

Iowa Program for Infant & Toddler Caregivers (IA PITC)



The Iowa Program for Infant and Toddler Caregivers strives to “raise the quality of care for infants and toddlers”. IA PITC consists of a 40-hour training plan program. This training plan program is broken down into 4 training modules. Each module consists of 5 two-hour lessons. Caregivers are encouraged, but not required, to complete all 40-hours of PITC training. IA PITC lessons are intended for anyone caring for infants and toddlers including parents, childcare providers, and childcare center directors.

Module I: Social-Emotional Growth & Socialization

All children need safe and secure care that supports their developing self-knowledge, self-control, self-esteem and respect for the feelings and rights of others. Healthy social-emotional development is the foundation for all other learning and is built through the nurturing relationships with the important adults in their lives.

Lesson 1: Getting in Tune with Infants & Toddlers

The relationship between an infant and his or her caregiver is at the heart of quality infant/toddler care. This lesson provides information that can help caregivers provide sensitive, responsive care to each infant/toddler in their group.

Key concepts:

- A. Responsive Care Giving, Watch, Ask, & Adapt
- B. Welcoming a Child (First Moves)
- C. Self Awareness (Hot Spots)

Lesson 2: Temperaments

Right from the start, babies are different from each other. An understanding of temperamental differences can help caregivers work more responsively and effectively with the individual infants and toddler in their care.

Key concepts:

- A. Nine Temperament Traits
- B. Three Temperament Types (covering the issue of possible labeling, and traits are more important than style; include how you work with each type)
- C. Goodness of Fit, Culture and Family

Lesson 3: Social-Emotional Milestones and Responsive Caregiving

This lesson will develop and understanding of the watch, ask and adapt responsive process within the age appropriate social and emotional milestones.

Key concepts:

- A. Three Stages of Infancy - Ages of Infancy
- B. Responsive Process: Watch, Ask, Adapt
- C. Understanding Social-Emotional Milestones

Lesson 4: Understanding Children's Behavior

This session focuses on recognizing and understanding individual and developmental issues behind the behaviors of infants and toddlers. Materials support caregivers in recognizing the source of different infant/toddler behaviors and identifying ways to work with them.

Key concepts:

- A. Attachment
- B. Five Possible Causes of Behavior
- C. Four Roots of Socialization

Lesson 5: Guidance & Discipline

This session takes a look at the roots of how babies develop social skills, how each setting plays a part, as well as specific guidance techniques appropriate for children as they grow from birth to three years old. Video and print materials are used, as well as group problem solving activities.

Key concepts:

- A. Definition of Terms (ages)
- B. Socialization and Guidance and Discipline Strategies
- C. Age related discipline

Module II: Group Care

This module looks at group care in centers and in homes. To ensure that young children become healthy, emotionally secure individuals, it is critical to establish intimate relationships between infants and significant others in their lives. This module looks at the development of those relationships through the concepts of intimacy in groups, routines of care and the importance of the environment where care takes place.

Lesson 1: Routines as Curriculum

Caregiving routines provide opportunities for caregivers to build close personal relationships with each child while attending to each child's individual physical, emotional and developmental needs. When carried out responsively and with out haste, routines create learning opportunities, allowing time for the child to participate, develop skills and share the joys of communication. This helps the caregiver as well as the child. The caregiver is likely to find satisfaction in these caregiving routines when he or she pays attention to the whole child not just the task.

Key concepts:

- A. Building Relationships within Sleeping, Eating, and Diapering
- B. Routines as Curriculum
- C. Cultural Differences

Lesson 2: Primary Care/Continuity of Care

This lesson focuses on the importance of a primary care system for giving infants and toddlers in care the personal relationships and responsive care that they need.

Key concepts:

- A. Definition of Terms
- B. Implementation Issues and Strategies

- C. Small Groups
- D. Attachments Implementation Issues and Strategies

Lesson 3: Environments 1

The caregiving environment provides the setting in which an infant or toddler spends large amounts of time. The setting must meet the growing child's physical, emotional, social and cognitive. Caregivers have many options in designing the environment so that it meets the child's needs for safety, health, security, comfort and learning in indoor as well as outdoor spaces.

Key concepts:

- A. Eight key elements of Outdoor and Indoor Spaces
- B. Create Your Own Space (small groups)

Lesson 4: Environments 2

This lesson will assist providers in creating spaces that are age appropriate for small groups.

Key concepts:

- A. How are you going to make the policies work in your environment?
- B. Family Child Care

Lesson 5: Respectful Care

Magda Gerber's thoughts on respecting the skills as well as individual differences of infants and of the importance of observing children.

Key concepts:

- A. Defining Magda's Terms
- B. Observation
- C. Self-motivated Learning

Module III: Learning & Development

This module focuses on facilitation of infant's natural interests and urges to learn. This is done by providing infants with close and responsive relationships with caregivers; by designing safe, interesting and developmentally appropriate environments, by giving infants uninterrupted time to explore; and by interacting with infants in ways that emotionally and intellectually support their initiations in discovery and learning.

Lesson 1: Principles of Facilitating Early Learning Overview

What is the caregiver's role in helping infants learn? Certainly, we need to regularly observe and use that knowledge in developing individualized curriculum. It is also helping to understand how to use the "Adapt, Support, Repetition/Practice and Expand" methods.

