.

A diverse group of ECE professionals developed and implemented The Nevada Registry. The professionals:

- Share the desire to improve the quality of ECE environments for all children;
- Identified the need to address the issues that lead to high staff turnover among the ECE workforce;
- Are working to develop innovative systems that lead to increased wages for professionals in the field;
- Support the development of a central clearinghouse of information linking all professionals in the state;
- Strive to professionalize the field of ECE.

The Nevada Registry serves as a clearinghouse of information for the field of ECE and offers Career Ladder placement, an online calendar of training, community resources/information and a statewide job board. The Nevada Registry is also responsible for the approval of all informal (not-for-college-credit) child care training in the state.

Mission

The Nevada Registry supports and empowers ECE professionals in Nevada to promote high quality ECE through recognition, professional development and educational growth.

Goals of The Nevada Registry

- Raise the status of the ECE profession by honoring and recognizing the professional achievements of those working in the field.
- Promote professional development.
- Help ECE professionals achieve greater respect and appreciation for their work with young children.
- Empower Nevada's providers to take responsibility for improving the quality of ECE.
- Promote the achievement of state and national standards in ECE.
- Encourage personal responsibility for actively pursuing professional and educational goals.
- Identify and document professional achievements.
- Collaborate with and unite partners to promote the vision, mission, and goals of The Nevada Registry.



Trainer Criteria

In an effort to continue to build a comprehensive training approval system that increases the consistency of training content and trainer qualifications across the state, The Nevada Registry was charged with creating a second set of training approval criteria for trainers. Currently, there is an established training approval criterion for training CONTENT. It has been recommended that in the future, trainers will also be required to meet predetermined TRAINER criteria (based on the education and experience of the trainer). This criterion will be developed over the course of the next several years.

Creating and implementing criteria for trainers is an important and ongoing discussion at The Nevada Registry and among the Registry Advisory Committee. In December 2005, the Advisory Committee began examining national trends related to trainer criteria and reviewed other states' systems. The committee participated in ongoing dialogue with members of the National Registry Alliance. In 2007, a state Trainer Criteria workgroup was formed to begin looking at the process in Nevada. The workgroup has met five times and is beginning to take some preliminary steps toward creating trainer criteria.

Guiding Principles

Based on the literature reviewed, The Nevada Registry Advisory Committee believes that:

1. There is a correlation between the education level of the trainer and the quality of training the trainer provides (Fiend, R., 2002).
2. Providers who receive higher quality training will provide better quality care and education to young children (Barnett, W.S., 2004).

The guiding principles serve as a roadmap for the development of trainer criteria.

Purpose of Creating Trainer Criteria

The purpose of implementing criteria for trainers is two-fold. First, it is based on the premise that consistent standards for trainers promote high-quality training. Second, standards can guide early childhood professionals in choosing training opportunities.

From a Trainer's Perspective:

- Approval criteria holds trainers to higher standards
- Criteria helps to highlight a trainer's specialization and unique skills
- Criteria supports the professional growth of trainers
- Criteria increases the number of qualified trainers in Nevada

From a Practitioner's Perspective:

- Approval criteria helps to support higher quality and consistency in training
- Criteria helps ECE professionals make more informed decisions about the training and trainers they select
- Criteria increases the quality of care and education for all young children in Nevada



Who are Nevada’s ECE trainers?

In 2007, a state Trainer Criteria workgroup was established to develop ECE trainer standards. This group is also determining yearly professional development requirements for trainers. The workgroup concluded more information was needed on the current status of ECE trainers in the state of Nevada before it could proceed.

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE), in collaboration with The Nevada Registry, conducted a statewide online survey of all ECE trainers in Nevada in 2008.

The survey was administered through SurveyMonkey using the Dillman (2000) Tailored Design Method for Internet surveys (e-mail notice, e-mail letter with survey, two e-mail follow-ups). The survey was designed to collect demographic information and the perceived professional development needs and interests of all ECE trainers in Nevada. The survey was composed of 31 questions.

Three hundred twelve ECE trainers were identified in the state of Nevada. Two hundred seventy-seven successfully received a survey and 166 trainers responded to the survey (60 percent response rate). The majority of the survey respondents were female (97 percent) and Caucasian (83 percent) with a Bachelor’s or Master’s degree (73 percent). Of those indicating they had a degree, 61 percent stated it was in the field of ECE. Twenty-five percent had completed a CDA (Child Development Associate) credential.

Forty-two percent of respondents described their current employment position as an administrator or a director of a child care center, 22 percent trainer/consultant or higher education, 13 percent ECE teacher, 9 percent resource and referral or licensing specialist, 2 percent family or group home care provider, and 11 percent listed other positions such as Literacy Coach or Head Start Supervisor.

