

# Professional Development

## *For the Infant/Toddler*

### *Early Care and Education Workforce*

## INTRODUCTION

**I**n the early care and education (ECE) field, the infant/toddler (I/T) workforce is sometimes the least educated and under compensated, with the highest turnover rate.<sup>1</sup> These factors are disturbing in light of the growing research that demonstrates that the brain undergoes the most dramatic development during the first 3 years of life. Neuroscience teaches us that the interactive nature of the relationship between children and caregivers—the “serve and return relationship”—is essential to the formation of the developing brain.<sup>2</sup> A well-compensated, knowledgeable, and competent I/T workforce with ongoing opportunities for professional development can contribute to a positive start for infants, toddlers, and families. The advancement of the I/T workforce can be considered within the context of State<sup>3</sup> efforts to develop and implement early childhood professional development systems (PDS). An early childhood PDS is defined as a “comprehensive system of preparation and ongoing development and support for all early childhood education professionals working with and on behalf of young children.”<sup>4</sup>

### I/T WORKFORCE

The I/T workforce is defined as individuals providing direct or indirect services to infants, toddlers, and their families in early care and education settings. The I/T workforce includes caregivers, assistant/lead/head teachers, directors, mentors, coaches, specialists, and consultants. I/T caregivers may work in center-based child care; regulated child care homes; family, friend and neighbor care; and Early Head Start programs.

The purpose of this paper is to share a framework and offer approaches to strengthen professional development opportunities for the I/T workforce. States can use the framework to build or enhance a PDS and plan for the use of I/T targeted funds. The framework offers opportunities to consider how a career lattice, training and education, financial supports, partnerships, and assessment of outcomes can support the professional development of the I/T workforce. **Appendix A** includes a checklist to assist State discussions of the challenges and opportunities in developing or improving a State-based PDS.

<sup>1</sup> Dennehy, J. and Marshall, N.L. “Workforce Characteristics of Infant and Toddler Caregivers in Centers, Family Child Care Homes and Early Head Start Programs: A Massachusetts Capacity Study Research Brief,” Wellesley Centers For Research on Women, Wellesley, MA, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, “In Brief: The Science of Early Childhood Development” NGA Center for Best Practices, National Conference of State Legislatures, and Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 2008, [http://developingchild.harvard.edu/library/briefs/inbrief\\_series/inbrief\\_the\\_science\\_of\\_ecd/](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/library/briefs/inbrief_series/inbrief_the_science_of_ecd/) (Accessed July 12, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> In this paper, “States” refers to States, Territories, and Tribes.

<sup>4</sup> LeMoine, S. “Workforce Designs: A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems,” Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2008, Pg. 5, <http://www.naeyc.org/policy/ecwsi#blueprint> (Accessed June 15, 2010).



National  
Infant & Toddler  
Child Care  
Initiative

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ZERO TO THREE

A Project of the Child Care Bureau

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM COMPONENTS AND THE INFANT/TODDLER WORKFORCE

**O**pportunities for professional preparation designed to support the I/T workforce can easily be integrated into an existing PDS. Currently, 37 States have or support PDS.<sup>5</sup>

Key components that States can design for a clearly articulated system to support the I/T workforce include clear pathways for achievement such as a career lattice, education and training that allow for hierarchical learning about I/T development and expanding skill levels, financial incentives to remain in the field, partnerships such as I/T specialist and other consultant networks, and assessment of outcomes.

### CAREER LATTICE

**A** career lattice is a mechanism by which people enter and progress in a profession, assessing knowledge and skill levels for various roles, levels, or programs.<sup>6</sup> It is an important component of a PDS. The career lattice should include opportunities for the I/T workforce to access professional development activities and describe how they can move (horizontally, vertically, and diagonally) within a single ECE system or across early childhood systems. Professional preparation opportunities should allow members of the I/T workforce to seek out and move into positions with more responsibility and increased compensation, potentially improving job satisfaction and overall caregiver retention. The career lattice can be designed to provide clear, multiple entry points including both formal and informal pathways for members of the I/T workforce to achieve career advancement. It can offer multiple levels of job opportunities to work with infants, toddlers, and families, defined according to the core knowledge and competencies specific to each position.

