

ACCESS AND OUTREACH: SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Reaching all early care and education caregivers in a State or Territory is a huge challenge. Rural and urban locations, multiple languages and literacy levels, and different professional (or nonprofessional) aspirations are just some of the differences that make the early care and education workforce so wonderfully diverse and yet so difficult to support. Outreach efforts, activities, and ongoing supports must incorporate relevant cultural, background, linguistic, and individual frameworks to support the population served by the professional development system most effectively.

Systems incorporate access and outreach activities that address the question of *why does it matter?* by highlighting why professional development is important. These efforts also address the question of *what is available?* and how practitioners can plan for attaining professional development. Such activities can include clearly defining the goals and mission of the system; providing career and personal development planning, advising, and other support; promoting the availability of professional development offerings; offering training with multiple delivery methods; and establishing public engagement initiatives.

Discussion Topics

- 1) Meaning of access and outreach: What does it mean in our context?
 - Which current efforts are perceived to be effective and successful?
 - Why do you think they are effective?
 - Does it have to do with their structure? Because they efficiently meet a specific need? Other reasons?

- 2) Themes, ideas, and questions about access and outreach:

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3) Our current activities and roles related to access and outreach:

4) Possible activities and roles for the future related to access and outreach:

- What are the gaps and needs?
- How can we collaborate to meet the needs?

5) How do your group's ideas and suggestions connect with the other professional development system elements?

- Include any ideas about how to engage the community in these efforts.
