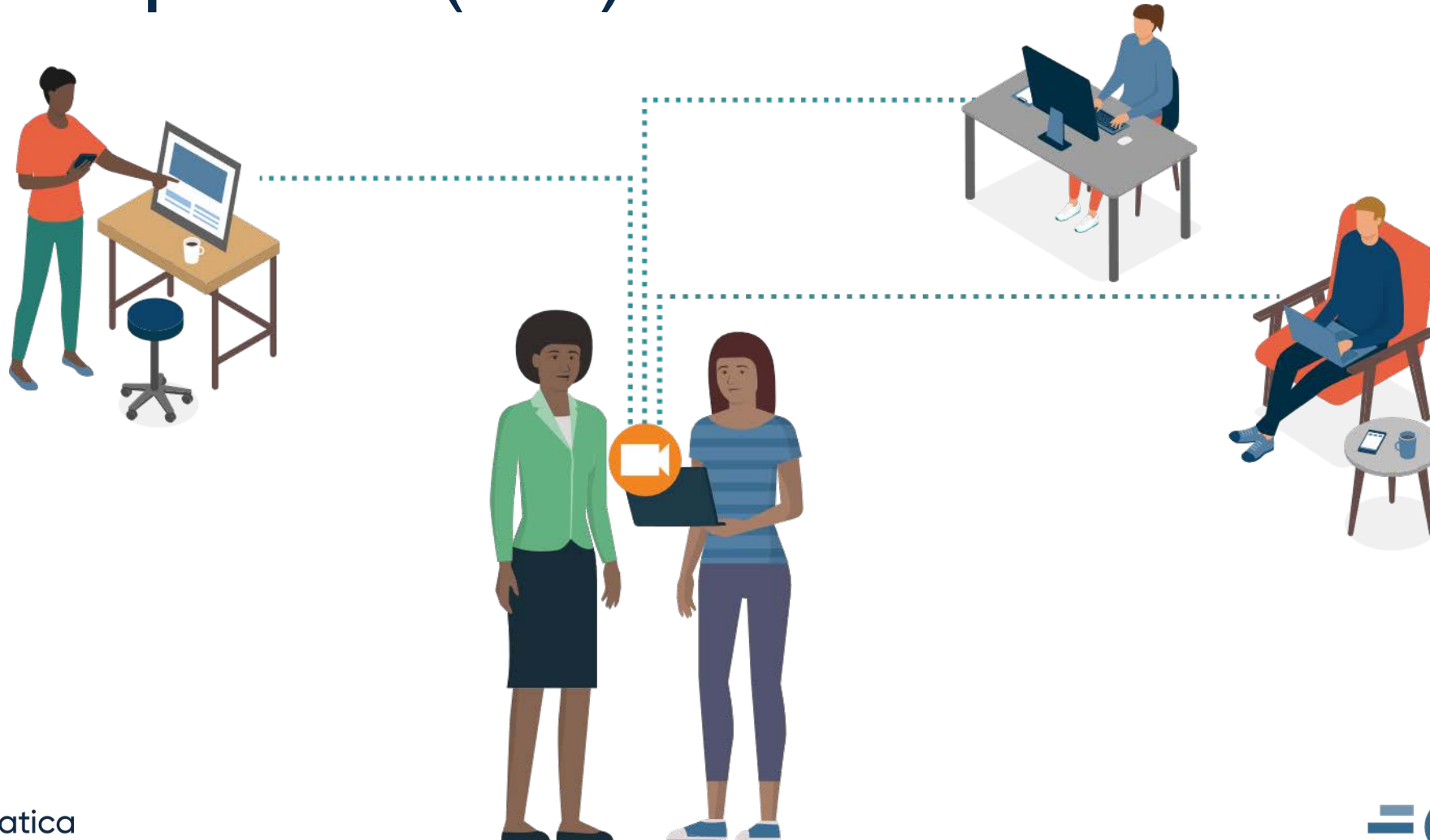# We Grow Together

Use of Technology to Support Early Care and Education Professional Development

Overview

/ **Key findings from literature**

/ **Description of We Grow Together**

/ **Initial findings about technology use**

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Technology and professional development (PD)

We Grow Together (WGT)

- **PD system for caregivers working with infants and toddlers in center-based care and family child care homes.**

