Supporting Family Child Care Providers Who Serve Mixed-Age Groups with Infants and Toddlers

Hot Topics Webinar
June 20, 2018
Greeting

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SCBC Infant Toddler Specialist,
Region I

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Poll #1: Introductions

◆ Please select the role that fits you best
Agenda

◆ Set the stage: Share relevant research about family child care (FCC)
◆ Examine the needs of infants and toddlers in mixed-age groups
◆ Share technical assistance strategies to support FCC providers in meeting the needs of children in mixed-age groups
Setting the Stage

Why Is FCC Important?
How Is FCC Unique?
What Are the Characteristics of FCC Providers?
Percentage of Infants and Toddlers in Subsidized FCC in 2015

- 32 percent of infants in subsidized child care were in FCC settings*
- 28 percent of toddlers in subsidized child care were in FCC settings*

*These settings include child home, family home, and group home data.

Benefits of Family Child Care

- Provides opportunities to build/deepen positive relationships over time
- Provides opportunities for cultural consistency
- Is convenient for parents
- Is an economic asset for communities

Challenges and Opportunities

- There are multiple standards and regulations
- Providers may feel isolated
- Providers may lack access to information and resources
- Providers may experience role burden
- Providers work long hours
- There are mixed-aged groups

How We Can Help Providers Meet the Needs of Infants and Toddlers in a Mixed-Age Group

Ensure They Understand the Development of Children from Infancy Through Age 12
Infants and Toddlers Need ...

- Meaningful experiences and interactions with primary caregivers
- Caregivers who understand the rapid developmental shifts that occur from birth to age 3
- Predictable care that is individualized to their needs, abilities, and interests
- Caregivers who partner with families and who provide care in culturally responsive ways
Relationship-Based Care

- Individualized care
- Inclusion of children with special needs
- Culturally sensitive care
- Continuity of care
- Small group size
- Primary care

Preschoolers Need …

- Opportunities to build confidence and competence in the following:
  - Emerging social skills
  - Language development
  - Cognitive concepts
  - Problem solving
  - Gross motor skills
School-Age Children Need …

- Focus on voice and choice
- Developmentally appropriate space and activities
  - Learning stations for science, math, literacy, and the arts
  - Listening stations for books and music
  - Online activities
  - Homework support
Why We Must Consider the Unique Needs of Infants and Toddlers in FCC Settings

- Social relationships that are responsive to an infant’s cues, needs, and interests promote optimal brain development*
- Relationship-based care buffers infants from the effects of stress*
- Learning evolves through relationships and responsive caregiving**

Sources:


Why We Must Consider the Unique Needs of Infants and Toddlers in FCC Settings

“Learning starts in infancy, long before formal education begins … Early learning begets later learning and early success breeds later success … ” —James J. Heckman & Henry Schultz

Poll #2

◆ How much has your understanding improved regarding meeting the needs of infants and toddlers in mixed-age groups?
Strategies for Caring for Children in Mixed-Age Groups

Strategies for FCC Providers
Considerations for Working with Mixed-Age Groups in FCC

Environment and materials
- Ensure materials meet a wide range of developmental needs
- Ensure the environment promotes health and safety

Create a flexible schedule
- Identify “must do” activities
- Plan transitions

Plan ahead
- Expect the unexpected
- Collaborate with families
- Consider opportunities for peer-to-peer learning
Strategies for Caring for Children in Mixed-Age Groups

Training and Technical Assistance Strategies
Technical Assistance Strategies

- Provide relationship-based training/technical assistance
- Promote connections with peers and community resources
- Offer focused professional development
Welcome our presenters

Jen Cortes
Program Coordinator
Early Childhood Leadership Institute
Center for Access, Success and Equity
Rowan University, NJ

Lisa Matter
Expanding Quality in Infant Toddler Care Initiatives
Manager
Child Care Quality Initiatives
Denver, CO
Training Infant Toddler Specialists to Employ a Strengths-Based Coaching Model
Coaching in Context

Colorado Coaching Consortium

Competencies for Early Childhood Coaches

Colorado Coaching Credential
Coaching in Context

Complete 48-hour EQIT Course

Complete 80-hour Infant Toddler Specialist Foundation Course/Training of Trainers

Begin Teaching 48-hour EQIT Course
The EQ Initiative: Experiences for Infants and Toddlers

RELATE:
Moving Forward
Continuation of quality practices,
Planning change where needed,
Planning future meetings
and/or observations

RESPECT:
Observation
Planning the observation,
observing and documenting

REFLECT:
Depth of Understanding
Mutual exploration of the observation and documentation
Why, How and What we Coach:

1 full day of Reflective Practice focused on the Why of topics in our coaching manual: Trust, Responsiveness, Cultural Responsiveness/Humility, Strengths-Based, Inquiry Stance*

1 full day of practicing the How and What of observing, documenting, and reflecting on child experiences and caregiver strategies
Lisa Matter
Expanding Quality in Infant Toddler Care Program Manager
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Strategies

❖ Share one or two successful strategies for supporting FCC providers
Poll #3

❖ How likely will you use at least one of the strategies or practices that you heard today?
Final Thoughts/Wrap Up
Poll #4

- Are there other webinar topics that would be useful to you?
- Please add your thoughts in the chat room.
Thank You
References


Resources


Resources


Infant/Toddler Resource Guide

About the Infant/Toddler Resource Guide

What is the purpose of this guide?
This Resource Guide offers a host of materials to support the development and implementation of policies and practices for high-quality care for infants and toddlers. Whether you are a Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Administrator developing policies, a child care provider seeking information and guidance, or a professional development provider seeking innovative training materials, this site is for you. Development of this guide is new and actively growing, so check in frequently to see what resources have been added to support your work with infants, toddlers, and their families.

Who are the intended users?
We are including resources for three primary audiences:

- CCDF Administrators, staff, and state policy professionals
- Child care resource and referral administrators, training organization directors and trainers, higher education institution administrators and early childhood/child development faculty, and technical assistance organization administrators and providers
- Infant and toddler teachers, center directors, and family child care providers