See Table 1: Respondent Demographics

Table 1: Respondent Demographics (n=166)	
Gender	
Female	97%
Male	3%
Ethnicity/Race	
Caucasian/White	83%
African American	8%
Hispanic	4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%
American Indian	1%
Other	2%
Age	
50 or older	30%
40 to 49	30%
30 to 39	28%
18 to 29	12%
Education	
Doctorate degree	1%
Master’s degree	37%
Bachelor’s degree	36%
Associate’s degree	14%
High School graduate or GED	12%
CDA (Child Development Associate) credential	
Yes	25%
No	75%
Current Position	
Director, Assistant Director or Administrator	42%
Trainer/Consultant or Higher Education	22%
Lead/Head Teacher	13%
Child Care Resource and Referral or Licensing Specialist	9%
Family or Group Home Care	2%
Other (e.g. Head Start supervisor, Literacy coach)	11%
Employer	
Private child care center	28%
State agency	15%
Self-employed	14%
Head Start	9%
Higher Education	7%
Resource and Referral	6%
Public Schools	6%
Other	11%

Years as an ECE trainer

ECE trainers responding to the survey had been training in the field of ECE from less than one year (10 percent) to more than 10 years (27 percent). See *Figure 1*.

ECE Trainer Level on the Career Ladder

The highest numbers of trainers were at Career Ladder Level 6.2 which represents an ECE professional with a Master's degree and 4,000 hours of direct experience working with young children.

See *Figure 2*.

Nevada's Career Ladder Levels are as follows:

Level 1

1.1 Meet Child Care Licensing requirements and a minimum of 1,000 hours of direct experience with young children

1.2 All of 1.1 plus a high school diploma/GED

1.3 All of 1.1, 1.2 and 1 ECE college credit or 15 hours approved training

Level 2

2.1 Current CDA or 8 ECE college credits and 2,000 hours direct experience, or high school diploma/GED, 120 hours of approved training, and 2,000 hours direct experience

2.2 12 ECE college credits and 3,000 hours direct experience

Level 3

3.1 Apprenticeship Certificate or 20 ECE college credits and 4,000 hours direct experience

3.2 1-year ECE certificate or 30 college credits with 24 in ECE and 4,000 hours direct experience

Level 4

4.1 Associate's degree in ECE or Associate's degree in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits

4.2 All of 4.1 and 4,000 hours direct experience

Level 5

5.1 Bachelor's degree in ECE or Bachelor's degree in another field with a state teaching licensing containing an ECE endorsement or a Bachelor's degree in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits

5.2 All of 5.1 and 4,000 hours direct experience

Level 6

6.1 Master's degree in ECE or Master's degree in another field with a state teaching licensing containing an ECE endorsement or a Master's degree in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits

6.2 All of 6.1 and 4,000 hours direct experience

Level 7

7.1 Doctorate in ECE or Doctorate in another field an ECE endorsement or Doctorate in another field with 30 or more ECE college credits

7.2 All of 7.1 and 4,000 hours direct experience

Figure 1

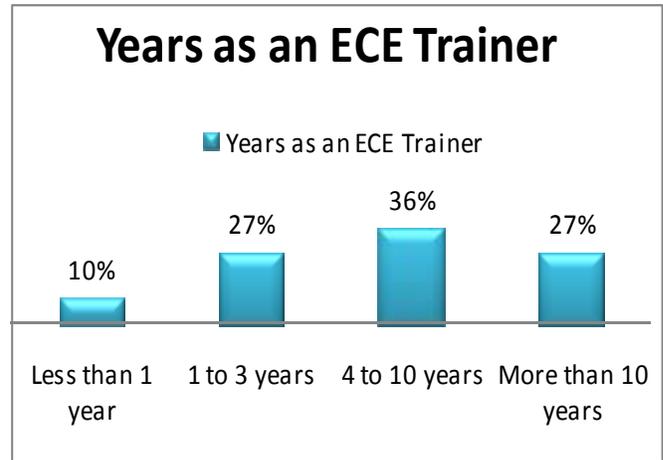
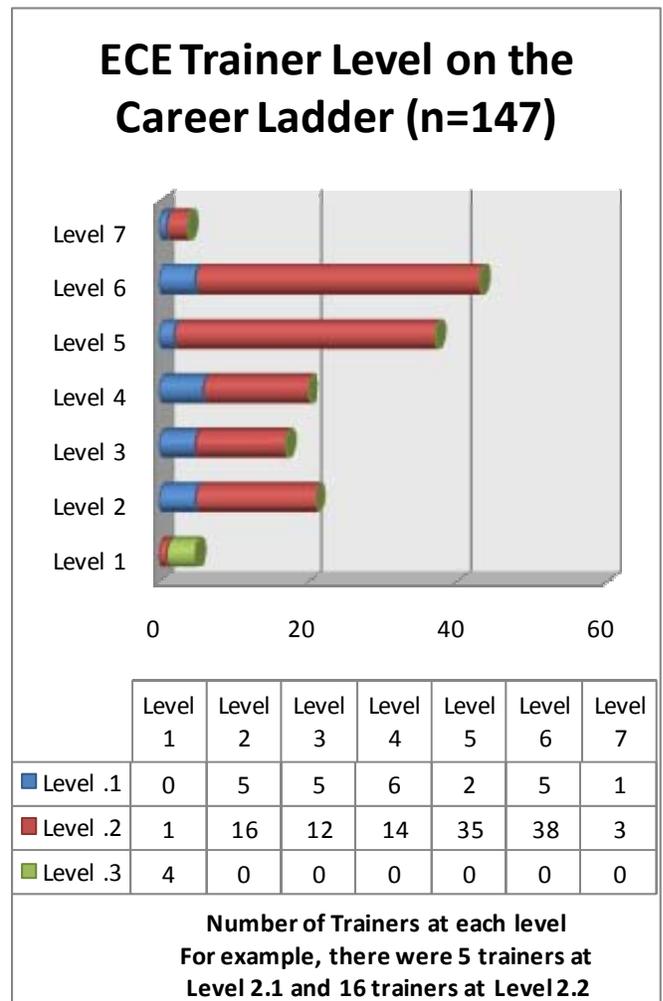


