Early Education Emergent Leaders Program Evaluation Report

Prepared for

ARIZONA EARLY EDUCATION FUNDS

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	2
Introduction	3
Evaluation Design	6
Findings	7
Summary	26
Recommendations	28
Conclusion	30
References	32
Appendices	33

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Early Education Emergent Leaders Program Evaluation Report

Introduction

Over the past decade it has become increasingly evident that the leadership provided by child care center Directors and Administrators are an important element of a high quality program. In fact, effective leadership is crucial to establishing a high quality early childhood program (Bloom & Sheerer, 1992; Peisner-Feinberg et al., 1995; Phillips, Mekos, Scarr, McCartney & Abbott-Shim, 2000; Talan & Bloom, 2004). The Director shapes the work environment for the teaching staff who, in turn, provide the critical link to children's developmental outcomes. However, there are still very few programs in the State of Arizona that provide specialized training and support to child care directors and administrators in a systematic manner.

In addition to the need for effective Administrators who can lead the way for quality enhancement in their respective programs, nurturing leaders for the State of Arizona's burgeoning state-wide system has also been a recent concern for many policy makers and community advocates. Indeed research and experience have shown that leaders will assume a variety of roles across a career or a lifetime. Professionals who are in the field of early care and education (ECE) often begin as classroom teachers, then move onto a Director position, then they often move beyond their programs and assume positions of consultants, mentors, advocates, or other ECE related policy/program staff. Funding from *First Things First* is revitalizing our ECE system by bringing in millions of dollars each year. Contributions from leaders in all roles are essential to help ensure success in Arizona, and prepare communities for the influx of funding from *First Things First*. The *Chase Early Education Emergent Leaders Program* was designed to address the need for leadership development in Arizona by recognizing that by training and mentoring early care and education program Administrators and Directors, we can enhance the quality of their programs while simultaneously developing leadership skills that will poise participants for statewide and community leadership positions.

Program Overview

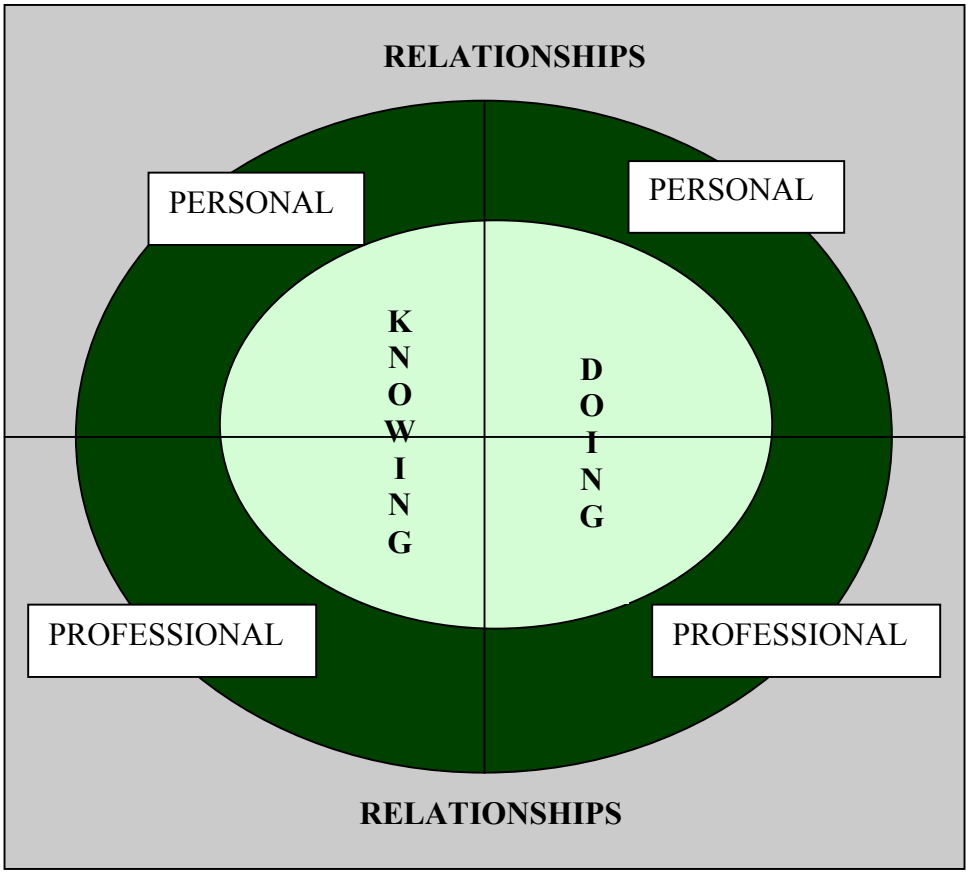
The purpose of the *Chase Emergent Leaders Program* is to increase the capacity of professionals in early care and education programs through training, networking and technical assistance, and to actively create, support and advocate for quality early childhood programs.

Theoretical Model

Two complementary theoretical models guide the Chase Early Education Emergent Leaders Program. The first model is proposed by Paula Jorde Bloom, a noted researcher on the topic of child care Director leadership. Bloom's model emphasizes that change is

an ongoing process, and that in order to effectively run high quality programs, Directors must be comfortable with both the theory and practice of leading change efforts (Bloom & Bella, 2003). The second model, proposed by ZERO TO THREE, echoes the importance of theory and practice by identifying two main contributors to Directors' leadership potential – knowledge and action. This model suggests that *knowing* and *doing* are equally important elements of leadership and are manifested in both the personal and professional dimensions. And finally, the change that comes about as a result of *knowing* and *doing* is embedded in the social context of *relationships* (Kellegrew & Youcha, 2004).

ZERO TO THREE's Relationship-Based Leadership Development Model



Program Design

2008 marks the fourth cohort of *Chase Early Education Emergent Leaders* (CEL). The two partners in coordination were *Southwest Human Development* and *The Governor's Office for Children, Youth & Families*.

Outreach – CEL coordinators targeted a group of Directors that was diverse in terms of types of programs, geography, Directors' level of experience, and culture/ethnicity. Outreach activities included mailings to centers all over the state, visits to Director support groups, and targeted recruitment through other training programs.

Key Elements – This year's CEL was an 8-month program that began in January 2008 and ended with a "Graduation Ceremony" in September 2008. The Key Elements of CEL were training, mentoring, and individual projects.

Training – Day-long monthly workshops were held where both Directors and Mentors were present. Training sessions included: "Visionary Director" (Carter & Curtis); "Brand Your Life, Live Your Brand" (Bob Lewis); quality measurement; leadership & quality; child health consultation; ECE advocacy; state licensing issues; state child care administration; Child Care Legislative Day at the State Capitol. Each session involved learning new content, an opportunity for discussion and networking among participants, and discussion with the presenter(s).

Chase Early Education Emergent Leaders Program Objectives
1. Enhance Directors' leadership skills
2. Expose Directors to new tools and resources
3. Help Directors appreciate and value the mentorship experience
4. Inspire Directors to replicate a mentoring model with their own staff
5. Encourage learning from peers
6. Extend Directors' professional network
7. Identify areas for improvement in center/program
8. Implement quality improvement in Directors' programs
9. Increase Directors' understanding of the legislative process
10. Develop Directors' skills and ability to communicate ECE issues with legislators and other policy-makers
11. Motivate Directors to think of themselves as an agent of "change" through active leadership and advocacy in broader community
12. Become involved with community networking and advocacy efforts in an "active" manner

Mentoring – Each Director was assigned one Mentor who was available to consult on various issues involving CEL projects and other issues related to their respective programs. There was no prescribed modality for providing assistance – nor any specified training curriculum for Mentors. Mentors met with the Coordinators once during the year to discuss their mentees' progress and offer support and advice for one another. They also communicated informally with each other and with the Coordinators.

Individual Projects – Directors developed an Individual Project for their centers with training and technical assistance from CEL coordinators and their Mentors. Each Director had the opportunity to identify a center need, articulate a goal, develop steps to meet the need, implement the plans at their centers, and measure the impact of their Project. Directors were then charged with presenting their Individual Project in the form of a poster-presentation at the CEL Graduation Ceremony.

Evaluation Methods

This section describes the participants in the evaluation, procedures, instruments, and data analysis procedures.

Evaluation Questions:

1. What are the characteristics of Directors, their programs and Mentors who participated in CEL?
2. Do participants' self-assessment scores change after going through the CEL program?
3. How do participants rate their experiences in CEL?
4. Are there any associations between participants' background characteristics and their ratings of their CEL experience?

Participants

Twenty-five Directors and six Mentors participated in this year's CEL program. Partcipants' demographic characteristics are described in the Findings section below.

