

EQIT Central Themes, Learning Goals & Resources

Module 1: The Wonder of Infancy: An Introduction to Expanding Quality in Infant Toddler Care

Central Themes

- Expanding Quality in Infant Toddler Care is a statewide initiative to increase the quality and availability of care for infants and toddlers.
- The first three years of life are of especially important because of the impact of early experiences on the development of the brain.
- Caregivers with specific infant toddler training are able to offer experiences that support healthy development for infants and toddlers.
- Caregivers with specialized EQ training use a process called “Respect, Reflect, and Relate” to make responsive decisions based on informed observations.
- The EQ course of training supports caregivers to increase knowledge, build skills, and utilize reflective practice.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss the importance of the first 3 years of life based on the impact of early experiences on brain development.
2. Describe how they are becoming part of a statewide initiative to ensure that infants and toddlers are cared for by people with specialized training.
3. Understand that caregivers with specific infant toddler training are prepared to offer experiences that promote positive brain development.
4. Learn about the process of “Respect, Reflect, and Relate,” used by caregivers to make responsive decisions based on informed observations.

Resources

I Am Your Child (video, I Am Your Child Foundation)

Building Your Baby’s Brain (booklet, Teaching Strategies)

Module 2: Care of the Spirit: Emotional Development

Central Themes

- Infants and toddlers meet their emotional needs through interaction and relationships.
- The major task of emotional development in the first three years of life is to develop a strong sense of oneself through:
 - Self-regulation – managing reactions to experiences and feelings
 - Emotional expression – using and understanding the communication of facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language
 - Achieving an attachment relationship – developing strong, ongoing relationships with adults whom the baby trusts to keep him safe
- Emotional development and interaction patterns may be affected by disabilities.
- Caregivers are able to meet the emotional needs of infants and toddlers in groups.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child has a special relationship with an adult(s) in the program.
 - Each child begins to regulate (manage) his/her reactions to other and the environment.
 - Each child learns to express feelings effectively.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the relationship between emotional needs and interaction, and relational experiences of infants and toddlers.
2. Understand that the major task of emotional development in the first three years of life is to develop a strong sense of oneself through:
 - Self-regulation
 - Emotional expression
 - Achieving an attachment relationship
3. Understand how emotional development and interaction patterns may be affected by disabilities.
4. Discuss strategies for meeting the needs of infants and toddlers in groups.

Resources

Fearful, Flexible, and Feisty (video, PITC)

Module 3: Responsive Caregiving for Healthy Relationships

Central Themes

- Responsive care is important in order for infants and toddlers to feel valued, loved, confident, and competent. What you do makes a difference in the lives of babies and their families.
- Just as adults, infants and toddlers like to be treated with kindness, caring, and understanding.
- Specific strategies are a part of responsive care.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child feels valued and lovable and develops a sense of self-worth.
 - Each child trusts adults to be emotionally and physically available.
 - Each child becomes caring, confident, and competent.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss how both they and babies like to be treated with kindness, caring, and understanding.
2. Explain how they and babies like to be treated.
3. Explain why relationships and responsive care are important for infants and toddlers.
4. Describe specific strategies that are important for providing responsive care to develop positive adult-child relationships.

Resources

Getting in Tune (video, PITC)

Module 4: Our Partners: The Families

Central Themes

- Parents and caregivers each have intensely intimate relationships with the babies in their care; each plays a different but important, role.
- Parents and caregivers have complex and many-layered relationships with each other.
- Child care programs need to clearly define, communicate, and implement the role of parents within their program.
- Care givers and parents need established and effective methods for ongoing communication
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child and family feels emotionally connected to each other during the day.
 - Each child's family members feel welcome in the program.
 - Each child's relationship with his/her family is appreciated and supported as the most important relationship in the child's life.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Understand that parents and caregivers each have intensely intimate relationships with the babies in their care, and each plays a different, but important, role.
2. Support their complex and many-layered relationships with parents.
3. Develop strategies to clearly define, communicate, and implement the role of parents within their program.
4. Develop a repertoire of effective methods for ongoing communication.