Studies document the positive correlation between professional preparation and workforce retention. For example, a 2005 Massachusetts I/T workforce capacity study research brief reviewed the latest information on workforce education, staff-child ratios, group size, teacher tenure and turnover, and staff wages and benefits.<sup>7</sup> The research brief focused on the characteristics of the workforce caring for infants and toddlers in licensed or regulated early care and education in Massachusetts. Stability, tenure and related turnover rates were found to be important workforce factors related to the quality of infant and toddler early education and care. The authors concluded that turnover rates were higher among staff with lower qualifications. One study reviewed in the brief, the Massachusetts Cost Quality Infant Toddler Study, reported that 25 percent of infant teachers and 33 percent of toddler teachers were hired within the previous year. Therefore, a new assistant I/T teacher who is introduced to a career lattice that provides opportunities to expand or change roles and increase compensation, while continuing to work with infants and toddlers, may be more interested and able to stay in the field and provide higher quality care.

<sup>5</sup> NCCIC, "Early Childhood Professional Development Systems Toolkit," National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center, [http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/pd\\_toolkit/index.html](http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/pd_toolkit/index.html) (Accessed July 15, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> NCCIC, "Early Childhood Professional Development Systems Toolkit: Cross-Sector Professional Development Systems and Systems Integration," National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center, [http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/pd\\_toolkit/pd\\_section2.pdf](http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/pd_toolkit/pd_section2.pdf) (Accessed July 12, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Dennehy, J. and Marshall, N.L., "Workforce Characteristics of Infant and Toddler Caregivers in Centers, Family Child Care Homes," and "Early Head Start Programs: A Massachusetts Capacity Study Research Brief," Wellesley Centers For Research on Women, 2005, Pg. 9.

**Steps to Consider:** States developing or reviewing ECE career lattices can consider establishing an I/T workforce committee that can recommend and develop I/T specialization levels. States may need to consider including placeholder levels in the career lattice for positions or credentials that currently do not have defined education or experience requirements. Levels can later become available incrementally to the workforce as States develop the necessary requirements and supports to achieve the level.

### STATE EXAMPLE

**Illinois**, in its ECE career lattice, designed 5 levels of I/T specialization that begin with 15 semester hours, or 9 semester hours and a CDA, at level 2 and progress to a master's degree-level credential at level 6. Level 6 is currently in development. For more information, see <http://www.ilgateways.com/uploadedFiles/Credentials/ITC/foms/ITC%20Framework%20Final.pdf>

## TRAINING AND EDUCATION

**T**he training and education of the I/T workforce is a key consideration.<sup>8</sup> States want to ensure that the resources allocated for training and education of the I/T workforce will expand knowledge and competence to support career development and build partnerships with families. An overview of the 2010–2011 State Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) plans revealed that 54 States and Territories report spending I/T targeted funds on specialized training for I/T toddler caregivers,<sup>9</sup> and it is the most frequently reported use of the funds. For infant caregivers, and even more often for toddler caregivers, specialized caregiver training in early care and education is associated with higher quality care.<sup>10</sup>

States can consider the specialized needs of the I/T workforce when developing core knowledge and competencies, early learning guidelines, and statewide training curricula. Furthermore, these key documents may be incorporated into training and education requirements to support advancing the skill and knowledge level of the I/T workforce. Core knowledge and competencies, early learning guidelines, and curricula are key components of training and education and offer opportunities to strengthen training and education for the I/T workforce.

### CORE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES

One approach to building effective training and education is the development of multi-level core knowledge and competencies (CKC) specific to the I/T workforce. Core knowledge and competencies define the content (knowledge) and skills (competencies) that adults working with young children need to support children's individualized learning experiences and development. The I/T workforce should understand the rapid physical, cognitive, language, social, and emotion-

<sup>8</sup> For the purposes of this paper, training is defined as professional development that occurs outside of the context of formal education pursued for credits toward a degree. Education is defined as credit-bearing coursework that contributes to a degree.

<sup>9</sup> NCCIC, "Table 5.1-A Infant and Toddler Targeted Funds," in *CCDF State Plans Data Summary Tables 2010–2011*, National Child Care Information and Technical Assistance Center, <http://stateplans.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?do=viewDataSummaryTables>. (Accessed July 15, 2010.)

