NC Infant-Toddler
Quality Enhancement Project

2019-2020

Contract Number: 38398

Submitted August 24, 2020

By

Child Care Services Association, Inc. on behalf of

The NC Child Care Resource and Referral Council

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The **NC Infant Toddler Quality Enhancement Project (NC ITQEP)** is pleased to report another successful year providing a variety of support services to North Carolina's infant/toddler workforce. The NC ITQEP is designed to support quality improvement of the early care and education of NC's youngest and most vulnerable children in licensed child care facilities in the state. This report will include both quantitative and qualitative data to support and document the project's work during fiscal year 2019-2020 (FY20).

NC ITQEP At A Glance, FY20

The following are a few project highlights from FY20:

- 457 classrooms serving 3,593 children in 65 counties requested and received technical assistance from the team of 21 Infant Toddler Specialists (ITS).
- 193 training sessions were conducted during the year with 2481 unduplicated (and 2721 duplicated) participants from 72 counties.
- Three virtual train-the-trainer sessions for the Developmental Monitoring and Screening two-hour training were conducted for 41 CCR&R and Smart Start technical assistance and professional development providers statewide.
- A pilot was conducted with 22 infant toddler experts, 44 new infant toddler teachers and 14 Infant Toddler Specialists completing the New Infant Toddler Teacher Orientation (NITTO) with statewide launch ready at the end of June, 2020.
- 80 of NC's 100 counties were served by the NC ITQEP during FY20.
- Classrooms that participated in intensive technical assistance improved in quality by an average of 1.50 points from the pre-assessment (ITERS-R) to the post-assessment (ITERS-R).
- The team of ITS were trained to conduct ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 assessments and began working with centers to develop screening and monitoring policies and procedures for their sites.
- 2020 brought a new challenge to the world in the form of a pandemic. All face-to-face training and technical support for child care centers ended in late March and did not resume for the remainder of the fiscal year. The ITQEP began making adjustments to existing trainings in order to conduct high quality professional development via ZOOM. ITS across the state continued to make contact with centers on their caseloads to offer support during the unprecedented situation.

Output Programmatic Reporting Chart Contract: CCSA Infant Toddler Quality Enhancement Project Contract Number: 38398			
Output	**Performance at Closeout** (use numbers only)	**Output Assessment** (target met or not met)	**How is this data collected?**
Number of multi-year transition plans addressing a shift of current technical assistance provisions to the Practice Based Coaching (PBC) model delivered to the Division by February 1, 2020	Target: 1 Final: 1	Met	The due date was revised to May 1, 2020 due to a delay in Practice Based Coaching training with the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, & Learning The plan was submitted to DCDEE on April 29, 2020. See Addendum A.
Number of online Infant and Toddler Teacher Orientation trainings completed on or before June 30, 2020	Target: 1 Final: 1	Met	NITTO was completed and piloted with revisions made throughout the year on DCDEE's on-line learning platform, Moodle. DCDEE was notified that all updates were complete via phone call on June 26, 2020.
Number of teachers and program administrators participating in the pilot of the online Infant and Toddler Teacher Orientation training	Target: 100 Final: 118 started; 88 completed	Met	Participation was recorded from the Moodle platform.
Number of Technical Assistance Specialists completing the Developmental Monitoring and Screening training of trainers session	Target: 30 Final: 41	Met	Data was collected from the three virtual train-the-trainer attendance roster.
Number of unduplicated infant toddler teachers and program administrators in child care programs serving infants and toddlers receiving onsite coaching, mentoring and consultation	Target: 1365 Final: 1307	Not Met **COVID Impact** Ist Qtr - 55% 2nd Qtr - 78% 3rd Qtr - 94% Pandemic shut down started at the end of 3rd Qtr. EOY - 96%	Data was collected from Regional Infant Toddler Specialist quarterly training reports.
Number of unduplicated infant toddler teachers, program administrators and those working on behalf of children birth-three receiving professional development in infant-toddler related topics outlined in the scope of work	Target: 2000 Final: 2481	Met	Data was collected from Regional Infant Toddler Specialist quarterly training reports available to the Education Manager and Project Manager

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Outcome Programmatic Reporting Chart
Contract: CCSA Infant Toddler Quality Enhancement Project
Contract Number: 38398</td></tr>
<tr>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th style="color:red">Performance at Closeout
(use numbers only)</th>
<th style="color:red">Outcome Assessment
(target met or not met)</th>
<th style="color:red">How is this data collected?</th>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of infant toddler classrooms showing measurable improvement in quality on post-assessments following technical assistance</td>
<td>Target: 85%
Final: 100%</td>
<td>Met</td>
<td>Pre- and post-assessment scores were reported to the Project Manager by each ITS once both assessments were complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of technical assistance recipients reporting increased ability to apply the knowledge and skills gained through technical assistance</td>
<td>Target: 95%
Final: 99%</td>
<td>Met</td>
<td>Participants were asked to complete an evaluation in which they were asked if they had an increased ability to apply the knowledge and skills gained through technical assistance. Evaluations were returned to the Project Manager. If participants answered 4 or 5 in a 5-point Likert-type scale it was determined that they had increased ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of training recipients reporting increased ability to apply the knowledge and skills gained through training.</td>
<td>Target: 95%
Final: 98%</td>
<td>Met</td>
<td>Post-assessments of each training event asked participants to rate their increased ability to apply the knowledge and skills gained using a 5-point Likert-type scale. ITS conveyed the responses to the Education Manager via their training report.</td>
</tr>
</table>

Contract Value ($): $2,080,364.00
Contract Unspent ($): $199,423.61 (9.6% of the total budget)

Please provide information about the reason for unspent funds if it exceeds 5% of the total:
$163,544.73 of the unspent was for subcontractors or 7.8% of the total budget.
 Most of the contractor's unspent budget was related to vacancies in personnel
(Regions 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 14 all experienced partial year vacancies in their ITS
positions.)
The majority of the remaining unspent funds were due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Role & Qualifications of Infant Toddler Specialists, FY20

The ITQEP's 21 regional Infant Toddler Specialists (ITS), each assigned to one of 14 regions, provide intensive technical assistance and training to classroom teachers and center administrators. Six of the fourteen regions experienced vacancies in their ITS positions with Regions 1, 5, 6, and 14 having position openings at the end of FY20.