Procedures

Evaluators collected data from Directors and Mentors. Participating Directors completed pre and post self-assessments, they consented to an observation of their program's environmental quality, a pre and post interview on administrative practices, and provided written feedback on CEL. Mentors completed pre and post self-assessments and provided written feedback on their experiences with CEL. For complete cross-listing of program objectives, steps, and measures, see Appendix A.

Instruments

Director Background Survey – This survey captured basic demographic information about Directors and their programs. It also asked about previous experience with quality enhancement training programs – including previous work with a mentor.

Director Self-Assessments – This survey was administered pre and post CEL program. It used scales adapted from "Visionary Director" (Carter & Curtis) to assess Directors' vision about their programs, their program's organizational climate, and the frequency of various tasks and responsibilities (Durst, 2006).

Director ECE Networks, Resources & Community Survey – This survey was also administered pre and post CEL program. It asked Directors questions about their professional networks, their sources for ECE resources, and their professional community involvement (e.g., conference attendance, professional memberships).

Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, Revised Edition – The ECERS-R (Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 1998) is an observational tool that was used to rate the environmental quality of each Director's program. In order to maintain consistency, the ECERS-R was used in the 3-year old classroom of each Director's program. The ECERS-R was used at the beginning of the CEL program to establish baseline quality for each child care center. Observations were conducted by professional evaluators with extensive experience both in observation and early childhood development.

Program Administration Scale – the PAS (Talan & Bloom, 2004) was used pre and post CEL program to assess the quality of administrative practices of the Directors' programs. Data collectors completed the PAS with Directors using an interview format that took about 3 hours to complete. Interviews were conducted by professional evaluators with extensive experience in interviewing child care professionals.

Mentor Survey – Mentors filled out a survey pre and post CEL. The survey captured information about their demographic background, professional background, motivation for being a mentor, and self-assessment on how prepared they felt in helping Directors accomplish each of the CEL program objectives.

CEL Feedback Survey – Each Director filled out a survey at the end of the CEL program. Their survey solicited feedback on the CEL program and also asked Directors to rate their Mentors and the Coordinators. Each Mentor also filled out a survey at the end of the CEL program, which asked them for general feedback on different aspects of the CEL program and asked them to rate the CEL Coordination.

Data Analysis Procedures

For each survey instrument, evaluators analyzed frequency of responses to survey items, mean scores, and summarized themes from open-ended responses. T-tests were then conducted in order to determine change in scores from pre to post program. For the ECERS-R and the PAS, evaluators conducted descriptive data analysis, and then conducted correlations and analysis of variance to examine the survey and observational/interview data for associations. T-tests were also conducted on the PAS in order to determine whether there were any changes in scores pre and post CEL.

Findings

Participants' Background

This section will provide information about the background characteristics of the participants in the Chase Emergent Leaders program.

> *Directors/Administrators* – Twenty-five Directors (25) participated in the CEL program. All of the Directors were female, and the average age was 42.38 years (min. 24; max. 66). Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the Director participants were White, 12% were Latina; 12% were Asian, and 8% were Native American. The average amount of time in a management or administrative position was 11.64 years (min. 1; max. 30).
>
> Fifty-six percent (56%) earned a Bachelor's degree or higher. Twenty percent (20%) earned a Master's degree. Twenty percent only had a GED or High School diploma, and 24% earned an Associates degree. The table below presents descriptive information about total number of college semester hours Directors completed by the end of the CEL program.

Table 1 – Directors' Total College Semester Hours

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Total college semester hours	.00	203.00	110.50	58.87
Total ECE semester hours	3.00	100.00	37.06	29.50
Total management coursework hours	.00	36.00	9.94	10.49

Child Care Program Characteristics – We also collected data on various features of the child care programs in which Directors worked. Overall, there was wide diversity in the types of programs represented in Chase Emergent Leaders. Forty-four percent (44%) of the child care programs were "for-profit" organizations, and 56% of the programs were non-profit organizations. Table 2 presents additional information about the auspices of programs represented in CEL – several of which fell into more than one category (e.g., a Head Start program embedded in a campus child care program).

Table 2 – Child Care Program Auspice

Type of Program	N	Percent*
Non-Profit	14	56
For Profit	11	44
Head Start	5	25
Connected to Elementary School	4	16
Faith-Based	3	12
Campus Child Care	2	8

(* Percentages add up to more than 100 – categories are not mutually exclusive)

Although 36% of the programs served children that were predominantly White, there was wide ethnic and cultural diversity in the CEL child care programs. Table 3 presents percentages of different ethnic categories.

Table 3 – Categories of Ethnic & Cultural Children Served in CEL Child Care Programs

Categories	N	Percent
Predominately White	9	36
50 White/50 nonWhite	4	16
Predominantly Latino	7	28
Wide Diversity	5	20

The average number of classrooms in CEL child care programs was six (min. 2; max. 14). Sixty percent (60%) of the programs offered child care from infancy through Kindergarten. Thirty-six (36%) offered child care for pre-K only, and only one program offered care from infancy through pre-K.

Many of the CEL child care programs served English language learners (ELLs). Twenty-four percent of program Directors (24%) reported that more than 50% of the children in their programs were ELLs, and 12% of the CEL program Directors reported that more than 70% of their children were ELLs.

In regards to the percentage of subsidy-eligible children enrolled in programs, 61% of CEL Directors reported that more than 50% of their children were subsidy-eligible, 35% of CEL Directors reported that more than 70% of their children were subsidy-eligible. Twenty-six percent (26%) of the CEL Directors reported that less than 20% of their children were subsidy-eligible.

Program Quality Characteristics – For each Director's child care program, we wanted to get a measure of baseline Quality, so we conducted an observation of environmental quality using the Early Childhood Education Rating Scale – Revised Version (ECERS-R). The results are summarized below in Table 4.

Table 4 – Environmental Quality Ratings

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
ECERS total mean	**2.97**	**6.86**	**5.39**	**1.20**
Space & Furnishings Subscale	3.38	7.00	5.82	1.06
Personal Care Subscale	2.50	7.00	5.37	1.37
Language & Reasoning Subscale	2.50	7.00	4.90	1.34
Activities Subscale	1.33	7.00	4.87	1.55
Interaction Subscale	2.25	7.00	5.52	1.36
Program Structure Subscale	1.67	7.00	5.50	1.46
Parents & Staff Subscale	4.00	7.00	6.38	.87

As listed in the table above, the average Quality rating for CEL programs was 5.39. The national average is 4.30 to 4.45 (Howes et al., 2008; Peisner-Feinberg et al., 2001; NICHD ECCRN, 2005). On average, CEL child care programs tended to score highest on ratings of "Space and Furnishings," and they scored lower on "Instructional Activities." These results are consistent with national multi-state studies, and as a result child care researchers and evaluators have recently begun to emphasize and examine elements of "instructional quality" in their studies and Quality assessments (Howes et al., 2008; Pianta, 2003).

In addition to collecting data on baseline Quality, we also asked Directors whether or not their child care programs were accredited by a nationally-recognized organization. Forty-eight percent (48%) of the Directors reported that they were accredited. The remaining 52% reported that they were interested in pursuing accreditation.

We also asked Directors to report whether they had been involved in other Quality-enhancing projects. Forty-four percent (44%) reported involvement with other community Quality initiatives (e.g., AZ Self-Study Project; Child Care Libraries for Literacy; Pinal County Quality Roll-Out; Hands on Quality; Pinal Leadership Academy). Additionally, 76%

of the Directors reported that they had previous experience working with a child care Mentor, Coach, or Consultant. On average, they had worked with a Mentor, Coach or Consultant for 1.7 years. Almost half (47%) reported working with a Mentor in a formal capacity, 11% reported working with a Mentor on an informal basis, and 42% reported that they had worked with a Mentor both formally and informally.

Mentors' Background

There were six Mentors in the CEL program. All the Mentors were female and they were all White. Their average age was 50.67 years. Eighty-three percent (83%) had a Master's degree or higher. Half (50%) of the Mentors reported that their educational training was in the field of Special Education. Thirty-three percent (33%) reported that their field of study was Early Childhood Education, and 17% reported that their field of study was Developmental Psychology. All of the Mentors reported having past experience providing direct services to young children and/or families. Half of the Mentors worked as independent contractors, the other half had full-time positions in other agencies where they were given leeway to work with CEL as a Mentor. Additional descriptive information about Mentors' background is listed in Table 5 below.

Table 5 – Mentors' Experiential Background

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Years consulting experience	4.00	34.00	14.67	10.33
Years ECE experience (including consulting, direct service, teaching)	4.00	16.00	11.33	4.32
Total years in field (including consulting and direct service)	12.00	39.00	24.17	9.58

In regards to Mentors' reported areas of expertise, they were highly skilled in a variety of domains related to early care and education. See Table 6 below.