<sup>10</sup> Kreader, J. Lee, Ferguson, D., and Lawrence, S. "Infant and Toddler Child Care Quality" *Child Care & Early Education Research Connections*, Research-to-Policy Connections No. 2, August 2005, Pg. 5, <http://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/6872> (Accessed July 15, 2010.)

al development that infants and toddlers experience. To practice responsive child care, the I/T workforce needs a keen awareness of the critical importance of emotional development and its connection with language, culture, and social growth during infancy. When adults understand what to expect from young children and how to support them during the first 3 years, they can better nurture the skills needed for success later in life. Core knowledge and competencies designed specifically for the I/T workforce and integrated into high-quality training and educational opportunities may ensure that caregivers have the knowledge foundation as well as the relationship-based skills needed to provide quality care.<sup>11</sup> Currently, 36 States have CKC that support the early care and education workforce.<sup>12</sup>

**Steps to Consider:** States can periodically review CKC to determine if a more specific focus on the I/T workforce is needed. States can review training and education opportunities to determine how CKC are incorporated into and support the professional development of the I/T workforce.

### STATE EXAMPLES

**Arkansas** created a curriculum, *Adventures for Toddlers*, designed to support toddlers from 18 to 36 months old. *Adventures for Toddlers* is based on the Arkansas I/T ELG and is formatted to assist and guide child care professionals who work with toddlers. The curriculum contains 30 topics spanning eight focus areas. The curriculum includes benchmarks that follow six important areas of I/T care, including self-concept, emotional, physical, social, cognitive, and language development. Created to be flexible, the curriculum allows caregivers to select from the 30 topics and permits them to decide when and for how long they should delve into the topics with the toddlers. For more information, see <http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/advfortoddlers/qa.html>.

**Maine's** I/T training program, *Supporting Maine's Infants & Toddlers: Guidelines for Learning & Development*, requires 30 hours of training. The program guides early child care providers through the history, development, and implementation of Maine's Infant & Toddler Early Learning Guidelines and helps them understand how to apply the guidelines to day-to-day work with infants, toddlers, and families. The training stresses the connection between authentic assessment and curriculum planning in a series of eight modules. While in the training program, participants use a variety of strategies and tools to collect developmental indicators, make observations, and plan curriculum by relying on Maine's guidelines for infants and toddlers. Participants complete a case study of one infant or toddler that makes use of the concepts and strategies taught in the training. For more information, see <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/maineroads/pages/ckt.htm#Supporting>.

**Maine, New Mexico, New York, and South Carolina** have core knowledge domains specific to infants and toddlers that require specialized knowledge consistent with the National Association for the Education of Young Children's early childhood professional common knowledge and developmentally appropriate practices. **Maine** and **Illinois** have multiple competency levels demonstrating proficiency specific to I/T specialization. For more information, see <http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/Corekc.htm>

<sup>11</sup> National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative, "Core Knowledge and Competencies for Infants and Toddlers," Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance, Child Care Bureau, 2009.

<sup>12</sup> National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative, "Keys to High-Quality Child Care for Infants and Toddlers," [http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/keys\\_to\\_hqccit.htm](http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/keys_to_hqccit.htm) (Accessed July 15, 2010).

## INFANT/TODDLER EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES

Currently, 30 States and 3 Territories have infant and toddler early learning guidelines (I/T ELG). Early learning guidelines describe what children should know and be able to do; and help ensure that the I/T workforce knows how to support learning and development appropriate for infants and toddlers. I/T ELG often include strategies to ensure that the I/T workforce is able to support the development of young children at different ages and levels of development. Some States are considering how best to incorporate I/T guidelines into training and education for the I/T workforce. I/T ELG can be a common framework for building coursework across the career lattice, from entry-level training to advanced education. I/T ELGs can also provide a common language for communication across professional disciplines and with families.

**Steps to Consider:** States can work with the PDS, higher education, and other stakeholders to develop a plan to systematically incorporate I/T ELG into I/T workforce training and education. Incremental steps, beginning with entry-level training, may be necessary. Developing training for use with families with infants and toddlers can also be considered.

## INFANT/TODDLER CREDENTIALS

An I/T credential (ITC) is a qualification that asserts that the holder has specialized knowledge and skills that serve as a foundation for high-quality interactions with and care of infants and toddlers.

The credential is formal recognition of this professional achievement. Establishing an ITC as part of a comprehensive PDS is a critical component of supporting the professional development of the I/T workforce. An ITC can be designed to:

- Offer encouragement or incentives for I/T practitioners to seek out and benefit from specialized education and training
- Set a standard of care for I/T practitioners
- Provide a vehicle for practitioners to demonstrate knowledge and competence
- Establish a system of recognition for such efforts and achievements<sup>13</sup>

A 2010 ITC review conducted by the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative identified 21 States with credentials for the I/T workforce, and several more planning and piloting credentials. Although the majority of States offer a single-level ITC, more recent initiatives are offering ITCs with multiple levels. Some States incorporate the Child Development Associate (CDA) National Credentialing

Program center-based I/T endorsement into State credential initiatives and are seeking official recognition from the Office of Head Start that their State credential meets or exceeds the standards of the National CDA.