Resources

No videos used in this module

Central Themes

- Children under three are especially vulnerable to illnesses and accidents. Every caregiver can positively impact the environment to ensure that infants and toddlers are safe and healthy. Caregivers must be constantly aware of the importance of their daily practices.
- Creating a healthy and safe caregiving environment requires partnering with a variety of agencies, health providers, and organizations.
- Illness can be controlled by considering three factors: the source of the germs, the method of transmission of the germs, and the susceptible or vulnerable host.
- Good nutrition affects the health and well-being of very young children. Caregivers must ensure that children receive the nutrients they need for growth and energy, and at the same time they must ensure food safety.
- By knowing the factors associated with increased risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), and following the American Academy of Pediatrics' recommendations regarding sleep position, childcare providers can reduce the risk of (SIDS) in their facilities.
- Injury prevention is a major responsibility of infant and toddler caregivers. By understanding how injuries happen, and taking the necessary precautions, most injuries can be avoided.
- Oftentimes, childcare settings are the only places children are seen on a regular basis, so caregivers play a critical role in reporting abuse and neglect.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child and the caregivers are healthy and safe.
 - Each child experiences a program where the spread of infectious diseases is contained.
 - Each child experiences healthy eating habits and the prevention of food-borne diseases.
 - Each child experiences good health.
 - Each child's health and emotional needs are met in the napping procedures and the risk of injuries and SIDS are reduced.
 - Each child experiences a safe, uncluttered environment that is free of hazards.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss their role in maintaining safe and healthy environments that promote intimate relationships and early learning.
2. Be aware of and know how to use the health and safety resources that are available in their community.
3. Discuss how infectious diseases are spread, and be able to implement policies and procedures that will reduce the spread of illnesses in an infant and toddler caregiving setting, including:
 - Good handwashing techniques
 - Diapering and toileting techniques
 - Specific sanitation procedures to prevent the spread of disease
4. Describe the guidelines for nutritious meals and snacks for children that correspond to emerging eating skills and follow proper food-handling procedures to reduce the risk of food-borne illness.
5. Create safe and restful sleeping environments. Participants will be able to identify risk factors associated with SIDS and know what to do to reduce the risk of SIDS.
6. Discuss ways to effectively reduce the number and seriousness of injuries through identification of potential hazards in the environment, promotion of preventive actions, and enforcement of safety policies.
7. Recognize the general behavior that may suggest child abuse and neglect, and understand the role of caregivers in protecting children in their care.

Resources

It's Not Just Routine (video, PITC)

Stepping Stones to Using Caring for Our Children (book)

Module 7: The Power of Places and Spaces

Central Themes

- Environments express the values of a program. An early care and education environment should reflect and support all the elements of quality care that we have discussed in the EQ curriculum.
- Good environments for infants and toddlers positively impact all of the developmental domains and ensure children's health and safety.
- Good environments promote the development of relationships between caregivers and children, promoting responsive caregiving and facilitating the caregiver's availability to the children. Good environments also promote the relationships between children themselves, and between programs and families.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child experiences an environment that is safe, calm, and engaging.
 - Each child experiences an environment that has comfortable spaces that are inviting to him/her, and promote relationships with caregivers and peers.
 - Each child experiences indoor and outdoor environments that provide a rich variety of activity choices, materials, and toys for all levels of development.

Learning Goals

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss how the key elements of good environments for infants and toddlers promote safety, health, convenience, flexibility, movement, choice, and comfort for both adult and child.
2. Describe strategies for designing environments that promote age-appropriate and child-centered learning and development from birth to 3.
3. Identify characteristics in an environment that enhance the relationships and connections between children, families, and caregivers.

Resources

Space to Grow (video, PITC)

Module 8: Day to Day the Relationship Way: Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers

Central Themes

- A curriculum is everything that the child experiences in your care
- Thinking about what you and babies would want during a day in childcare will help you develop a responsive curriculum
- A responsive relationship-based curriculum has six components:
 1. A strong foundation
 2. Positive, responsive, adult-child relationships and interactions
 3. The caregiving routines and schedules
 4. The environment, including equipment and materials
 5. Experiences and opportunities that emphasize the importance of play
 6. Planning for changes in caregiver-child interactions, the environment, an experience, and opportunities, is based on each child's and the group's needs, interests, and strengths.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child experience responsive routines.
 - Each child has many opportunities to use toys, materials, and equipment in a variety of ways.
 - Each child experiences an individualized curriculum

Learning Goals

By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:

1. Describe what "curriculum" is for infants and toddlers
2. Identify key elements of a responsive curriculum for infants and toddlers
3. Discuss ways to implement a responsive , relationship-based curriculum for the children in their care

Resources

The Next Step (video, PITC)

