



## Meet Some of Our Infant Toddler Specialists

### Deanna Bledsoe

In 2004 Deanna joined the Infant Toddler Quality Enhancement Project. She earned her BS degree in Early Childhood Education from North Carolina Central University. Deanna enjoys going to church and spending time with family and friends. She is most passionate about high- quality childcare for infants and toddlers.



### Melinda McCullen

I have been in the Early Childhood field for over 25 plus years. For the past 16 years, I have been an infant Toddler Specialist serving programs in a nine-county region. I have a passion for educating teachers through my current position as Infant Toddler Specialist and Adjunct Instructor at Forsyth Technical Community College. My hope is to make an impact in the teachers that work with our youngest, therefore, creating safe, secure and nurturing environments for them to learn and develop.

In my spare time, I enjoy hanging out with my two Jack Russell Terriers, Tucker and Checkers. They are my fur babies. I am involved in Carolina Russell Rescue as my other passion is saving animals! I love shopping, being outdoors and my most favorite place on earth is at the beach!

### Alicia Shell

I have been with the project for 10 years. I am married with 4 children three daughters and a son. I have one grandson who is 5 and just started Kindergarten and a granddaughter that is due in February 2022. My hobbies are spending time with my children, reading, and playing with my dogs. I adopted a Miniature Poodle puppy, Murphy, during COVID quarantine and he really keeps me on my toes.



I have both a BA and MA in Child Development. I chose Child Development as a major because I recognized the importance of quality experiences and development in children's early years. Young children need to be supported in their development and interactions to ensure that they have the quality foundation that they need to be successful in school and life.

Being an Infant Toddler Specialist is especially great because I get to support child care providers in providing those quality interactions and experiences that will help the youngest children start their lives off with the best foundation possible. And...getting to interact with babies and toddlers while "working" is the best benefit of the job there is.