Table 6 – Reported Areas of Expertise

All Mentors	Some Mentors	Few Mentors
Professional Networking	Advocacy	Community Organizing
Staff Development	Parental Involvement	Budget & Fiscal Management
Program Quality Enhancement	Research, Evaluation, Assessment	Enhancing Cultural Awareness
Curriculum Development		
Leadership Development		
Staff-Child Relationships		
Staff-Staff Relationships		

Outcomes Evaluation Results

This next section of the evaluation examines findings related to the CEL program.

Overall Ratings on CEL Objectives – Directors were asked to rate how well the Chase Emergent Leader program met their expectations for the major program objectives (See table on page 5). The overall mean score for this scale was 3.48 (4 = "exceeded expectations"; 3 = "adequately met expectations"). The highest ratings were in the area of developing networks, exposure to new tools and resources, and becoming involved and motivated to effectuate change. The lowest rating indicates a desire to learn more specific skills around communicating with legislators and other policy makers. See Table 7 below.

Table 7 – Ratings on CEL Project Objectives

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Enhance leadership skills	2.00	4.00	3.48	.59
Expose to new tools and resources	3.00	4.00	3.60	.50
Value the mentorship experience	1.00	4.00	3.32	.90
Inspire to replicate mentorship model	1.00	4.00	3.36	.76
Encourage learning from peers	2.00	4.00	3.52	.59
Extend professional network	3.00	4.00	3.88	.33
Identify areas for improvement	1.00	4.00	3.36	.81
Implement quality improvement	1.00	4.00	3.32	.80
Increase understanding of legislative process	2.00	4.00	3.36	.57
Develop skills to communicate with legislators and other policy makers	2.00	4.00	3.20	.76
Motivate to think of yourself as agent of change	3.00	4.00	3.72	.46
Become involved with community networking and advocacy	2.00	4.00	3.58	.58

Training – The training component of CEL consisted of day-long monthly workshops. Directors and Mentors were present during the training events. Each training session involved learning new content, an opportunity for discussion and networking among participants, and

Workshops and Training Events

January: CEL Orientation – 1 ½ days
January: "Visionary Director" (Carter & Curtis) – 2 day workshops
February: Child Care Day at the Legislature
March: "Brand Your Life, Live Your Brand" (Bob Lewis)
April: Leading Quality (Evaluation and Assessment)
May: Living Leadership (Advocacy, Leadership & Policy)
June: Child Care State Administrators; Licensing Issues; Child Advocacy

discussion with the presenter(s).

Directors were asked to rank their top three choices for their favorite training sessions. Table 8 lists their responses. The two-day workshop called "Visionary Director," led by renowned experts, Margie Carter and Deb Curtis, was not only Directors' top choice, but also almost every Director provided feedback in their surveys about how this training session in particular inspired and motivated them in an extraordinary way.

Table 8 – Participants' Top 3 Training Sessions

Session	% Who ranked as #1	% Who ranked as #2	% Who ranked as #3	Total
Visionary Director	56%	32%	--	58%
Brand Your Life, Live Your Brand	32%	20%	12%	64%
Living Leadership	8%	16%	32%	56%
Leading Quality	--	24%	28%	52%
Licensing	4%	--	12%	20%
DES	4%	--	--	4%
CAA	--	--	4%	4%

Below is a list of common themes from participants' feedback on the training sessions. See Appendix B for a more complete listing of feedback on Training:

- Everything was great – don't change a thing!
- Incorporation of CEL content into Directors' own programs – especially enhanced communication strategies with center staff.
- Content from the training sessions provided inspiration for Individual Projects.
- Participants inspired by the leadership qualities they saw in the presenters.
- More sessions on developing explicit leadership skills that can be used inside and outside of participants' respective programs (e.g., public speaking, conflict resolution, communicating with policy makers, stress management, etc.)
- More sessions on day-to-day management of a center (e.g., hiring staff, licensing issues, working with other service agencies, etc.)

Mentoring

Work Style – This section summarizes different aspects of Mentors' work with the CEL Directors. Overall, Mentors used a variety of strategies; there was wide variability in the amount of total time Mentors spent on mentoring activities each month. See Tables 9 & 10 for more details.

Table 9 – Strategies used with Mentees

All Mentors	Some Mentors	Few Mentors
Responded to Mentees as needed	Provide training and workshops to Mentees (and their centers)	Conduct observations at Mentees' centers
Conducted in-person meetings	Initiate new projects and directions	Held meetings with more than one Mentee at a time
Referred Mentees to other community resources	Use CEL training sessions as quality time to connect	--

Table 10 – Time with Mentees (in hours)

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Avg amt of total time each month spent in mentoring activities	2.00	11.46	7.15	4.07
Avg time per mentee per month	.98	3.30	2.13	.94

Job Crafting – Industrial psychology uses the term "Job Crafting" to describe the extent of autonomy, emotional investment, rewards and support associated with doing one's work. Researchers have found that in professions where optimal job crafting is taking place, the quality of the work improves. Researchers have just recently begun to apply this concept to the filed of ECE, where for teachers' monetary rewards are very low, but emotional investment is high and autonomy in the classroom is high – various aspects of job crafting are associated with higher and lower levels of quality. For example, teachers who have good relationships with their colleagues and good support from their director tend to be more effective as teachers (Phillips et al., 2000). In this evaluation, we have applied the concept of Job Crafting to profession of ECE mentors & consultants, where we know very little about the nature of their work.

Findings from the Mentors' surveys illustrate some important points about the nature of their work. First, all of the CEL Mentors are highly committed to their profession of being a Mentor (e.g., view position as their primary career – not just a "paycheck" or a stepping-stone to another career; anticipate still being a Mentor 5 years from now). Second, while there was no statistical difference between the way Mentors viewed their level of autonomy at the beginning of CEL, and the way they viewed their level of autonomy at the end of CEL, there were some interesting trends in the data that are worth noting. At the beginning of the CEL program, Mentors felt they had the most autonomy in their work when it came to deciding on the content and types materials they could give to their Mentees. They felt they would have less autonomy over whether or not their Mentees would achieve their

desired outcomes. By the end of the CEL program, Mentors still felt that they had high autonomy over determining the type of guidance and materials they provided their Mentees, but felt they had the least autonomy over the amount of time they could spend with each of their Mentees. See Table 11 below for descriptive statistics on each item.

Table 11 – How much autonomy do you feel you have in the following aspects of your CEL mentoring work?

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Time 1				
Type of guidance	2.00	3.00	2.83	.41
Content and type of materials	3.00	3.00	3.00	.00
Work schedule	2.00	3.00	2.50	.55
Working relationship	2.00	3.00	2.83	.41
Determining outcomes	1.00	3.00	2.33	.82
Amount of time spent with mentees	2.00	3.00	2.67	.52
Time 2				
Type of guidance	3.00	3.00	3.00	.00
Content and type of materials	3.00	3.00	3.00	.00
Work schedule	2.00	3.00	2.50	.55
Working relationship	2.00	3.00	2.67	.52
Determining outcomes	2.00	3.00	2.50	.55
Amount of time spent with mentees	2.00	3.00	2.20	.45

Directors' Ratings of the CEL Mentors – The CEL Directors rated the effectiveness of the Mentors on the following domains – Knowledge & Skills; Interpersonal Skills. Overall, CEL Mentors received impressive ratings in all these domains. The overall mean for Skills & Knowledge was 3.39 (4 = *strongly agree*). The overall mean for Interpersonal Skills was slightly higher: 3.52. The tables below list ratings on specific items.

Table 12 – Mentor Skill & Knowledge

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Mentor versed in EC content and building collaborations	2.00	4.00	3.56	.65
Mentor demonstrates respectful awareness of cultural diversity	2.00	4.00	3.40	.65
Mentor recommends app strategies and resources	2.00	4.00	3.36	.76

Mentor elicits information and is good listener	2.00	4.00	3.52	.59
Mentor demonstrates effective organizational skills	2.00	4.00	3.40	.71
Mentor provides prompt feedback	2.00	4.00	3.28	.79
Mentor has worked to clarify our roles and responsibilities	2.00	4.00	3.20	.71

Table 13 – Mentor Interpersonal Skills

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Comfortable to talk with	2.00	4.00	3.56	.65
Demonstrates flexibility and openness	2.00	4.00	3.48	.65
Generally pleasant	3.00	4.00	3.60	.50
Expresses ideas, but not overpowering	2.00	4.00	3.54	.59
Supported active participation in mentoring process	2.00	4.00	3.40	.71
Respectful and caring	3.00	4.00	3.64	.49
Creative in examining problems and options	2.00	4.00	3.42	.65

These high rating scores are further reflected in many of the comments made by Directors in response to open-ended questions on their feedback surveys. For a more complete listing of Directors' comments, please refer to Appendix C. Below are a sample of quotes that reflect common themes:

What were the aspects of Mentoring that were strong?