> **Technical Assistance**: Technical assistance has primarily been provided within: (a) the classroom setting where ITS can function as role models for teachers, and (b) the child care facility as a whole where ITS can provide general support for both teachers and administrators. Technical assistance is tailored for each teacher, administrator and/or facility based on an inventory of their strengths and challenges. Due to COVID-19, the team transitioned to providing technical assistance remotely via phone calls, email, and ZOOM. All assessments of classroom quality have been put on hold throughout the pandemic.

> **Training**: ITS provide regular, face-to-face (with only a few virtual offerings) training to teachers and administrators within their geographic regions. The topics range from basic Prevention of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome to more complex training around curriculum and best practices. Best practices for the project are defined by the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R), Program for Infant and Toddler Care (PITC), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Toddlers. Due to COVID-19, the project's education manager held a train-the-trainer event on a webinar-based training entitled "Leading the Way." This training was conducted on five occasions during the month of June. A full list of the project's standardized training can be found in Addendum B.

Infant Toddler Specialists are highly trained professionals. Each fully trained ITS has the following credentials (at minimum):

- A Bachelor's degree;
- Certification in the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) for Infants and Toddlers;
- Training in the Infant and Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ITERS-R);
- Training in the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants Toddlers, and;
- Experience in providing early care and education for infants and toddlers.

Fifteen of the current 18 ITS are certified in the Program for Infant and Toddler Care (PITC) with both managers and one Anchor ITS certified.

The Project Manager and Education Manager began as an ITS and have assumed the role of providing guidance and oversight for all aspects of the project. Both managers and the anchor ITS hold Master's degrees within the field of Early Education and Learning.

Project Anecdotes, FY20

The following are just a few of the many comments received from teachers or administrators who participated in intensive technical assistance from NC ITQEP during FY20:

- *"[ITS] is very knowledgeable and is a great help to the infant and toddler teachers."*
- *"I am thankful for [ITS]'s willingness to provide this technical assistance for myself and my staff. It truly helps us be able to provide better service for our children."*
- *"[I] highly recommend the ITQEP and appreciate all the help we received."*
- *"Great program, not judgmental"*
- *"Excellent job. Looking forward to learn[ing] more because I believe there's always room for improvement."*
- *"[ITS] is excellent."*
- *"[ITS] is amazing; I wish she could work with us a lot more because each time I feel I learned something new."*

The following are excerpts from feedback received from teachers or administrators who attended training provided by the NC ITQEP during FY20:

- *"I really liked the PITC philosophy."*
- *"I found out about 3rd hand smoke."*
- *[I learned]"How to use the NCFELD book with my lesson plan."*
- *[I learned]"How to adapt to each of my children to have a "goodness of fit."*
- *"Intentional teaching - what am I going to do with the activity that I have chosen."*
- *"I learned about continuity of care and how it can impact a child's comfort level. I liked hearing about the inclusion of special needs children therapists in the classroom."*
- *[I learned about the]"Chart of temperament - it was good to see how I match up with feisty children in my class."*
- *"I feel more confidence in implementing the new form for lesson planning using the NC Foundations book."*
- *"Being more aware of the children's cultural and family values."*
- *"Learning that I can play a role in helping mothers and others supporting breastfeeding mothers and how I can help them."*

The following is an email received following an ITS-SIDS training:

Hello [ITS],
I hope this email finds you well! My name is ### ### and I attended your ITS-SIDS class. I must say I had a great experience as well as a better understanding of SIDS. I enjoyed your interact[ion] and creativity with the class. It was very effective and easy to maintain and follow the focus of the content. I recently graduated with a Master's Degree in Forensic Psychology, so your class was informative being that my degree specialized with children's behavior...

Ancillary Support Provided by NC ITQEP, FY20

All managers and ITS are encouraged to engage in infant-toddler activities and advocacy efforts within their local community and at the state level. We are proud to have provided the following support for efforts outside, but closely aligned with, NC ITQEP:

- ITS management delivered virtual training on infant and toddler advocacy in NC that was developed by ThinkBabies;
- ITS management attended ThinkBabies Think Tank in February to assist in the development of a policy agenda for the NC Early Education Coalition;
- ITS management and several regional ITS attended a three-day racial equity workshop conducted by the Racial Equity Institute of Greensboro;
- Five ITS are taking part in the Trauma-Informed Infant and Toddler Care (ITTI) Project operated through Duke Center for Child and Family Policy;
- Six ITS are enrolled in graduate school in order to attain their Lead Infant Toddler Learning post-baccalaureate certification through the University of North Carolina-Greensboro;
- Three ITS are taking part in the Early Childhood Equity Champions project to address systemic inequities in early childhood education;
- All ITS enrolled in a tailored Abecedarian Approach course offered through Red River College, taught by one of the principal investigators of the 1974 Abecedarian Project longitudinal study. This course was ZOOM-based and ran for 6 weeks with the team preparing for and meeting once per week.

