



KEY CONCEPT

MULTIPLE CONTEXTS FOR PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND IMPROVEMENT

We used to think that professional development basically equaled training, and that training alone would support learning and improvement in practice.

Now we know that training is one important professional development strategy, but alone will not change practice. We know that multiple strategies embedded in the program and the daily work are required.



These four contexts for professional learning and improvement each contribute in a unique and interrelated way.

Together they:

- **Advance** professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions
- **Support** both learning and change in daily practice
- **Facilitate** this learning and improvement continuously



KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

Training and other knowledge development contexts introduce an area of practice – what is, how to do it, and why it is important.

- Developing knowledge about what a practice is and why it is important is critical to motivating professionals to change.
- However, there can be minimal expectation that professionals return and apply this knowledge to their daily work on their own without support.

**Courses • Training •
Readings • Workshops •
Conferences**

SUPPORTS FOR TRANSFER TO PRACTICE

ECE professionals need support to learn how to apply knowledge and skills to their daily work - on their own without support.

- Job aids like sample lessons to try or structured protocols to follow can support implementation.
- Also, assistance like coaching can help professionals:
 - To trouble-shoot issues that come up while practicing new skills
 - To navigate the complexity of applying knowledge and skills with specific individuals and groups in their classrooms and centers.
 - To figure out how to overcome the real obstacles that get in the way of improvement.

JOB AIDS
Samples • Protocols

ASSISTANCE
Coaching • Mentoring
Consultation • Technical
Assistance

COLLABORATIVE, JOB-EMBEDDED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ROUTINES

ECE professionals need routine opportunities for collaborative reflection, examination of practice, learning, and planning for improvement.

- Isolation leads ECE professionals to deal with the complexities and stressors of teaching by becoming “stuck in their ways” and/or burning out.
- Collaboration breaks isolation and also supports and challenges professionals’ thinking, beliefs and practice.
- New routines may be installed such as peer learning teams, and older routines such as lesson planning meetings can be transformed to support collaborative learning and improvement.
- Over time, collaboration strengthens professional learning and creates a programmatic culture where professionals value reflecting, examining practice, and continuously learning and improving together.

Peer Learning Teams
• Data Dialogues • Study Groups • Lesson Study
Lesson Planning, Staff, Interdisciplinary Meetings

REFLECTIVE SUPERVISORY DIALOGUE AND FEEDBACK

Supervision traditionally focuses on monitoring, compliance, and performance feedback.

- When supervision includes reflective dialogue with feedback and focuses on a person’s learning (versus compliance only), then it transforms into professional learning.
- In parallel to effective teaching, to facilitate professional learning and improvement, supervisors provide emotional, organizational and instructional supports.
- Supervisors provide these supports in formal meetings, when monitoring, or in other informal, daily interactions with staff.





**LEAD
LEARN
EXCEL**

LEADER VOICES:

Benefits of Collaboration

"They handle themselves and each other more professionally and respectfully. They are accepting of new knowledge and change. Teachers can get entrenched sometimes and I was apprehensive at the start about that, but I see them changing and growing and looking forward to meeting ... and asking for materials and information."

LEADER VOICES:

Benefits of Reflective Supervisory Dialogue and Feedback

"I've learned new phrases that help me start a dialogue with staff about issues that arise... Now, we understand why the coaches use the specific language they use and we can see the benefits of that language. It creates an atmosphere of respect, collaboration and learning for all that are involved."