> "The mentoring was very strong and useful – more than what I could have asked for. They were very professional and passionate."
>
> "In developing my unique and inspired relationship with my mentor, I started thinking very carefully about how to approach and work with each of my staff according to their individual styles."

Describe your relationship with your Mentor.

> "Supportive and friendly – I felt like I know this is a person I can rely on, go to for ideas, and someone who will listen without judgment."
>
> "Motivating and uplifting."

> "She was able to relate to my frustration – she was very supportive and understanding."

> "Open, honest, very supportive, and showed a strong interest in culture of my community. This made me feel like I could trust her and be open."

How did you benefit from this relationship professionally?

> "Given me a renewed sense that my work is important."

> "My mentor is a role-model and an inspiration. I am motivated to emulate her professionalism and passion."

> "My mentor is well-connected professionally and can connect me to her network when I need it."

> "She pushed me to take chances professionally that I may not have done before. She gave me permission to take it easy on myself as well."

How did you benefit from this relationship personally?

> "She provided support in moving out of my comfort zone; she helped me get out of my rut."

> "[My Mentor] is a great listener and sounding board – I have felt isolated over the years, and it was nice to have another ECE professional to talk to."

> "I have much more courage to knock down barriers and make changes."

Room for Growth – Although most Directors "enjoyed their experience immensely," and did not provide any suggestions for improvement, it is always useful to consider ways in which this important aspect of the CEL program can be enhanced. According to Tables 12 and 13, the lowest rated items for Mentors' effectiveness were all related to the bigger issue of no real clarity around the expectations, guidelines, and purpose of the mentoring component of CEL. The following quote from a CEL Director illuminates this theme:

> "At first I thought that the Mentor's role was as an advisor on our Individual Projects. I thought that the

> Project was going to be the sole focus of our relationship. Now I see the Mentor's role as a person that can aid in your future as an early childhood leader, as a resource of connections, networking, and knowledge."

Although overall, Mentors received positive ratings on their effectiveness, 36% expressed dissatisfaction around two different issues. The first issue revolved around not having enough face-to-face time with their Mentors. Indeed, results in Table 10 show wide variability in the amount of time Mentors spent communicating with Directors (min. 2 hours total per month; max. 11.5 hours total per month). It is not surprising that those Directors who were matched with Mentors who reported spending less time on Mentoring activities were more likely to express dissatisfaction with the amount of time they had with their Mentors. The following quotes from two different Directors sums up the sentiment that several Directors expressed:

> "I would have benefited from more feedback and more sessions with my mentor. A pre-scheduled day and time each month may have been easier for both of us to commit to – like the second Wednesday of each month. We only met twice."

> "I only had one face-to-face meeting with my Mentor. [She] was very busy, and it was hard for her to respond to my requests for technical assistance in a timely manner."

The other issue that was raised by several Directors revolved around a mis-match in communication styles. These Directors tended to rate their Mentor's effectiveness as lower because they felt that their Mentors were not as personally engaged as they were hoping. The quotes below provide examples:

> "Sometimes it was hard to talk to my mentor – she didn't seem very engaged. This relationship did not really benefit me personally or professionally. I wanted her to be more vocal, smiling more, put more excitement in all that she knows and does."

> "The concept of mentoring seemed helpful, but I did not feel "mentored." We had a polite relationship, but she was very passive. I requested resources and she never followed through. The relationship did not benefit me in any way – professionally or personally.

Mentors' Self-Assessments – Overall, the CEL Mentors felt that they were "exceedingly prepared" to help the Directors meet the main CEL project objectives. The mean score for this rating scale was 2.66 (3 = "exceedingly prepared"). Interestingly, there was no

statistically significant correlation between Directors' ratings of how CEL helped them meet program objectives and Mentors' self-ratings of how prepared they felt in helping Directors reach program objectives. Trends in the data indicate that Directors tended to have higher ratings than Mentors' self-assessments on the CEL program objectives.

We also asked Mentors to rate the areas of expertise that were directly enhanced by their experience with CEL. Table 14 displays the results.

Table 14 – Areas of Expertise Directly Enhanced by CEL

Most Mentors	Some Mentors	Few Mentors
Professional Networking	Curriculum	Enhancing Cultural Awareness
Program Quality Enhancement	Staff-Staff Relationships	Parental Involvement
Community Organizing	Advocacy	Budget & Fiscal management
Leadership Development	Research, Evaluation, Assessment	--
Staff Development	Staff-Child Relationships	--

We also asked Mentors for their feedback on their experience as a CEL Mentor, and there were several themes that emerged from their open-ended responses. First, they all acknowledged the many serendipitous opportunities they had for professional growth: they learned from one another, they learned from their Mentees, they learned from the training session presenters, they learned from the Coordinators, and they learned while researching resources for their Mentees.

Second, they all appreciated the independence and autonomy they were given in doing their work. Nevertheless, the third theme that emerged was an overwhelming expression of desire for more support and guidance in the following areas:

1. More intentional advancement of Mentors' professional knowledge
2. More meetings where they can learn from one another, and learn from the Coordinators
3. Lack of clarity around the different elements of successful Mentoring
4. Expectations of Mentors and Mentees need to be made more clear (e.g., let Directors know that they are also responsible for part of a successful Mentoring relationship)
5. More funding to visit their Mentees more often

Also, Mentors specifically expressed a desire for more support on the following CEL Program Objectives:

1. Enhance directors' administrative skills
2. Help director appreciate the value of the mentoring experience
3. Promote the replication of mentoring between EL participant and their staff
4. Develop and implement program quality improvement plans

5. Enhance directors' capacity for advocacy

Individual Projects

Completing an Individual Project was another cornerstone of the CEL program. This strategy builds on theories of adult learning, which tell us that optimal learning happens when students can apply content knowledge to a grounded experience – like implementing a project at one's place of employment. The amount of time the CEL Directors spent working on their Individual Projects ranged from 30 hours to over 100 hours. Although Directors had the latitude to select and implement a project of their own choosing, each of the CEL Individual Projects addressed one of five main themes.

1. Family Partnerships
2. Staff Training/Professional Development
3. Community Outreach
4. Enhancing Outdoor/Indoor Environments
5. Special Needs Awareness

> "Working on this project has allowed me to see early childhood education in a completely different view. I have never been so passionate and have the desire for change for better quality for our children in my life. It has rubbed off on my staff, teachers and even parents!"
> ~CEL Director

When asked about barriers and challenges they faced in implementing their project, Directors responded that time was one of the biggest factors. With the multitude of demands present in their daily work as child care administrators, many Directors had to work over-time to complete their project in a timely manner. Another challenge Directors reported was facing resistance from their own staff or from the people at the top of their program (e.g., center owner, Head Start Board, etc.). Finally, some Directors felt isolated in their endeavor and would have liked more support and guidance from their Mentors and other CEL Directors.

Almost every Director indicated that they had plans to extend the scope of their Individual Projects, and in fact, many Directors had already started expanding their project's scope. Here are some examples of the different ways in which Directors planned to continue making an impact:

> "Through my Individual Project for [CEL] I have organized a professional network in our community – it is comprised of child care owners who serve low-income children and families in our immediate community. I expect to see it continue to grow in membership."

> "I have already extended my project from disseminating it among staff to disseminating it to parents – I will be publishing a parent's booklet on early intervention this fall."

"This project is already growing with possible donations from local clubs and organizations."

"We're going to do this every year -- We have already have a date for the 2nd Annual Health & Safety Fair."

"We are organizing a meeting with all the Directors from our county in order to advocate the City Manager for a Human Services position."

The impact of walking through the room where CEL graduation took place and all the Directors' Individual Project posters were displayed, gave one a sense of the real change that is taking place in child care programs around the state. Almost all who attended the graduation ceremony were inspired by what all the CEL posters represented – a promise and commitment to enhancing quality at the Directors' centers and beyond. Indeed, almost all the Directors indicated that their Individual Projects were just the "tip of the iceberg" in their quest for quality in their child care centers and in their respective communities.

Coordination

Southwest Human Development and the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families provided the coordination for CEL. The Coordinators were responsible for recruiting participants, hiring and supervising Mentors, organizing all training sessions, being the touch-point for all questions and concerns related to CEL, and organizing the CEL Graduation Ceremony. This section presents findings on Directors' and Mentors' ratings of CEL Coordination. Directors' ratings of Coordination were consistent with their ratings for their Mentors. The average score was 3.38 (4= strongly agree; 3=agree). See Table 15 for a listing of scores on individual items.

Table 15 – Directors' Ratings of CEL Coordination

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CEL objectives clearly defined	1.00	4.00	3.24	.72
Methods used to assess our needs helpful	1.00	4.00	3.16	.69
Activities and events tailored to our needs	3.00	4.00	3.56	.51
Flexible enough to change if wasn't meeting our needs	1.00	4.00	3.38	.71
Coordination process met our expectations	3.00	4.00	3.40	.50
Overall quality of CEL coordination was high	2.00	4.00	3.52	.59

CEL Mentors' ratings for Coordinators' effectiveness were lower than Directors' ratings for Coordination. The mean score for General Coordination was 2.81. The mean score for Coordinators' Knowledge & Skill was 2.86. Scores for individual items are listed in the Tables below.

