

— A CCR&R's Guide to —
**POWER TO THE
PROFESSION**

What It Is and Why It's
Important to CCR&Rs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

In this e-book we'll explore Power to the Profession, the groundbreaking initiative with potential to transform the landscape of the early childhood field.

Chapter 1: Understanding Power to the Profession

Chapter 2: How CCR&Rs Fit In

Chapter 3: Goals, Task Force & Decision Cycles

Chapter 4: Next Steps

CHAPTER 1

UNDERSTANDING POWER TO THE PROFESSION

CHAPTER 1

Understanding Power to the Profession

What is Power to the Profession?

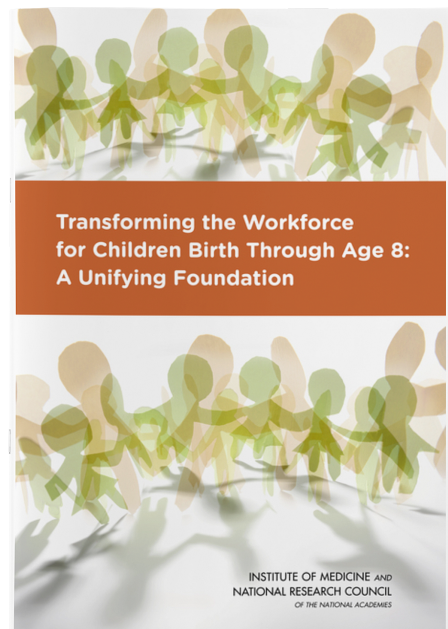
Power to the Profession is a groundbreaking initiative whose work has the potential to transform the landscape of the early childhood field. It is a collaborative effort involving 15 national organizations to define the early childhood profession by establishing a unifying framework for:

- Career pathways
- Knowledge and competencies
- Qualifications
- Standards
- Compensation

CCR&Rs are an integral voice in this initiative.

Power to the Profession is grounded in research from the 2015 report, *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. The report provides recommendations and guidance on system changes to improve the quality of professional practice and specific actions needed to improve the early childhood professional development system and workforce.

Guided by this groundbreaking research, the recommendations from the Power to the Profession task force will help the early childhood field understand what types of skills, competencies, and education are needed to be an early childhood professional.



CHAPTER 2

HOW CCR&RS FIT IN

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How CCR&Rs Fit In

Why should Child Care Resource and Referral agencies get involved?

CCR&Rs have a direct link to child care providers and other early childhood systems in their communities such as K-12 schools, higher education, business community, coalitions, and other systems of care for children and families. CCR&Rs are on the frontline of delivering professional development opportunities to early childhood educators in their communities. They are uniquely positioned to prepare the early childhood field as we evolve into a profession.

The professional development needs of the early childhood field will no doubt change as the profession evolves. Child Care Resource and Referral agencies need to be proactive in anticipating these changes and adjust their professional development offerings accordingly. They need to be engaging with and forging new partnerships with their community colleges and others in their community that offer professional development now in anticipation of the changing need.



In order to be on the forefront of this movement, CCR&Rs should engage in conversation with others in the field, especially individuals who may not know about the Power to the Profession work such as rural family child care providers or teachers whose first language is not English. CCR&R agencies may be the only agency working with these providers on a regular basis and the only way that they will hear about the movement. It is extremely important that these individual voices are heard about recommendations that may affect our system and other child care providers.

Isn't the early childhood profession already a profession?

Technically, no.

Depending on where an early childhood educator works or lives, they may have a different title or a different level of education and training than someone who performs essentially the same job in another early childhood setting. What qualifies an individual to be a lead teacher in one early childhood setting may not qualify them for the same position in another type of program, such as Head Start or a public pre-kindergarten program?

One way to think about the work of Power to the Profession is to consider the nursing field. There are different levels of professionals who perform different nursing duties with varying degrees of responsibilities and specializations. The early childhood field is similar in many ways. The difference, though, is that the nursing profession is standardized across settings and professionalized through defined requirements for education, competencies, and compensation. With your help, Power to the Profession will develop a similar system for the early childhood field.



What is a profession then?

