INFANT-TODDLER QUALITY INDICATORS AND THE WORKFORCE:
Exploring What Works, Lessons Learned, Questions and Concerns, and Related Resources
Session Outline

1. Introductions and Overviews:
   - National
   - Focus on North Carolina

2. Group Discussion

3. Wrap-Up:
   - What’s Next
   - Take-Aways

Photo: © Maria Mayoral
Introductions

ROLE CALL
Introductions

Who’s here?
Overview

NATIONAL
Need

- More than 11 million infants and toddlers in the US; nearly half need daily early care and education (ECE) services

- Vast majority of infant toddler ECE programs are mediocre to poor quality
Babies At Risk

BABIES AT RISK: INFANTS AND TODDLERS BY FAMILY INCOME LEVEL

Nationally, almost half (48%) of children under age 3 live in low-income families (with an income less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)), including 25% that live in families in poverty (with an income less than 100% of the FPL).

SOURCE: NATIONAL CENTER FOR CHILDREN IN POVERTY (www.nccp.org)
Disparities Manifest Early

![Disparities in Early Vocabulary Growth]

- High SES
- Middle SES
- Low SES

SES = Socio-Economic Status

Cumulative Vocabulary vs. Age (months)


Source: Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2007).
Reality of Racial Inequity

Infants and Toddlers in Low-Income and Poor Families by Race/Ethnicity

- White: 34% Low Income, 15% Poor
- Black: 70% Low Income, 45% Poor
- Hispanic: 65% Low Income, 35% Poor
- Asian: 69% Low Income, 41% Poor
- American Indian: 41% Low Income, 25% Poor
- Other: 45% Low Income

Source: National Center for Children in Poverty, 2013
Reality for Infant-Toddler Educators

Median Income for Center-Based Teachers Serving Babies and Toddlers (0-3)

- 125% with family of 2
  - low income
- 147% with family of 2
  - infant-toddler center-based with Bachelor's degree
- 82% with family of 4
  - all infant-toddler center-based teachers
- 97% with family of 4
  - poor

Sources: Adjusted and adapted from the National Survey of Early Care and Education Project Team. (2013); and ASPE 2015 Federal Poverty Guidelines.
Educational Attainment of National Early Childhood Workforce by Ages of Children Served

- **High School (or GED) or less**: 28% (National workforce serving infants and toddlers; 36% (National workforce serving preschoolers (3-5 years, not yet in kindergarten)
- **Some college**: 13% (National workforce serving infants and toddlers; 24% (National workforce serving preschoolers (3-5 years, not yet in kindergarten)
- **Associate's degree**: 17% (National workforce serving infants and toddlers; 17% (National workforce serving preschoolers (3-5 years, not yet in kindergarten)
- **Bachelor's degree or higher**: 19% (National workforce serving infants and toddlers; 45% (National workforce serving preschoolers (3-5 years, not yet in kindergarten)

Source: National Survey of Early Care and Education Project Team. (2013).
National Research Council (April, 2015) workforce report recommendations include:

- Concerted attention on needs of infant and toddler educators
- Assess and revise current professional competencies, develop and sustain foundational and specific competencies – embed in systems
Advancing the Call from NAS …

…for shared specialized competencies

✓ Type of profession: ECE educators

✓ Specialty/discipline: teaching, with a focus on working with high-need populations

✓ Age group: infants and toddlers

ZERO TO THREE’s Critical Competencies for Infant-Toddler Educators™!
Specific teaching practices that support social-emotional, cognitive, and language and literacy development of babies and toddlers

Detailed descriptions of observable skills of infant-toddler educators

Strategies for serving high-needs populations

Summaries of foundational knowledge, attitudes, and competencies from ZERO TO THREE’s Cross-Sector Core Competencies for the Prenatal to Age Five Field

Crosswalks with related ECE criteria
Linguistic Mismatch

- Between families and ECE settings and staff
- Between educators and PD systems
  - Foundation of core knowledge and competencies may focus on working with diverse populations
    - Typically doesn’t provide a focus on or access to diverse workforce, particularly those who’s primary language is not English

How is or can this mismatch be addressed in QRIS indicators, processes, resources, and supports?

