

NEW YORK STATE PARENTING EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP: Professional Development Activities Progress Report January 2014

Effective parent education programs have been linked with decreased rates of child abuse and neglect, better physical, cognitive and emotional development in children, increased parental knowledge of child development and parenting skills, improved parent-child communication, reduced youth substance abuse, and more effective parenting monitoring and discipline.¹

The New York State Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP) is a **statewide network of parenting professionals** who help parents obtain the tools and skills necessary to raise healthy and happy children in a caring and nurturing environment. Our mission is *to enhance parenting skills, knowledge and behavior through a strong, statewide network that promotes and improves parenting education.*

NYSPEP carries out its mission by providing parenting educators and related professionals with high quality professional development resources including **in-person workshops**, a **professional credentialing system**, and **online professional resources**. This report is a summary of NYSPEP's professional development work to date.

Strong Roots Training Institutes

In 2010, NYSPEP launched the **Strong Roots Training Institutes**. Every year, the Institutes focus on a topic related to the **core competencies** of the NYSPEP Parenting Education Credential (see below) and include a one-day workshop with a keynote speaker or panel and a selection of afternoon breakout sessions. NYSPEP works to make our Strong Roots Training Institutes **accessible** by repeating each Institute in several locations throughout the state.

Plenary/Key Note Presentation	Break Out Sessions
2010 & 2011 - Evidence-Based Parenting Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Development • Communication Skills • Parenting Styles • Working with Groups
2012 - Fatherhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engaging Fathers • Adult Learning • Media Literacy • Sexual Education
2013 - Vicarious Trauma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassion Fatigue • Reflective Practice

To date, there have been 871 registrants for 22 Institutes held across the state; from New York City to Buffalo, Southern Tier to the North Country. Participants include mental health professionals, early childhood education providers and home visitors, in addition to formal parenting educators.

¹ Samuelson, Anne (2010). Best practices for present education and support programs. *What Works, Wisconsin Research to Practice Series*, 10. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin–Madison/Extension.



Participants' evaluations indicate their **knowledge of the topics presented has increased** and more than half were able to describe how they will **immediately apply that new knowledge in their work with families**.

For 2014, NYSPEP is planning a new series of six Strong Roots Training Institutes with topics based on feedback from NYSPEP members and stakeholders.

NYSPEP's Parenting Educator Credential

Since 2010, NYSPEP has been developing a four-tiered credentialing system to formally assess and acknowledge parenting educators' education, training and experience at four levels of professional development. The Parenting Educator Credential applies to a variety of professions that support families including family advocates, peer support workers, family life educators, home visitors, prevention workers, among other professions.

The NYSPEP Parenting Educator Credential defines the **wide range of competencies** - skills, knowledge, and experience - that **parenting educators need** in order to provide **high quality programs** and successfully implement evidence-based curriculum. To date, more than 55 parenting educators have earned the NYSPEP Credential.

The credential *is not a training program*. Rather, it acknowledges the training, experience and expertise that a parenting education provider already has. The credential application process is portfolio based, requiring an applicant to document his or her education, experience and understanding of parenting education concepts.

The NYSPEP Parenting Educator Credential benefits New York's parenting education and support services by:

- ✚ Providing government and other funders and stakeholders with **well-defined** and **uniform competencies** for parenting educators, while assuring the public that credential educators have broad expertise that enables them to meet parents' individual needs.
- ✚ Recognizing **individual professional growth** and **development** through a portfolio-based demonstration of a parenting educator's increasing level of competence.
- ✚ **Increasing parenting educators' professional visibility** and demonstrating their commitment to accountability, professional growth, and continued practice in the field of parenting education.

Comments from 2013 Strong Roots participants:

- ✚ *"Really impactful, stimulating conversations and meaningful examples."*
- ✚ *"Small group discussions were very helpful. Instructors were knowledgeable."*
- ✚ *"I plan to use this with a monthly support group. It is perfect!"*
- ✚ *"This training will help me to be a better clinician and more solid."*
- ✚ *"Networking and brainstorming with people in other agencies was most valuable."*



Core competencies required for the four tiers are listed in the table below. Many of the Credential’s core competencies are **aligned** with **credentials** and **training programs**, such as the Family Development Credential, Family Peer Advocate Credential and Parent Empowerment Training, Training for Excellence in Parenting Education, Parents as Teachers, Healthy Families New York, Nurse Family Partnership and other evidence based home visiting programs.

NYSPEP Parenting Educator Credential: Tiers and Required Competencies	
Tier I: Resource Associate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Understanding the need for parenting education ♦ Child and lifespan development ♦ Health and safety ♦ Strength-based communication ♦ Family systems and relationship building ♦ Community systems and resources ♦ Adult learning ♦ Nurturing discipline ♦ Educational and child care relationships ♦ Working with diversity ♦ Professional ethics
Tier II: Parenting Educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ <i>Required Competencies:</i> Professional identity and boundaries ♦ Effects of poverty ✚ <i>At least three of the following:</i> Family conferencing ♦ Group facilitation ♦ Home visiting ♦ Media literacy ♦ Fatherhood ♦ Sexuality education for families
Tier III: Senior Parenting Educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Completed Tier II ✚ <i>Required Competencies:</i> Program implementation ♦ Staff supervision ♦ Working with different populations ♦ Program evaluation ♦ Group development/process
Tier IV: Master Parenting Educator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Completed Tier III ✚ <i>Required Competencies:</i> Adult learning and learning style theory ♦ Parenthood and adult development theory ♦ Working with indicated populations ♦ Ethical implications in parenting education ♦ Training and mentoring parenting educators ✚ <i>At least two of the following:</i> Curriculum development ♦ Program design/development ♦ Sustainable funding ♦ Community development to support parents and families

Online Professional Resources

NYSPEP has expanded its audiences through **online training webinars**. Beginning in 2010, NYSPEP has presented three to five webinars per year on topics ranging from child development to post-trauma wellness.

During 2013, we hosted seven webinars that addressed topics such as infant/toddler development, parenting styles, social-emotional development, and fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, with 65 to 68 registrants taking part in each webinar.

In addition, NYSPEP’s **website** and **bi-weekly e-news** routinely alert NYSPEP members to professional development resources and training opportunities.

To learn more about NYSPEP and to sign up for our newsletter visit us at www.nyspep.org.