**Steps to Consider:** The challenges of integrating the ITC within existing State systems are a primary rationale for intentional, strategic planning for the credential. Strategic thinking will help ensure that the new credential includes all relevant aspects of system integration, avoids duplication with existing systems, and maximizes limited resources. The first strategic decision in developing an ITC is defining who will participate in the planning process. Including key stakeholders from the outset will help ensure that all related elements of existing State systems will be considered.

### INFANT/TODDLER CREDENTIAL

An ITC is any combination of requirements (training, courses, experience) that, when considered together, translate into formal recognition of individuals who work with infants and toddlers in child care programs.

Click on this link to access strategies to design an I/T credential: [http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/ITC\\_TA\\_Tool.pdf](http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/ITC_TA_Tool.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> National Infant and Toddler Child Care Initiative, "Credentials for the Infant/Toddler Child Care Workforce: A Technical Assistance Tool for Child Care and Development Fund Administrators," Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance, Child Care Bureau, 2007. [http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/ITC\\_TA\\_Tool.pdf](http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/ITC_TA_Tool.pdf)

Special consideration may be needed for the development of credentials for the I/T workforce in regulated family child care settings and unregulated family, friend, and neighbor care.

### STATE EXAMPLES

**South Carolina** has an ITC designed to train caregivers to provide nurturing, high-quality care to infants and toddlers. The State works to ensure that a variety of technical colleges across the State offer the required classes to those wishing to pursue the credential. To be eligible for the ITC, the recipient must complete the six required classes for 18 total credits. The classes are offered at 16 technical colleges throughout the State. For more information, see <http://www.sc-ccccd.net/IT%20Info%20Sheet.pdf>.

**Oregon's** Infant/Toddler Credential was created to ensure that I/T caregivers who earned the credential are acknowledged for their achievements, qualifications, and knowledge about the care of infants and toddlers. Individuals with the ITC meet the qualifications to be a head teacher in an I/T classroom in a certified child care center. They also meet the qualifications for a certified family child care provider caring for more than two children under the age of 2 years. For more information, see <http://www.centerline.pdx.edu/credential/infant-toddler-index.php>.

### STATEWIDE CURRICULUM FOR THE ENTRY-LEVEL INFANT/TODDLER WORKFORCE

A statewide curriculum for the entry-level I/T workforce is a curriculum developed or adopted by a State to provide standardized training for individuals newly entering the workforce. A statewide curriculum attempts to create consistency and uniformity for entry-level I/T workforce training. When entry-level training is standardized across the State, it is easier to achieve quality control that ensures training outcomes are met. Some States created their own curriculum that is designed specifically for that State, while others adopted preexisting curricula. Some States are also designing entry-level curricula for family, friend, and neighbor caregivers to improve quality of care in unregulated child care settings. Whether created specifically for the State or not, a statewide curriculum for the entry-level I/T workforce is intended to provide the workforce with the CKC necessary to improve the quality of care given to infants and toddlers.

**Steps to Consider:** States can begin by conducting an inventory of the I/T entry-level training currently offered in the State and research what other States have adopted. A committee can be authorized to conduct the analysis and make recommendations on moving to statewide standardized training for the I/T entry-level workforce.

### STATE EXAMPLE

**Nebraska** created a program, First Connections, to make technology-based training opportunities available to ECE professionals who work with infants and toddlers. The goals of First Connections training are to increase the quality of care given to infants and toddlers by providers and to strengthen the relationships between parents and caregivers. The training curriculum framework is based on the CDA competencies and is assimilated with other statewide ECE training efforts, such as the Nebraska Framework for Early Professional Development. *First Connections* has five curriculum modules that must be completed chronologically. For more information, see <http://www.firstconnections.nde.state.ne.us/project.htm>.