*Hold that question in your mind for now ...*
QRIS and PD Systems

- QRIS participation linked with workforce data systems/registries and/or career pathways/lattices; access to PD, compensation, and retention initiatives; individual PD planning

Are there required or recommended specifics that focus on working with infants and toddlers?

- QRIS standards on qualifications, experience, ongoing PD, program administration and management, learning environment, curriculum, child assessment
  - Specialized knowledge and competencies as a foundation
  - Continuity of quality care and education as one goal
Advancing this longtime vision specifically focused on infants and toddlers

Source: Adapted by S. LeMoine from *New Approaches to Regulation* (1996), by Gwen Morgan, The Center for Career Development in Early Care and Education at Wheelock College.
Supporting Babies Through QRIS

ZERO TO THREE Series:

- Implementation Status and Tools in US States and Other Jurisdictions
- Inclusion of Infant and Toddler Quality Standards
- Self-Assessment Tool

www.zerothree.org/qris
### Inclusion: Infant & Toddler Quality Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical Categories</th>
<th>Typical Subcategories</th>
<th>Special Considerations for Infants and Toddlers</th>
<th>Examples of Standards Addressing Infants and Toddlers</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>(The text in parentheses indicates what level the standard affects in QRIS.)</td>
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**Teaching & Learning**
- Daily Interactions & Relationships
- Teaching & Learning: Physical Learning Environment
- Developmental Screening & Assessments
- Curriculum
- Children with Special Needs

**Family Engagement**

**Professional Development and Staff Qualifications**

**Health and Safety**
- Environmental Safety & Physical Health
- Nutrition

**Supporting Babies Through QRIS**
Supporting Babies Through QRIS

A Self-Assessment Tool for U.S. States and Other Jurisdictions

Purpose & Uses:

✓ Identify the strengths, opportunities, and gaps in system.
✓ Identify QRIS components that are already in place to support infants and toddlers.
✓ Prioritize components that could be added to augment existing supports for infants, toddlers, and families.
### ELEMENT 1: Quality Standards for Programs and Practitioners—Incorporates child care licensing, Head Start, Pre-K, aligned with Early Learning Standards

**Vision:** Ensure that the state or jurisdiction develops a set of QRIS standards that measure the level of quality and support adherence to best practices that have been promoted by experts in the child development field, in order to foster high-quality, accessible, inclusive, and culturally and linguistically competent early care and learning services for infants, toddlers, and their families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Self-Assessment</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Priority Level</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<td>1. QRIS standards include infant- and toddler-specific indicators in these areas:</td>
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<td>a. learning environment</td>
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<td>b. continuity of care policies and practices</td>
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<td>c. developmental screening</td>
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<td>d. child assessment</td>
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<td>e. family engagement</td>
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<td>f. curriculum</td>
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<td>g. daily interactions/relationships between child and caregiver(s)</td>
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<td>h. dual-language learners</td>
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<td>i. children with special needs</td>
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<td>j. staff qualifications and professional development</td>
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<td>k. environmental safety and physical health</td>
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<td>m. physical activity</td>
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<td>n. cultural competency</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. QRIS incorporates the Early Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS).</td>
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Self-Assessment Tool

Figure 1:

QRIS: Framework for the Early Care & Education System

OUTCOME: Children growing and learning

Quality Standards for Programs and Practitioners
- Incorporates child care licensing
- Head Start, Pre-K; aligned with Early Learning Standards

Support for Continuous Quality Improvement
- Program & professional development for programs & practitioners to meet and maintain quality standards

Engagement, Outreach, and Promotion
- For consumers, programs, practitioners, funders

Planning, Monitoring & Accountability
- For compliance with standards, oversight & revision of system

Financial Support for Programs, Practitioners, and Families
- Ongoing, adequate investment from all sources (public & private) linked to quality standards

Partnerships and Collaborations
- Partners, resources, and structures to create synergies


Supporting Babies Through QRIS
Overview

FOCUS ON NORTH CAROLINA
Data from 1st generation QRIS on the low quality of I/T care

2004 funding from NC Division of Child Development and Early Education for a statewide initiative focused on I/T quality enhancement
Highly qualified Infant Toddler Specialists and Statewide Project Manager

