



2022

Statewide Infant/Toddler Specialist Networks

A State Profile Compendium



CHILD CARE

State Capacity Building Center



State Profile Compendium

A Closer Look at Statewide Infant Toddler Specialist Networks

Introduction

The Child Care State Capacity Building Center's Infant/Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN) has developed this resource to highlight the approaches states and territories use to operate statewide networks of Infant/Toddler Specialists. This compendium of state profiles is intended to share details regarding the functions, approaches, and promising practices of such networks.

Descriptions of state profiles in this resource were retrieved from a combination of personal interviews with state Infant/Toddler Specialist network representatives, data collection through a questionnaire sent to state infant/toddler leaders, communication with Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) lead agencies, states' child care websites, and other publicly available information describing state infant/toddler care efforts. Minor revisions were made to enhance readability. If you would like to provide updated information for your state or territory's Infant/Toddler Specialist network, please contact us by emailing SCBC_InfantToddlerNetwork@icf.com. This is a living resource, and we will update it periodically to reflect up-to-date information.

This resource is intended to spotlight the practices, supports, and services provided by Infant/Toddler Specialist networks across the country. States and territories can use these resources to learn more about how other states are operating their networks and identify a variety of approaches to different aspects of Infant/Toddler Specialist networks.

Definition

For the purposes of this document, an Infant/Toddler Specialist network is defined as "a state-based system that coordinates the work of Infant/Toddler Specialists" and works with them as "a key support for state-based professional development systems that serve the needs of infants and toddlers in out-of-home care." Infant/Toddler Specialists, in turn, "support the infant/toddler workforce by providing services such as professional development education and training; technical assistance (for example coaching and consultation); resource identification; and community outreach, education and support. The overall goal of an ITSN is to improve caregiver practices and the overall quality of each infant and toddler's developmental experience." [1]

Quick Facts

Statewide Infant/Toddler Specialist Network

- Infant/Toddler Specialist networks are an infant/toddler **quality improvement strategy** designed to support the infant/toddler caregiving workforce.
- Many Infant/Toddler Specialist networks offer a combination of training and **relationship-based professional development supports** via regionally based Infant/Toddler Specialists.
- The overall goal of Infant/Toddler Specialist networks is to support the infant/toddler workforce and **ensure all babies, toddlers, and their families** have access to high-quality care.

1. National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative. (2010). Infant/Toddler Specialist Network Factsheet. Retrieved from <http://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/19568/pdf>

Alabama



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
8



Language Supports Offered
English



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, consultation, and technical assistance



Website
Coming soon

More Details



About This ITSN

The Infant/Toddler Professional Development Network was established in 2015 with Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) quality funds via a contract with the Alabama Department of Human Resources and funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The mission of the Infant/Toddler Professional Development Network, housed at Jefferson State Community College, was improving the professional practice of Alabama's infant/toddler teachers through increases in educational level and skills and personalized professional development plans.

The Infant/Toddler Specialist Network relocated to Child Development Resources at the University of Alabama in 2021. Nine regions across the state contract and house nine Infant/Toddler Specialists with partnering quality enhancement agencies, which serve as a valuable resource for parents and early childhood education providers. The current network strives to elevate the standards of care in early childhood settings by increasing the knowledge, skill level, and confidence of those who care for infants and toddlers. A network of qualified Infant/Toddler Specialists provides coaching, training, consultation, and technical assistance across all Alabama counties and across all service settings (licensed centers, license-exempt centers, family child care, and group care homes).

The Infant/Toddler Specialist Network collaborates with local and statewide partners to best serve the infant/toddler population, including, but not limited to Early Intervention, Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation, Help Me Grow, Parenting Assistance Line, Read Right from the Start, and quality rating and improvement system.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

Specialists offer workshops specific to the unique learning needs of infants and toddlers and informed by evidence-based practices in areas such as supporting child development and learning, building family and community relationships, building meaningful curriculum using developmentally effective approaches, and supporting emotional expression and regulation. Specialists also align trainings with requirements of the state Department of Human Resources to support state licensing requirements.



Coaching Framework

The coaching framework is guided by a blend of existing evidence-based models, including practice-based coaching, supported by Facilitating Attuned Interactions (FAN). A program-created competency framework for infant and toddler teachers is used during the coaching process.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

Infant/Toddler Specialists receive both intensive initial training and ongoing professional development in the areas of infant/toddler development, relationship-based practice, and developmentally appropriate practice. Content areas include but are not limited to practice-based coaching, Classroom Assessment Scoring System, Association for Infant Mental Health Foundations of Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health, Conscious Discipline, and Facilitating Attuned Interactions. Additionally, specialist surveys take place several times a year, which include questions about areas Infant/Toddler Specialists feel they need support, and the results guide professional development planning. Targeted resource books and materials are provided to Infant/Toddler Specialists, and webinars are coordinated as needed when topics arise. Infant/Toddler Specialists meet biweekly with peers and supervisors for administrative supervision, peer learning opportunities, and reflective feedback.



Observation Measurement Tools Used to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses measurement tools including a program-created competency framework for infant/toddler teachers, qualitative and quantitative data on coaching outcomes (such as knowledge and application of teaching practices), the impacts of coaching as an infant/toddler professional, and the collaborative relationship with the Infant/Toddler Specialist.



Evaluation Efforts

The network's logic model outlines the program's purpose, strategies, and expected results. The program collects data that measure how many teachers and programs receive coaching, consultation, technical assistance, and professional development as well as the topic areas addressed. These data also track types of programs (licensed, license-exempt, family child care, group care homes) and where the program is being implemented by the county. This allows the state to ensure equity and access to everyone across Alabama. The state collects quantitative and qualitative data at multiple time points to get information about coaching outcomes, such as knowledge and application of teaching practices, the impact of coaching on infant/toddler professionals, and the collaborative relationship with the Infant/Toddler Specialist. The state collects information about additional training needs and uses it to create future professional development opportunities. The state regularly collects quantitative and qualitative data from Infant/Toddler Specialists and coaches to inform programmatic changes and enhancements as well as future professional development for the Infant/Toddler Specialists.