NC Infant-Toddler
Quality Enhancement Project

New Infant Toddler Teacher Orientation Pilot (NITTO)

As outlined in the mid-year report, our Infant Toddler Management team realized that in order to create a high quality online orientation, we needed input from our Infant Toddler Specialist (ITS) team as well as other experts in the Infant Toddler field. Based on this realization, the pilot of the New Infant Toddler Teacher Orientation (NITTO) was delivered in three phases. These phases included the ITS phase, the Expert phase and the New Teacher phase. During the first phase (ITS phase), 14 regional Infant Toddler Specialists completed NITTO and gave feedback. Based on their feedback, changes were made before beginning the Expert phase.

During the Expert phase, the ITS team recommended Early Childhood Professionals that they believed would give valuable feedback. These experts included seasoned teachers and administrators as well as local Technical Assistance providers, higher education staff, a DCDEE Licensing Consultant and other professionals with knowledge around Infant and Toddler child care. The Experts were given access to NITTO on Nov. 13th and asked to complete it by Dec. 18th (5 weeks). The time was extended to Dec. 31st due to technical problems in Moodle as well as the lack of completions.

During the Expert phase we found it hard to get people to complete NITTO due to their other responsibilities. Ninety-four (94) professionals were recommended and contacted by email and phone. Sixty-six (66) agreed to complete NITTO and give constructive feedback. Forty-seven (47) experts began NITTO and gave feedback on the portions they viewed, while 22 completed and gave feedback on the entire orientation.

The original date to begin the New Teacher phase was planned for Monday, March 30th. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the start date was changed to Monday, May 4th. Teachers were allotted five weeks to complete the course. Eighty-five (85) new teachers applied to participate in the New Teacher phase, 57 were enrolled and 44 completed the course. We believe that these numbers were affected by the drastic changes that occurred in child care related to COVID-19. Among the three phases of the pilot, 80 participants completed NITTO.

The following are some quotes from the course pilot participants:

- *"It helped me understand the steps in achieving positive social-emotional health for each child."*
- *"[It was a] reminder that I am very important as a teacher and that the children in my care depend on me especially in the first three years of their lives."*
- *"The information gave me more insight [in]to guiding behaviors and how it is important to take care of myself and the importance of remaining calm."*
- *"[NITTO was] helpful to remind us that children are ever learning from those around them. We are able to be positive supports in their development and growth, or we can miss teaching opportunities by focusing on the negative."*
- *"It reminded me that conflicts are learning opportunities within the classroom."*

- *"[I need to] take care of myself so I can take care of the little ones."*
- *"[NITTO] is a great resource for every teacher and all infant/toddler teachers must consider taking this course."*

Administrators or the NITTO pilot participants noted the following:

- *"[My teacher's] enthusiasm for the toddler age group seemed to improve."*
- *"[My teacher] became aware of hazards in her room."*
- *"[My teachers] collaborated together and had great discussions about the class."*
- *"My teachers were very excited about this program. I appreciate you all letting administrators be a part of it too. It was fun getting to see my teacher's face light up as they explained when I asked them what they learned this week or that week. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity for early childhood educators, especially in infant and toddler care. This age is my heart!"*

A Look at ITQEP Data:

Technical Assistance Data Points:
- Location of TA: Center-based
- Number of unduplicated providers: 1,307
- Number of Children Impacted by TA: 3,593 infants and toddlers
  in 457 classrooms

Type of Secondary TA Provided with frequency (All ITQEP relates to
Infant/Toddler Care):

