



Human Development & Relationships Programming: July - September 2025



Pattie Carroll, Human Development and Relationships Educator, contributed to the development of a statewide report on the continuing education needs of Wisconsin's early care and education (ECE) workforce. Her work focused on co-

writing and synthesizing findings from six regional focus groups conducted in late 2023. The final report will be released in October 2025.

Overview

The report, *Continuing Education for an Essential Workforce: Perspectives from Early Care and Education Professionals in Wisconsin*, documents the voices of 32 ECE professionals across 12 counties. It highlights the challenges and opportunities related to continuing education, including barriers to access, foundational competencies, and strategies for improving family engagement and professional support.

Background

- The Division of Extension received an Innovation Grant to explore the continuing education landscape for ECE professionals.
- Carroll collaborated with a team of Extension educators and specialists to analyze focus group data and co-author the final report.
- The report is intended to inform statewide efforts to improve continuing education access and quality for ECE professionals.

Contribution

- Carroll co-wrote sections on foundational competencies, family engagement, and culturally responsive practices.
- She helped synthesize qualitative data from focus groups, integrating direct quotes and thematic analysis.
- Her writing emphasized the importance of supporting new professionals, promoting inclusive practices, and strengthening partnerships between providers and families.

Outcome/Next Steps

The final report will be published in October 2025 and shared with county and state partners, training and technical assistance agencies, and other stakeholders. It will serve as a resource for shaping future continuing education efforts and supporting Wisconsin's ECE workforce. Dodge County will host one of the regional Early Childhood Education workshops, featuring content informed by the needs assessment. This local workshop will provide Dodge County childcare professionals with access to relevant, research-based strategies that reflect both statewide trends and local priorities. By connecting regional insights to local action, Dodge County is helping lead the way in strengthening professional development and elevating the quality of care for children and families in our community.

"We need to value this and be able to build good childcare in the homes, in the centers, in different places with quality people." — Focus Group Participant