## ARTICULATION TO HIGHER EDUCATION FOR THE INFANT/TODDLER WORKFORCE

Articulation agreements are designed to allow educational institutions to accept or transfer a pre-approved set of courses or coursework between institutions. It is critical that training articulate to institutions of higher education for members of the I/T workforce to have opportunities for career advancement. It is equally important that associate's degree coursework can articulate to institutions offering bachelor's and advanced coursework. Although entry-level training for the I/T workforce is becoming more common, it is frequently offered outside the context of formal education, often without college credit. This can be a disincentive for the entry-level I/T workforce to continue its education. Some States are designing entry-level training that can be offered for credit and are encouraging or supporting the development of articulation agreements between PDS and higher education institutions. In addition, there is increasing attention to the I/T content of ECE degrees at all levels—associate, bachelor, master, and doctoral. Some States and higher education institutions are concerned that the depth and content of I/T coursework does not reflect current knowledge of the complexity and importance of infant and toddler development. Efforts are underway to update existing courses, add new courses, and offer degree concentrations in infant and toddler studies.

**Steps to Consider:** States can consider beginning with an inventory of existing training, courses, and degrees that offer an I/T focus. The inventory can include descriptions of the content, last revision date, whether it is credit or noncredit, level (entry, immediate, or advanced), and alignment with I/T CKC and I/T ELG. The inventory can also include existing and planned articulation agreements between and among institutions offering I/T training and education.

### STATE EXAMPLES

**Maine** has a fully articulated statewide PDS. Training is offered through the resource and referral system, which can then be articulated to the CDA credential and also into a 2-year program. The 2-year program can articulate to a 4-year program. Maine also offers three levels of an I/T credential, with some of the training and education offered through the resource and referral system and some offered by higher education. For more information, see <http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/maineroads/pages/ckt.htm>

**Ohio's** Infant Toddler Certificate is offered online by the University of Cincinnati (UC) and articulates to an associate's degree, and a bachelor's degree offered by UC. Both degrees offer an I/T focus. For more information, see [http://www.uc.edu/DegreePrograms/Collage/documents/education\\_cech/CERT-ECE\\_Infant\\_Toddler.pdf](http://www.uc.edu/DegreePrograms/Collage/documents/education_cech/CERT-ECE_Infant_Toddler.pdf)

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT

**F**inancial support encourages the I/T workforce to access professional development opportunities, maintain professional status, and remain in the field. Financial support can be provided through scholarships, wage supplements, and financial incentives. Financial incentives can be awarded to the I/T professional seeking formal and informal training, credentials, and degrees. Without these types of support, many members of the I/T workforce would not be able to pursue further education, which is essential to quality child care.

**Steps to Consider:** States can consider several ways to financially encourage and support the I/T workforce to seek continuing education and training. States can consider a variety of funding

sources ranging from scholarships to wage increases. One approach is to give priority to the I/T workforce in existing scholarships and wage increase programs. Another approach may be to provide student loan forgiveness to individuals who work in I/T settings.

### STATE EXAMPLES

**New Jersey** recently devoted \$1 million of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds for scholarships for the I/T workforce to obtain a new I/T credential. In addition, the Clearinghouse Office of Professional Impact New Jersey offers a number of financial assistance programs to those working in early childhood education. The NJ Early Childhood Education & Training Reimbursement Program reimburses registered family child care providers and licensed child care center group or head teachers for coursework completed for a CDA or Certified Childcare Professional credential, associate's degree, bachelor's degree, or early childhood teacher certification program. For more information, see <http://www.njcite.org/>

**Montana** offers a variety of financial incentives for those who wish to complete various credentials for I/T care. Through the Early Childhood Project, Montana offers the Professional Development Incentive Award—Higher Ed (previously known as Higher Education Merit Pay) and the Professional Development Incentive Award (previously known as Merit Pay I). With funding from Best Beginnings Quality Improvement, the Montana Early Care and Education Scholarship Program offers three scholarships. These awards and scholarships were created to improve the quality of early care and education. For more information, see <http://www.mtecp.org/scholarships.html>.

## PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**T**he availability of qualified I/T specialists, educators, consultants, mentors, and coaches is of interest to States as they work to improve the quality of I/T settings. States developing and operating I/T specialist networks or working to help I/T settings achieve higher ratings in a Quality Rating Improvement System are seeking ECE consultants <sup>14</sup> who have the knowledge and skills to work with the I/T workforce. Formal I/T specialist networks are currently implemented in 23 States. <sup>15</sup> Although many other States do not have a formal network of specialists, different types of consultants are working in I/T settings, with varying levels of education and experience in the development of infants and toddlers. The CCDF's summary of State and Territory plans for fiscal year 2010–11 <sup>16</sup> identified 37 States that planned to use CCDF funds to support technical assistance to I/T child care programs as well as several that planned to support specific types of consultants, including health, mental health, I/T specialists, and inclusion specialists. In addition, States are beginning to form partnerships across disciplines and with higher education and PDS to build the capacity and coordinate the services of consultants and other professionals working to support I/T settings.