Module 9: Exploring Early Learning

Central Themes

- Infants and toddlers use a variety of strategies – physical and mental learning schemes – try to understand the world.
- Infants and toddlers make learning discoveries about the physical world, including object permanence, cause and effect, imitation, use of tools, and use of space.
- Infants and toddlers make learning discoveries through their interactions with people in their world to acquire language, literacy, numeracy, and other concepts.
- Disabilities may affect the learning process in infants and toddlers.
- Caregivers support learning when they are able to anticipate and recognize how infants and toddlers make discoveries in their daily experiences.
- Infants and toddlers learn how to become members of their own family and their own culture.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child uses many strategies to explore and learn from his/her environment.
 - Each child develops the ability to be curious, choose, focus, problem-solve, and complete a task.
 - Each child learns about the basic concepts of the world.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the variety of strategies that infants and toddlers use to construct knowledge.
2. Discuss the discoveries infants and toddlers make through interaction with the objects in the world: imitation, cause and effect, object permanence, use of tools, and use of space.
3. Know the discoveries infants and toddlers make through interaction with the people in their world: language and literacy, numeracy, categories, and concepts.
4. Consider the effects of disabling conditions on the progression of development.
5. Know ways caregivers can support early learning.
6. Become aware of how infants and toddlers learn to be a member of their own family and culture.

Resources

Discoveries of Infancy (video, PITC)

Getting Ready for School Begins at Birth (pamphlet, Zero to Three)

Module 10: Learning to Talk, Talking to Learn

Central Themes

- As an active learner at birth, the child has his/her own basic biological capacity to learn language.
- Observation and response (Respect, Reflect, and Relate) to infants' and toddlers' "cues to communicate" are critical in developing communication competence.
- Exposure to stories, words, rhymes, songs, books, and play help to determine how infants and toddlers learn language and make meaning from their world.
- Positive back-and-forth interactions ("the dance") between the infant and toddler and parents/caregivers are key in learning language.
- Childcare providers need to understand the multiple factors that play a part in the development of first language and second language.
- Early nonverbal & verbal relationships influence a child's ability to communicate and acquire language to build the foundations for later literacy.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child enjoys communicating often in his/her own way with facial expressions, gestures, and language.
 - Each child learns new sounds and words in his/her language(s).
 - Each child continues to increase the length and complexity of language use.

Learning Goals:

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the critical importance of observing and responding to the nonverbal cues and behaviors of infants and toddlers that facilitate their language learning.
2. Become increasingly familiar with the typical developmental patterns and processes of learning a first and second language.
3. Learn about atypical patterns and reasons for concern that may result in parent's questions and/or the need to find resources for supporting early language development.
4. Explore resources and ways to connect to home and to share information with parents.
5. Reflect on their own nonverbal and verbal competencies in interactions with infants and toddlers.
6. Consider ways to create culturally competent language interactions.

Resources

Early Messages (video, PITC)

Module 11: The Joy of Discovering Literacy

Central Themes

- Families, caregivers, and educators have a significant impact on children's language and emerging literacy skills.
- Literacy development is influenced by many factors, including language and literacy experiences at home, in childcare, and within the attitudes of the family and childcare providers towards literacy.
- The development of language and literacy is a parallel process base on how children are exposed to language and how parents and caregivers prepare them for later reading and writing.
- Children who are provided a variety of experiences and opportunities to talk, tell stories, read storybooks, draw, and write are generally successful at learning to read and write later on.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child listens to sounds, creates sounds, and engages in sound play.
 - Each child is interested in listening to stories and looking at books.
 - Each mobile infant and each toddler show interest in print.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss the development of early literacy in relationship to oral language learning during the first three years of life.
2. Describe the key role that environment (exposure and experience) plays in the growth and development of language and early literacy.
3. Increase their knowledge of the impact of responsive care (playing with sounds, interactive storybook reading, and print awareness) on the developing infant's and toddler's language and literacy learning.
4. Develop strategies to share with family members that respect their choices and culture and support language and literacy learning into everyday routines, activities, and interactions.

Resources

Language and Culture: Respecting Family Choices (video)

Module 12: Babies in Motion

Central Themes

- Motor development during the first years of life is dependent upon the infant's biological capacity and being in environments that provide comfort and opportunities for safe exploration.
- Understanding the concepts of stability (stable base) and mobility (ability to move) sharpens caregivers' observations of motor development and improves responses to the infant's growing motor capabilities.
- Infants and toddlers learn through all their senses – including vestibular (balance) and proprioception (knowing where one is in time and space) – and use their senses to comprehend the world around them.
- A responsive environment can make a difference in an infant's ability to self-regulate and continue to refine gross and fine motor skills and capabilities.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child develops the ability to move and explore his/her world.
 - Each child develops the ability to use his/her hands and fingers with increasing control.
 - Each child enjoys a variety of sensory experiences and learn through all of the senses.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the development of infants' and toddlers' motor abilities during the first years of life as a backdrop for further refinement of movement and self-regulation.
2. Discuss the basics of sensory motor development.
3. Describe the key roles that environment and caregiver interactions play in the growth of motor and sensory-motor abilities.
4. Increase their knowledge of the impact of responsive care on the developing infant and toddler's gross, fine motor, and sensory-motor function.