Table 16 – Mentors' Ratings of General Coordination

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Methods for gathering information to assess our needs was helpful	1.00	4.00	2.83	.98
Support received from Coordinators was tailored	1.00	4.00	3.00	1.10

to our needs				
Coordinators flexible enough to change if wasn't meeting our needs	1.00	4.00	2.83	.98
Support and assistance from Coordinators has been effective	1.00	4.00	2.67	1.03
Process of working with Coordinators met our expectations	1.00	4.00	2.83	1.17
Overall quality of Coordinators' TA was high	1.00	4.00	2.67	1.03

Table 17 – Mentors' Ratings of Coordinators' Knowledge & Skills

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Well versed in leadership dev & mentoring process	1.00	4.00	3.17	1.17
Coordinators demonstrate respectful awareness of cultural diversity	1.00	4.00	3.33	1.21
Coordinators recommend app strategies and resources	1.00	4.00	2.67	1.21
Coordinators demonstrates effective organizational skills	1.00	4.00	2.67	1.03
Coordinators provide prompt feedback	4.00	4.00	2.67	1.21
Coordinators have worked to clarify our roles and responsibilities	1.00	4.00	2.67	1.21

The lower scores given by Mentors most likely is a reflection of their desire for more guidance and feedback in their work with Directors. Mentors' strong articulation in their open-ended responses on the feedback surveys can help us understand these ratings further. (See above section -- *Mentors' Self-Assessments*)

Outcomes – Pre/Post Comparisons

There were three main outcomes that we hypothesized would be impacted by Directors' involvement with Chase Emergent Leaders: 1) Directors' Self-Assessments scores; 2) Program Administration Scale scores; 3) increased Professional Contributions. Data was collected on these measures both pre and post CEL.

Directors' Self Assessments – We used three different instruments that each captured different dimensions of a Director's view of herself as an effective administrator – the Vision Assessment scale, the Organizational Climate scale, and Director's Tasks & Responsibilities scale. We hypothesized that these scales addressed areas where CEL would provide an impetus for change.

There was no statistically significant increase in the Vision Assessment from Time 1(M=3.35, SD=.81) to Time 2 (M=3.35, SD=.91). There was a statistically significant increase for Organizational Climate from Time 1 (M=2.37, SD=.36) to Time 2 [M=2.66, SD=.24, t(23)= -5.19, p<.000]. There was also an increase that approached statistical significance for Director's Tasks and Responsibilities from Time 1 (M=2.38, SD=.78) to Time 2 [M=2.56, SD=.79, t(23)= -1.90, p<.10].

Table 18 – Directors' Self Assessments Pre/Post Comparisons

Measure	Mean
Vision Assessment Time 1	3.35
Vision Assessment Time 2	3.35
Organizational Climate Time 1	2.37
Organizational Climate Time 2	2.66***
Director's Tasks & Responsibilities Time 1	2.38
Director's Tasks & Responsibilities Time 2	2.56+

*** significant p<.000; +approaching significance p<.10

Program Administration Scale -- This scale was administered in an interview format that lasted approximately 2-3 hours. It was completed pre and post CEL. PAS scoring can range from 1 to 7 (7 = Excellent; 1 = Inadequate). There were statistically significant increases in Directors' scores from Time 1 (M= 5.30, SD=.21) to Time 2 [M=5.78, SD=.19, t(22)=-4.00, p<.001]. Admittedly, the CEL program did not address many of the items contained in the PAS. However, when we conducted an item-by-item t-test analysis on those PAS items that were directly addressed through CEL training sessions, mentoring content, and most importantly, Individual Projects, we found that those scores showed a statistically significant increase from Time 1 to Time 2. See Table 19 below.

Table 19 – Program Administration Scale

PAS Item	Mean Score
Overall PAS Score Time 1	5.30
Overall PAS Score Time 2	5.78**
Staff Development Time 1	6.07
Staff Development Time 2	6.40*
Internal Communication Time 1	5.21
Internal Communication Time 2	5.79**
Program Evaluation Time 1	5.14
Program Evaluation Time 2	6.01**
Family Involvement Time 1	5.80
Family Involvement Time 2	6.12**
External Communication Time 1	5.59
External Communication Time 2	5.99**
Community Outreach Time 1	5.86
Community Outreach Time 2	6.43**

* = p<.05; ** = p<.01

Professional Contributions – Lastly, we conducted another paired sample t-test analysis to determine whether the number of Directors' professional contributions increased. Professional contributions are activities that show commitment to the field of early childhood beyond center-based responsibilities (e.g., service or leadership in a professional organization, presenting at a professional conference, serving as a resource to media about early childhood issues, mentoring, advocacy, research, publishing, providing training to another program).

The results show a statistically significant increase. At Time 1, Directors reported an average number of 1.67 professional contributions; by Time 2 the average number was 3.47 ($t(23)=-4.58$, $p<.000$).

Associations – This last section of the analysis of outcome measures addresses the following question: Are there any associations between participants' background characteristics and ratings related to their CEL experience?

In regards to participants' mentoring experience, we found several interesting associations. Directors who had worked with a mentor in a previous project were more likely to have spent more time with their CEL Mentor ($r=.49$, $p<.01$; $r = .76$, $p<.01$). Also, not surprisingly, Directors who spent more time spent with their CEL Mentors were more likely to give them higher ratings of effectiveness ($r=.35$, $p<.10$; $r=.68$, $p<.05$).

There were other background characteristics that were correlated to CEL outcome measures. First, we found that Directors whose centers had lower percentages of children who are eligible for subsidies scored higher on the Vision Assessment at Time 2 ($r=-.51$, $p<.05$). Directors who had fewer classrooms in their centers were more likely to score higher on Organizational Climate at Time 2 (r--.49, $p<.05$). Finally, and not surprisingly, Directors whose centers were NAEYC accredited were more likely to score higher on the Program Administration Scale at Time 2 ($r=.58$, $p<.01$). So it appears that Directors who had less formidable challenges at their centers like fewer children in poverty and less classrooms to manage, were more likely to perceive that things were going well for them and for their centers. And those Directors who had already cleared the hurdle of accreditation were clearly in a position to make greater advances in organizational quality.

Ripple Effect: Comments from Past Emergent Leaders

The comments below were elicited via an email survey distributed to all past Chase Emergent Leaders. The survey asked past participants to reflect on the ways CEL has directly impacted their professional outcomes in a variety of domains. The comments below are a sampling of the responses received.

1. Enhancing the quality of your program

"My participation in [Chase Emergent Leaders] provided me an opportunity to expand my knowledge and awareness of emerging trends and ideas in ECE. I was able to bring this knowledge back and apply it to my work and enhance the quality of services we provide."

"My enhanced skills as a leader enabled my program to be more successful all-around. The experience that I gained in the Chase program, coupled with the growth that I achieved as a Director, allowed me to be a better, more accomplished Director of a preschool. This, in turn, allowed my school to be of higher quality."

"Before [Chase Emergent Leaders], I was not aware of the State support for Early Childhood Education. I also received excellent mentoring in helping me feel comfortable in helping children, even when it isn't directly teaching them. It might be as in my case, providing quality

education for teachers in the field. Part of that job is to help them find financing through DES grants."

2. Increasing your network (or creating a new network) of other professionals in the field of ECE

"I have been fortunate to expand my network through [CEL] and continue to meet professionals that have been involved in the program either as emergent leaders, trainers, facilitators or advocates in ECE."

"Yes, I met a bunch of new people that had all kinds of experience and it was great to learn and hear their ideas and perspectives."

"My network definitely increased in size. I still keep in contact with my mentor from the program, and have been able to stay updated on important information and events that are occurring around the state."

"I definitely did create a new network of professionals; if it weren't for the Emergent Leaders program and meeting [the coordinator], I wouldn't be where I am today (literally!!) I am very thankful."

3. Other opportunities for employment/career shift

"Because of the Chase program I was able to see the variety of work done in the field, and it helped me to see that there is a lot out there. When I was ready to leave my position, I used my Emergent Leader network to find a new career path in early childhood development."

"I actually left my job about six months after the completion of the Chase program. As cliché as it may sound, the Chase program opened up my eyes and allowed me to spread my wings and fly..."

4. Policy and/or advocacy work

"I am now working closely with individuals on an Autism Support Team, and we are working on community involvement activities."

"I am hoping to attend the "Step Up For Kids" event on September 16th; I am always an advocate of children's rights and looking for the best interest of children. Children across the globe have a special place in my heart. "

"I have been working with Ottawa University and NAU to create education ladders that enable Early Childhood Educators to receive State Certification in Early Childhood Education."

