

Vision, Goals, and History

For more than fifteen years, a dedicated group of early childhood collaborators representing various aspect of the early childhood community in North Dakota have worked to design, develop, and grow the Growing Futures Registry system. Today, the Registry works to promote the growth of a well-qualified, effective early childhood workforce in North Dakota. The following vision and goals have been identified to guide the work of the Registry and advance early childhood professional development in our state.

Vision

A coordinated system that grows the knowledge and competencies of individuals who provider care and education to children ages birth to 8-years, promotes the development of successful careers in early care and education, and strengthens early childhood programs to support healthy developmental and learning outcomes for children.

Goals

- Facilitate coordination of training and education opportunities for the early childhood workforce
- Ensure that training and education approved for professional development aligns with Core Competencies and equips individuals with knowledge, skills, and tools necessary to support children's development and learning
- Provides continual access to all systems components to individuals, organizations, trainers, and regulatory staff regardless of location, income, or background
- Establish training opportunities for the early childhood workforce that are progressive and cumulative, and linked to Growing Futures Career Pathways as well as to the Bright&Early quality rating and improvement system.

Outcomes

- Increased number of individuals who have a valid professional credential or degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development
- Increased number of programs participating in Bright&Early
- Increased number of accredited programs
- Enhanced training infrastructure to support progressive professional development and career growth for the early childhood workforce
- Increased membership in the Registry
- Increase retention of individuals in the early childhood field
- Improved competence, professionalism and recognition of individuals in the early childhood field

History

- 2000: The name "Growing Futures" was adopted by a cross sector group of stakeholders and chaired by the state Head Start Collaboration Office
- 2003-2008: Stakeholder groups met to envision and design the overall professional development system, including the Registry
- 2008: Child Care Aware ND began to test a data system that was designed to operate both CCA training and the Growing Futures Registry.

- 2012: The Growing Futures Registry open, joining a number of other state Registry systems. The North Dakota Department of Human Services implements the policy that all training must be approved through the Registry to be accepted for child care license renewal. The Registry begins to track training attendance and to maintain permanent training records for individuals, and to provide verifiable information to child care licensers.
- 2016: The Registry outgrew its original database and purchased a highly sophisticated data system designed to support the work of state Registry systems. The purchase of this data system meant that North Dakota became a member of the Registry Consortium, a group of states that all operate their state Registry using the same software product.

The transition to the new data system occurred 7-1-2016. At that time, Registry membership had grown to nearly 4000 individuals. Hundreds of hours of training had been approved, tracked, and reported since the Registry opened in 2012. In just four years of operation, the Registry has become established as an integrated component of the state system and the central clearinghouse for information on the state early childhood workforce.

Though the Growing Futures Registry has become a mature state registry system, the work is never complete. As state and federal expectations change, the Registry must continually adapt and expand to better support our field. This means that the history of the Growing Futures Registry is still being written. Growing Futures truly is about growth: growth of individuals, growth of their knowledge and skills, growth of program quality, growth of support systems and services, and of course, growth of the children who count on us every day to meet their developmental and learning needs.