Dual Language (5) — 0.1%
Social Emotional (934) — 18.4%
Mental Health (278) — 5.5%
Inclusion (8) — 0.2%
Business Management (359) — 7.1%
Developmental Screening (26) — 0.5%
Health & Safety (3459) — 68.2%
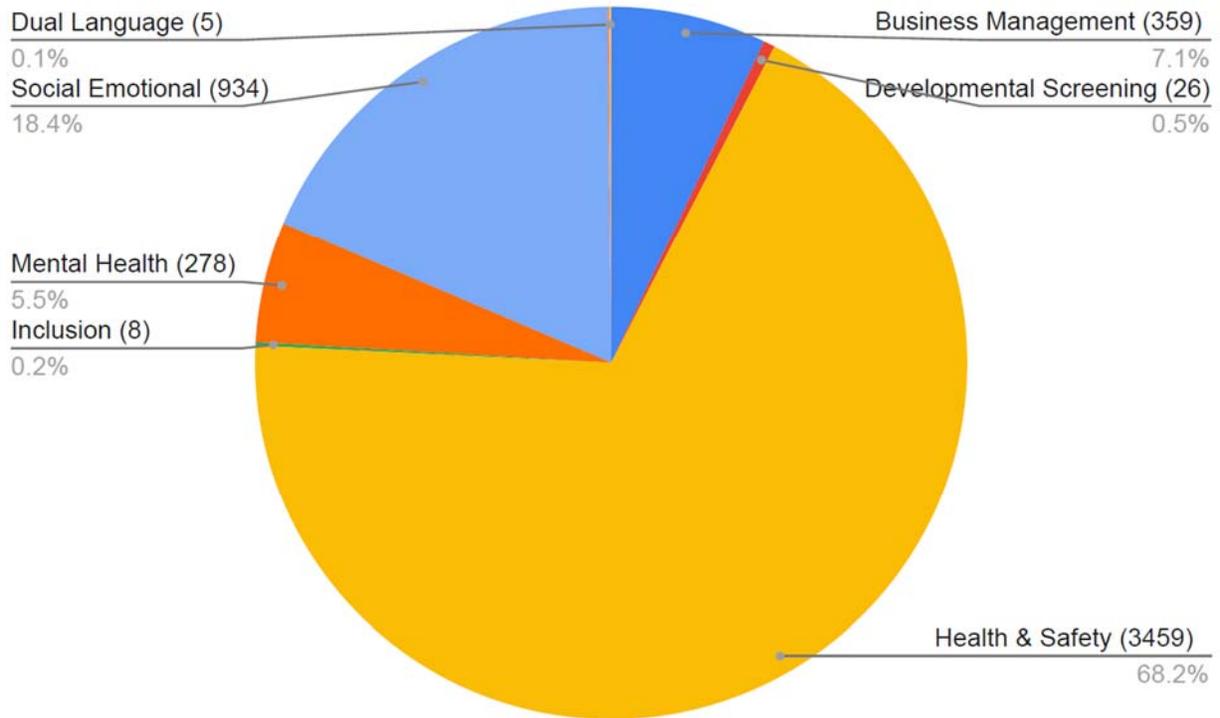
Training Data Points:
Unduplicated Participants Trained by Job Title
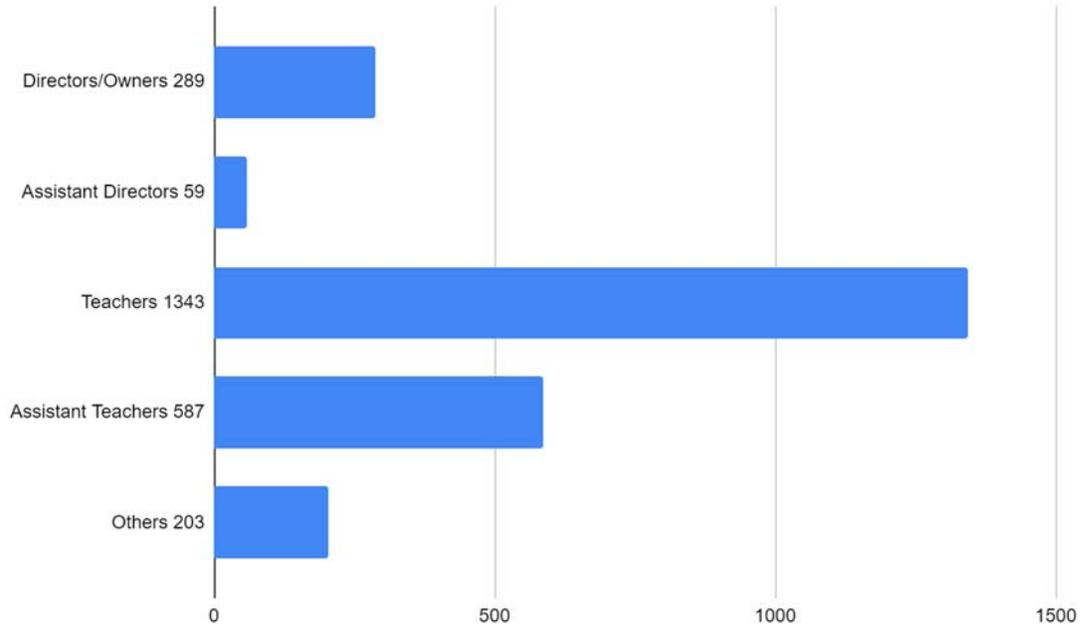
# of Children Served by Age Group

Challenges Faced by the NC ITQEP During FY20

The NC ITQEP focused on many successes during the FY20. As with any project that supports quality improvement in early care and education settings, challenges exist.

Below are a few challenges that the NC ITQEP confronted in the delivery of training and technical assistance in FY20:

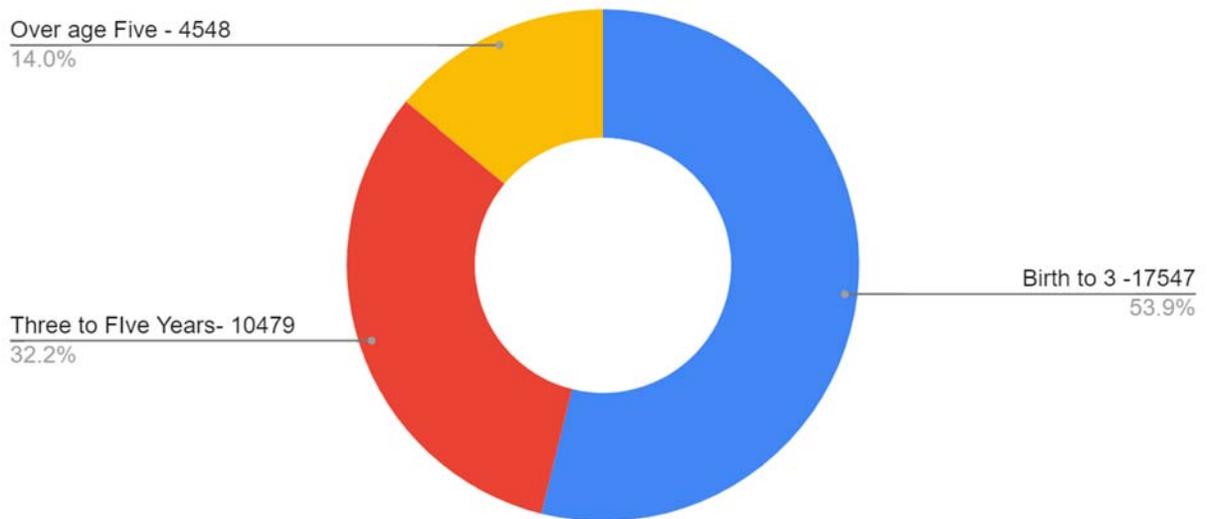- A lack of participants for training remains a challenge across the state. While our goals were met, 1507 of the 2481 unduplicated participants attended the Infant Toddler Safe Sleep training that is required of all infant and toddler teachers.
- Administrators continue to ask regional ITS to come in and help teachers prepare for environmental rating scale assessments. The project is committed to moving teachers and administrators to ongoing quality of care and away from temporarily modifying behaviors and settings to meet a test (or observation scale as the case may be).
- Teacher and administrator turnover continues to be an ongoing struggle for the majority of our infant and toddler classrooms which, in turn, causes many changes in young children's lives when they need the support of consistent and deep relationships with their caregivers.
- Technical assistance with the NC ITQEP requires a time and energy commitment from both teachers and administration. Many early care and education programs are unwilling to make this commitment. In certain programs, the commitment is evident, but the starting point for change is very poor program quality. The challenge is to facilitate improvements without overwhelming teachers and directors. Resources to support quality care are variable across the state; turnover and lack of funding for needed materials can cause intermittent progress toward higher quality.