5. Training in the community

"Emergent Leaders gave me the confidence to pursue opportunities as a trainer. I recently joined the extended staff at Yavapai Community College to co teach a child care professional training course through a grant program set up with DES. Now I am also a S*CCEEDS registered trainer."

"I have been an advocate and curriculum writer for 3 new Montessori Teacher Training programs at South Mountain Community College."

6. Mentoring other ECE administrators

"I have really benefited from the opportunity to enhance my leadership and mentoring skills and have applied this knowledge in my interactions mentoring others in my program and outside of my program."

"After I completed the leadership program I was asked to be a mentor for a teacher entering our program. I feel that because of what I learned in the program, I was able to provide quality mentoring that enhanced her knowledge about the program and assisted her in the classroom."

"I provided support and encouragement for my former assistant director who was applying for the Chase program for 2007-2008. I also provide this mentoring to some of the people for whom I provide workshops."

"I am currently mentoring a coordinator for a new Montessori Teacher Training Program. I will be active in helping this person prepare the self-study needed for national accreditation."

7. Leadership involvement on a council, committee or board (related to ECE and Child Development issues)

"After participating in the program I have been invited to participate as a board member for the Valley of the Sun Association for the Education of Young Children (VSAEYC), a committee member for Children's Action Alliance (CAA) and The National Coalition for Campus Children's Centers (NCCCC)."

"I conduct yearly meetings with a Montessori Advisory Board at SMCC."

8. Other comments

"The Chase Emergent Leader program had a huge impact on my professional career. I am grateful for the experience, and I think it's a brilliant way to help shape new ECE leaders in Arizona every year. The people who were [the coordinators] of the program were so kind, welcoming, and humorous. It was a joy to listen to them speak, and it was always a pleasure seeing them at the meetings. [My mentor], was incredibly helpful and encouraging. I also got to

know [another mentor], who was always smiling and helpful. The speakers that were brought in from around the country were motivational and inspiring. Everything was wonderful - and to think that this was all provided at no cost to the participants! As an ECE professional, this was more than I could have ever asked for in helping to shape my future. Thank you, Chase Emergent Leader Program!"

Summary

The Chase Emergent Leaders participants responded overwhelmingly that their experience with their Mentor, the CEL Coordination and training was highly positive. Average ratings based on CEL program objectives and CEL Effectiveness were "exceeding expectations" and "highly effective." Directors' qualitative responses mirrored the positive ratings. Directors responded favorably to each of the cornerstone elements of CEL – Training, Mentoring and Individual Projects. In addition, we found significant increases in almost all of Directors' outcome measures from Time 1 to Time 2. These findings demonstrate that the Chase Emergent Leader model for delivering leadership training is working very well, and could most likely be expanded and replicated to achieve similar results.

"Because of my participation in Emergent Leaders, I have become more connected within the state and also feel a deeper commitment to the cause of early childhood education. I don't think I would have been able to accomplish all that I did last year and what I am working on this year without the support of the Emergent Leaders program."

~CEL Director

Discussion – Lessons Learned

Diversity in Baseline Quality

Although the average quality score for child care centers that participated in CEL was well above the national average (5.39), the CEL program represented a range of Quality (min. 2.97; max. 6.68). One of our key evaluation questions was whether a program's baseline Quality level would impact the type of experience the Director had with CEL. What we discovered was that there were no statistically significant differences in how Directors rated the effectiveness and overall quality of CEL. Directors representing all levels of Quality rated their experience with CEL as "excellent" or "highly effective." However, through qualitative open-ended responses, we discovered some interesting trends in regards to how Quality impacted Directors' experiences with CEL. For those Directors whose programs scored on the lower end of the quality ratings, they were able to apply new knowledge directly to their center, because they now had access to resources they previously did not have. However, these same Directors whose centers were struggling with lower Quality tended to also express more frustration because they had high expectations that their mentors and the CEL program should be able to help them "fix" what was broken. In addition, barriers at their centers that were often beyond their control – like high percentage of families in poverty – made it overwhelming at times to apply information and resources gained from CEL.

For those Directors whose center scored at the higher end of the Quality continuum, they were able to take their work to the next level and really develop leadership skills beyond the walls of their centers (e.g., professional networking, accessing community resources).

However, there was also the tendency for them to be impatient with their Mentor and CEL because they had heard a lot of the content before. In addition, they sometimes tended to have even higher expectations of their Mentors – especially where there was not an even match with the Mentor's experience and the Director's experience.

Mentoring

Mentoring programs build leadership by acknowledging the skills Directors already have and by helping them to extend their abilities. In so doing, mentoring programs help stem the turnover that is so destructive to our field, and enable new Directors and Administrators to see that they can be recognized for their work with children and adults (Whitebook & Walker-Duff, 1998). Even though one of the strengths of the CEL mentoring model is that each Mentor was free to develop a unique relationship with their assigned Directors, it seems as if there needed to be more clear direction for the Mentoring component of CEL. The findings from both Mentors as well as Directors indicate that there was some frustration about not knowing what to expect from one another. This is commonly referred to as the "hidden agenda" phenomenon where those who are organizing and planning the syllabus or program have an idea about what they would like to see happen, but they do not realize that these expectations have not been made explicit to the participants. It seems that this issue could be avoided in the future with the implementation of a Mentoring curriculum and framework. It would also be helpful to conduct more meetings with the Mentors where they can share their experiences, frustrations, and expectations with the Coordinators and with one another.

> "The assurance that somebody familiar is only a phone call away is the greatest asset I earned from the program."
>
> ~CEL Director

Although not the original focus of CEL, early on in the CEL program year we discovered an unanticipated opportunity for expanded leadership development – Mentors. Indeed, findings in this evaluation corroborate this idea. Mentors expressed a strong desire for more support and guidance for their own professional development. Many of the Mentors from the CEL program currently serve on First Things First Regional Councils, Advisory Boards, provide training throughout the community, and are leaders in various professional organizations. Mentors are an untapped resource for leadership development. Next year the CEL program could be expanded to include a specific model of training for Mentors and separate leadership objectives for Mentors.

Individual Project Plans

Suggestions for improvement provided by the Directors are quite straight forward: start conceptualizing the Individual Project sooner; meet with other Directors who are addressing the same topic; adjust the CEL schedule so that the final implementation phase coincides with the academic school year – not the end of the summer.

Coordination

The Coordinators for CEL seem to have discovered the formula for an effective leadership program – particularly in regards to organizing an impressive and powerful cadre of presenters for their training sessions – many of whom are nationally renowned. In regards to the mentoring component of CEL, it is apparent that the CEL Coordinators were successfully able to convene a highly skilled group of committed Mentors. Based on their

extensive previous experience with community collaborations they were able to recruit Mentors from different parts of the state. Since the majority of the Mentors came from the Tucson area and Maricopa County, one particular challenge seemed to be the lack of Mentoring capacity within each community represented by CEL. Building capacity in communities around the state also points to a need for on-going professional development of ECE Mentors, Consultants, and Coaches, which was also articulated by the Mentors participating in this evaluation. As we think about effective professional development and building capacity for more Mentors, we should also consider that an essential characteristic displayed by almost all of the Mentors in this study was an affinity for the emotional labor and commitment involved in their work with CEL. One question we may want to explore is – How can we develop professional pathways and models that encourage and deepen one's compatibility with the level of emotional labor inherent in this type of work, in order to build our pool of qualified ECE Mentors, Consultants, and Coaches?

Evaluation as Intervention

There were several ways that conducting a formal evaluation of Chase Emergent Leaders impacted the delivery of the program itself, and as a result, the evaluator(s)' involvement impacted the Directors' experiences with CEL. First, many Directors reported that completing the PAS interviews with the CEL evaluators was a positive motivator in their CEL experience. In fact, some of the improvement evident on the PAS scores came as a direct result of the initial PAS interview. Directors were made aware of various administrative issues that they were easily able to improve. Second, the Principal Investigator for this evaluation made formal presentations at several of the training sessions. This provided opportunities for the CEL Directors to deepen interactions and conversations that began with the PAS interview; thus, enhancing their perceptions of connectedness and support. Next year, it might be useful to intentionally include evaluation as an additional dimension in the leadership intervention.

Recommendations

This section highlights implications for next year's programming, future research and future funding.

Implications for Next Year's Programming

The box below highlights the major programming recommendations that flow directly from the findings of the CEL evaluation:

Key Recommendations:

1. Training – continue as is; make explicit whether the focus of CEL is leadership development, administrative training, or both.
2. Mentoring – strong aspect of CEL experience; present and use a framework for Mentoring; Directors want more time with Mentors
3. Individual Projects – more discussion of projects during CEL training sessions; shift CEL schedule so that projects are completed in the Spring
4. Coordination – develop professional development objectives for Mentors

Implications for Policy

Leadership development programs like Chase Emergent Leaders are crucial in states, like Arizona, where systems for early childhood development are growing at a rapid rate. There are many policy relevant applications for the CEL program – a few of which are discussed below.