Figure 2



What are they teaching?

Core Knowledge Areas

Nevada has organized ECE training into eight Core Knowledge Areas (CKA). ECE trainers reported presenting training in the area of Environment and Curriculum the most often. The following is the ranking of the Core Knowledge Areas (CKA):

1. Environment and Curriculum
2. Positive Interaction and Guidance
3. Human Growth and Development
4. Observation and Assessment
5. Health, Nutrition and Safety
6. Family and Community Relationships
7. Leadership and Professional Development
8. Management and Administration

See Figure 3: Core Knowledge Areas (CKA)

ECE trainers indicated they used the following resources to develop their training:

- Materials developed by self (82 percent)
- Research and/or journal articles (69 percent)
- State agency developed materials (45 percent)
- Prepackaged commercial training (31 percent)
- Materials developed by Cooperative Extension or higher education (22 percent)

Thirty-one trainers listed using other resources to develop training including materials from Web sites, ECE college textbooks, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) books, and information from state and national conferences.

See Figure 4: ECE Trainer Resources

Keeping up-to-date on the latest information related to ECE was accomplished by regularly utilizing:

1. Web sites related to ECE (87 percent)
2. Reading publications such as Young Children (78 percent)
3. Reading ECE books (67 percent)
4. Reading research journals (56 percent)

Trainers also listed taking classes, attending specific training/conferences and utilizing information from national organizations.

Figure 3

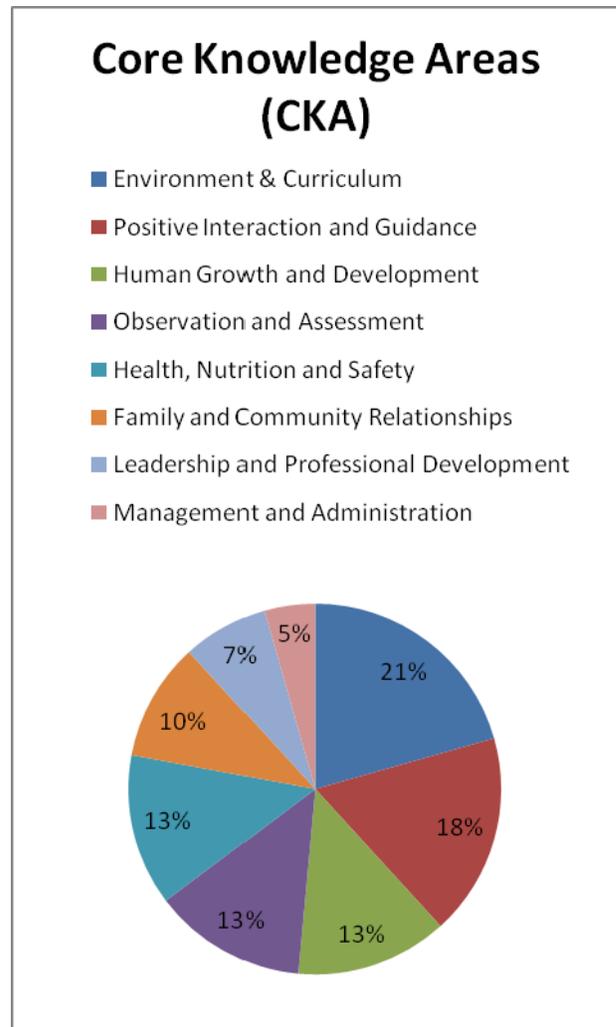


Figure 4



Where are they training?