Quick Facts



Years of Operation
23



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, and mentoring



Website
[Expanding Quality in Infant Toddler Care Initiative](#)

More Details



About This ITSN

The Expanding Quality in Infant and Toddler Care Initiative [EQIT] focuses on increasing the quality and availability of respectful, responsive infant/toddler care across Colorado while supporting local communities to expand their capacity to support infants, toddlers, and their families.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

The premier training is a 48-hour, Colorado-specific training called EQIT. Qualified Infant/Toddler Specialists are also encouraged to provide additional training content for which they are qualified that meets the needs of their community. Currently, these include Touchpoints, The Growing Brain, Trauma Responsive Care, and Relationship-Based Care. Colorado's relationship-based professional development approach has prompted an investment in training staff in child care settings to peer coach or peer mentor one another. This is a new, short-term pilot that the state expects will strengthen the system of support around the early care and education workforce.



Coaching Framework

The Colorado Infant/Toddler Specialist network uses a strengths-based coaching model called Coaching with the EQ RELATE. Qualified Infant/Toddler Specialist coaches are also encouraged to provide additional coaching using the LENA Grow Coaching sequence when this meets a community need.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

Colorado provides an initial, 80-hour Infant/Toddler Specialist Foundation Course and an initial, 20-hour Coaching with the EQ RELATE training. The network provides annual training in topics related to infant/toddler development, infant/toddler child care, and adult learning approaches. Additionally, Colorado has invested system-wide in Reflective Supervision/Consultation (RS/C), and all EQ Infant/Toddler Specialist coaches participate in a minimum of 8 hours of RS/C annually.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

Colorado's theory of change includes an open framework that defines responsive care as a process rather than an outcome. This open framework is called Respect, Reflect, Relate. Because Colorado's focus is continuous growth and change, it does not measure point-in-time achievement but rather dosage and participation in quality supports.



Evaluation Efforts

Colorado measures satisfaction and intent to stay among the infant/toddler early care educator workforce. They are currently in the process of developing a defined logic model.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
10



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, and mentoring



Website
<http://www.floridaearlylearning.com>

More Details



About This ITSN

Each local early learning coalition is staffed with an Infant/Toddler Specialist who serves as a support for providers serving infants and toddlers. These specialists offer coaching, training, and resources to teachers and directors serving the families of these young children. Quality goals are created with program assessment tools (CLASS). They also support the implementation of child assessments to further those goals. These specialists also offer additional training, coaching, and facilitation of communities of practice through the Early Learning Florida program.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

The state uses the Pyramid Model approach, developmental screening, and Florida State University's 10 Components of Quality Care for Infants and Toddlers.



Coaching Framework

The state uses practice-based coaching.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The state has monthly meetings.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses Infant/Toddler CLASS measures, Teaching Pyramid Infant–Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS), and Florida State University's 10 Components of Quality Care for Infants and Toddlers.



Evaluation Efforts

The state uses implementation science.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
13



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, and mentoring



Website
www.accelerateillinoisproviders.com

More Details



About This ITSN

The infant/toddler specialist program is designed to offer caregivers of young children, birth through 3, training and technical assistance. The goal of the program is to ensure young children are cared for in environments that are safe, caring, and developmentally appropriate. The Infant/Toddler Specialist offers services for family child care and center-based programs caring for infants, toddlers, and 2-year-old children.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

All Infant/Toddler Child Care Specialists (ITCCS) can provide Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC) trainings once they are certified. That is a statewide requirement. Specific areas of Illinois also offer training on the Pyramid Model approach.



Coaching Framework

This information is not applicable.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The network traditionally offers one in-person work day per fiscal year and various calls and webinars as needed when topics arise. Illinois also offers refresher trainings, continuous quality improvement trainings, and informal networking time for specialists to learn how others in the state are doing their work. In adapting to needs to support specialists from a distance, book discussions are offered, where targeted resource books are purchased and given to all ITCCS (and Quality Specialists). Then discussion questions and specific chapters are assigned for reading. As a part of the book study, the specialists gather using a distance meeting platform for large- and small-group discussion.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses Environment Rating Scales (ERS).



Evaluation Efforts

ITCCS are trained the same as Quality Specialists as far as providing technical assistance and consultation to providers related to Illinois's quality rating and improvement system (QRIS). ITCCS also enter data into a statewide database.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation

17



Language Supports Offered

English and Spanish



Distance Supports

Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered

Training, resource development, job-aides, articles, and templates



Website

<https://indianaspark.com/>

More Details



About This ITSN

Better Baby Care: Regionally based Infant/Toddler Specialists provide a high level of training and technical assistance to child care providers across the state.

Specialists are available to work with individual teachers to coach and model different teaching techniques in an infant/toddler classroom. In addition, the Infant/Toddler Specialist does the following:

- Works with the coaches for Paths to QUALITY (Indiana's QRIS) to consult with programs, providing feedback and resources to increase the quality of infant/toddler programming
- Aids programs in achieving a breastfeeding designation certification
- Provides support to programs interested in practicing continuity of care and primary caregiving
- Provides families with specialized information regarding quality infant/toddler care and individualized ongoing support to meet their needs as they search for child care



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

Based on the Indiana Self-Assessment Tool (I-SAT), the Infant/Toddler Specialist creates trainings on topics related to the indicators and benchmarks of the I-SAT. Some of the trainings currently offered are listed below:

- Safe Sleep Practices: Reducing Sudden Unexpected Infant Death and Implementation in Child Care Settings, Modules 1 and 2
- Infant and Toddler Writing Activities that Activate Family Experiences
- Establishing Routines for Infants and Toddlers that Promote Health and Safety
- Infant and Toddler Spaces: Design for a Quality Classroom
- Little Connections: Building Relationships and Interactions to Support Infant and Toddler Learning
- Building Routines to Meet the Needs of Infants and Toddlers



Coaching Framework

Indiana's Infant/Toddler Specialist supports SPARK Learning Lab Coaches with Paths to QUALITY (Indiana's QRIS) when consulting with programs and providing feedback and resources to increase the quality of infant/toddler programming.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The Infant/Toddler Specialist attends annual state and national conferences, including Zero to Three, Resources for Infant Educators, and Infant Onward. This individual is also a part of many statewide workgroups whose focus is improving safe sleeping practices and infant/toddler care. SPARK Learning Lab also has an internal Safe Sleep Workgroup whose vision is to commit to involving and engaging every person to use safe sleep practices to eliminate safe sleep violations and infant mortality cases. This group will use data-informed learning and continuous research to provide support for training, resources, and innovation to child care providers, families, our SPARK team, and partners.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

When creating professional development opportunities, the Infant/Toddler Specialist focuses on using best practices. Infant/Toddler Specialists support SPARK Learning Lab Coaches when offering supports to early education and care programs.