<sup>14</sup> In this paper, "consultants" refers to I/T specialists, educators, consultants, mentors, and coaches.

<sup>15</sup> National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative (NITCCI), "Infant/Toddler Specialist Network FactSheet," NITCCI, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance, Child Care Bureau 2010 [http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/it\\_specialist\\_factsheet.pdf](http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/it_specialist_factsheet.pdf).

<sup>16</sup> NCCIC, "Table 5.1-A Infant and Toddler Targeted Funds," *CCDF State Plans Data Summary Tables 2010-2011*, <http://stateplans.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/index.cfm?do=viewDataSummaryTables> (Accessed July 15, 2010).



**Steps to Consider:** States can begin by identifying and collecting information about the range of consultants already working with I/T settings to answer these questions:

- Who is providing consultation services in the State?
- What I/T care settings are served by consultants?
- How are the needs of infants, toddlers, and families met by consultants?
- Are there gaps in services to I/T care settings and families?
- What are the professional development needs of the consultants?

### STATE EXAMPLES

The six **New England States**, in collaboration with the **Region I** Child Care Bureau office and the National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative, developed three I/T modules for consultants from multiple disciplines working with child care programs serving infants and toddlers. The purpose was to provide consultants with information on infant and toddler development and best practices, support their professional development, and foster collaborative consultation across disciplines. The modules were delivered to multidisciplinary teams from each of the six States in 2009–10. States have developed action plans to integrate the modules into professional development supports for child care consultants. For more information, see <http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/consultants.htm>.

**New Hampshire** is working on building interdisciplinary capacity to work with child care programs serving infants and toddlers. The State has focused on developing strong relationships with higher education to meet the needs of the I/T workforce. It has also convened an interdisciplinary team to integrate several initiatives, including Mind in the Making, ZERO TO THREE's Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect curriculum, and the I/T consultation modules. In addition, the New Hampshire Child Development Bureau is developing an allied professional credential to reflect that working with infants and toddlers is interdisciplinary work. Professionals in social work, psychology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech pathology can apply for the credential that allows them to demonstrate to child care programs that they are qualified consultants.

## OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

**B**ecause so many States are investing Federal and State funds in supporting the professional development of the I/T workforce, interest in determining the effectiveness of these investments is growing. Recent publications, such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC's) *Workforce Designs: A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems* and the National Child Care Information Center's "Early Childhood Professional Development Systems Toolkit,"<sup>17</sup> highlight the need for both system- and component-level evaluations. System-level assessment of the effectiveness of PDS as well as evaluation of the effects of specific training, education, and supports on I/T workforce practice has not been common, but there have been a few efforts so far.

**Steps to Consider:** States can initiate periodic review of how the PDS meets the needs of the I/T workforce. States can also incorporate outcome evaluation requirements into initiatives funded for the professional development of the I/T workforce.

<sup>17</sup> LeMoine, S., "Workforce Designs: A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems," 2008, Pg. 5. <http://www.naeyc.org/policy/ecwsib#blueprint> (Accessed July 15, 2010).

## STATE EXAMPLES

**Louisiana** used NITCCI's Early Care and Education Professional Development System Support for Infant/Toddler Workforce Assessment Checklist (**Appendix A**) as part of its strategic planning efforts to improve the quality of I/T settings.

In **Pennsylvania**, a study examined the relationship between child caregivers in urban child care settings who completed the First Beginnings child care training curriculum and the quality of care provided for infants and toddlers in a sample of 160 caregivers in 96 I/T rooms throughout 48 childcare programs. For more information, see <http://www.research-connections.org/childcare/resources/659?q=infant+toddler+professional+development+evaluation>.

## CONCLUSION

**T**his paper provides a framework for States to consider the quality of care offered to infants, toddlers, and families when developing or improving the State PDS. States should consider how well the I/T workforce is integrated and supported within each component of the PDS, including: (1) career lattice, (2) training and education, (3) financial support, (4) partnerships, and (5) outcomes evaluation. Periodic review of State ECE PDS to assess how well components support the I/T workforce is important to the development and retention of a knowledgeable and competent I/T workforce that can support the development of our youngest children. Opportunities for revision and enhancements of PDS components for the I/T workforce can be integrated into overall PDS planning and development or become the focus of a specific workgroup. Ensuring that infants, toddlers, and families are considered when designing or enhancing the State PDS may result in a knowledgeable and competent I/T workforce with ongoing opportunities for professional development that can contribute to a positive start for infants, toddlers, and families.