Location of Training

The ECE trainers responding to the survey conducted 57 percent of their trainings in Clark County, 34 percent in Washoe County and 9 percent at other locations throughout the state. These locations included Douglas, Humboldt, Carson City, Elko, Lyon, and southern Nye counties.

See Figure 5: Location of Training

Frequency of Training

The majority of the trainers (60 percent) indicated that they presented less than 12 trainings each year. Twenty-four percent taught an average of one training per month, 9 percent taught 2-3 trainings per month, 3 percent taught one training a week and 4 percent taught two or more trainings per week. Fifty-five percent stated their training is open to the public.

See Figure 6: Average Number of Trainings

To Charge or Not to Charge?

Sixty-five percent of the trainers indicated they do not charge for their training, 27 percent charge for some training but others are free, and 8 percent stated they charge for all of the training they conduct.

Number of People Trained by an ECE Trainer during a One-Year Period

Thirty-eight percent of ECE trainers stated they train less than 50 people per year. Thirty percent of ECE trainers indicated they trained 51-100 people per year, 27 percent trained 101-500 people per year, 5 percent trained approximately 501-1,000 people per year and 1 percent trained more than 1,000 people per year.

See Figure 7: Number of People Taught

Figure 5

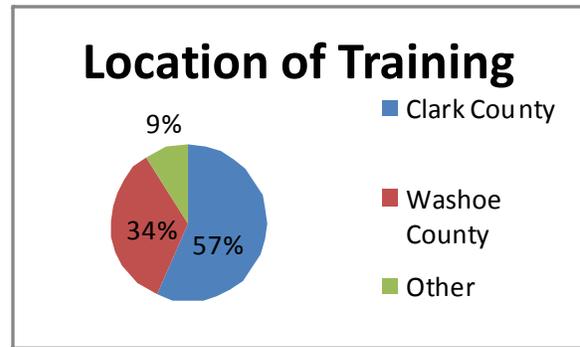


Figure 6: Average Number of Trainings a Trainer Conducts

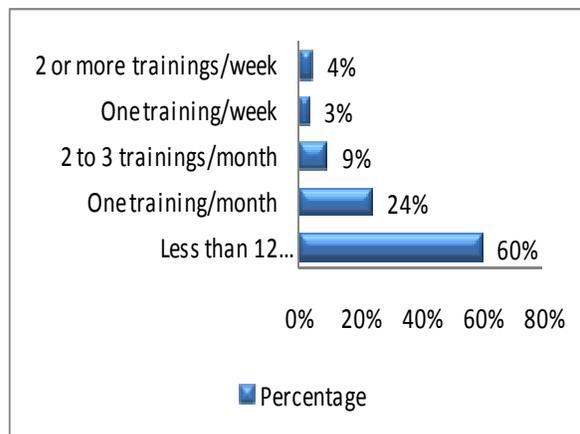
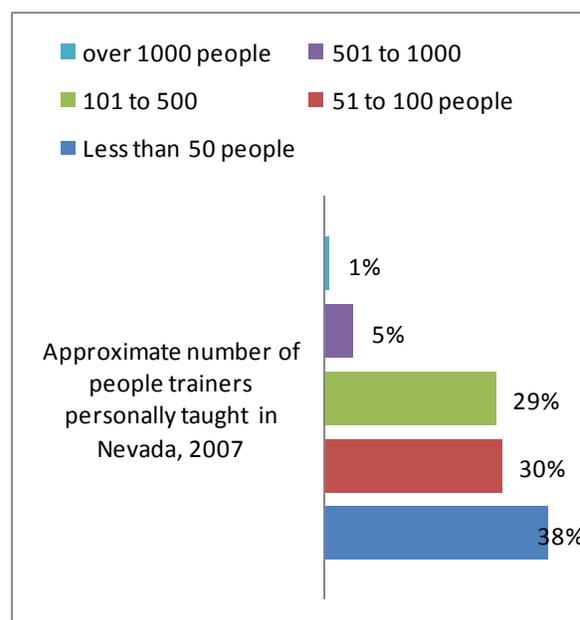


Figure 7: Number of People Taught by ECE Trainer



How do they train?

