

April 14, 2010

Closing Session Discussion

What am I taking away from today's summit? How can I use this information, what was interesting, meaningful?

- Participants reported learning the importance of bridging what we know from the evidence base and taking it into application.
- Participants reported taking away a variety of new research information to apply to practice, including the importance of quality interactions between teachers, children, parents; the relevance of quality programs and evaluation; the importance of collecting data for program improvement.
- The Summit provided an opportunity to focus on research and reinforced the importance and value of research for the Early Childhood Community. It "stretched our minds."
- The Keynote provided a framework for the activities of the day; all sessions were interrelated.
- Researchers reported learning new linkages, meeting new people and making connections. The Summit helped researchers to better "know the lay of the land" and learn about services being provided by practitioners.
- For those participants working in programs that have been involved in research, the Summit provided an opportunity to hear about results of studies they have been a part of, as well as other studies that are taking place.
- The Summit provided an opportunity to gather data for legislators and donors. Data is important for securing resources and highlighting that investments in early childhood are worthwhile.

April 14, 2010

What is needed to effectively create or strengthen connections between research, practice, policy and other key stakeholders to benefit young children, families and professionals? How can CYFS and the University most effectively support the practice and policy communities? How can these communities inform research taking place at the University? What might be some possible mechanisms for making this happen?

- Regular, on-going communication among key members of the research, practice, and policy communities via structured groups or forums is needed to provide a mechanism for collaboration and dissemination of research, as well as translation of findings in the practice/policy settings.
- Participants indicated that the CYFS Summit provided a format for building networks, building connections, and learning more about what's going on in our own community. We need to work toward bringing campuses together to become a major force in early childhood research, practice and policy reform.
- Research summaries that are written for various audiences (e.g., practitioners, parents, policy makers) with a focus on implications for practice and policy would help to disseminate findings in a way that will translate into practice. We have wonderful pieces of research coming out; how do we weave them together so that people are not feeling overwhelmed? How do we help people select and integrate all the research-based practices that are available?
- Increasing communication across the University and community college campuses and finding ways to link with professionals across the state is needed to inform research and support dissemination and training efforts across Nebraska.
- Conducting more interdisciplinary research is necessary to continue to build a solid evidence base to inform practice.