

Professional Development Tools to Improve the Quality of Infant and Toddler Care: A Review of The Literature

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The literature review report for the Professional Development Tools to Improve the Quality of Infant and Toddler Care (Q-CCIIT PD Tools) project summarizes the state of the field, highlighting the most promising methods and approaches for enhancing caregiver interactions with young children, particularly caregivers serving infants and toddlers, those with limited education, and those in home-based and family child care

(FCC) settings. The review is not exhaustive; instead, it identifies the professional development (PD) resources and components most pertinent to the development of new PD tools and the project's conceptual framework.

The review draws on several sources: recent reviews and meta-analyses conducted within the past 10 years, the websites of leading PD and research organizations, database searches for

empirical studies published during the past 10 years, and expert and Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) input. Together, the sources resulted in 122 studies, including 31 focused on caregivers serving infants and toddlers and 26 with caregivers in home-based or FCC settings. The report is accompanied by a set of appendix tables summarizing key aspects of each study included in the review.



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KEY FINDINGS FROM THE REVIEW INCLUDE:

- Few studies focus on caregivers in infant/toddler or home-based settings, but the broader literature discusses tools and approaches useful for these two groups. In addition, most tools/approaches and strategies have not been studied in isolation and instead are typically bundled together.
- Ongoing PD efforts can be more effective at sustaining caregiver or child outcomes than one-time PD approaches. More intensive delivery has the strongest evidence of effectiveness.
- The available literature points to a range of effective PD strategies, including positive provider-caregiver relationships, the active participation of caregivers in PD efforts, and performance feedback.
- Using a combination of strategies may foster better caregiver outcomes.
- Online tools are a cost-effective and successful approach to providing PD, particularly for caregivers in more isolated settings. They can provide collegial support for caregivers who are geographically or socially isolated, such as those in rural areas and home-based settings.
- PD can successfully influence caregiver practice even within a short timeframe, particularly when focused on specific practices.
- Caregivers need more support for developing skills to implement more complex curricula and approaches.
- Written PD materials should be clear, adapted for a range of audiences and literacy levels, and clearly translated for classroom practice.
- Most conceptual models in the literature are relatively simple and, at minimum, identify the strategies, method of delivery, and participants of the PD effort.

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<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/professional-development-tools-improve-quality-of-infant-toddler-care-review-literature>.