## APPENDICES

### **APPENDIX A**

Early Care and Education Professional Development System Support  
for Infant/Toddler Workforce Assessment Checklist

### **APPENDIX B**

Resources

## APPENDIX A

### EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT FOR INFANT/TODDLER WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

COORDINATED CHILD CARE ECE PDS SUPPORT FOR I/T WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT CHECK LIST	YES	NO	IN PROCESS	COMMENTS
<b>Career Lattice</b>				
The career lattice includes multilevel opportunities specific to the I/T workforce.				
<b>Training &amp; Education</b>				
There are multilevel core knowledge & competencies specific to the I/T workforce.				
Training & education for the I/T workforce incorporate I/T CKCs.				
Training & education for the I/T workforce incorporate I/T ELGs.				
There is a defined statewide curriculum to prepare the entry-level I/T workforce.				
There is a statewide curriculum appropriate for FFN care-givers serving I/Ts.				
Training for the I/T workforce articulates to higher education.				
There are associate- & bachelor-level degrees that offer an I/T focus.				
<b>Credentials</b>				
There are multilevel credentials for the I/T workforce.				
State I/T credentials meet or incorporate EHS requirements for the I/T workforce.				
<b>Financial Supports</b>				
There are scholarships available to the I/T workforce.				
There are financial incentives to reward I/T workforce members who complete training, credentials, & degrees.				
<b>Partnerships to Support Professional Development</b>				
There are adequate I/T specialists, educators, consultants, mentors, & coaches to support the professional development & practice of the I/T workforce.				
There are adequate professional development opportunities & supports for I/T specialists, educators, consultants, mentors, coaches, lead teachers, & directors.				
<b>Outcomes &amp; Evaluation</b>				
There is regular review of the PDS's support for the I/T workforce.				
There is regular assessment of the impact of training, education, & supports on I/T workforce practice.				

### RESOURCES

The following resources provide additional information about supporting the professional development of the I/T workforce.

#### CORE KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES

##### ***National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative Keys to High-Quality Child Care for Infants and Toddlers: Core Knowledge and Competencies for Infants and Toddlers***

This paper describes common elements found in the CKC of 36 States, including age ranges, core knowledge categories, competency levels, and special considerations for children with special needs and cultural diversity.

[http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/keys\\_to\\_hqccit.htm](http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/keys_to_hqccit.htm)

##### ***Charting Progress for Babies in Child Care, A CLASP Child Care and Early Education Project: Establish Core Competencies***

This website provides resources on establishing CKC for the I/T workforce, including policy ideas, state examples, and a bibliography.

<http://www.clasp.org/babiesinchildcare/recommendations?id=0001>

##### ***Reinvesting in Child Care: State Infant/Toddler Policies: Establish Core Competencies (CLASP)***

This policy brief provides a rationale for why and how States should implement CKC for the I/T workforce.

<http://www.clasp.org/admin/site/publications/files/0469.pdf>

#### INFANT/TODDLER EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES, TRAINING, AND EDUCATION

**Arkansas** developed a curriculum for the I/T workforce to use with toddlers that incorporate the benchmarks from the developmental strands of the Arkansas Framework for Infant and Toddler Care.

<http://www.arkansas.gov/childcare/advfortoddlers/qa.html>

**Maine** developed a 30-hour training module for the I/T workforce that guides participants through the history, creation and use of the State's early learning guidelines.

<http://muskie.usm.maine.edu/maineroads/pages/ckt.htm#Supporting>

#### INFANT/TODDLER CREDENTIALS

##### ***National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative, Credentials for the Infant/Toddler Child Care Workforce: A Technical Assistance Tool for Child Care and Development Fund Administrators***

This document is a guide for States and Territories planning to develop or implement a system to formally recognize the specialized knowledge and skill sets needed by the I/T workforce.

[http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/ITC\\_TA\\_Tool.pdf](http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/ITC_TA_Tool.pdf)

##### ***Oregon Infant Toddler Professional Credential***

This website gives an overview of the Oregon Infant Toddler Professional Credential, including the requirements and application process.