COVID-19 Related Changes and Challenges

The pandemic shutdown during the fourth quarter of FY20 has been by far the largest challenge for the ITQEP.

- ITS could not travel to provide either training nor technical assistance and the enormous stress of a global pandemic was felt by all. Project management established open communication links and partnered with another infant toddler technical assistance project to conduct training related to personal wellness.
- A lack of web-based standardized training was immediately recognized and our management team began making revisions to adapt current training events to a virtual format. Few training opportunities were available during the last quarter as a result.
- Due to the pandemic, we postponed the start date for NITTO by more than a month. This limited our ability to communicate with applicants due to changes in their centers or employment being open. We understood that the primary concern for providers became job security, job availability, and physical health. We decided against potentially adding undue stress to these providers during this time; rather, we allowed space and time for

their personal and family concerns. This decision affected our previously planned process of correspondence with NITTO participants. All of the above circumstances likely influenced the number of teachers who completed the course. We received confirmation from participants that the amount of time designated for NITTO was affected by the pandemic.

- Many centers closed altogether and all centers were instructed to limit the number of people in the classrooms to reduce the risk of infection. The ITS were not able to conduct training or TA face-to-face and with many teachers not working they were not willing to do TA.
- VERY few teachers were accessible for technical assistance work with ITS. Infant toddler teachers rarely are allowed planning time, and with pandemic-related changes to protocols many were simply too overwhelmed to engage in hands-on support from ITS.
- A waiting list for ITS support had been established prior to the pandemic, but sites were removed upon closure or request based on pandemic-related changes.
- STRESS was a factor that affected our team and it became clear that we need each other for support through the crisis. The team initially participated in a Community of Practice organized by DCDEE and met weekly with the Abecedarian course. From those weekly activities, an ongoing "Friday Team Meet" has been established to assist ITS with identifying and managing stress, providing peer support, and responding to the rapidly changing early childhood environment in North Carolina.

Strengths Emerging for NC ITQEP During FY20

Several strengths emerged in FY20 as a result of the challenges faced by NC ITQEP.

- ITS learned new technology platforms, collaborated in shifting their trainings to a virtual format, and began to meet more frequently as a unit to problem-solve together.
- NC ITQEP took advantage of the opportunity to network with other groups in the field, such as the NC Infant Toddler Intensive Technical Assistance Project and the Infant Toddler Trauma Informed Project, to provide additional virtual support and to break down technical assistance silos. The team's ability to nimbly respond and adapt to rapidly-changing circumstances was made evident.
- The ITQEP team was able to expand its creativity due to collaborative efforts, and generate a pool of ideas for relevant support for teachers and child care facilities in the upcoming fiscal year. Issues of equity and access have become prominent in team discussion, and will be a priority as the team moves forward.
- The ITQEP team began meeting weekly virtually and has continued to do so in various formats since early April 2020. The COVID crisis has allowed us an opportunity to develop relationships among the team that will strengthen our support across the state for teachers and administrators.

Addendum A

NC Infant Toddler Quality Enhancement Project Transition to Practice Based Coaching

Respectfully Submitted by CCSA as a part of Contract 38398 (NC Infant Toddler Quality Enhancement Project) on May 1, 2020.

Performance Requirement reads:

5. Create a multi-Year plan to transition current technical assistance provision to the Practice Based Coaching (PBC) model.

Practice-Based Coaching (PBC) is a cyclical, research-based process that supports teachers' use of effective teaching practices that are associated with positive outcomes for children (The National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning, 2014). Occurring in the context of supportive partnering relationships, the components of PBC include: 1) goal planning and establishing action steps; 2) focused observation; and 3) feedback sharing and reflective inquiry to support classroom practices.

Reference
> The National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning (2014). *Practice-based coaching collaborative partnerships.* Retrieved from https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/pbc-handout.pdf

The NC Infant Toddler Quality Enhancement Project will use PBC as a unifying framework for the delivery of high-quality, intensive technical assistance to child care facilities across the state. Through the implementation of a structured and evidence-based technical assistance model, the project will create a cohesive, consistent method of providing support to early educators that facilitates meaningful communication and effective collaborative efforts.