Key concepts:

- A. Four Courses of Infant Curriculum
- B. Caregiver's Role - Adapt, Support, Repetition/Practice and Expand
- C. Observation of Infant Learning

Lesson 2: Discoveries of Infancy

Learn how babies develop common learning strategies.

Key concepts:

- A. Six Discoveries
- B. Discovery Process (engage)
- C. Communicating with Parents about Infant Learning

Lesson 3: Brain Development in Infancy

You will understand the impact that stress has on brain development and early learning. There are critical points in time for babies and toddlers to learn certain things. We will explore emotional development, and learn the seven ways to support brain development.

Key concepts:

- A. Impact of Stress and its Effects on Brain Development and Early Learning
- B. Emotional Development
- C. Seven Ways to Support Brain Development (includes Day to Day Care of Infant Brain Development)
- D. Use It or Lose It
- E. Windows of Opportunity

Lesson 4: Special Needs

Explore your feelings about inclusive care and how to partner with parents. Learn how to adapt your environment to meet the needs of all children. In addition, find out about community resources available to you and the children in your care.

Key concepts:

- A. Exploration of Caregiver's Feelings about Inclusion
- B. Adapting the Environment
- C. Partnering with Parents
- D. Resources (local)

Lesson 5: Language Development and Communication, and Culture

Did you know that there are ten suggested ways to help children develop language skills? It is also very important to understand how cultural differences impact language development.

- A. Ten Strategies to Enhance Language Development
- B. Importance of Supporting Home Language
- C. Children's Active Role in Learning Language
- D. Individual and Cultural Differences (Including Warning Signs)

Module IV: Culture, Family, and Providers

Since the family is the most important influence and support in a child's life it is so important for the child care provider and the family to make decisions together. Just as important is the fact that an infant is developing a sense of who they are, where they come from, and how they are valued. Recognizing and respecting the cultural beliefs that are a part of that identity formation is absolutely crucial. Communicating in an infant's home language is also important. Module IV helps providers recognize their own cultural perspectives, the feelings associated with those, how to negotiate with families

when there are differences, and creating program policies which reflect partnerships with parents.

Lesson 1: Culture, Family and Providers

Children's sense of identity is formed through the ways in which the important adults in their lives react and interact with them. Rules for living are passed down to them from their family's beliefs, faith, ethnicity, etc. Children need to feel secure in who they are and where they come from. What child care policies and practices should be in place that reflect support of cultural beliefs?

Key concepts:

- A. Overview - Defining Culture (first paragraph of video magazine is representative)
- B. Essential Connections for Policy and Practices - include Keys 1-5 (see video magazine)
- C. Acknowledgment of the personal and emotional nature of discussions of culture; dialogue can empower people to develop.
- D. Emphasis on the importance of supporting children's culture and family bonds to their healthy development of identity, security, and competence

Lesson 2: Harmonizing Cultural Diversity for Sensitive Infant Care

- Understand the importance of how children develop their sense of self and how culture impacts it. Everyone has cultural beliefs, what are yours?

Key concepts:

- A. Identity Formation - Culture & Race (identity formation is the most important to emphasize in this lesson)
- B. Keys to Culturally Sensitive Care (6-10)
 1. Key #6 Uncover your cultural beliefs
 2. Key #7 Be open to the perspective of others
 3. Key #8 Seek out cultural and family information
- C. Everyone Has Culture (lesson 7, activities 19 & 21; lesson 9 activities 25 & 26)
- D. White Privilege
 - 4.

Lesson 3: Responding to Families in Culturally Sensitive Ways

What is culture? What is cultural awareness and sensitivity? It is important to understand how culture affects all of us so that we can develop certain skills in order to partner effectively with parents on behalf of their children.

Key concepts:

- A. Basic Assumptions - Understanding Culture and Its Impact on All of Us
- B. What is Culture? What is Cultural Sensitivity? Development of Cultural Awareness/Sensitivity/Responsiveness as a Lifelong Process
- C. Partnering with Parents - Keys 6-10 Defining Values
- D. Skills Needed (pick up on the definition and explore deeper understandings of skills)

Lesson 4: Protective Urges

Through a four-step process we will explore and work with our feelings that affect how we work with children and families. We will also work to understand parent's feelings so that we can be open, honest, and understanding.

Key concepts:

- A. Explore Your Feelings; Understanding and Working with Feelings Underlying Parent-Caregiver Relations
- B. Share Your Feelings with Others
- C. Working with parent's feelings - Understanding, Competence, Honesty
- D. Working with Caregiver's feelings - Four Step Process for Dealing with Feelings

Lesson 5: Responsive Home Visitation

The information gained by doing a home visit can be invaluable in understanding a child and his/her family. Using that knowledge can lead the child care provider in helping parents understand how they can help their child develop. For example, how to focus on process Vs product learning opportunities (the skills that a toddler gains in an independent painting activity are more important than having a piece of artwork that looks like something to an adult).

Key concepts:

- A. Relationship Based - Promoting Child Development Through Parent-Child Interaction (consider Using a parent form of handout #28 at intake)
- B. Process vs Product/Outcome - Infant Mental Health Perspectives
- C. Evaluations - Using Parent-Child Interaction Groups
- D. Features of a Relationship-Based Approach