- Embedded in CCR&R Regional Lead Agencies
- Engaged in required continuing education
- Supporting the I/T workforce
  - Quality Improvement Planning
  - On-site TA/Coaching
  - PD support, including specialized CEUs in infant-toddler content
NC IT QEP Impact: FY2014

![Bar chart showing the impact of various categories on the quality of early childhood education.](image-url)
Adjustments were made along the way by:

- Creating a culture of continuous improvement for our team of I/T Specialists
- Intentionally reducing “short-term” TA to focus on more “intensive” TA with fewer programs
- Implementing a second “frame” for TA based on the Pyramid Model (CSEFEL)
- Implementing longer CEU learning events to support skill development and transfer of learning to practice
- Increasing support for administrators/owners of programs serving infants and toddlers
Lessons from NC Transformation Zone

1. Program “readiness” for QE work is key
2. Slowing things down supports the shift from culture of compliance to culture of continuous improvement
3. Grants ($) can make a difference, BUT…
4. Financial stability supports continuous improvement
   ▪ Enhanced subsidy payments for high quality infant-toddler services
   ▪ Higher reimbursement for infant-toddler services
Who’s Caring for Our Babies?

- Early Childhood System Studies

- Early Childhood Workforce Studies
  - Working in Early Care and Education in North Carolina 2014 Workforce Study

http://www.childcareservices.org/research-reports/
Educational Attainment of Center Based Teaching Staff by Age of Children Served, NC and National Samples

- **NC Age 3 to 5 yrs**: 6.8% HS or Less, 30.8% Some College, No Degree, 26.6% AA Degree, 35.8% Bachelor's Degree or Higher
- **US Age 3 to 5 yrs**: 13% HS or Less, 24% Some College, No Degree, 17% AA Degree, 45% Bachelor's Degree or Higher
- **NC Age 0 to 3 yrs**: 18.0% HS or Less, 42.7% Some College, No Degree, 24.3% AA Degree, 15.1% Bachelor's Degree or Higher
- **US Age 0 to 3 yrs**: 28% HS or Less, 36% Some College, No Degree, 17% AA Degree, 19% Bachelor's Degree or Higher

Other Supports for the I/T Workforce

- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® enhanced scholarships for teachers working with infants and toddlers
- WAGE$ compensation supplements for all teachers based on education promotes continuity as turnover is reduced
Support for “other” TA/PD Providers*

- NC Foundations of Infant Toddler Care Summer Institutes for Community College Instructors
- NC Foundations of Infant Toddler Care for other TA/PD Providers (CCR&R, Smart Start)
- Toddler CLASS Observer Training/Certification
- Exploration with B-K program faculty in 4-year institutions

*Race to the Top - Early Learning Challenge Grant Activities
Group Discussion

SHARE YOUR PERSPECTIVE!
Discussion Prompts

- Does your QRIS intentionally address the specific needs of infants and toddlers? If so, how?
- Has your QRIS helped increase the quality of infant and toddler programs in your area/state/territory? How do you know?

What successes do you want to share?
What questions do you have for the group?
What resources do you recommend or want?
Discussion Prompts

- How is your QRIS aligned/not aligned with your PD system and/or other quality improvement efforts?
- What data is available in your state on either the quality of infant-toddler care or the infant-toddler workforce qualifications and demographics, and how are you using it?
- What are some of the workforce challenges and how are they being addressed?
  - How are you (or do you hope to) address access issues, language and/or cultural mismatches?

What successes do you want to share?

What questions do you have for the group?

What resources do you recommend or want?
Wrap-Up

WHAT’S NEXT AND TAKE-AWAYS
If you want to meet the needs of infants and toddlers in care, consider how you will support the important adults in their lives.

The infant-toddler workforce needs access to TA/PD practitioners who

- have experience with birth to three and
- specialized knowledge of evidence-based practices that impact infant-toddler learning and development and
- skills related to adult learning and
- competencies related to the implementation of evidence-based TA strategies (coaching, mentoring, etc.)
They Deserve Better Our Best

*Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results*

-Einstein

Photo: © Andrea Booher
THANK YOU!

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