Evaluation Efforts

SPARK Learning Lab's internal Safe Sleep Workgroup explores safe sleep data from the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning to determine the needs of educators, specifically looking at reoccurring themes within licensing violations. One of SPARK Learning Lab's defining objectives is to have no repeat safe sleep violations in the early education and care field. At the end of 2021, safe sleep was no longer in the top 10 reported Illinois violations.



Quick Facts

**Years of Operation**

16

**Language Supports Offered**

English and Spanish

**Distance Supports**

Yes

**Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered**

Training and consultation

**Website**

None available

More Details

**About This ITSN**

Child care resource and referral agency child care consultants with infant/toddler expertise provide technical assistance statewide.

**Training or Coaching Supports, or Both**

The child care resource and referral agency system offers trainings that are specific to infant/toddler caregivers, including PITC and Infant/Toddler Pyramid Modules. The Lead Agency also has a contract with Iowa State University to offer the Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) training.

**Coaching Framework**

The state uses practice-based coaching.

**Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists**

Child care resource and referral agency consultant staff work on professional development plans with their supervisors. Each consultant's plans would be unique to their individual professional learning needs.

**Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance**

The state uses Environment Rating Scales (ERS) and TPITOS. ERS is part of Iowa's QRIS, if providers choose to participate. TPITOS is used with programs that choose to be part of our program-wide Pyramid Model cohort program.

**Evaluation Efforts**

The Lead Agency tracks program quality in general through our QRIS, but not specifically just infant/toddler quality efforts.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
6



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish—some of our resources are available in Spanish, including several podcast (Kids These Days) episodes



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training and consultation



Website
None available

More Details



About This ITSN

Kansas Child Care Training Opportunities (KCCTO) has been providing training supports and services to Kansas child care providers, including those working with infants and toddlers, since 1986. The KCCTO–Kansas Inservice Training System (KITS) Infant/Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN) was established in 2016 through a partnership of KCCTO with KITS, a program of the University of Kansas.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

The development of our current library of courses was guided by state initiatives, provider priorities identified through the statewide needs assessment, and trends observed by KCCTO-KITS ITSN Specialists. KCCTO-KITS ITSN currently has 33 courses available for in-person delivery, 42 available for live virtual delivery, and 9 available for online delivery. Understanding behavior; supporting development; and establishing classroom schedules, routines, and transitions are common areas of focus. KCCTO-KITS ITSN staff also provide training support for some of the over 100 online courses available through KCCTO Workforce Development, including Inclusive Care for Infants and Toddlers, Infant and Toddler Child Development, and Reducing the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and Using Safe Sleep Practices. Additional courses are in development on topics based in PITC, inclusion of children with disabilities in child care, and early childhood mental health.

Training is provided by the KCCTO-KITS ITSN through a variety of delivery methods, including online asynchronous and instructor-guided training, live virtual training, and face-to-face community-based training. Professional development advising and referrals to scholarships are available through partner programs (in other words, Child Development Associate, Infant Mental Health Endorsement). Online resources developed or identified by Infant/Toddler Specialists include downloadable on-demand print materials and the Kids These Days Podcast episodes, which are developed by ITSN staff. Child care providers can explore these materials independently or with the support of a specialist. Support of local provider peer-learning groups and maintenance of a statewide community of practice is available for directors of child care programs.

Selection of coaching, mentoring, and consultation were based on the National Association for the Education of Young Children and National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Training and Technical Assistance Glossary (2011):

- “Coaching is a relationship-based process led by an expert with specialized and adult learning knowledge and skills, who often serves in a different professional role than the recipient or recipients. Coaching is designed to build capacity for specific professional dispositions, skills, and behaviors and is focused on goal setting and achievement for an individual or group.
- Mentoring is a relationship-based process between colleagues in similar professional roles, with a more experienced individual with adult learning knowledge and skills, the mentor, providing guidance and examples to the less-experienced protégé or mentee. Mentoring is intended to increase an individual’s personal or professional capacity, resulting in greater professional effectiveness. (Based on this definition, KCCTO-KITS ITSN provides mentoring with the specialist hired by the project).

- Consultation is a collaborative, problem-solving process between an external consultant with specific expertise and adult learning knowledge and skills and an individual or group from one program or organization. Consultation facilitates the assessment and resolution of an issue-specific concern—a program- or organizational-, staff-, or child- or family-related issue—or addresses a specific topic.”

In addition to in-person training, KCCTO-KITS ITSN offers both online and live virtual training. Online training is asynchronous and trainer facilitated. Virtual training is delivered synchronously via Zoom. Technical assistance is provided in the format that best fits the needs of the provider and could include any combination of onsite, email, virtual, or phone contacts.



Coaching Framework

Coaching is founded on characteristics outlined by Rush and Shelden (2020) and is one component of the KCCTO-KITS ITSN service model. This coaching practice has five characteristics: joint planning, observation, action and practice, reflection, and feedback. The KCCTO-KITS ITSN service model is based on adult learning theory and implementation science and is designed around level of intensity. At each level, providers have access to a diverse set of service components. Level 1 services are a proactive approach to general issues of staff development. At level 2, support is more focused and individualized. At level 3, support is more intensive, often including an individualized and written technical assistance plan with a program or provider. These levels of intensity are grounded in the four components of collaboration and linkages, information services, technical assistance, and training. Each of these components has a variety of activities through which knowledge and skill development are achieved and accomplished through research-validated strategies with advising, consultation, and coaching.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

Multiple strategies are used to support the KCCTO-KITS ITSN Specialists and their professional development. Regularly scheduled staff meetings provide the opportunity for specialists to reflect, mentor, and coach each other while focusing on training and technical assistance skills. The Infant/Toddler Specialists are currently engaged in a book study using the Early Childhood Coaching Handbook (Rush & Shelden, 2020). Specialists can self-identify knowledge and skills for improvement. These identified knowledge and skills are often addressed through specific training. Staff are encouraged to participate in professional organizations as members and leaders in those organizations, attend professional conferences, or be members of local, state, or national advisory groups. All KCCTO-KITS ITSN staff have recently participated in and are completing requirements of PITC.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

This information is unavailable.