- **Relationship-based coaching from a trained local PD provider.**
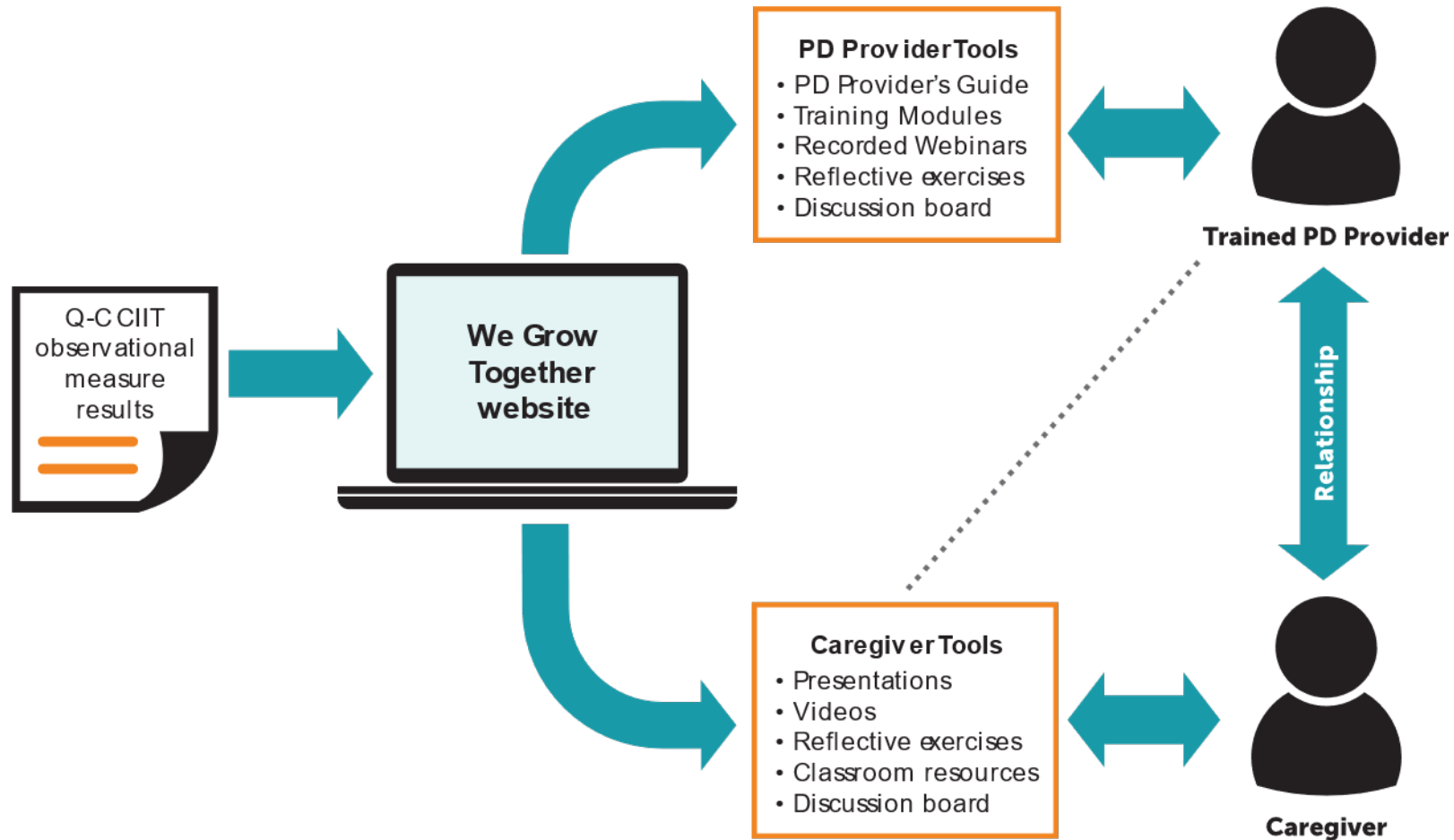
- **Access to easy-to-use online tools.**

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Quality of Caregiver-Child Interactions for Infants and Toddlers (Q-CCIIT) observational tool

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The Q-CCIIT observational tool focuses on high quality caregiver-child interactions that support

- Social-emotional development
- Language and literacy
- Cognitive development

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Key components of WGT

PD Provider Tools
- PD Provider's Guide
- Training Modules
- Recorded Webinars
- Reflective exercises
- Discussion board

Trained PD Provider

Q-C CIIT observational measure results

We Grow Together website

Relationship

Caregiver Tools
- Presentations
- Videos
- Reflective exercises
- Classroom resources
- Discussion board

Caregiver

Modules

Introductory Materials for Caregivers
Both Caregivers and PD Providers

Support Social-Emotional Development: Caregiver-Child Relationships
Both Caregivers and PD Providers

