

## Director Mentor Quick Fact Sheet

### A Director Mentor is . . .

The term "Director Mentor" is used by the California Early Childhood Mentor Program to identify an early childhood administrator who has applied and been selected by her or his local Mentor Program. The Mentor Program, funded by the California Department of Education, Child Development Division, works with 95 community colleges across California. Those colleges, either individually, or working together in regional groupings, invite early childhood leaders from their community to serve on a Mentor Program Selection Committee. Each Committee uses the guidelines of the Mentor Program to review applications, meet with applicants, and select Director Mentors from a variety of child care settings, including publicly and privately funded centers and large family child care programs.

### A Director Mentor does . . .

A Director Mentor works with less experienced Directors, Site Supervisors, Assistant Directors, or experienced Directors who are facing new challenges, to provide support, suggest resources, and encourage the Protégé Director to gain the skills and confidence needed to succeed. The Director Mentor and Protégé Director work together with the local Mentor Program Coordinator to identify the Protégé's needs and develop a customized contract. The Director Mentor and her or his Protégé then meet in person, talk over the phone, and/or communicate via email for a total of 20 hours. These 20 hours may be completed in one week, many months, or something in between, as long as the hours begin and end within the same fiscal year (August 1-July 31).

### What are the rewards?

Upon completion of each 20-hour contract, once approved by the local Mentor Program Coordinator, the Mentor Program pays the Director Mentor a stipend of \$750. In addition to this stipend, Director Mentors may also earn an hourly stipend of \$25 per hour for working with Director Mentor applicants to help them understand the new assessment tool being used as part of the selection process, the *Program Administration Scale* (Talan and Bloom, 2004). All stipend-eligible activities must be pre-approved by the local Mentor Program Coordinator.



In addition to the monetary rewards, Director Mentors reap professional rewards. Director Mentors are encouraged to become involved in a local Director Seminar, open to all Directors in a community. The Mentor Program provides facilitation and materials support for these seminars. The program plans to introduce professional development conference calls to learn and discuss advanced mentoring techniques. Also, once a year, the Mentor Program offers an Advanced Director Mentor Institute, to which all Director Mentors across California are invited and for which travel and meeting expenses are paid. The Institutes are two-day in-depth sessions focusing on mentoring and leadership skills. Finally, the professional acknowledgement of being a Director Mentor identifies an individual as an exemplary ECE administrator who is also skilled in supporting others in their professional growth. Director Mentors frequently become, if they were not before, recognized leaders in their ECE communities.

## How do I Become a Director Mentor?

**Step 1.** Meet the minimum qualifications: Experience in a supervisory position at an Early Childhood Education facility for at least three years and completion of at least three units of ECE administration and supervision.

**Step 2.** Complete a half-day Director Mentor Introductory Session. Five to seven Introductory Sessions are offered at no fee on Community College campuses in locations across the state each fall. Announcements of the dates and locations of the half-day sessions are sent out to all licensed centers in surrounding counties. If you would like to be sure that you receive an announcement, contact the Mentor Program (see contact information below).

**Step 3.** Complete a one-day Director Mentor Institute (DMI). Individuals who complete a half-day introductory session, meet the minimum application requirements, and are interested in applying to become a Director Mentor will be invited to one of two Director Mentor Institutes. Exact dates and locations will be announced at the half-day sessions.

**Step 4.** Apply to your local Mentor Program. To do so, contact your local Mentor Program Coordinator, request an application, and submit that application to the Coordinator.

*Your written application, references, transcripts, documentation of quality review, and other supporting materials will be reviewed by the Coordinator and a team of two Selection Committee members. If these materials present you as a viable candidate for Director Mentor, you will proceed to Step 5 below.*



**Step 5.** Conduct a Program Administration Scale (PAS) self-study, select and prepare documentation for seven PAS items, and participate in an interview at your site conducted by two Selection Committee members.

*After receiving all applications for the selection period, the local Selection Committee meets to screen the applications and determine selection teams and procedures. Note that Selection Committees may ascribe higher priority to applications from Directors who have, or have had, a Mentor Teacher on their staff. Committees may also establish priorities based on program needs, such as representation by programs of different types (family, corporate, or publicly-funded child care, for example), need for bilingual Director Mentors, or need for Director Mentors with particular areas of expertise.*

### **Must I Be Currently Employed as a Director to Apply?**

No. Your eligibility is based on your experience, not your current job title or employment status. Becoming a Director Mentor is a wonderful option for semi- or fully retired directors to share the breadth of their experience with others. Applicants who are not currently working in a program need to work with the Coordinator to identify relevant alternatives for the site quality review and Program Administration Scale self-study described above.

### **Must my Program be Licensed in Order for Me to Apply?**

No. However, if your program is not licensed, you are asked to explain the reason for your license exemption on your application form.

### **Must my Program be NAEYC Accredited in Order for Me to Apply?**

No. However, if your program is NAEYC accredited or has had a recent quality review—for example, one of the Harms and Clifford Environment Rating Scales (ECERS-R, ITERS-R, FCCERS-R, SACERS), PRISM, etc—you will need to submit the results of the accreditation or quality assessment and describe how you have addressed any challenges resulting from the review.

### **How are Protégé Directors identified?**

The California Early Childhood Mentor Program makes a limited number of small grants available to local Mentor Programs to be used to recruit Protégé Directors and promote Director Mentor activities. However, in most cases, Director Mentors and the local Mentor Program Coordinator are responsible for “recruiting” Protégé Directors. Although the program is provided free of charge to Protégé Directors,



many Directors are unaware of the program. The Mentor Program provides brochures and other written materials and the local Mentor Program Coordinator has a budget for business cards, flyers, and other program promotion materials. The Director Mentor and local Program Coordinator work together to promote the Director Mentor's availability through ECE Administration and Supervision classes, through the Resource and Referral agencies, at the Director Seminar and other directors' groups, through professional organizations and through Community Care Licensing.

***For Further Information, Contact:***

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