Evaluation Efforts

Both formative and summative evaluation strategies are used. Each training event has an evaluation specifically associated with that training. Technical assistance plans have specific evaluation paired with the action plan and the identified outcome or goal of that plan. The technical assistance plan also uses goal attainment scaling to measure stability or maintenance of change over time.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
16



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, consultation, and learning communities



Website
www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/mccrn

More Details



About This ITSN

Regional Infant/Toddler Specialists improve child care services for infants and toddlers through specialized training and technical assistance for infant/toddler care providers using Maryland's Healthy Beginnings Guidelines.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

External ownership and development include the following: Zero to Three Critical Competencies for Infant/Toddler Caregivers, Pyramid Model for Infant/Toddler Care, The Growing Brain (at some programs), Healthy Beginnings (a state-developed developmental resource and training), sudden infant death syndrome and sudden unexpected infant death from American Academy of Pediatrics; other trainings are developed by the coaches and specialists based on provider interest and need—curriculum developmental milestones, working with families, QRIS standards, and so on.



Coaching Framework

The state uses practice based coaching and facilitating attuned interactions.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

Learning communities from Zero to Three and conference and webinar participation and learning communities from local, state, and national experts. Infant/toddler coaches meet in a monthly workgroup that is self-directed and run; this is how they connect and identify where and what their goals are; they are currently exploring advocacy and how to elevate the visibility of the infant/toddler caregiver needs in Maryland.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses infant/toddler CLASS measures and ERS.



Evaluation Efforts

Maryland collects data that measure how many teachers, providers, and programs receive coaching services; this includes topic area; goal; time spent coaching, researching, and travelling; and myriad other details. They also use a satisfaction survey. They are extremely interested in using the American Rescue Plan Act to find and fund an impact data system to tell a better narrative of these services.

Michigan



Quick Facts



Years of Operation

11



Language Supports Offered

English



Distance Supports

Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered

Training, coaching, mentoring, and consultation



Website

Not available

More Details



About This ITSN

Quality Improvement Consultants are receiving statewide infant/toddler training to directly support providers serving infants and toddlers. Infant/Toddler Specialists are available in the Great Start to Quality Resource Centers. Michigan's Infant/Toddler Specialist network is robust. The heart and soul of the network is the 14 Infant/Toddler Specialists who coordinate and lead local infant/toddler learning communities.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

The state uses state sponsored opportunities and PITC.



Coaching Framework

The state uses cognitive coaching and practice based coaching.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The state has annual conferences, reflective supervision and practices, and communities of practice.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses infant/toddler CLASS measures and ERS.



Evaluation Efforts

The state uses an evaluation plan and Infant/Toddler Guidance Document.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
5



Language Supports Offered
English, Spanish, and Somali



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training and coaching



Website
<https://www.inclusivechildcare.org/>

More Details



About This ITSN

Minnesota's Infant/Toddler Coaching Program, implemented through the Center for Inclusive Child Care (CICC), began in 2016. CICC offers relationship-based professional development to child care programs focused on supporting the unique needs of infants and toddlers, implementing health and safety best practices, and successfully including children with challenging behaviors or special needs in the child care setting.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

Minnesota offers training and coaching supports to participating programs. The state offers synchronous training supports to coaching partners on communication with families, developmentally appropriate practices, and behavioral guidance. The state also offers an infant mental health series developed with the Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health (statewide mental health association) on introducing caregivers to infant mental health, building relationships with families, and supporting children through separations and transitions. CICC also offers asynchronous training through self-studies accessed in the network website's resource library.



Coaching Framework

Minnesota implements a locally designed hybrid coaching model whereby coaches and providers can use both in-person and online methods to meet their needs and goals over time. Coaches have completed Minnesota's Relationship Based Professional Development Credential, a 45-hour course, which provides a foundation of core knowledge and skills needed by coaches, consultants, and mentors. The credential incorporates Minnesota's Knowledge and Competency framework for Relationship-Based Professional Development Specialists (<https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-7586-ENG>) and aligns with the principles of practice-based coaching.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The state uses reflective consultation, quarterly communities of practice, bimonthly professional development sessions, monthly coach meetings, and conferences.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

There is no formal measure, but some coaches use CLASS.



Evaluation Efforts

Minnesota implements an evaluation plan, based on its theory of change, which includes data collection from multiple sources, including the following: providers' pre- and post-surveys, provider end-of-event surveys, provider interviews, coaches' pre- and post-surveys, coach interviews, coaches' end-of-event surveys, and continuous quality improvement plans, which include action steps around policies, procedures, and the provider's own professional development goals. This is a collaborative process between the coach and the provider with the ultimate goal of improving academic and behavioral outcomes for young children within Minnesota.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
4



Language Supports Offered
English



Distance Supports
Unknown



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, and consultation



Website
<https://www.inclusivechildcare.org/>

More Details



About This ITSN

Quality Improvement Consultants receive statewide infant/toddler training to directly support providers serving infants and toddlers. Infant/Toddler Specialists are available throughout the state.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

The state uses PITC, CLASS assessments, targeted training, resources, and materials provided.



Coaching Framework

The state uses practice-based coaching.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The state has monthly meetings.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses CLASS.



Evaluation Efforts

Through ongoing evaluation, Missouri decided to expand the program to offer services statewide.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
13



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, mentoring, and consultation



Website
www.childcarenj.gov

More Details



About This ITSN

Programs can access services through referral from a Technical Assistance Specialist or Quality Improvement Specialist, Health Consultant, or Licensing Inspector. The network has Health Consultants who support infant/toddler programs and providers. Infant–early childhood mental health consultation is available.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

The Infant/Toddler Specialist network provides the following trainings:

- Growing Brains Training—Zero to Three Curriculum
- Developmentally Appropriate Practices
- Birth to 3 Years Early Learning Standards
- PITC
- ERS overviews

New Jersey has a robust training calendar that Infant/Toddler Caregivers have access to as well. For Relational Health Trainings (including Pyramid Model, Keeping Babies and Child in Mind Training Series, Infant/Toddler Curriculum Training [Creative and High Scope], Ages and Stages Questionnaires Training, Inclusion, and much more) see the following link to the training calendar:
<https://www.grownjkids.gov/TrainingCalendar>.