<http://www.centerline.pdx.edu/credential/infant-toddler-index.php>

### ***South Carolina Infant/Toddler Credential***

This document describes the South Carolina ITC, its usefulness, requirements, and available financial and academic supports.

<http://www.sc-cccd.net/IT%20Info%20Sheet.pdf>

## **STATEWIDE CURRICULUM FOR THE ENTRY-LEVEL INFANT/TODDLER WORKFORCE**

### ***Nebraska's First Connections***

This website provides information on Nebraska's statewide curriculum and training initiative, First Connections, that was designed to make exemplary technology-based training opportunities available to early childhood care and education personnel working with infants and toddlers (including those with special needs) primarily in home-based child care.

<http://www.firstconnections.nde.state.ne.us/project.htm>

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

**New Jersey** established the First Steps Infant Toddler Initiative Scholarship Program for infant and toddler practitioners employed in licensed child care centers to increase the number of infant and toddler practitioners obtaining the New Jersey Infant/Toddler Credential.

[http://www.pinj.org/upload/First\\_steps\\_collegeintroletter\\_Mar\\_9\\_revised.pdf](http://www.pinj.org/upload/First_steps_collegeintroletter_Mar_9_revised.pdf)

**Montana** offers the Certified Infant Toddler Caregiver stipend to support individuals who are caring for infants in licensed child care centers or registered group or family child care homes. A \$1,600 incentive award is offered if the caregiver remains in a stable employment situation for at least 18 months.

<http://www.dphhs.mt.gov/hcsd/childcare/infanttoddlerstipends.shtml>

## **PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### ***National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative, Consultants in Child Care Settings Resources***

This website provides briefs, webinar materials, consultant training modules and other resources designed to support the professional development and collaborative consultation of consultants working with the I/T workforce.

<http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/consultants.htm>

### ***National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative Brief: Coordinating Child Care Consultants from Multiple Disciplines to Improve Quality in Infant/Toddler Care Settings***

This brief provides a framework and practical suggestions for coordinating and educating consultants serving I/T settings to improve communication and collaboration among consultants and the I/T workforce.

<http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/consultants.htm>

### ***National Infant & Toddler Child Care Initiative, Infant/Toddler Specialist Network Factsheet***

The factsheet defines the I/T specialist network and describes specialist qualification requirements and funding mechanisms.

[http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/it\\_specialist\\_factsheet.pdf](http://nitcci.nccic.acf.hhs.gov/resources/it_specialist_factsheet.pdf)



## OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION

### ***National Child Care and Technical Assistance Information Center Early Childhood Professional Development Systems Toolkit***

The “Quality Assurance” section of the tool kit provides an overview of quality assurance and its components, as well as information about how to ensure and measure achievement within PDS.  
[http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/pd\\_toolkit/pd\\_section8.pdf](http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/pubs/pd_toolkit/pd_section8.pdf)

## RESEARCH

### ***Childcare and Early Education Research Connections: Impact of Training and Education for Caregivers of Infants and Toddlers***

This brief describes research findings on a small number of training initiatives with a focus on the level of quality observed before and after training.

<http://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/6874/pdf>

### ***Childcare and Early Education Research Connections: Infant and Toddler Child Care Quality***

This brief summarizes current research on I/T child care quality, including the relevance of the professional development of the IT workforce.

<http://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/6872/pdf>

### ***Workforce Characteristics of Infant and Toddler Caregivers in Centers, Family Child Care Homes and Early Head Start Programs: A Massachusetts Capacity Study Research Brief***

This research brief, part of the Massachusetts Capacity Study, focuses on the characteristics of the workforce caring for infants and toddlers in licensed or regulated settings in Massachusetts. The brief provides information on workforce education, staff–child ratios, group size, teacher tenure and turnover, and staff wages and benefits.

<http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED500767.pdf>

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

### ***Building an Early Childhood Professional Development System***

This issue brief gives an overview of the importance of an early childhood PDS, what research is informative, challenges to system development, and what steps Governors can take to support an early childhood PDS.

<http://www.nga.org/files/pdf/1002earlychildprofessionaldevelopment.pdf>

### ***Workforce Designs: A Policy Blueprint for State Early Childhood Professional Development Systems***

This blueprint focuses on the policies that connect and support professional development activities and describe effective implementation of a State professional development system. The Blueprint highlights principles and policy that build or sustain an integrated system.

[http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/policy/ecwsi/Workforce\\_Designs.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/policy/ecwsi/Workforce_Designs.pdf)