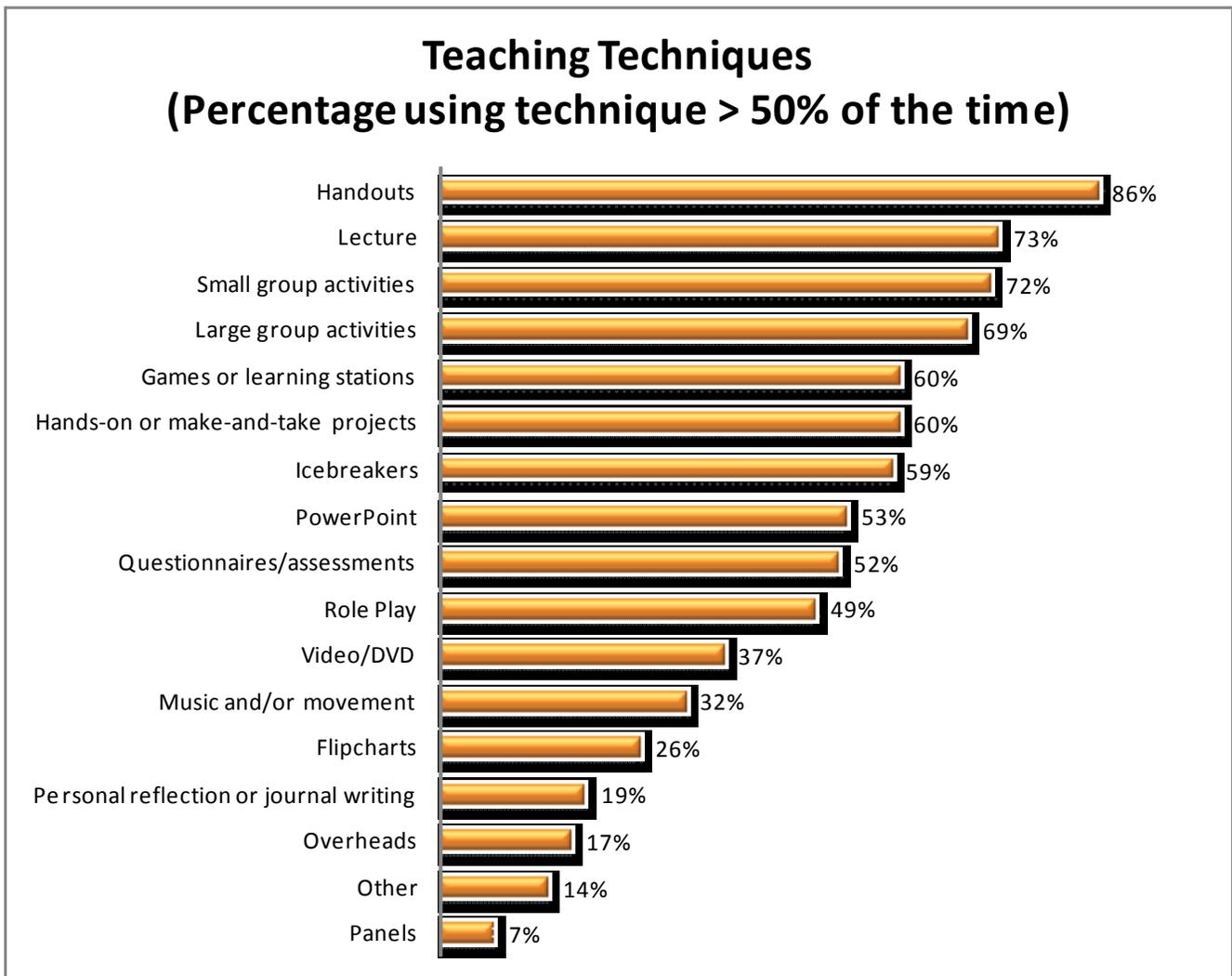
Teaching Techniques: ECE trainers were given a list of 16 common training techniques used to teach adult learners (e.g. PowerPoint, handouts, small group activities) and asked to indicate whether they used each of the listed teaching techniques in their trainings: Never, Occasionally, Half of my training, Most of my training, or All of my training.

Figure 8 highlights each Teaching Technique and the percentage of ECE trainers indicating that they use the teaching technique in at least half of their training. For example, 86 percent of trainers stated they use handouts in half, most, or all of their training, 73 percent used lecture, and 72 percent small group activities.

Other teaching techniques listed included webinars or Web site programs, field trips and monthly book/article reading discussions.

See Figure 8: Teaching Techniques

Figure 8



What are the professional development needs and interests of ECE trainers?

Training for Trainers

Trainers were asked to indicate how they would like to receive training if it was offered specifically for ECE trainers. The highest interest was in receiving training through online training modules or 2-to-3-hour training sessions. Moderate interest was listed for training before or during the annual Nevada Association of the Education of Young Children (NevAEYC) Early Childhood Conference. The lowest level of interest was for 2-to-3-day training seminars.

Trainers were given a list of 15 potential training topics related to training adult learners. Trainers indicated whether they had high, medium, or low interest in each topic (n=153). Listed below are the ranking of the topics.

See Figure 9: ECE Trainers Interest in Training Topics.