Coaching Framework

The state uses Early Childhood Coaching Framework by Rush & Shelden.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The Infant/Toddler Specialist networks receive ongoing coaching sessions in small groups and ongoing professional development, as identified annually through needs assessment. All Infant/Toddler Specialist networks go through an extensive orientation series to support their knowledge of the coaching framework. There are communities of practice and peer learning groups, and they also receive training support on their ability to coach infant/toddler classrooms on the Pyramid Model. Most recently, they went through a train-the-trainer session on the Growing Brains Curriculum to train programs with which they work.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses ERS and some professionals in New Jersey are reliable in the TPITOS.



Evaluation Efforts

A number of programs that enroll in and finish the intensive technical assistance process follow the protocol. In addition, pre– and post–ERS data are now being captured in the New Jersey Child Care Information System.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
20



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, and consultation



Website
www.childcarenj.gov

More Details



About This ITSN

The New York Infant/Toddler Resource Network was established in 2002 with Child Care and Development Fund quality funds via contracts with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Seven regional Infant/Toddler technical assistance centers across New York State, located within host child care resource and referral agencies and staffed by Infant/Toddler Specialists, serve as a valuable resource for parents and child care providers. The Infant/Toddler Specialists in each region of the state provide training and technical assistance to promote an understanding of the importance of and strategies for improving the quality of care for infants and toddlers to meet their unique needs. The New York Infant/Toddler Resource Network reaches out to communities, child care providers, and families to promote safe, nurturing environments for the youngest New Yorkers. It emphasizes the high-quality early care that's essential to a child's long-term social, emotional, and intellectual development.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

The state uses PITC, ERS assessments, targeted training, resources, and materials provided.



Coaching Framework

The state uses the Pyramid Model and interest-driven learning frameworks and coaching (as taught by the New York Association for the Education of Young Children).



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

Infant/Toddler Specialists receive an abundance of support. Quarterly regional technical assistance, monthly Infant/Toddler Specialist network meetings, two annual learning retreats, a local annual conference (hosted by the New York Association for the Education of Young Children), quarterly newsletters, Early Intervention Specialists' collaboration, and Technical Assistance Alignment Workgroup.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

- Infant/toddler CLASS measures
- ERS
- TPITOS
- Devereux Early Childhood Assessment and Behavior Incident Report



Evaluation Efforts

Success is measured through evaluation of individual training and technical assistance sessions. Individual regions may use their own. In relation to the Pyramid Model, a data system was developed by New York State and is used for implementing programs.

North Carolina



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
17



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, and consultation



Website
<https://www.childcareservices.org/programs/itqep/>

More Details



About This ITSN

The Infant/Toddler Quality Enhancement Project's goal is to improve the quality and availability of infant/toddler care in North Carolina. The project team serves all 100 North Carolina counties through Infant/Toddler Specialists housed in regional lead child care resource and referral agencies. A Project Manager, employed by the Child Care Services Association, provides leadership and oversight of the project.

Specialists provide services statewide, including technical assistance for child care programs and other community consultants and training specific to infant/toddler care best practices. The project is monitored to ensure consistency, equity, and quality of services delivered statewide, and the impact is evaluated by several measurable outcomes. The Project Manager and Specialists contribute articles for use in local and regional publications and serve on a variety of state and local committees to provide support for birth to 3 initiatives.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

The state uses PITC-related trainings, some Pyramid Model trainings, developmental screening and monitoring, orientation to infant and toddler care, and multiple other training topics.



Coaching Framework

The state uses practice based coaching.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

Specialists are provided fiscal resources for them to choose professional development that meets their unique needs.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

1. Infant or toddler CLASS measures
2. ERS
3. TPITOS
4. Quality of Care for Infants and Toddlers
5. Zero to Three Competencies and Exploring Others



Evaluation Efforts

The state uses a logic model and evaluation plan.



Quick Facts

**Years of Operation**

18

**Language Supports Offered**

English

**Distance Supports**

Yes

**Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered**

Training, coaching, mentoring, and consultation

**Website**Kslade@occcra.org

More Details

**About This ITSN**

Zero-To-Three Critical Competencies, ITERS, 17 state-developed, state-sponsored opportunities with PITC influences (topics include biting, brain development, cultural diversity, story time, environments, observation, heuristic play, inclusion, lesson planning, primary care, routines, sensory/art/science, guiding behavior, temperament, play, understanding infant/toddler behavior, and transitions), Early Learning and Development Standards, and some Specialists, may train on homelessness in the early childhood education program.

**Training or Coaching Supports, or Both**

None are available.

**Coaching Framework**

A child care resource and referral agency statewide technical assistance model may be used by some agencies.

**Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists**

The state uses Zero-to-Three Growing Brain; ongoing book studies—cohort of learners; professional development on technical assistance; coaching and mentoring; training on ITERS, Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3, and Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional; Zero-to-Three Critical Competencies coaching; quarterly statewide specialist meetings to increase knowledge and application; and frequent sharing of virtual resources. Child care resource and referral agencies may choose to have their Specialist PITC certified.

**Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance**

- Infant or toddler CLASS measures
- ERS

**Evaluation Efforts**

This information is not applicable.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
3



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, consultation, and focused child care networks



Website
Not applicable

More Details



About This ITSN

Each Infant/Toddler Specialist conducts a focused child care network—Infant/Toddler Early Educators complete a memorandum of understanding and receive incentive funds for participating. The networks run for 2 years and require educators to attend monthly 1:1 consultation and a monthly training focused on infant/toddler topics.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

Oregon provides training with Zero to Three Critical Competencies and a variety of other trainings based on early educator and community needs.



Coaching Framework

A child care resource and referral agency statewide technical assistance model may be used by some agencies.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The state has communities of practice, individual meetings, and ongoing opportunities for professional development based on identified strengths and needs of the group.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses infant/toddler CLASS measure, ERS, and TPITOS.



