



NEW YORK STATE  
PARENTING  
EDUCATION  
PARTNERSHIP  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

**2022**



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## Message from NYSPEP Co-Chairs

Dear NYSPEP Community,

It is with great pride that we share this year's report with you! The past year has been full of excitement and we are grateful for each and every member, volunteer, caregiver, participant, and supporter! NYSPEP has achieved more this year than in any year past thanks to generous funding from the NYS Office for Children and Family Services and the NYS Office of Mental Health. Their continued support has helped us reach more professionals and families than ever before. Likewise, the engagement of the NYS Education Department and NYS Council on Children and Families has been pivotal in ensuring our best work is put forward.

Critical to our efforts are our dedicated steering committee and members. Individuals from across the state who give their time and energy to create opportunities for professional development and parent engagement. These individuals have labored over the past year to ensure that all the meetings are planned, the sessions convened, the presentations delivered! We could not do this work without them and we are so thankful for their efforts!

Thank you again for your partnership!



Timothy Hathaway  
NYSPEP Co-Chair  
Prevent Child Abuse NY  
Executive Director



Kristin Weller  
NYSPEP Co-Chair  
NYS Council on Children and Families  
Project Director

## **About Us**

The New York State Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP) is a statewide cross-systems initiative designed to ensure all children grow in nurturing families by enhancing parents' knowledge, skills and behavior. NYSPEP informs and supports close to 1,052 practitioners, program managers, researchers, and policymakers to promote, provide and improve evidence-based parenting education. Parenting education is a core component of a comprehensive strategy to strengthen family and community approaches to healthy child development and help prevent child abuse and neglect. When the rate of indicated reports of child abuse and neglect is over 65,000 for children ages 0-17 years in NYS, the capacity of families to raise healthy children and the cost to the larger community must be considered a public health issue. Effective parenting education programs have been linked with better physical, cognitive and emotional development in children; increased parental knowledge of child development and parenting skills; improved parent-child communication; more effective parental monitoring and discipline; reduced youth substance abuse; and decreased rates of child abuse and neglect.

## **2021 Progress**

In 2021, New York Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP) celebrated fifteen years of collaborative work supporting parenting educators. Parenting educators are defined broadly as all professionals with the expertise and knowledge to provide parents with developmentally appropriate strategies to guide the healthy development of their children in their care. NYSPEP leaders have taken significant steps this year to advance our mission “To enhance parenting skills, knowledge, and behavior by developing a strong, statewide network that promotes, provides, and improves parenting education.” We are pleased to share our recent accomplishments.

## **Community Cafés**

### **Community Coalition: Awards and Reports**

The continuing impact of COVID-19 on local communities cannot be over-emphasized. The global pandemic and resulting stay-at-home orders changed all aspects of life and service delivery. NYSPEP awarded a total of four grants to community coalitions across the State. One coalition ultimately withdrew from the project, as COVID-19 resulted in many transitions of staff, families, and members of the coalition. This coalition determined they needed to focus on responding to adapting their services to meet family needs.

#### *Onondaga*

The Early Childhood Alliance (ECA) coalition wanted to expand their work with families as a part of the ECA coalition. The training and support provided by NYSPEP were greatly received. The coalition stated, “The amount of training support and a great deal of flexibility provided by NYSPEP related to implementing the grant was better than we had expected.” This coalition was motivated to

accomplish deliverables and was eager to work with the other two coalitions for cross-learning/collaboration. The professional development (webinars, pieces of training, coalition calls) were helpful to their work. This grant has strengthened their commitment to lifting and centering parents in the work of early childhood system building. The Community Café pieces of training have deepened the connection to the Strengthening Families Protective Factors, and the coalition reported benefiting from learning how to implement successful Community Cafes. ECA expressed interest in additional webinars related to partnering with parents, supporting parents in leadership roles, and more practical examples of centering parent voices in coalitions. These areas of support were brought forward to the Professional Development workgroups within NYSPEP as an identified need for potential future webinars topics.

This coalition learned that it takes time to nurture trusting relationships with parents and that starting small and building on success can lead to real connections with parents. The challenges this group faced involved COVID-19 and hindering recruitment efforts with parents. Despite the barriers, they successfully completed *5 Community Cafes with 42 attendees*. The cafes centered around the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Parent Leadership Network's "Parenting Manifesto." This manifesto is built on Racial Equity and putting parents at the center of combating racism. Parenting engagement has the potential to create and expand positive and equitable outcomes for children.

ECA Strong Roots Day was "Better Together: Centering & Engaging Parent Voice" was virtual and attracted over *100 participants*. The event facilitated learning about evidence-based strategies for centering parent voices and the importance of co-creating initiatives with parents. The event included panels featuring Early Childhood professionals and parents partnering with community-based organizations. The surveys from the Strong Roots Day gave a 100% percent satisfaction rate. Altogether, *110 parents* were served in the Community Cafes and the Strong Root Day.