The NCITQEP proposes the following strategy to implement PBC provided adequate staffing and funding is available:

FY 20-21:
- Create a detailed plan with timeline and possible "tiers" of implementation
- Research best platform for communication and engage said platform
  - (HS Coaching Companion possibly)
- Create plan to determine the best use of PBC within the ITQEP project
- Decide the ITS Team members to plan and begin use of PBC
- Train IT Specialists (a subset of ITQEP Regional ITS)
  - (Need guidance on who to have train the coaches)
- Create working Policies & Procedures
- Begin PBC in conjunction with NITTO follow up coaching support and data collection
- Meet periodically with statewide PBC team to discuss and evaluate

FY 21-22:

- Analyze and evaluate from initial use of PBC after NITTO completion
  - -P&P
  - -platform
  - -TA providers experiences and opinions
  - -Coachees experiences and opinions
  - -In person versus virtual experiences
- Train additional coaches
- Begin use of PBC in general TA with initially trained Regional ITS
- Implement research protocol to determine efficacy of PBC in ITQEP
- COP for PBC to include professional development on PBC then move select ITS towards mentorship.

FY 22-23:

- Initially trained Regional ITS continue PBC
- Finalize P&P for PBC implementation (and write into project orientation for new ITS)
- Train remaining ITS on PBC implementation
- Form mentorship and COP teams
- Continue data collection on best use and practice of PBC across the state

FY 23-24:

- Full implementation of PBC with all intensive work with classrooms across the state
- Use ongoing assessment cycles for continuous evaluation and improvement

With the PDG grant that NC received, it is anticipated that the Babies First NC team will be involved in the Practice Based Coaching implementation by being trained during FY 21-22 and using My Teachstone as the communication platform.

NC Infant-Toddler
Quality Enhancement Project

Infant Toddler Continuing Education Units (CEU)

All trainings align with North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development.

Note: Those participants receiving CEUs can also count these hours as DCDEE training credits. Each event described below is a *.5 CEU = 5 DCDEE contact hours.*

Linking NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development to Curriculum Planning for Infants and Toddlers
Do you want to understand how to align your infant and toddler activity plans with the Foundations for Early Learning and Development? Then this CEU course is for you. This five-hour course will provide participants with an introduction to the Foundations, help you navigate your way through the document and identify strategies that support children's development and learning. Participants will spend time observing children in their classroom setting to create intentional activity plans that align with the five developmental domains of development. Participants are encouraged to bring a copy of NC Foundations for Early Learning and Development and a blank copy of the activity plan you use in your program. (DCDEE 2,3,7,9)

Creating a World of Learning by Understanding the Individual Growth and Development of Infants and Toddlers
Young children learn best when they are surrounded by a world of learning opportunities. Join us to see the profound effect their own unique way of approaching these early experiences has on their development and motivation to learn. You will gain an awareness of how other factors such as culture, temperament and ability levels also affect a child's learning and development. Time will be spent on identifying effective strategies that enhance your role in fostering each child's optimal growth and development. We are going to build our knowledge on these concepts using the developmental goals for infants and toddlers and the framework of developmentally appropriate practice. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Listening and Talking, Activities, and Interaction and NCFELD Domains: All. (DCDEE 2, 3, 7, 8)

Planning With Purpose: Rethink Your Process to Meet the Individual Needs of Infants and Toddlers
It is true what they say, children learn through play. But how do you know that you are planning the right play experiences for each child's needs? Come explore the steps to successful planning that will give new purpose to your process. We will uncover why creating activity plans is an important part of being an intentional teacher. Discover how to use your observations of children to plan experiences that when flexible and adaptable impact each child's current and future skills and abilities. Leave with the understanding that being purposeful in your planning is the best way to support the development and learning of each infant and toddler in your care. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Space and Furnishings, Listening and Talking; Activities, Interaction, Program Structure and NCFELD Domains: All. (DCDEE 1, 8, 9)

Forming First Relationships: Using Respectful, Responsive and Reciprocal Practices with Infants and Toddlers
Starting at the earliest moments, relationships are being formed. These first relationships are the crucial foundation of children's ability to learn. How do you get to know the children and families in your care? Do you spend time with children and their families learning from and about each other? Focusing on the Nurturing and Responsive Relationships level of the Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) Pyramid Model, we will discover specific strategies to foster social and emotional wellness in infants and toddlers. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Listening and Talking, and Interactions and NCFELD Domain: Emotional and Social Development. (DCDEE 3, 4, 8)

Designing High Quality Infant Toddler Care Environments
In some settings, you feel relaxed, comfortable, and free to open up and be yourself. In other places you feel formal, stiff, and a little on guard. In thoughtfully planned environments, children feel a sense of belonging and security. The child's care environment conveys messages about what is okay and what is not, what is expected or allowed, and what is encouraged. We will explore the second level of the CSEFEL Pyramid Model in order to understand how to design high quality environments to meet the needs of infants and toddlers. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Space and Furnishings, Listening and Talking, Activities and Interactions and NCFELD Domain: Emotional and Social Development. (DCDEE 1, 3, 5, 8)

Increasing Quality with the ITERS-R: Today and Every Day!
This CEU course presents an in-depth review of the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale subscales and indicators. Lecture, activities and discussions will help you better understand the reasons behind the ITERS-R requirements. Learners will engage in group discussions and activities that explore how to best support infant toddler development and learning using an appropriate tool designed to measure quality. Learners will gain confidence in their ability to provide high quality early learning experiences for infants and toddlers. Learners are encouraged to bring a copy of the spiral bound Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised edition. (DCDEE1, 2, 3, 5, 8)

Creating Conversations: Supportive Strategies for Infant/ Toddler Language Development
Ever wonder how to encourage children's language development? Are you sometimes worried that a particular child may have a language delay? Do you want to know how to strengthen your strategies to support language and early literacy development in your classroom? Come learn how important language and early literacy experiences are in the first three years and how to create a culture in your program that supports language and literacy development through interactions, experiences, environment and family involvement. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Listening, Talking, Interactions, and NCFELD Domain: Language Development and Communication. (DCDEE 2, 4, 7, 8)