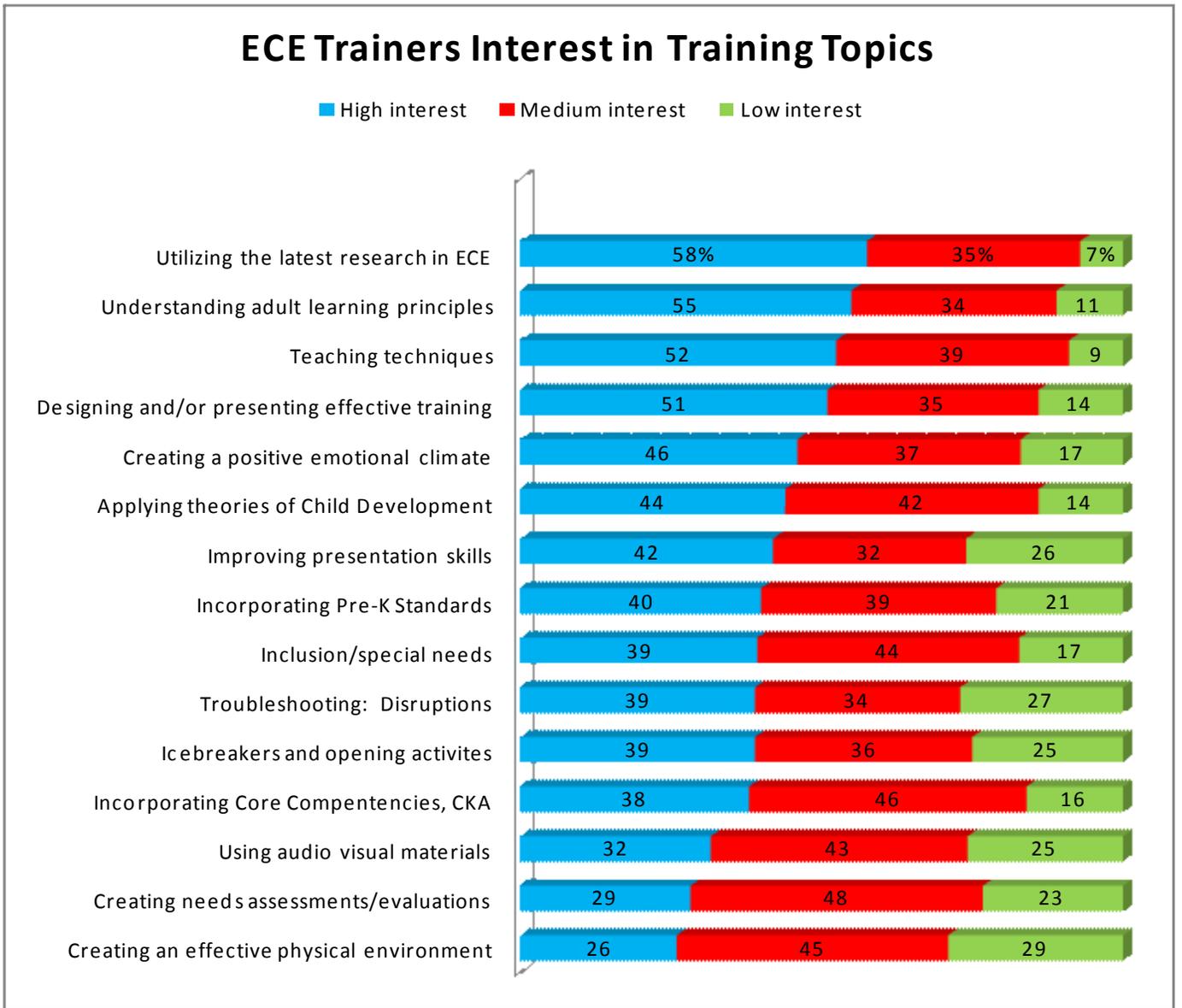
The topics were ranked from highest interest to lowest interest level as follows:

1. Utilizing the latest research in ECE
2. Understanding adult learning principles and styles of learning
3. Teaching techniques: learning stations, role plays, games, facilitated discussions, group activities
4. Designing and/or presenting effective training for adult learners
5. Creating a positive emotional climate for involving participants
6. Applying theories of child development to training for adult learners
7. Improving presentation skills (e.g., voice, gestures, body language)
8. Incorporating Nevada Pre-Kindergarten Standards into training
9. Understanding how to implement knowledge of inclusion/special needs when training adult learners
10. Troubleshooting: Dealing with disruptive, reluctant, or negative adult learners
11. Icebreakers and opening activities for adult learners
12. Incorporating Nevada's Core Competencies and Core Knowledge Areas (CKA) into training for adult learners
13. Using audio visual materials effectively (e.g., PowerPoint, videos)
14. Creating needs assessments/evaluations for training adult learners
15. Creating an effective physical environment (e.g., room arrangement for adult learners)

Only two additional topics were listed by respondents.

- Licensing regulations
- Teaching adult learners how to effectively utilize Behavior Management Skills

Figure 9



Trainers support their own professional development by attending local training on early childhood (73 percent), attending state ECE conferences (52 percent), attending national conferences (50 percent), and completing college or university ECE courses (39 percent). Reading peer-reviewed research journals, taking online training courses, presenting at conferences, attending leadership training, and participating in Reggio Roundtable book clubs were also listed by survey respondents as additional ways they support professional development.