### *Nassau*

The YES Community Counseling Center (YCCC) applied for this grant to help develop parent-based participation in their evidence-based Active Parenting (AP) series, with a focus on their Latino/Hispanic population. YCCC wanted to train new culturally competent community AP parent educators in their AP Train the Trainer Program. YCCC successfully hosted a hybrid (virtual/in-person) parent leaders stakeholder meeting to determine their Community Café outreach, marketing logistics, and identify parent leaders to assist in implementation. With the assistance of two established parent leaders, they had a high rate of participation. Additional assistance was provided from the school district and Parent Advisory Council Team ( PACT) in their Spanish/Latino community. During this virtual process, the parents voiced a lack of knowledge on how to talk with their children about substance use prevention, identifying mental health concerns, and bullying prevention. The training and assistance from NYSPEP helped this coalition achieve its goals and the

coalition benefited the “Implementing the Strengthening Families framework in Your Practice” training.” Under the guidance of the pieces of training we provided, they gained skills in implementing quality, cultural humility training for their social work professionals in Nassau County.

YCCC learned that a neutral location of the Community Cafes is important to community partners to implement parent discussions and engagement. The challenges they faced included COVID-19-related participation and the overall fatigue of parents as a result. YCCC successfully completed 5 cafes centered around sparking leadership, building relationships, and strengthening families. YCCC witnesses how parents show up helps defines a community, and their presence helps children navigate social landscapes and recover from social trauma. The cafes attracted *41 attendees with over 20 being parents*. YCCC Strong Roots Day, “Identifying Implicit Bias - Increasing Cultural Humility: Fostering Understanding & Collaboration for Healthy Youth” had *65 attendees*.

### *Allegany Cattaraugus Stueben*

The Three County Fatherhood Pilot coalition wanted to build capacity among the parent leaders and develop a common language among organization partners through Protective Factors Training. These efforts would culminate in advancing Fatherhood work regionally through the visibility of a regional Strong Roots Summit. This coalition found the pieces of training provided through NYSPEP beneficial because it provided methods that could be used for their parent groups beyond the Fatherhood Connection Series. Organizational partners expressed enthusiasm for the Community Café Model and continue using it to foster conversations with respective communities. Partners responded positively to the Protective Factors Framework.

After training completion, this coalition learned that there are varying levels of readiness to engage beyond the initial activity that brought parent leaders into the group, such as facilitating Fatherhood groups. While COVID-19 played a factor in their capacity for attendance and implementation, they completed 5 Community Cafes that brought men and fathers together to find a common language. In total, *36 attended the cafes with over 20 being parents, and 33 being fathers*. The series highlighted that men need a place that supports them and assists in learning about fatherhood. The café series was eye-opening and illustrated that fathers needed representation and identity. “During the Community Cafes, we found that many fathers want to talk and be present. The Community Cafe model allowed a connection for dialogue.”

The Strong Roots “Fatherhood Summit” keynote speaker was Ken Scarborough, it attracted 38 individuals, and included a screening of the film: Resilience. The summit touched on topics such as being a buffer and offering support for youth experiencing diversity and how one can offer support effectively. There was a panel of community professionals, and they answered questions such as

- “When you are working with a participant in your services, what are your hopes for that person’s outcomes?”
- “What are examples of how fathers and professionals can work together to get the outcome that they want?”

Overall, the Fatherhood Summit generated great discussions and enthusiasm for the topics. The coalition reported that, “there were many fathers who attended and spoke up to tell their stories while thinking together about our systems for the welfare of children, fathers, and families.

### **2022 Retrospective Survey of Coalition Findings**

NYSPEP solicited a survey to our past grantees to garner information about their experience with our Strong Roots Training and Community Cafes. Overall, we received positive responses from a diverse group of professionals. A theme of one of our Strong Roots Trainings was Parental Resilience, and coalitions have shifted their focus to include this concept as a part of their work. Local groups contacted the presenter to offer a similar training to their own staff. This training provided opportunities for service providers to hear directly from parents who were in attendance, and learned better communicative language to better engage with families. As a result, more attendees applied to the NYSPEP Parenting Educator Credential, and a Parenting Educator became a facilitator and offered the training through a Family Resource Center. After Community Cafes we use Harvest Reports to capture important discussion points and themes to inform work in the communities. Our Community Cafes are an adopted, evidenced based parenting education program prioritizing family activity-based programming.

