



# Checklist/Questions: Creating Training and Technical Assistance Strategies That Address the Needs of Infants and Toddlers

The following questions are designed to help you consider the challenges to designing training and technical assistance that support best practices in infant and toddler child care settings. All questions may not be applicable to your plans for improving the quality of care. The questions and tables provide an aid for beginning or continuing to define and implement quality infant and toddler care in your State or Territory.

## Identify Sources of Funding for Infant and Toddler Quality Activities

- ◆ How much Child Care and Development (CCDF) funding does your State or Territory currently use on allowable infant and toddler quality activities? Examples of allowable quality activities include improving or implementing the State's or Territory's early learning standards, training and professional development of the infant and toddler workforce, improving the quality of infant and toddler child care programs, and other quality activities that are measurable.
- ◆ Will the three percent infant and toddler set-aside provide new funding that can support activities for improving infant and toddler child care programs?

## Identify Allowable Infant and Toddler Training and Technical Assistance Quality Activities

Which of the following activities does your State or Territory currently implement to improve the quality of infant and toddler care?

- ◆ Offering training and professional development for of the child care workforce.
- ◆ Improving or implementing the early learning and development guidelines (ELDGs).
- ◆ Enhancing the quality of programs through technical assistance (e.g., coaching, mentoring, consultation, statewide networks of qualified infant and toddler specialists, coordination with early intervention specialists, etc.).

How can your State or Territory fund allowable quality infant and toddler training and technical assistance activities?

- ◆ What funding is currently used for these activities?
- ◆ How will you fund the improvement of current activities or development of new activities?
  - Decreasing or eliminating current activities that are not considered allowable (e.g., activities that cannot be accurately assessed for effectiveness, that do not have quality assurance, that are not aligned with your quality improvement requirements, that are redundant)?



- Using the expanded reserve of CCDF funds that are required to use for enhancing the quality of child care settings?
- Using the set-aside for infants and toddlers?

## Training and Professional Development for the Infant and Toddler Workforce

Teachers and support staff (e.g., substitutes, float staff) are critical for developing and sustaining high-quality infant and toddler programs.

- ◆ What are your current professional development and training requirements for infant and toddler teachers and support staff in your State or Territory?
  - Preservice.
  - In-service for entry personnel.
  - Annual.
- ◆ Where are those requirements located?
  - Licensing.
  - A quality rating and improvement system.
  - Other quality initiatives.
- ◆ Do the requirements include age-specific education or training for infant and toddler teachers and support staff? For example, do they cover the following:
  - Addressing different development stages and needs between birth and 3 years;
  - Developing secure attachments between children and caregivers;
  - Understanding and supporting children's social-emotional development;
  - Setting behavioral expectations that are developmentally appropriate;
  - Using individualized, age-appropriate techniques to manage challenging behavior; and
  - Recognizing and reporting signs and symptoms of trauma.
- ◆ Do the requirements ensure that teachers and support staff possess critical knowledge and skills? For example, do they cover the following:
  - Conducting developmental and behavioral screenings and assessments;
  - Fostering healthy social-emotional development;
  - Implementing positive strategies to manage behavior;
  - Fostering secure attachment between children and caregivers;
  - Delivering culturally responsive care; and
  - Developing self-reflective skills that support identification of potential biases toward children and families.



- ◆ Are education and training accessible to infant and toddler teachers and support staff? For example, do they provide the following:
  - Different delivery systems (e.g., online courses, college classrooms, training in child care facilities, webinars);
  - Various geographic locations (e.g., face-to-face classes or training sessions);
  - Flexible scheduling (e.g., within or outside the normal operating time of child care facilities);
  - Materials and courses that support English language learners;
  - Frequent offerings;
  - Affordable options (e.g., free classes or scholarships);
  - Literacy support; and
  - Entry requirements for college courses.
- ◆ How frequently are college course content and trainings, required by the State or Territory, reviewed and updated to align with current infant and toddler research and best practices?
- ◆ Do required professional development and trainings provide a logical progression for the infant and toddler workforce (e.g., trainings provide a progression of advanced materials over time to increase staff's knowledge and effectiveness in their work; trainings provide encouragement and incentives for the infant and toddler workforce to advance their education)?

### Early Learning and Development Guidelines

- ◆ Does your State or Territory have early learning and development guidelines (ELDGs) or early learning standards that cover children from birth to 3 years?
- ◆ Do these guidelines outline fundamental components of high-quality infant and toddler care:
  - Knowledgeable and skilled caregivers;
  - Sensitive and responsive care;
  - Continuity of care;
  - Family engagement;
  - Cultural competency;
  - Individualized care with small groups and primary caregivers;
  - Inclusion of children with special needs; and
  - Healthy and safe environments.



- ◆ Are your current ELDGs presented in a user-friendly format that allows infant and toddler caregivers to easily locate information and materials that are specific to children ages birth to 3?
- ◆ Have your ELDGs been updated to reflect current research and best practices for infants and toddlers?
- ◆ Are the state educational agency and the state advisory council on early childhood education and care aligned in their support and use of the ELDGs?
- ◆ Do your current methods of child assessment align with the ELDGs?
- ◆ Do your current assessments of infant and toddler program quality examine the program's use of ELDGs?
- ◆ Are there continuing opportunities for professional development on the effective implementation of ELDGs?

### **Technical Assistance for the Infant and Toddler Workforce: Coaching and Mentoring–Consultation Services**

- ◆ Who are the professionals providing training and technical assistance to infant and toddler caregivers in your State or Territory?
- ◆ Has your State or Territory identified a consultation model or infant and toddler specialist network system to address the critical areas of training and support for infant and toddler caregivers?
- ◆ Is there a statewide, regional, and/or local network to coordinate consultants' efforts to do the following?
  - Improve communication among consultants across multiple disciplines;
  - Cultivate collaboration;
  - Increase efficiency;
  - Decrease redundancy; and
  - Enhance the delivery and assessment of high-quality care.
- ◆ Does this network have clear avenues to connect and share information across consultants from multiple disciplines who are serving infants and toddlers (e.g., mental health, early intervention, family support)?
- ◆ Are coaching and mentoring opportunities individualized to address the specific needs of infant and toddler caregivers?
- ◆ Have specific knowledge, skills, competencies, and dispositions been identified for coaches and mentors who work in infant and toddler settings?
- ◆ Are these knowledge, skills, competencies, and dispositions reflective of current research and best practices?
- ◆ Is there a system to track, monitor, and evaluate the quality of coaching, mentoring, and other consultation offered in infant and toddler programs?
- ◆ Are there measures in place to track the performance and efficacy of consultation services?
- ◆ How do programs receive information about available consultation services?



- ◆ What systems or processes are in place to assess the effectiveness consultation services?

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