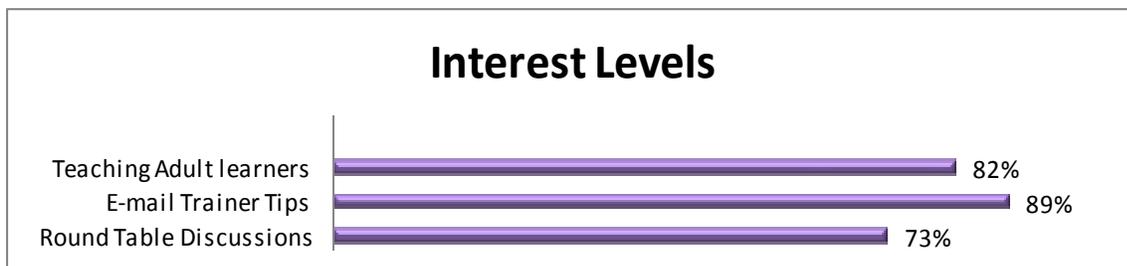
Training on teaching adult learners

Almost half (49 percent) of the ECE trainers had taken a class or received specific training on teaching adult learners from train the trainer workshops, college courses, and/or classes on adult learning principles. Several trainers indicated they had been certified in teaching adult learning principles or had received a credential or college degree in Adult Education. Eight-two percent indicated they would be interested in taking a class on adult learning principles in the future.

ECE trainers expressed interest in receiving monthly e-mails containing trainer tips and ideas (89 percent) and participating in quarterly networking round table discussions designed for trainers to share ideas (73 percent).

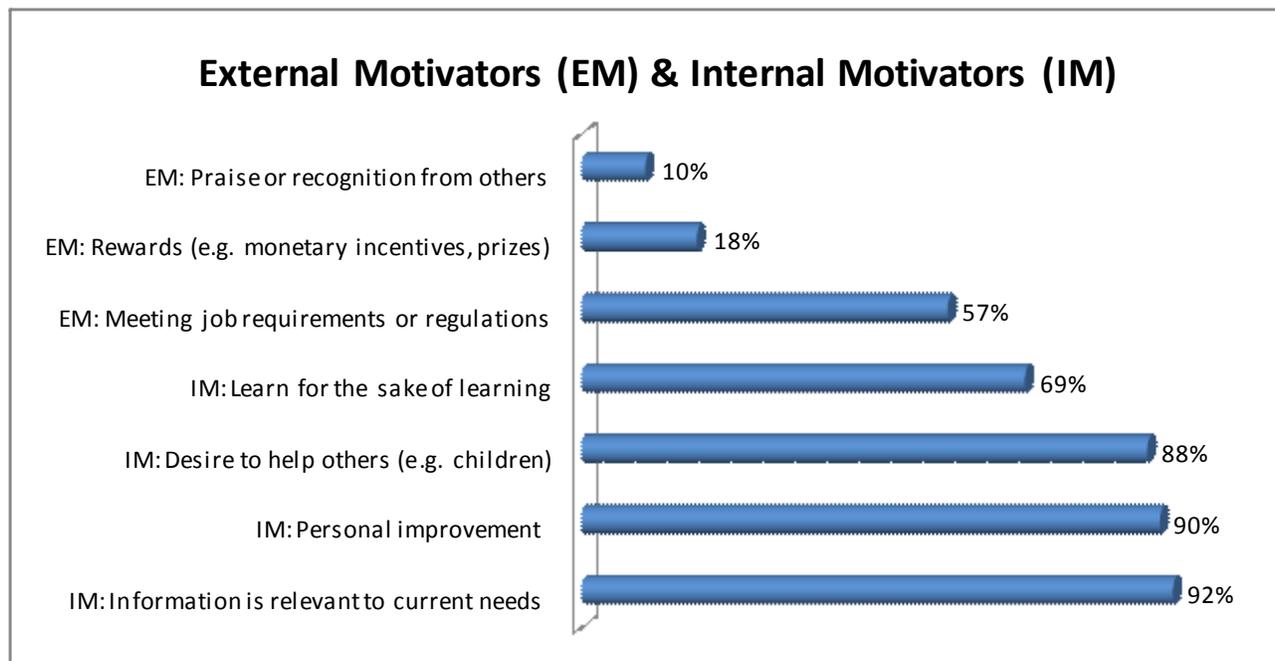
See Figure 10: Interest Levels

Figure 10



What motivates you to learn? Seven potential motivators were listed and ECE Trainers were asked to indicate if any of the statements motivated them to learn. Four of the motivators were internal (come from within) and three of the motivators were external (come from outside sources). A higher percentage of trainers responded that they were motivated to learn by internal motivators. *See Figure 11: External and Internal Motivators*

Figure 11



Additional comments from ECE trainers

ECE Trainers were asked to give any additional comments in regard to their professional development needs and interests. The following are some of the comments given.