Module 1: Support Social-Emotional Development: Caregiver-Child Relationships

Support Children's Language Use
Both Caregivers and PD Providers

Module 2: Support Children's Language Use

Support Children's Understanding of Language
Both Caregivers and PD Providers

Module 3: Support Children's Understanding of Language

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Key practices

Children's cues

Conversations

Questions

Extend language

Use new words

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Tools

- Narrated presentations
- Handouts for colleagues and families
- Step-by-step guides and checklists
- Videos of caregivers implementing key practices
- Activities and self reflection exercises

- Classroom supports
- Role plays
- Progress checklists/graphs
- Links to additional resources

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Implementation

Learn about the website	PD provider and caregiver meet	Use WGT

2018-2019 WGT field test participants

- **Analytic sample included 271 caregivers and 168 PD providers:**

  - 89 Early Head Start center-based pairs

  - 125 community center-based pairs

  - 57 family child care pairs

- **Purposive sampling to obtain diversity in setting types in 10 different geographic areas**
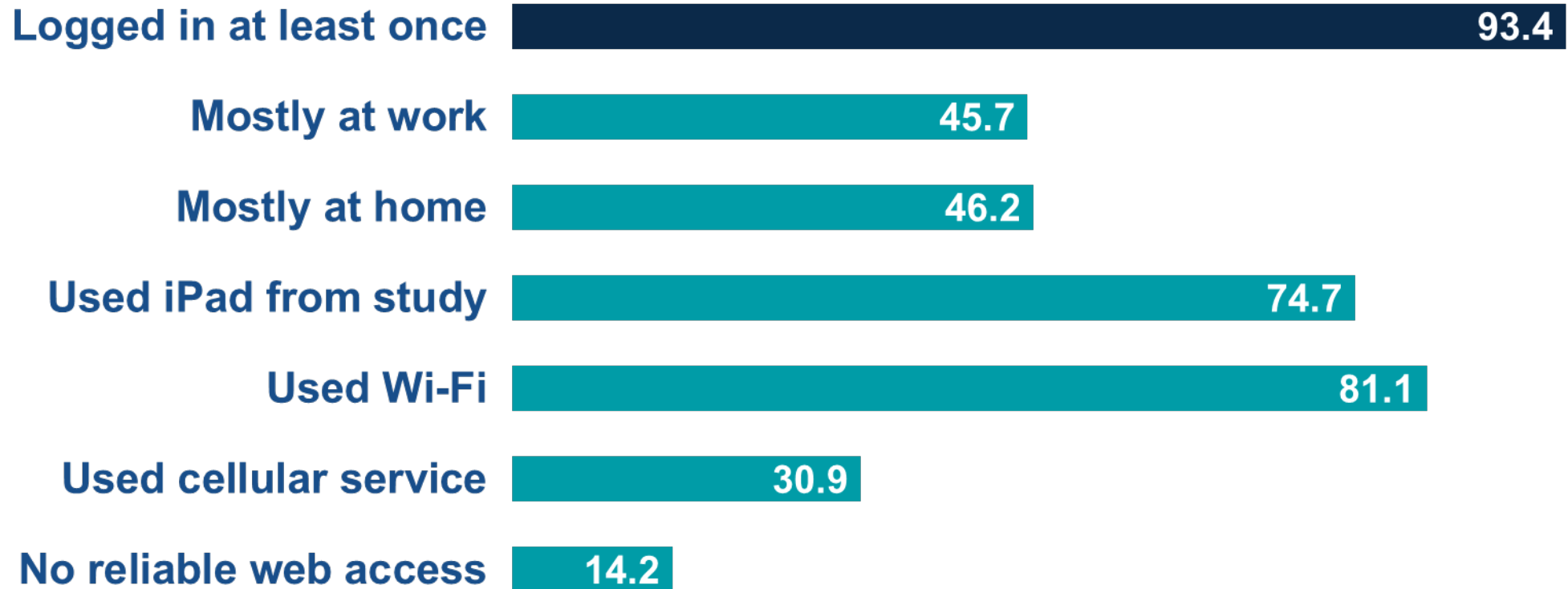
2018-2019 WGT field test

- **4 months of WGT implementation**

- **Data collection was before, during, and after WGT implementation.**

  - Q-CCIIT observations (fall and spring)

  - Surveys (fall and spring)

  - Web-analytics and implementation data (during implementation)

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WGT orientation and supports