A profession is built on a shared purpose, common identity, and agreement on the unique responsibilities and characteristics of the profession. Generally, a profession is defined by some of the following elements:.

- Distinct responsibilities
- Scope of practice
- Code of ethics
- Competencies
- Standards and expectations for practice
- Educational requirements
- Higher education accreditation
- Entry exams
- Continuing education requirements
- Certification and/or licensing by state boards

While the early education field has some of these components, it is not standardized from state to state or even setting to setting. Power to the Profession is intended to remedy that.

Do we really need Power to the Profession?

Yes! We need to ensure that early childhood professionals are equipped with and have the skills and competencies to do the critical work of helping young children develop to their fullest capacities. We know through neuroscience that 90 percent of a child's brain is developed before they reach the age of five. Children and families deserve to have early childhood professionals who have the education, knowledge, skills, and competencies to help children develop to their fullest potential.

Creating a profession helps raise the image of the field and helps the public understand the importance of a high quality early childhood education. Power to the Profession will not only define who early childhood educators are as professionals but it will also give us the credibility and compensation that has been missing from our field.



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CHAPTER 3

GOALS, TASK FORCE & DECISION CYCLES

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Goals, Task Force & Decision Cycles

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What are the goals of Power to the Profession?

The main goals of Power to the Profession are to:

1. Provide a common definition of what it means to be an early childhood professional.
2. Develop recommendations on what type of education, training, and competencies early childhood educators need in order to teach young children.
3. Develop ways to finance the early childhood system.
4. Develop structures that will hold us accountable to this new system.

Who is leading and guiding Power to the Profession? Who is the task force?

The Power to the Profession's task force is being lead by 15 national organizations who represent and work with early childhood educators. In addition to the 15 task force agencies, there is a group of more than 30 national stakeholders who also participate in Power to the Profession. The national stakeholders list of supporters is continuing to grow. You can find a list of all task force and stakeholders on the [Power to the Profession website](#).

How does the Power to the Profession task force operate and what are the Decision Cycles?

The task force meets about every three months to review and discuss the research on the specific Decision Cycles under review. The Decision Cycles are the topics the task force discusses during their meetings. Some Decision Cycles are discussed individually, while other Decision Cycles are grouped together for discussion.

During the task force meetings, members discuss the policy and practical implications the research has on the early childhood field and drafts a consensus recommendation. The draft recommendation is then shared with the field, and public comment is requested. The task force reviews and considers the fields comments and recommendations and either issues a revised draft for additional comments or final decision.



Decision Cycle 1: Professional Identity and Boundary

The initial cycle addressed the name, identity, scope, and responsibilities of the early childhood education profession. With multiple rounds of responses and engagement, the content outlined in Decision Cycle 1 is based on the central concept that early childhood educators care for and promote the learning, development and well-being of children birth through age eight in all early childhood settings; meet qualifications determined by their title/role in their setting; and have achieved mastery of the specialized knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to perform their job.

Status: The task force has approved the consensus draft for Decision Cycle 1.

Decision Cycle 2: General Competencies

This Decision Cycle addresses the type of standards and competencies early childhood professionals should have to be in the field. While many states have developed competencies for the early childhood field, the task force is addressing what general competencies early childhood professionals need.

Status: The task force has approved a consensus draft for Decision Cycle 2.

Decision Cycles 3, 4, and 5: Specializations, Competency Attainment Source, Qualifications and Pathways

This combined Decision Cycle addresses four questions:

- **Question #1:** How should the designations within the profession be structured?
- **Question #2:** What preparation programs should be endorsed and supported?
- **Question #3:** Given the duration of the primary professional preparation programs and the depth and breadth of the professional standards and competencies, what distinguishes preparation programs and their graduates?
- **Question #4:** Should the early childhood education profession have specializations? If so, how should specializations within the profession be structured?

Status: A draft statement was released and feedback from the field was received. The task force is in the process of updating its original recommendation and a second draft is scheduled for release by mid-August 2018.

Decision Cycle 6: Compensation

What does comparable compensation look like?

Status: Not yet started.

Decision Cycle 7: Accountability and Quality Assurance

What accountability structures must be in place to support effective preparation of the early childhood workforce?

Status: Not yet started.