"I think all trainers need to be evaluated by those that take the classes and/or other trainers or those associated with The Nevada Registry. A percentage of evaluations should be required to be turned in with the sign-in sheets for each training to meet criteria of qualifications to remain a Nevada-approved trainer."

"I think ECE trainers need to prove their ability to train on a particular subject before they are allowed to offer training in that area."

"Nevada Registry training given and taken by trainers and experience in the field should have more impact on where we sit on the career ladder."

"I think it would be good to have a directory of trainers available."

"I think that those who are on the registry should be required to have a MINIMUM of bachelors in ECE. I have been to too many trainings where the trainer has maybe a CDA or is just an administrator with no ECE college units or an unrelated degree. I think in order to maintain the integrity of the Registry, the TRAINERS should have more of a background in early childhood education."

"The requirement of the state of Nevada of 15 hours of training – I feel that if you are training professionals throughout the year, we should get credit for that toward our required 15 hours. I agree with the requirement to stay updated and continually trained, perhaps 7-9 hours of trainings could be a requirement instead and be able to report the hours you train other professionals as credit hours. Thanks for listening!"

"Would appreciate being able to apply to the registry for training online as soon as possible."

"Supporting professionals who have a Master's Degree or above 6.1 and dedicate many hours of training with a letter of support to the State Licensing Bureau who requires 15 hours in addition to all the training that professionals perform. A graduate degree certainly certifies you as a qualified professional in the field. This is a very frustrating experience for dedicated trainers. Support from the Registry may help with this effort."

"I feel that the Nevada Registry has made training more difficult with the way you must submit and have approval of courses. I have decreased classes that I will offer to include only my center in order to simplify the process."

The state Trainer Criteria workgroup appreciates the feedback and will review and consider each comment as the Nevada's Trainer Criteria is developed.



Next steps:

National Trends

All components of the ECE trainer approval system are based on current research, knowledge, and best practices recognized by the ECE profession. The workgroup has identified several national trends that are relevant to the development of trainer criteria and are important considerations as the state of Nevada continues with this process:

- Many states across the country have trainer approval systems which are based on tiers or levels within their systems. Levels are designed to capture an individual's experience as a trainer, experience in the early childhood field, and education in ECE.
- Training is most effective when it is based on Adult Learning Principles.
 1. Adults learn best when new information validates and builds on their prior knowledge and experience.
 2. Adults are more motivated to learn if they are active participants in the learning process and viewed as a partner with the trainer in the learning experience.
 3. Adults are concerned with actual practice and want to apply their learning to present and personal situations. Opportunities for learning need to be rooted in a problem-solving context.
 4. Adults benefit from training designed to contribute to their self-esteem and personal, as well as professional growth (Collins, 2004).



Proposed stages of development for ECE trainer criteria

The Nevada Trainer Criteria workgroup is taking a careful and conservative approach to the implementation of trainer criteria. The following is the proposed stages of development. Implementation of this plan is dependent on Registry resources and statewide objectives. This strategy can change at the discretion of The Nevada Registry, the Registry Advisory Committee and/or the Trainer Criteria Workgroup.

Step 1: Trainer Survey (completed)

Through a partnership with the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, an online survey was sent to all ECE trainers in order to create a profile of who currently provides training in Nevada. The online survey was designed to collect information on ECE trainer demographics, teaching techniques, and perceived professional development needs.

Step 2: Online Orientation on Adult Learning Principles

The workgroup believes strongly that in order to be effective, trainers must possess knowledge of basic adult learning principles and the ability to implement these principles. It has been proposed that an online orientation providing an overview of adult learning principles be developed. Once developed, all registered ECE trainers would be required to complete the online orientation within a designated timeframe. Trainers choosing not to complete the training would not be able to receive approval for ECE training classes until this requirement is completed.

Step 3: Provide Trainers with Professional Development in Targeted Areas

Professional development will be provided to trainers on topics of high interest (e.g., utilizing the latest research in ECE, teaching techniques, designing and presenting effective training for adult learners).

Step 4: Creation and Implementation of ECE Trainer Levels

Currently, the workgroup is reviewing three proposed Trainer Levels. The exact levels and criterion have not been determined, but it is anticipated that the proposed levels will be modeled closely after the framework of systems in other states.

Step 5: Creation and Implementation of Evaluation and Quality Assurance System

Evaluation of training quality is an important component to the training approval system. The Registry plans to have a strong evaluation process and quality-assurance system in place in the future. This process could include such components as participant evaluations, periodic observations and follow-up with trainers and/or an online survey of training participants.

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