Evaluation Efforts

The state uses a logic model and periodic individual check ins to see where things are at and how it's going. Infant/Toddler Specialists use a technical assistance data log to enter goals, meetings, trainings, and so on that they have with providers.

Pennsylvania



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
14 +



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, and consultation



Website
<https://www.pakeys.org/>

More Details



About This ITSN

Pennsylvania supports technical assistance related to infants and toddlers in four ways. The first is child care health consultation, which supports the integration of health and safety practices in infant/toddler rooms. The second model, STARS technical assistance, can address general practices and supports around program structure and infant/toddler environments. The third model, infant/toddler technical assistance, is more in-depth technical assistance to further enhance activities and relationships in the provider's setting and relationships with parents. The final model is Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC). IECMHC help children, families, and child care providers through a reflective, collaborative, problem-solving and capacity-building relationship, mental health consultation encourages adults to build stronger relationships with infants and young children so that they feel safe, supported, and valued.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

The Infant/Toddler Specialist network coordinated by Pennsylvania Key and the Office of Child Development and Early Learning provides training in PITC, the Pyramid Model, Strengthening Families, Mind in the Making, Reflective Practice, and Center for Early Literacy Learning.



Coaching Framework

Information about the Coach Approach can be viewed at <https://www.pakeys.org/get-professional-development/coaching/>.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

This information is unavailable.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

Pennsylvania embeds an expectation for Program Observation into the state's QRIS, Keystone STARS (STARS). Providers must select from a list of tools and as part of the STARS designation process work with the quality coach to review and develop a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Plan. Approved tools to guide CQI can be viewed at <https://www.pakeys.org/get-professional-development/coaching/>.



Evaluation Efforts

This information is unavailable.

South Carolina



Quick Facts



Years of Operation

15



Language Supports Offered

English



Distance Supports

Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered

Training, coaching, consultation, and mentoring



Website

www.scpitc.org

More Details



About This ITSN

The South Carolina Program for Infant/Toddler Care provides training paired with coaching strategies that encourage self-reflection and build on the strengths of individual programs and teachers to promote a responsive, relationship-based approach to infant/toddler care. Professional development topics focus on enhancing teachers' knowledge of child development and building strategies that support a relationship-oriented understanding of children's behavior and learning. All Infant/Toddler Specialists who deliver these intensive services have earned PITC certification, are considered certified trainers by the South Carolina Endeavors, and have experience working in early care and education settings.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

These include training and coaching on PITC concepts and practices, infant/toddler health and safety (for example, promoting safe sleep, promoting infant/toddler feeding and nutrition with a focus on choking hazards, and reducing the use of restrictive equipment), breastfeeding-friendly child care designation training and coaching, and the South Carolina PITC demonstration site. Infant/Toddler Specialists provide the monthly trainings to a cohort of local child care programs to facilitate peer learning and camaraderie among local child care providers.



Coaching Framework

South Carolina uses a state-developed model similar to practice-based coaching. Infant/Toddler Specialists provide a monthly training. Then, Infant/Toddler Specialists follow up with biweekly observation and coaching. In this observation and coaching, Infant/Toddler Specialists observe to ensure teachers carry out practices. Infant/Toddler Specialists also provide strengths-based, reflective coaching to highlight what teachers are doing well. The state also provides a parallel track for directors to receive monthly coaching. The purpose is to support directors in carrying out PITC's Six Essential Program Practices and other topics related to managing and supervising staff, enhancing adult relationships around children, and so on.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The state provides annual advanced training, monthly group reflective supervision, and other trainings on related topics to support and enhance teachers' practices (for example, Facilitating Attuned Interactions and using motivational interviewing).



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses specific infant/toddler indicators developed for the state QRIS standards as an informal measure.



Evaluation Efforts

South Carolina partners with researchers from the University of South Carolina by conducting a formal evaluation, which will impact its logic model and theory of change. It will update this system after the formal evaluation.

South Dakota



Quick Facts



Years of Operation

25



Language Supports Offered

English



Distance Supports

Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered

Training, coaching, mentoring, consultation, and community education



Website

<https://sdece.org/>

More Details



About This ITSN

Infant/Toddler Specialists are housed within the five early childhood enrichment (ECE) offices. The following services are available:

- Professional development opportunities specific to infant/toddler care on topics such as infant development in language, motor and social skills, learning environments, relationships with families, and health and safety
- Onsite technical assistance
- Site observations
- Telephone consultations for child care staff and parents
- A resource lending library with professional resources, information, curriculum planning ideas, and infant/toddler toys and equipment



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

South Dakota's Infant/Toddler Specialists provide training and coaching supports to individuals working in infant/toddler classrooms. Training content is based on research and evidence-based materials such as the Pyramid Model, Program for Infant/Toddler Care, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Learn the Signs. Act Early., National Center for Shaken Baby Syndrome, American Academy of Pediatrics, and so on.



Coaching Framework

The state uses practice-based coaching.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

This information is unknown.



Observation Measurement Tools Used to Support Training and Technical Assistance

Infant/Toddler Specialists within South Dakota's ECE system may use tools such as the Environment Rating Scales, Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA), Teaching Pyramid Infant/Toddler Observation Scale (TPITOS) and Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS). Infant/Toddler Specialists use these tools on a case-by-case basis to provide additional information to support individual teachers and program goals and needs.



Evaluation Efforts

The state uses pre- and post-surveys to measure knowledge learned in infant/toddler classes. The state measures technical assistance and coaching interventions using forms collecting data to measure provider actions based on the behavioral change theory model.

Tennessee



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
20



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, and consultation



Website
Unavailable

More Details



About This ITSN

As part of the Tennessee child care resource and referral agency network, 17 infant/toddler coaches (specialists) provide high-quality training, coaching, and technical assistance to child care educators caring for children birth to 3 years and provide families with information and resources about accessing quality child care services in all 95 counties. The infant/toddler coaches provide a variety of services that include the following:

- Offering onsite training, coaching, technical assistance, and modeling of quality practices to support optimal child development
- Facilitating peer learning groups with early child care educators and directors
- Conducting the infant/toddler specialization program, with each training session providing a deep dive into the content, intensive classroom coaching, strategies to use in the classroom, and information to share with families that will enable them to use this information at home
- Coaching to support the state observation tool
- Partnering with state regulation licensing consultants for targeted technical assistance



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

Tennessee provides training, coaching, and technical assistance to infant and toddler programs. Training topics include safe sleep, abusive head trauma, social-emotional development, oral language and early literacy development, brain development, protective factors, health and safety, classroom environments, early learning and development standards, nurturing relationships, and more.



