

Thrive by Five WA's Nurturing Families Initiative Communities of Practice Institute

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Figure 1 Free-Form Maps served as a way for participants to get to know the work of their respective organizations.

The Thrive by Five (TBF) Communities of Practice (CoP) Institute was held on November 3-5 at the Edgewater Hotel in Seattle, Washington. The institute was designed to train parent educators and other early learning professionals to facilitate CoPs in their respective organizations. A total of 21 participants representing 13 organizations including a team from the Mississippi Center for Education Innovation (MCEI) participated in the intensive three-day experience. An additional two days of training will follow later in the year.

As described by TBF, “communities of practice are based on the adult learning principle of collective learning within a shared domain. Meaning it is people coming together to learn from each other in a deliberate, facilitated manner around a specific, shared interest.” Thus, the following expectations were set for each CoP Facilitator who completed the initial three-day experience:

- 1 Facilitate 3 in-person gatherings,
- 2 Recruit parent educator members,
- 3 Plan logistics for each gathering (securing space, sending out announcements, receiving RSVPs, food if necessary),
- 4 Communicate regularly with Thrive and group (mainly through email/calls),
- 5 Participate in larger learning community (through online community when implemented and on calls), and
- 6 Participate in evaluation (post gathering data survey and reflective survey for the participants).



Figure 2 Participants engaged in “fishbowl” consultancy. American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters were provided for the hearing impaired.