This year, expectations were exceeded as over *60 cafes were conducted with close to 1,500 participants*. The attendees stated that the Community Café model helped to build trust and familiarity among the parents with communities that encouraged a level playing field allowing for a rich array of perspectives. These cafes led to on-going engagement with parent group leaders including creation of their own training on how to be a parent support leader, mentorship, leading cafes, participating in coalitions, and becoming board serving members. The combination of Strong Roots Training and Community Cafes enabled an increase in availability of parenting education, coalition building, and future planning. Communities came together around high quality parenting education resulting in an increase of trauma informed parenting practices, an increase in social media posts supporting positive parenting and parental resilience, and a continuation of offering education related to trauma responsive care. Communities came out of these trainings and cafes becoming more committed to the importance of embracing the voices of parents and co-creating with families in early childhood systems.

## **Webinars**

The webinars presented are listed below and saved on the NYSPEP website for future review.

1. "Principles of Adult Learning" with Jane Taylor, Advisor and Learning Designer (Feb. 16, 2022)

This webinar will prepare participants to describe two or more adult learning approaches to use with parents; use criteria to select which adult learning approach to take based on context of the visit; select experiential learning for skill development; build on assets based approaches by using inquiry to surface and challenge assumptions.

2. NYSPEP's Workshop "How to Incorporate Storytelling in Your Work--Part II" (June 17, 2021)

Why is storytelling important? How do we encourage storytelling? How do we use storytelling effectively in group and/or home visiting settings? Have these questions answered in the follow up to the Part I training by viewing the recording through the link below.

3. NYSPEP Pre-Café Orientation 2021

Kara Georgi presents an overview of the Community Café Model, a powerful community engagement tool. Community Cafés are not community presentations but an opportunity for meaningful dialogue between the café organizers and community members. Come learn how to create a safe space for listening, learning and working together toward common goals.

4. NYSPEP's Community Coalitions RFA Orientation Webinar 2021

This webinar was facilitated by the NYSPEP Community Connections Workgroup to provide introductory information on the mission of NYSPEP, the guiding principles of the collaborative work of NYSPEP, and an overview of the NYSPEP community coalition work.

## **Landscape Analysis**

In February 2021 the New York State Parenting Education Partnership (NYSPEP), under the auspices of the Credential Work Group, organized a Summit on Workforce Quality for Parenting Education, a virtual half-day event. "The nearly 250 attendees represented a wide range of involvement in the field, a majority were either frontline parenting educators or someone whose work supported parenting educators. Agencies and organizations represented included: home visiting programs, Head Starts, the Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition, NYC Administration for Children Services, child abuse prevention programs, YWCAs, perinatal networks, community health worker programs, the NYS Office of Mental Health, Cornell Cooperative Extension programs, and many more. The engagement from those in such a wide



range of positions in widely varied organizations reflects the embeddedness of parenting education in many different services.<sup>[1]</sup>

Participants came away with an understanding of the wonderful and diversified array of parenting education programs being offered across New York. They also learned that, because parenting education is a fairly new profession, there is no national recognition specifically for parenting educators and that the requirements for working in the field vary from position to position and from program to program. However, the National Parenting Education Network (NPEN) has developed a list and description of the comprehensive set of competencies necessary for parenting educators, and NYSPEP has aligned with those competencies in its creation of the NYSPEP Parenting Educator Credential. There is, therefore, the potential for greater uniformity for a standard of foundational knowledge and skills and recognition of those who have education, training and experience to provide high quality services across New York State. And, as highlighted during the Summit, there is now more than ever, the need for flexibility and portability in how we provide parenting education, and the NYSPEP credential is valuable across programs, curricula, and modes of service—it ‘travels’ with the parenting educator no matter the format, the clients, or the setting.”<sup>[2]</sup>

During the Summit, one of the next steps was to complete a thorough analysis of organizations serving parents, as well as partnering institutions. The goal is to have a growing cohesiveness, collaboration and coordination in the field. The Credential Work Group, supported with funding by New York State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS), embarked on developing a landscape analysis of parenting education in New York State.

The analysis includes:

- Identifying what higher education degrees, certificates, and programs parenting educators may hold, with a description of relevant degree or certificate programs at colleges or universities, including the CUNY and SUNY system, as well as private institutions such as Adelphi University.
- Descriptions of the trainings, certificates, and nontraditional credentials that parenting educators in New York have. In addition, this landscape analysis will describe professional development and training opportunities available to parenting educators as they continue their careers.
- An overview of the job titles and positions that parenting educators hold across the state and other locations, as well as examples of parenting educator pathways, highlighting especially the experiences of Credentialed Parenting Educators.

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<sup>[1]</sup>NYSPEP Summit on Workforce Quality for Parenting Education in New York State, Feb 2, 2021 p3. [https://nyspep.org/application/files/3216/2610/0625/NYSPEP\\_SUMMIT\\_REPORT\\_FINAL-7-7-21.pdf](https://nyspep.org/application/files/3216/2610/0625/NYSPEP_SUMMIT_REPORT_FINAL-7-7-21.pdf). Downloaded August 30,2022.