Coaching Framework

The state uses practice based and transformational frameworks.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The state uses reflective supervision, an annual conference, professional development trainings, PITC, and Zero to Three Social and Emotional Development micro train-the-trainer opportunities.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses its state monitoring tool.



Evaluation Efforts

There are none available currently.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
20



Language Supports Offered
English and Spanish



Distance Supports
Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Training, coaching, consultation, and mentoring



Website
None available

More Details



About This ITSN

The Lead Agency provides statewide technical assistance to programs addressing the unique needs of infants and toddlers. Specifically, the Lead Agency contracts with the Children's Center and Care About Childcare agencies at Weber State University and Utah Valley University to employ six Infant/Toddler Specialists to provide statewide technical assistance.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

Infant/Toddler Specialists work with child care programs that are receiving the Lead Agency's birth-to-3 grants. They use a variety of technical assistance approaches that include the following:

- Conducting ITERS observations
- Providing in-person feedback to child care center program directors and caregivers
- Providing onsite technical assistance, coaching, and modeling of best practice and age-appropriate guidance techniques
- Sharing room arrangement ideas
- Supporting caregiver and child problem-solving skills
- Guiding purchasing age-appropriate materials and equipment
- Facilitating training, small group workshops, and director support groups
- Providing caregivers with resources and support for children who exhibit difficult behaviors
- Listening to and reflecting concerns of program staff

In addition, there are several options for state-sponsored career ladder infant/toddler training.



Coaching Framework

The state uses problem based coaching.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

The state has conferences; reflective supervision; and monthly meetings to meet, discuss issues, and problem-solve.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

The state uses ERS.



Evaluation Efforts

Utah has outcome measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. For example, it looks at baseline scores and scores after intervention, how many providers completed the Infant/Toddler Endorsement training, and so on.



Quick Facts



Years of Operation

13



Language Supports Offered

English and Spanish



Distance Supports

Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered

Training, coaching, and consultation



Website

www.va-itsnetwork.org

More Details



About This ITSN

The Virginia Infant/Toddler Specialist network strives to achieve excellence in early care by increasing the knowledge level and skills of those who care for infants and toddlers, whether in family child care homes or in center-based programs. It promotes high-quality teacher child interactions and the use of quality curriculum, which includes focusing on the social-emotional development of infants and toddlers and providing consultation on challenging behaviors of individual infants and toddlers in care. It also links to existing community resources that support healthy, safe, and nurturing care for children, birth–36 months. VA-ITSN prioritizes their services to publicly funded programs that serve infants and toddlers, in alignment with the goals of the Unified Virginia Quality Birth to Five Measurement and Improvement System.

Infant/toddler mental health services are also provided by the network. These are current practices, and some could change in the upcoming year. The network is supported by the Child Care and Development Block Grant through the Virginia Department of Education.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

These include high-quality interactions aligned with infant/toddler CLASS; Virginia's Birth to Five Early Learning Standards; the Pyramid Model and Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning; Ages and Stages Questionnaires, Third Edition; LENA Grow; Ages & Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional, Second Edition; Virginia Department of Education Infant and Toddler Endorsement Courses; director-focused trainings; Celebrating Babies and Tots institutes; and 1-2-3 READ! early literacy training. Virginia also provides professional development, support, and scholarships; provider recognition; communities of practice; newsletters; a website to include ask-the-expert opportunities and blogs; involvement of families with children with challenging behaviors; and referrals.



Coaching Framework

Virginia incorporates practice-based coaching into its network-developed model, which includes observation and assessment on teacher-child interactions and learning environments, quality improvement plans, individualized coaching and support materials, and feedback provided after services conclude. They have the option to use LENA Grow. Specialists are trained in practice-based coaching.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

These include annual conferences, reflective supervision, webinars, technical assistance events, support for individual professional development, Virginia Infant/Toddler Specialist network orientation, training for reliability of instruments, Regional Office specialist conference calls throughout the year, and PITC.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

These include infant/toddler CLASS measures, ERS, TPITOS and an Infant and Toddler Environment Checklist, and a health and safety checklist.



Evaluation Efforts

These include infant/toddler CLASS observations; use of Virginia Department of Education approved infant/toddler curriculum, ITERS and Family Child Care Environment Rating Scale scores; TPITOS scores; health and safety checklists; quality improvement plan goal attainment; Infant and Toddler Environment Checklist (early literacy); training knowledge measures; pre- and post-survey family questionnaire; self-reported improvements; self-assessment of knowledge and comfort using strategies; qualitative documentation; number of website visits and pageviews; and obtainment of endorsements, certificates, and credentials by providers.

Washington



Quick Facts



Years of Operation

10



Language Supports Offered

English and Spanish



Distance Supports

Yes



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered

Training, coaching, and consultation



Website

Under development

More Details



About This ITSN

In addition to providing training, coaching, and consultation for infant/toddler professionals, Washington's ITSN also provides material supports, such as classroom materials and Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) kits. Washington also codeveloped a remote implementation of their coaching strategies and continued to provide targeted coaching services based on filmed classroom observations from 2020 to 2022.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

These include Pyramid Model, ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE, Flip It, Conscious Discipline, and Filming Interactions to Nurture Development (FIND).



Coaching Framework

This includes relationship based, practice based, and FIND (developed as a state model).



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

These include communities of practice for FIND, FIND training and certification, ASQ training and certification, and practice-based coaching series.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

Washington is implementing a new QRIS measurement that is a state model. It is based on a self-assessment, submitted videos based on Washington's Early Learning and Development Guidelines and Core Competencies, and records review of policies and practices related to Washington's quality standards.



Evaluation Efforts

These include qualitative data collection and case studies.