Learning is Happening Right Before Your Eyes: Seeing and Supporting Infant and Toddler Cognitive Development
Many adults still think of babies as helpless and simply a "clean slate". In fact, if you watch infants and toddlers closely, you will see that in almost every waking moment they are engaged in thoughts and actions of discovery and learning. These thoughts and actions are the complex learning processes and abilities that we will discuss as we define "cognitive development". We will further describe cognitive development in terms of six different types of discoveries infants and toddlers make when they explore and experiment with the things and people in their world. Opportunities to apply your knowledge of these discoveries will help you see the learning that is happening as infants and toddlers are developing cognitively. In the end, you will leave with some strategies and experiences you can use daily to support infant and toddler cognitive development. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Space and Furnishings, Listening and Talking; Activities, Interaction, Program Structure and NCFELD Domain: Cognitive Development. (DCDEE 2, 3, 7, 8)

Health and Safety for Infants and Toddlers
This .5 hours CEU course meets the NC Child Care Rule for Health and Safety Training Requirements for #9 Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome and Abusive Head Trauma (**SBS/AHT**) #2 Administration of Medication, #1 Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases in Child Care and for #5 Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning for Emergencies Resulting From a Natural Disaster, or a Man-Caused Event. This course will focus on warning signs and prevention strategies for shaken baby syndrome, NC Child Care rule and the forms that are required to be completed before giving medication, the prevention and control of infectious diseases in child care settings and the stages of emergency preparedness and response. (DCDEE 1)

Infant Toddler Training Events

Note: DCDEE contact hours for these events typically range from 1.5 to 4 each. Each are 2 hours unless noted.

Supporting Developmental Monitoring and Screening in Early Care and Education Settings
We know that monitoring and screening in early childhood early care and education settings is critical to identifying children at risk for developmental delays. What is less known is how programs use developmental monitoring and screening tools and ways caregivers talk with families about their children's growth and development. This training will help participants understand the differences in developmental monitoring and screening and why they are so important to children and families. Participants will learn how they can track and celebrate children's milestones and strategies for collaborating with families on supporting children's healthy growth. You can play an essential role in our state's early intervention efforts!
 (DCDEE 7, 9)

What Every Baby Needs
Everything in a baby's world happens in steps and stages. It is important to appreciate each stage as it occurs and provide the support and guidance needed to allow a successful journey through each one. This training will offer suggestions of what types of materials support learning at the different stages. You will gain insight on the benefits of providing babies with ample time and space to master a skill before moving on to start practicing a new one and will explore some of the drawbacks of intervening unnecessarily. With each mastered skill, babies are discovering more about their bodies, the world around them and how the two work together. These skills are the foundations that they will carry with them throughout their life and across all domains of learning. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Space and Furnishings, Activities and Program structure. (DCDEE 1, 2, 3, 7)

Exploring Social Emotional Development within the Context of Relationships *(2-2.5 hours)*
Through supportive relationships, infants and toddlers develop a sense of trust, learn how to interact with others, and how to eventually express empathy. Strong, nurturing relationships are key to healthy development for infants and toddlers. This professional development event will explore social emotional development within the context of relationships. Participants will learn how the process of getting in tune with children allows providers to offer responsive care, which in turn helps infants and toddlers form secure relational attachments. Secure and responsive relationships help young children to develop a strong foundation from which they can explore their environment. (DCDEE 3, 7)

Infant and Toddler Developing Social Emotional Skills *(2-2.5 hours)*
Children begin developing social emotional skills from infancy. Understanding how to support infant and toddler development during this period is crucial to their overall well-being. This professional development event explores the developing social emotional skills of infants and toddlers. Participants will learn to define and describe social emotional development, identify key social emotional skills that contribute to school readiness, and gain richer insight into strategies that support social emotional development for infants and toddlers. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Listening and Talking and Interactions. (DCDEE 3, 7)

Caregiving Routines: A Major Component of the Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers
What does the word "curriculum" mean to you? If teaching skills and planning projects are the first ideas that come to mind, then this training event will open your eyes to a new way of thinking about infant-toddler "curriculum". Infant and toddler teachers spend a large part of the day engaged in routine caregiving responsibilities. These are key learning times! Participants will understand why routines are essential to the "curriculum" and discover strategies to carry out daily routines that deepens the teacher-child relationship and promote infant and toddler development. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Personal Care Routines, Listening and Talking, Interactions and Program Structure. (DCDEE 2,3,4,7)

Language Development and Communication in Infants and Toddlers: What Are They Talking About?
It starts with crying, cooing, and babbling, and then you finally hear it, their first words! Sharing those language milestone moments can be some of our best experiences as infant and toddler teachers. During this workshop you will learn more about the development of language and communication for children birth to three; the research that links relationships to language learning in the first three years; and strategies to support development in this domain for all infants and toddlers, including dual language learners. In addition, participants will have a chance to discuss and share their ideas about the importance of talking to, singing with, and reading to infants and toddlers to foster a lifetime love of language and learning. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Personal Care Routines, Listening and Talking and Interactions. (DCDEE 8)

Creating Outdoor Learning Environments for Infants and Toddlers: It's Not Called a "Playground" Anymore
"Going Outside" is not just about *what is* out there but *what you do* when you are out there. It is in the news almost weekly; America's children are not getting enough exercise, which is becoming a serious issue for our children today. This training will help participants understand the benefits of taking children outside daily and provide suggestions on how to create spaces for infants and toddlers outside that support all areas of learning and introduce them to the natural environment. Finally, participants will discover what activities can be included in their outdoor spaces. This training provides information that supports ITERS-R subscales: Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Activities and Interactions. (DCDEE 1, 2, 8)