Attention to diversity – The demographics of children under five years of age has been shifting dramatically in Arizona. According to the Pew Hispanic Center and census bureau data, about one-third or more of children under five years of age are Latino. As leadership positions in the field of early education and development open up to those people who work directly with children and those who have strong ties to their communities, we must ensure that these opportunities reach child care Administrators from the full spectrum of ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. This may require programs like CEL to examine their approach to diversity and their assumptions about leadership and learning, and to develop multilingual training and other resource materials and/or provide translation services. Why does authentic inclusion in leadership matter? Dr. Alice Walker-Duff answers this question by stating, "Quality affordability, and accessibility will continue to elude the vast majority of us. Why? Because complex questions get inadequate answers when meaningful participation from significant segments of relevant populations is missing. Inclusion makes us stronger and more effective." (Whitebook & Walker-Duff, 1998). While this year's CEL cohort was moderately diverse, CEL could continue to be a model for the state by using some of its resources and community connections to create a leadership development program that is truly lives up to the call for "authentic inclusion."

Another policy implication for this work revolves around the current climate of systems-building that has been generated by First Things First and other state-wide partnerships like the Arizona Early Education Funds and the P-20 Council. Chase Emergent Leaders has already demonstrated its potential to be a training ground for future leaders around the state. In fact, several of the past Chase Emergent Leaders currently hold leadership positions in many of these state-wide efforts. The findings from this evaluation illustrate that not only is CEL a training ground for Directors, but it is also a training ground for the CEL Mentors.

Future Research

The research on leadership development for child care professionals is still sparse. Findings from this evaluation point to many other research questions that researchers and future evaluations can explore in order to push the field towards a deeper understanding of systems, leadership development, and ultimately, Quality. Below is just a small sample of the types of questions researchers and future evaluations could address:

1. Is quality impacted by CEL? We know Directors already have indirect associations on quality and children's outcomes, but how long does it take until we can measure the effects of leadership training such as CEL on classrooms, teachers and children? How much training/mentoring is needed? Is 9-months enough? What are the quality domains that are impacted first – structural, process, organizational?

2. What are the predictors for the creation of a positive Mentor/Mentee relationship (e.g. similar cultural background; being a "community insider"; Mentor's previous experience as a Director; ongoing reflective supervision for Mentors; motivation and commitment to the field)?

3. How can we develop a systematic way of measuring and monitoring the "ripple effect" of CEL in communities across the state and over time?

4. What are "best practices" in mentoring? Create a standard of practice that can guide the work of ongoing programs around the state that utilize a professional development model that includes: Mentors/Consultants/Coaches.

Implications for Future Funding

Based on the evidence contained in this report, we propose three major recommendations for the future funding of Chase Emergent Leaders. First and foremost, this program has achieved success on many different dimensions and should not only continue, but should be expanded to include more Directors and more Mentors. Second, the key to success seems to be highly trained and experienced Mentors and an inspiring training component. There is a clear need to continue to foster support to increase training for the Mentors. Investing in more training and support for the Mentors will likely yield even greater returns, and will move us closer to having a an impressive capacity of highly skilled Mentors, consultants and coaches throughout the entire state. In order to coordinate this extra dimension of training and support, more infrastructural funding would be required. Third, findings from both Directors and Mentors point to the desire for more in-person communication between Mentor and Mentee, which would also require additional funding.

Conclusion

States, like Arizona, that are in the midst of developing comprehensive early learning systems have to simultaneously ensure that a strong community infrastructure is in place. Successful early learning systems are seamless when communities are equipped to raise public awareness, identify existing resources and unmet needs, deliver quality services, and document evidence of success. For the past four years, the Chase Emergent Leaders program has helped pave the pathway to a quality early learning system by nurturing new voices of change.

Ten years ago, leading researchers and advocates recognized the importance of developing leadership in the field of early care and education. They promoted several specific suggestions to improve our leadership abilities:

1. We need to spend money on leadership development. Personal, agency, corporate, association, and governmental budgets must reflect this priority. When a community becomes true partners with child care professionals, greater personal and political will develops to support the field.
2. We must recognize, celebrate, and reward leadership - both financially and psychically.
3. Early care and education professionals need to seriously consider politics for themselves. As we use mass media and technology to support our field, we can develop our leadership skills and improve the status of the field. Responding to talk radio shows,

> writing letters to the editor, and communicating on the Internet through home pages and chat rooms are powerful development activities and ways to raise the public consciousness. (Whitebook & Walker-Duff, 1998)

The findings from this evaluation and the testimony of past CEL participants show us that there are ways to have meaningful inclusion at policy tables and ways to develop early care and education leadership and improve our field. We can continue find them and implement them if we speak the truth not only to power brokers, but also to ourselves. Nelson Mandela points out that our worst fear is not that we are inadequate. He insists that our deepest fear is that we are "powerful beyond measure." If we don't tap into that power now, professionals in this field will continue to be under-compensated, undervalued, and exhausted, and they will be unavailable for our children, families, economy, and future (Whitebook & Walker-Duff, 1998).

> "I am eternally grateful for the leadership and intense focus on self-realization and quality that the Emergent Leader program has allowed me. The ripple effect goes beyond anything we may see immediately. Investing in a human being is an investment that cannot be quantified - for the impact is never ending."
>
> ~CEL Director

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Appendix A – Evaluation Matrix

Objective	CEL Goals	CEL Activity	Construct Measured	Measures/Instruments	When Collected	Data Collector(s)
1.Develop new administrative and leadership skills	Enhance leadership skills Expose directors to tools and resources Directors will appreciate and value mentorship experience and resolve to replicate mentoring model with own staff	Meet/Communicate with CEL Mentor Mentors go on-site to help directors apply workshop knowledge to practice PAS self-assessment The Visionary Director Workshop Brand Your Life, Live Your Brand Living Leadership Workshop [Individual Project]	Leadership skills Administrative skills	Program Administration Scale Vision Assessment (Carter & Curtis p. 37-38) Organizational Climate Assessment (Carter & Curtis, p. 198) Technical Assistance Tracking sheet Director Self-Review – General Survey	Pre/Post Pre/Post Pre/Post On-going Pre/Post	Evaluators Self-assessment Self-assessment Mentors Self-assessment
Objective	**CEL Goals**	**CEL Activity**	**Construct Measured**	**Measures/Instruments**	**When Collected**	**Data Collector(s)**
2. Extend professional networks in early care and education	Encourage peer learning Share ideas with one another Dialogue with one another and other committed professionals in ECE	Brand Your Life, Live Your Brand	Professional network Resource contact list	Survey Survey	Pre/Post Pre/Post	Self-assessment Self-assessment
3. Develop and implement program quality improvement	Assist participants to assess and identify areas for quality improvement in their programs	ECERS-R Self-Assessment Leading Quality Workshop The Visionary Director Workshop Brand Your Life, Live Your Brand [Leadership Project]	Classroom Quality Organizational Quality	ECERS-R Program Administration Scale	Baseline Pre/Post	Evaluators Evaluators
4. Increase directors'	1. Expose directors to	Orientation: "Advocacy 101" w/	Advocacy and outreach to	Interview/open ended questions	Pre/Post	Self-assessment

understanding of their role and their effectiveness as change agents through active leadership and advocacy in the broader community	legislative process 2. Develop skills and ability to discuss ECE issues with legislators 3. Experience advocacy firsthand 4.Dialogue with other committed professionals in ECE 5. Become involved with community networking and advocacy efforts in an "active" manner	Dr. Judy Walruff State of Address @ Capitol Child Care Day at Legislature Brand Your Life, Live Your Brand Living Leadership [Leadership Project]	broader community Participation in community events/initiatives	Document involvement in community initiatives and organizations (e.g., FTF Regional Councils, professional organizations, ECE workgroups)	Pre/Post	Self-assessment
Objective	**CEL Goals**	**CEL Activity**	**Construct Measured**	**Measures/Instruments**	**When Collected**	**Data Collector(s)**
5. Build capacity in state for comprehensive leadership development programs	Provide experiences for CEL Mentors to reflect and integrate new ideas into their work with directors Deepen our understanding about what makes an effective Mentor (e.g., background characteristics, skill set, knowledge base)	Networking (peer learning) with other CEL Mentors Sharing resources with one another Attending CEL Workshops Recruitment of Mentors	Track EL Mentors' meetings, workshops, and networking with one another Mentors' background characteristics Directors' perceptions of their Mentor's effectiveness Mentors' perceptions of their own effectiveness with directors	Field notes Program records Survey Survey Survey	On-going On-going Pre Post Post	Evaluator Evaluator Self-report Directors Mentors