<sup>[2]</sup> NYSPEP Summit on Workforce Quality for Parenting Education in New York State, Feb 2, 2021 p15. [https://nyspep.org/application/files/3216/2610/0625/NYSPEP\\_SUMMIT\\_REPORT\\_FINAL-7-7-21.pdf](https://nyspep.org/application/files/3216/2610/0625/NYSPEP_SUMMIT_REPORT_FINAL-7-7-21.pdf). Downloaded August 30,2022.

## **NYSPEP Parenting Educator Credential**

### **Summit on Parenting Education Workforce**

In February 2021 NYSPEP, under the auspices of the Credential Work Group, organized a Summit on Workforce Quality for Parenting Education, a virtual half-day event. “The nearly 250 attendees represented a wide range of involvement in the field, a majority were either frontline parenting educators or someone whose work supported parenting educators. Agencies and organizations represented included: home visiting programs, Head Starts, the Adoptive and Foster Family Coalition, NYC Administration for Children Services, child abuse prevention programs, YWCAs, perinatal networks, community health worker programs, the NYS Office of Mental Health, Cornell Cooperative Extension programs, and many more. The engagement from those in such a wide range of positions in widely varied organizations reflects the embeddedness of parenting education in many different services.

Along with an understanding of the diversity of parenting education being offered in the state, participants learned that there is potential for a uniform standard of foundational knowledge and skills as well as for recognition of these who provide high quality parenting education in New York State. The Summit Program included presentations on the following topics: Defining Parenting Education, Parenting Education across NYS, NYSPEP Parenting Educator Credential, Learning from Other States’ Parenting Education Systems, and Next Steps to Support the Parenting Education Workforce in New York. Recommended next steps from the Summit were:

1. removing financial barriers for obtaining the NYSPEP Credential
2. simplifying the process for those wanting to earn the NYSPEP Credential
3. completing a thorough analysis of all organizations serving parents, as well as partnering institutions, so that there is a growing cohesiveness, collaboration and coordination in the field
4. employers and funders encouraging and/or requiring the NYSPEP Credential
5. policy makers working towards reimbursement from insurance/Medicaid for services provided by credentialed parenting educators.

To review a report of the 2021 Summit please go to:

[https://nyspep.org/application/files/3216/2610/0625/NYSPEP\\_SUMMIT\\_REPORT\\_FINAL-7-7-21.pdf](https://nyspep.org/application/files/3216/2610/0625/NYSPEP_SUMMIT_REPORT_FINAL-7-7-21.pdf)

### **Supports for Credential Applicants**

Funds were allocated with funding from NYS Office of Children and Family Services to support the continued growth of the NYSPSP Parenting Educator Credential. Funding allowed the support of both new and renewal credential applicants with scholarships to cover a portion of the credential fee. In addition, mentors were available to support the applicants as they developed their application portfolio. In 2022, the Credential Workgroup began the development and implementation of a group mentoring process. As NYSPEP moves forward, applicants may choose to participate in a group of peers who meet regularly with a mentor as they develop their application portfolios. One-on-one mentoring continues to be available.

## **Communications Consultant**

In Spring 2022, a communications consultant was contracted to develop marketing and outreach materials to promote the NYSPEP Parenting Education Credential. This work includes development of a logo for the Parenting Educator Credential and outreach materials to deliver key messages to specific audiences: parenting educators, managers of parenting education programs, and public agencies and private funders who could require and/or fund the credential. In Fall of 2022 these materials will be complete and the NYSPEP Credential Workgroup will begin to implement their use.

## **Credentialed Parenting Educators**

From 2021 through February 2022, nine parenting educators have applied and been awarded a NYSPEP Parenting Educator Credential and nine Credentialed Parenting Educators have applied and received renewal of their credential for an additional four years. Since the first credentials were awarded in 2012, 101 parenting educators have been awarded a credential. Currently, there are 41 active Credentialed Parenting Educators.

*NYSPEP extends many thanks to the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH), the New York State Office of Children and Family Services and the New York State Council on Children and Families for their continued support of excellence in parenting education across the state of New York. These agencies provide funding to NYSPEP's fiscal agent, Prevent Child Abuse New York. NYSPEP also wishes to thank our Conveners, Steering Committee members, partners, and individuals who have contributed to and supported our work.*

### **Conveners of the New York State Parenting Education Partnership**

- NYS Council on Children and Families
- NYS Office of Children and Family Services / Children and Family Trust Fund
- NYS Office of Mental Health
- Prevent Child Abuse New York
  
- NYS Education Department

[www.nyspep.org](http://www.nyspep.org)

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