- **Remote PD provider training**
- **Website navigation video and printable instructions**
- **Technical assistance: Phone, Email, Office Hours**
- **PD provider implementation webinars**
- **Online discussion boards**
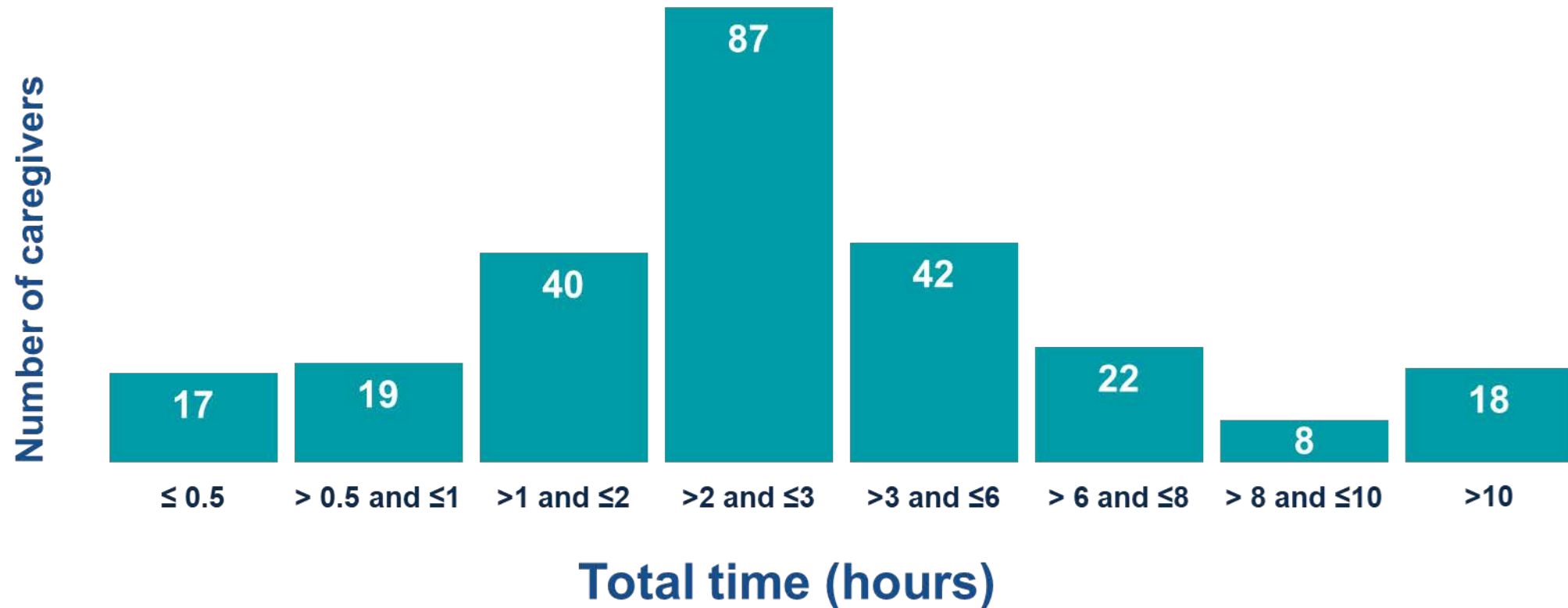- **For the field test, iPads**

Technology related findings

How caregivers accessed WGT

Logged in at least once	93.4
Mostly at work	45.7
Mostly at home	46.2
Used iPad from study	74.7
Used Wi-Fi	81.1
Used cellular service	30.9
No reliable web access	14.2

■ WGT website analytics   ■ Caregiver survey responses

Caregivers spent an average of 3.9 hours on the WGT website

Bar chart — Number of caregivers vs. Total time (hours):

Total time (hours)	Number of caregivers
≤ 0.5	17
> 0.5 and ≤1	19
>1 and ≤2	40
>2 and ≤3	87
>3 and ≤6	42
> 6 and ≤8	22
> 8 and ≤10	8
>10	18

Source: WGT website analytics

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Technical assistance inquiries