Appendix B – Training Session Feedback; Common Responses from Surveys

Reasons for top 3 picks	How have you implemented insights gained from training sessions?	Other topics you would like to see us cover in the sessions?	Suggestions for improvement
The topics were very relevant to my stage of professional development – was able to implement ideas immediately	Use strategies in reflective supervision and staff communication	More details about how to lead; Cover all leadership skills – dealing with difficult people; getting it all done; effective communication	"None. Topics, location, setting and time were perfect. Alan and the staff did an amazing job."
Cutting-edge information	Present myself as more professional	Public speaking; communicating with policy makers	More interaction between Mentors and Directors
Speakers were great examples of how to lead quality	Use information on evaluation (ECERS-R) as a self-study	Children with special needs; mental health issues; more on social-emotional development	Encourage Directors to do some individual presentations – good for public speaking skills
"Visionary Director was my professional re-birth"	New goals for program	How to apply for quality improvement grants; funding opportunities	More time during the last portion of sessions to review Individual Project Plans
The information presented made me reflect on my own practices.	Included topics for staff training in own center	More information on Quality outdoor environments	Not on Fridays – hard for Directors whose staff are often absent on Fridays
Challenged me as a professional	Use strategies that other Directors share during our training discussions	Let's take the "Tucson Tour." [Reggio-inspired programs]	Have some of the sessions in Tucson
	Used the ideas from Bob Lewis with my own staff	Stress management; multi-tasking	Longer sessions
	Visionary Leader was the spring-board and inspiration for Individual Project	Hiring, retaining and motivating staff	Create more of a flow in the sessions – sessions somewhat randomly presented
		More on licensing issues	Want to hear more from Alicia!
		Accreditation tools	Room not dark enough to see the slides.
		How to work with service agencies to assist children in care	

Appendix C – Feedback on Mentoring Relationship

What were the aspects of Mentoring that were strong?

- Brainstorming; extending ideas
- The mentoring was very strong and useful – more than what I could have asked for. They were very professional and passionate.
- In developing my unique and inspired relationship with my mentor, I started thinking very carefully about how to approach and work with each of my staff according to their individual styles.
- My mentor had extensive knowledge of my Individual Project's main area of focus.
- Having someone from outside my center listen and help me to come up with solutions to issues was fantastic.

Describe your relationship with your Mentor.

- "Supportive and friendly – I felt like I know this is a person I can rely on, go to for ideas and who will listen without judgment."
- "At first I was nervous about our meetings – but I soon began to look forward to and enjoy our meetings. I think we have a comfortable, honest (and fun) relationship.
- Motivating and uplifting
- She was able to relate to my frustration – she was very supportive and understanding.
- Open, honest, very supportive and strong interest in culture of my community. This made me feel like I could trust her and be open.
- I never feel like she is judging me, so I feel comfortable talking to her.
- She helped me see my own potential.
- I felt extremely comfortable sharing information with her – it helped that I knew my mentor from a previous Mentoring project at my center.
- At first I thought that the Mentor's role was as an advisor on our Individual Projects. I thought that the Project was going to be the sole focus of our relationship. Now I see the Mentor's role as a person that can aid in your future as an early childhood leader, as a resource of connections, networking, and knowledge.

Professional Benefit

- Professional network
- Encouraged me to grow professionally and get out of my rut
- Given me a renewed sense that my work is important
- Will continue relationship well beyond CEL
- Connected me to resources in my community
- Helped me discover my true potential
- My mentor is a role model and an inspiration. I am motivated to emulate her professionalism
- My mentor has inspired me to create and implement a mentoring program with my staff
- My mentor is very positive and passionate in everything she does, which makes me motivated and excited to do more and more for the children.
- My mentor is well-connected professionally and can help me when I need it.
- My mentor has encouraged me to make huge changes over the past 9 months including opening doors so I can further my education.
- She pushed me to take chances professionally that I may not have done before. She gave me permission to take it easy on myself as well.

Personal Benefit

- Support in moving out of my comfort zone; get out of my rut
- Network of other professionals outside my program who understand what I'm going through
- The encouragement and support she offered me at a time of staff change at my school gave me the courage to continue and improve
- Great listener and sounding board – I have felt isolated over the years, and it was nice to have another ECE professional to talk to.
- I have made many new friends
- **Increased self-confidence**
- I have much more courage to knock down barriers and make changes.

Suggestions for Improvement

- None – I enjoyed my experience immensely!
- Wanted to have small group meetings with Mentor and her other Mentees during the first day of CEL Orientation – would give us a chance to develop relationships and a smaller network of support for our ongoing work on our Individual Plans.
- More meeting times – it was easy to get side-tracked from my project because I know we would not be meeting very often.
- We only met once – so it was difficult to assess how helpful she could have been
- Mentoring interactions should have been more frequent (at least once a month) – a tracking sheet to reflect progress on our goals would have been helpful
- Small groups could go to visit other exemplary centers that serve low SES like me.
- Sometimes it was hard to talk to my mentor – she didn't seem very engaged. This relationship did not really benefit me personally or professionally. More vocal, smiling more, put more excitement in all that she knows and does.
- More communication and mentoring about issues I face on a daily basis like staff shortages.
- More communication and more face to face discussions. The distance was a problem and that is one reason why we talked as much on the phone whenever we could.
- My mentor was very busy, and it was hard for her to respond to my requests for TA in a timely manner.
- I would have benefited from more feedback and more sessions with my mentor. A pre-scheduled day and time each month may have been easier for both of us to commit to (example: the second Wednesday of each month)
- My hope is that we can continue communicating with our mentors once CEL is over. It would be nice to see some funding follow up communication from our Mentors.
- Honestly, I was not impressed with my mentor. I sent her my project plan as she requested, I expected feedback – I did not receive any. We only met face to face once.
- My mentor was very busy. I do not feel that she helped. Because of our previous mentoring relationship, she felt like I had everything "under control" and that I did not need as much assistance. I think I would have been helped more if I had been matched with a mentor I did not previously know.
- Make Emergent Leaders a little longer, so we have more time to develop our relationships with our Mentors.
- I wish the Mentors and the EL staff would sit at the tables with us and eat lunch with us at the training sessions.
- More mingling and integration of experts (presenters), mentors and Directors

- More focused workshops on the content in the PAS. Focus more on providing us with the rationale for why certain administrative practices are promoted in the PAS.
- I would like to see more specific pairings of Mentors and Directors. It would be neat to see people with similar programs or leadership stylings together.
- The concept of Mentoring seemed helpful, but I did not feel "mentored." We had a polite relationship, but she was very passive. I requested resources and she never followed through. The relationship did not benefit me in any way – professionally or personally.

Appendix D – Feedback on Individual Projects

How do imagine extending your project?

- I plan to write an article for the SAEYC newsletter.
- Through CEL I have organized a professional network in our community – it is comprised of child care owners who serve low-income children and families. I expect to see it continue to grow in membership.
- I have already extended my project (training booklet) from disseminating it among staff to disseminating it to parents – I will be publishing a parent's booklet on early intervention this fall.
- I am currently in the process of seeking additional funding to expand this literacy project.
- This project is already growing with possible donations from local clubs and organizations.
- We're going to do this every year -- We have already have a date for the 2nd Annual Health & Safety Fair
- I'm proposing my project to the company and will see if they can implement the tools I've created at all our centers.
- We will implement the same improvements at our other center, and then start working towards accreditation.
- We are organizing a meeting with all the Directors from our county in order to advocate the City Manager for a Human Services position.
- Ultimately, my plan is to incorporate my project into our bi-annual Open House for parents, so it will take place twice a year from now on.
- As a result of my Individual Project, I want to start working with a literacy specialist to expand our work to include more intentional transitioning to Kindergarten.

Barriers and challenges you faced?

- It was hard to find the time to complete the project – juggling teachers' schedules
- **Time!**
- Project materials were dependent on receiving incentives from another project, which didn't get to me in a timely manner
- Materials needed to be translated into Spanish
- I encountered resistance from my staff
- Hard to engage parents and **community** members – very busy people!
- I felt my project was too big and overwhelming for the 6 month time-line
- Our school was robbed and vandalized after we had already painted and purchased many materials for our project. Many items were stolen.
- I encountered some "territorial" issues with other community stake holders
- Lack of support from the owners of the program in which I work.

What could be improved for next year?

- Have other opportunities – later in the year – to see the examples of last year's project posters
- More discussion about process vs. outcome. I learned a lot through my process, but it felt like the product was being forced.

- Easier to complete and implement final stages of the project during the school year – not the summer.
- I wanted my mentor to be more involved through supervision and support.
- More time to learn about what others are doing – share ideas and strategies.
- Start discussing our projects earlier in the CEL year.
- Specific workshop topics that match broad areas of Project topics
- **More time for project planning.**