Resources

See How They Move (video)

On the Move: The Power of Movement in Your Child's First Three Years (booklet, Zero to Three)

Module 13: Understanding and Respecting the Gifts of Culture

Central Themes

- All people belong to a culture or cultures – seeing and experiencing the world through their own “cultural lenses”.
- Before we can begin to understand and appreciate the culture of others, we must develop awareness of our own values, beliefs, biases, and preferences.
- Culture influences child-rearing beliefs and practices.
- Culturally responsive childcare environments help support the healthy development of a child’s sense of identity and relation to family and the world around him/her.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each family shares information on preferences for the child and family.
 - Each child and family feels that its family traditions and home language are respected.
 - Each child experiences an environment that is rich in diversity and free of stereotypes.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Define culture and its importance to children and their families.
2. Begin to develop an awareness of his/her own culture and how it influences child-rearing practices.
3. Begin to understand and have respect for the culture of others.
4. Develop strategies for negotiating cultural differences.

Resources

Essential Connections: 10 Keys for Sensitive Child Care (video, PITC)

Module 14: Welcoming Children with Special Needs

Central Themes

- The ideals and challenges of inclusion for infants and toddlers with disabilities in childcare programs.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal law providing special education and early intervention services.
- Working with families whose children have disabilities
- Adapting materials and activities for children with disabilities
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child with and without special needs enjoys interactions with others.
 - Each child with special needs is successful in the environment and learning activities.
 - Each program has a process for referring a family for a comprehensive free assessment of the child's development if a special need is suspected.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Identify benefits and challenges of including infants and toddlers with special needs in childcare settings.
2. Discuss the elements of Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).
3. Identify and practice strategies for discussing developmental concerns with families.
4. Identify and practice strategies for adapting materials and activities for infants and toddlers with special needs.

Resources

Early Childhood Connections (Part C) materials

Module 15: Making a Difference with Relationship-Based Care

Central Themes

- Relationship-based, responsive care and education is important for infants, toddlers, families, and caregivers.
- Information from all of the modules describes responsive, relationship-based care and is the foundation for developing a caring community and guidance.
- An approach that including respecting, reflecting, and relating – or the 3Rs – provides a way of thinking about guidance.
“Who you are is as important as what you do” – ways of being that support children’s relationships and learning.
- “Who you are is as important as what you do” is a way of being that supports children’s relationships and learning.
- **RELATE Reflections**
 - Each child experiences relationship-based and responsive care and education.
 - Each child experiences a relationship-based approach to guidance.
 - Each child enjoys being with peers and develops the ability to be pro-social – kind, caring, empathetic – with his/her family, caregivers, and peers.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Summarize what they hope for children, families, and themselves.
2. Identify the benefits of primary care and continuity of care approaches.
3. Discuss how responsive and relationship-based care and education are a foundation for guidance strategies.
4. Describe why it is important to use positive guidance.
5. Discuss how all behaviors have a purpose.
6. Plan ways to develop a caring community.
7. Identify appropriate guidance strategies.
8. Share who they want to be in the lives of children and families.

Resources

Together in Care: Meeting the Intimacy Needs of Infants and Toddlers in Groups (video, PITC)

Module 16: Celebrating Our Profession

Central Themes

- The provision of high quality care for infants and toddlers is directly linked to the care and well-being of their caregivers.
- Quality childcare requires a broad infrastructure designed to meet the needs of infants, toddlers, and families.
- Professional development plays a key role in increasing quality and minimizing burn-out.
- As we work to improve the quality of care in individual programs, we have the potential to impact the quality of life in communities.

Learning Goals

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss their role within the wider early childhood care and education system.
2. Develop strategies for improving self-care and work environments.
3. Develop an awareness of the importance of ongoing professional development.
4. Describe their role in establishing and maintaining high-quality childcare environments.
5. Identify and form connections to supportive resources.

Resources

Local and statewide professional development and community resources