- **Initial challenges accessing WGT's technological components**

- **Caregivers report devices and materials were easy to use and navigate once they logged in**
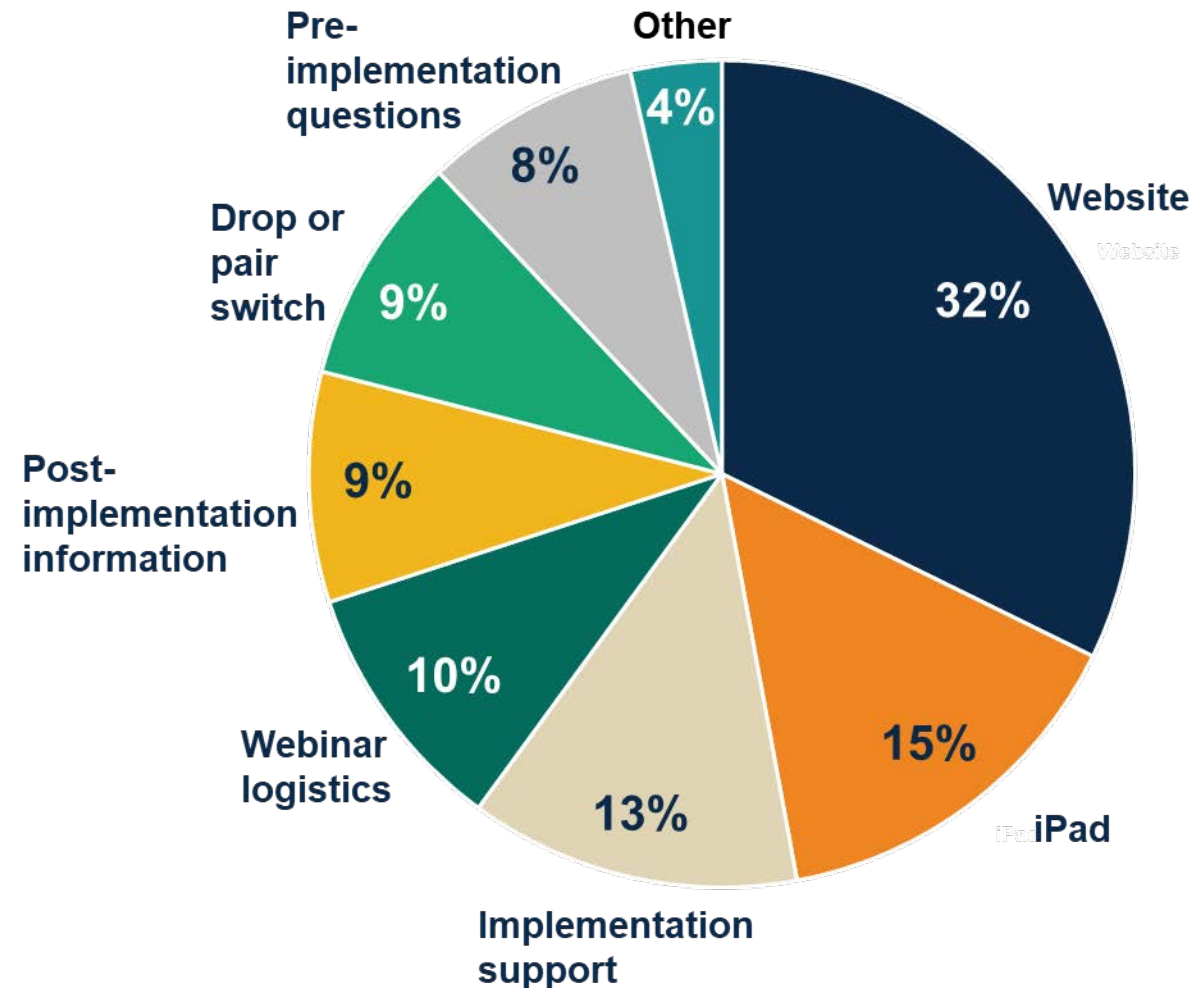
Caregivers gave the website high marks

- **WGT website: mean rating of 5.2 out of 6.0**

- **Survey responses:**
  - Easy to learn to use (97.2 percent)
  - Easy to use (96.0 percent)
  - Easy to find the information needed (98.8 percent)

Nearly all caregivers video-recorded themselves

- **93 percent of caregivers video-recorded themselves**

- **72 percent of caregivers reported it was easy to use the tablets**

- **91 percent of PD providers reported observing caregivers**

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Comfort with technology related to satisfaction with WGT

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Caregivers who reported greater comfort with technology (fall 2018 survey), had the following responses in spring 2019:

- Reported finding it easier to use the iPad to record practice
- Tended to have greater satisfaction with the WGT website
- Tended to more strongly agree that the WGT practices were helpful for children's progress
- Tended to more strongly agree that the WGT activities were useful

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Visit the project web-page: https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/professional-development-tools-to-improve-the-quality-of-infant-toddler-care-q-cciit-pd-tools