Decision Cycle 8: Required Support and Infrastructure

What resources and policies must be provided to build and sustain the profession?

Status: Not yet started.

How is Power to the Profession different from any other early childhood systems initiative?

We acknowledge these types of conversations have occurred for many years in a number of states. Power to the Profession is addressing multiple levels of the early childhood system all at the same time. While other initiatives have addressed some of these components, Power to the Profession is a national effort with over 50 national agencies that have joined together to study the science, receive feedback from the field in order to design a comprehensive, national early childhood profession framework.

CHAPTER 4

NEXT STEPS

CHAPTER 4

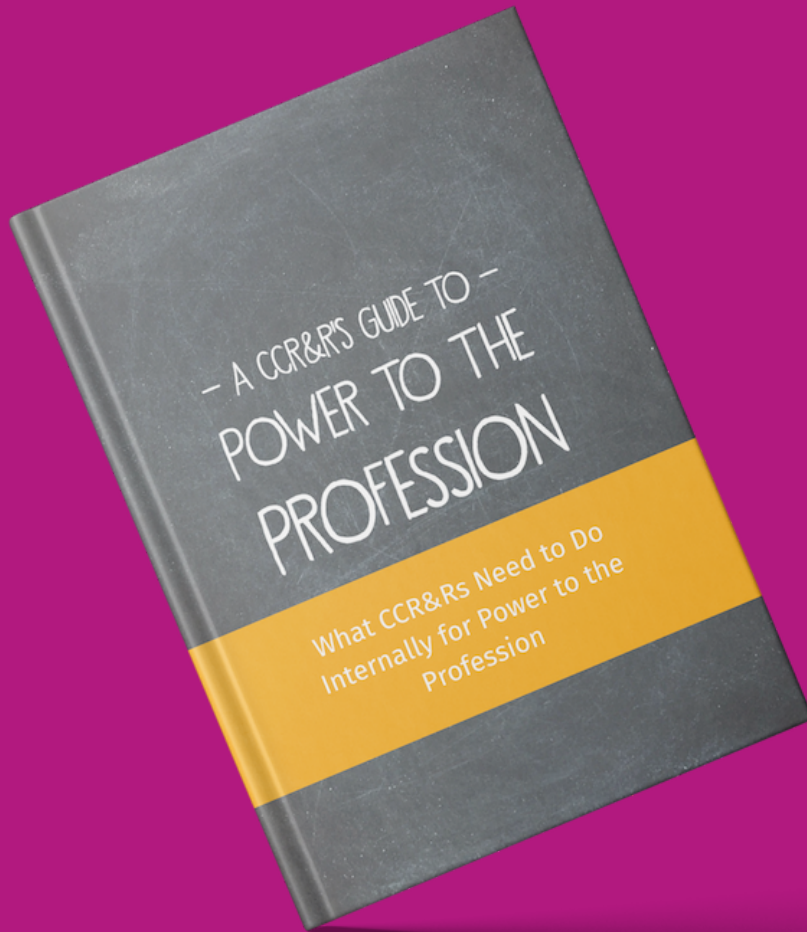
Next Steps

How is Child Care Aware of America participating in Power to the Profession?

Child Care Aware of America is one of the 15 national organizations that participates in the task force. Our executive director, Lynette Fraga, represents our Child Care Resource and Referral members on the task forces. She actively provides input and makes suggestions throughout each Decision Cycle based upon the input that we are receiving from our members. In addition, we have hosted several webinars and are publishing an e-book series to send to members which includes ways to engage in the Power to the Profession process and tips about how to be proactive in preparing for the evolution of the profession. We have also developed an [online Community of Practice Power to the Profession site](#) where the CCR&R community can network and learn from each other in our quest to professionalize the field.

What are the next steps for my CCR&R? Child Care Aware of America will be releasing two additional e-books that will offer tips and suggestions on how to talk about and share information on Power to the Profession with your own staff, child care providers, and your community partners. The e-books will give you information to help you be proactive in preparing for the evolution of the profession.





LEARN MORE!

Find out what CCR&Rs like you need to do internally for Power to the Profession by downloading the next e-book in our Power to the Profession series for CCR&Rs.

[DOWNLOAD THE E-BOOK](#)