Getting Started Improving Quality with the ITERS-R
Would you like to gain a better understanding of the Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale? More importantly, discover how to use the ITERS-R as a self-assessment tool to maintain quality long after the assessment is over. This two-hour training provides an overview of the ITERS-R. This training will explain the organization of the seven subscales used to evaluate programs, as well as the scoring system and what programs can expect before, during and after an assessment. Participants are encouraged to bring a copy of the spiral bound Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Revised edition. (DCDEE 1, 5, 8)

Infant and Toddler Early Literacy Learning
Did you know that reading to babies sets the foundation for future reading and writing? Our youngest infants and toddlers develop these essential abilities through positive, caring interactions and immersion in literacy-rich surroundings. Join us as we explore ways to create these nurturing environments for children's early literacy experiences. We will discover six age-appropriate literacy skill "building blocks" for infants and toddlers, and develop strategies for supporting parents in sharing literacy in the home. (2,3,4,7)

ITS-SIDS (2 to 4 hours)
This required training explains all the parts of North Carolina's SIDS Law. Participants will review information about when and how to use the approved waivers, how to best place a baby in bed to sleep, and other "Best Practice" recommendations. During the workshop, participants will get the needed information to create a Safe Sleep Policy, updated research about SIDS, and local health and safety resources. Participants also will be walked through how to do an unresponsive infant drill and the reason for doing them regularly. (DCDEE 1)

Infant Toddler Zone - PART I: Creating a Secure Infant- Toddler Environment (TOTAL 5.5hours)
Caring for infants and toddlers can be extremely rewarding but also pretty challenging. These very young children are dependent on their caregivers to meet their individual needs that support early learning and development while at the same time being responsible for their health and safety. During Part I of this Infant Toddler Safety Series, we will identify ways to enhance supervision so that infants and toddlers in your program are safe during play activities. Clear guidelines are discussed that will keep children healthy, but also feeling secure as they explore their indoor and outdoor child care environment. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines and Activities. (DCDEE 1, 5)

Infant Toddler Zone - PART II: Planning for Protection
Caring for infants and toddlers can be extremely rewarding but also pretty challenging. These very young children are dependent on their caregivers to meet their individual needs that support early learning and development while at the same time being responsible for their health and safety. During Part II of this Infant Toddler Safety Series, you will leave feeling more confident about the key elements of planning for protection including keeping records and communicating with families and other staff. There will also be conversation about the importance of daily active physical play as well as the types of age appropriate materials to provide that allow for safe exploration in a secure world. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Space and Furnishings, Personal Care Routines, Activities and Program Structure.   (DCDEE 1, 5)

Infant Toddler Zone - PART III: Caring for Infants and Toddlers
Caring for infants and toddlers can be extremely rewarding but also pretty challenging. These very young children are dependent on their caregivers to support early learning and development while at the same time being responsible for their health and safety. During Part III of this Infant Toddler Safety Series, certain positive guidance strategies are presented for you to use that allow infants and toddlers to learn about their world and what is expected of them. Enhance your understanding of how a caregiver's patient guidance facilitates the development of social and emotional competence of infants and toddlers, which is known to be linked to later school success. Also, discover ways to make the most of the daily routines such as feeding and diapering/toileting to support safe, healthy enjoyable experiences. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscales: Personal Care Routines and Interactions. (DCDEE 1, 5)

Supporting Breastfeeding Families: A Guide for Early Care Providers
Did you know that breastfeeding provides the healthiest start in life for infants, but children who are routinely cared for someone other than their parents are less likely to be breastfed? Learn more about the benefits and risks of breastfeeding and formula use. Identify barriers to breastfeeding in a child care setting and learn ways to reduce barriers and make your program more breastfeeding-friendly. Materials and resources provided by the Carolina Global Breastfeeding Institute will be available to provide information and support for programs and families. Get started on a path to earn the Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Designation offered by the NC Department of Public Health. This training provides information that supports the ITERS-R subscale: Personal Care Routines. (DCDEE 1, 4)

Administrator Specific Professional Development Event

Best Fit, Recruiting and Hiring: Infant and Toddler Child Care Staff (3 hours)
Recruiting and hiring infant and toddler staff can be a challenge! This training will provide expert information on recruiting and hiring child care staff with a focus on the needs of infants and toddler teachers. You will have the opportunity to learn creative methods in order to attract teachers that are the best fit for your organization. You will also learn best practices for the interview and hiring process. We want to help you take the stress out of hiring! (DCDEE 5)

Best Fit for Hiring Infant and Toddler Staff (1.5 hours)
Recruiting and hiring infant and toddler staff can be a challenge! This training will provide expert methods to help you determine the specific hiring needs of your organization. We will also discuss ways to attract teachers that are the best fit for your organization. We want to help you take the stress out of the hiring process!

Recruiting and Hiring Infant and Toddler Staff (1.5 hours)
Recruiting and hiring infant and toddler staff can be a challenge! This training will provide expert information on recruiting and hiring child care staff with a focus on the needs of infants and toddler teachers. You will also learn best practices for the interview and hiring process. We want to help you take the stress out of hiring!

DCDEE nine topic areas:

1. Planning a safe, healthy learning environment
2. Children's physical & intellectual development
3. Children's social & emotional development
4. Productive relationships with families
5. Program management
6. Professionalism
7. Child growth development
8. Inclusion of children with special needs
9. Observing & recording children's behavior