West Virginia



Quick Facts



Years of Operation
16



Language Supports Offered
English



Distance Supports
ITSN offers both self-paced online trainings, virtual webinars, and virtual coaching



Types of Professional Learning Supports Offered
Module series trainings, technical assistance, and coaching



Website
<https://www.wvit.org/>

More Details



About This ITSN

West Virginia's ITSN is composed of 12 specialists located in child care resource and referral agencies around the state. Specialists are required to have a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Development or a related field and one year of experience working with infants and toddlers. All specialists complete certification with PITC and West Virginia's Infant/Toddler Mental Health Endorsement. The group is facilitated by the ITSN Coordinator located in the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources, Bureau for Family Assistance, Division of Early Care and Education.

West Virginia ITSN Vision

Caregivers of infants and toddlers will understand the importance of lifelong learning and professional development and understand that their own professional goals are the key to providing high quality care to West Virginia's infants and toddlers.

West Virginia ITSN Mission

The ITSN will provide professional development opportunities, technical assistance, and coaching to assist infant/toddler caregivers in providing West Virginia's youngest children with supportive, nurturing environments. We will help these caregivers foster responsive relationships with both children and their families, which will support our children in achieving optimal developmental outcomes.

The group meets monthly to debrief and evaluate the latest project, discuss upcoming activities, and network with peers to reflect on current work. In addition, extended planning meetings are held twice a year to review accomplishments, address challenges, and build relationships among the team.



Training or Coaching Supports, or Both

The Infant/Toddler Specialists offer a 54.5-hour hybrid module course for caregivers that includes 48 hours of classroom instruction, 6 hours of onsite technical assistance, and 6.5 hours of self-paced online instruction. This course meets the West Virginia Child Care Licensing Regulations requirement for 40 hours of specific infant/toddler training to work with this age group. The training includes the development of a professional portfolio and proof-of-learning exercises to demonstrate competency with the learning objectives. Knowing that director buy-in is of particular importance to successful implementation of the caregiver learning objectives, the series begins with a required 11.5-hour hybrid module training for the administrator of the site. This includes 5 hours of classroom instruction and 6.5 hours of self-paced online training. Proof-of-learning exercises ensure mastery of the learning objectives.

A second 45-hour module training focusing on relationship-based care is also offered. This training requires continued work on the professional portfolio, as well as the development of a practicum based on the participant's choice of four topics: Pyramid Model, Primary Caregiving, Child Portfolio, or Program Evaluation.

Monetary stipends are awarded to the participants upon completion of each of these module's series. The child care site also receives a stipend to purchase any needed resources to implement learning objectives or improve health and safety issues.

The Infant/Toddler Specialists provide coaching and technical assistance on a variety of topics, as requested by the child care program. These sessions can be a one-time face-to-face or virtual visit or a series of visits over an extended period depending on the needs of the caregiver. Two particular areas of coaching currently include implementation of the new PITC curriculum to meet higher quality standards for the Tiered Reimbursement Program and support for achieving a Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care designation.

The Traveling Resource and Information Library System (TRAILS), also located in the child care resource and referral agencies, joins with the ITSN to offer specialized training and technical assistance to family child care providers who care for babies. This program is referred to as Traveling Resources for Infants Program (TRIP). This initiative reaches out to family child care providers where this age group is often found and who may have limited access to professional development events. During the TRIP visits, topics such as safe sleep and other health and safety practices are discussed.

The ITSN offers the Great Beginnings Infant/Toddler Conference annually, with topics and speakers appealing specifically to this age group. Sessions offered may include basic child development, developmentally appropriate practice, challenging behavior, trauma-informed care, supporting resilience, and self-care. The showcase of the event is a model room display with every item needed to furnish an infant/toddler room. At the end of the event, all the resources are divided and sent home with the participants.

Based on needs assessments and field observations, the ITSN may offer one day summits around the state on a topic of identified concern. Summit topics include primary care, improving quality of care, family engagement, and infant/toddler wellness.

The ITSN often provides professional development to the child care licensing and regulatory staff to keep them informed about the latest research and best practices for the infant/toddler age group.

To help providers in many aspects of quality care, the ITSN collaborates with other agencies in the state in offering professional development and learning opportunities. These agencies include the West Virginia Infant/Toddler Mental Health Association, West Virginia Birth to Three Early Intervention Program, the Apprenticeship for Child Development Specialist Program, the West Virginia Breastfeeding Alliance, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and KEYS 4 HealthyKids. [HA1]This section will need some formatting work.



Coaching Framework

The ITSN relies heavily on a relationship-based professional development and coaching model. The process begins with focused observation during Technical Assistance for Caregivers of Infants and Toddlers (TACIT) visits that occur as part of the module training experience or needs-based technical assistance requests. This is followed by creating an action plan involving the director, caregiver, and specialist. As steps are taken to meet the desired goal, the triad meets regularly to discuss progress and reflect on what is working well and what still needs improvement. Accomplishments, as well as challenges identified, are acknowledged.

Constant Hine's book, *Transformational Coaching for Early Childhood Educators*, was recently explored in a monthly book study to expand the specialists' skill sets surrounding coaching.



Ongoing Supports for Infant/Toddler Specialists

Members of the ITSN are afforded many opportunities for advanced specialized training, such as infant mental health, PITC, ITES-3, CLASS for Toddlers, infant massage, Pickler Intensive Institute, and Zero to Three's The Growing Brain. Many of the specialists have attended training on West Virginia's approved curriculum for the tiered reimbursement program, including Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos; Tender Care and Early Learning, published by High Scope; and PITC's new curriculum.

A valuable benefit to the group is the networking and camaraderie of the group itself. Peer relationships and strong friendship bonds are vital in managing the everyday difficulties of the field and emotional stress when dealing with the trauma of others.



Observation Measurement Tools Use to Support Training and Technical Assistance

Currently, the ITSN uses ITES-3 to support module series training, coaching, and technical assistance.



Evaluation Efforts

As West Virginia moves forward with providing a child care credential with a specialization in infant/toddler care, evaluation of understanding of learning objectives will be assessed using a proof-of-learning exercise. This may be done through use of a practicum, pre- or post-observations, or a test requiring a successful completion of 80 percent. These results, along with the baseline ITERS-3 results, will guide the development of future training and technical assistance to sustain the effort to improve quality of care for all children.

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The State Capacity Building Center (SCBC) works with state and territory leaders and their partners to create innovative early childhood systems and programs that improve results for children and families. The SCBC is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care.

ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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