INTRODUCTION

Health organizations recommend that mothers exclusively breastfeed their infants for the first six months “to achieve optimal growth, development and health.” (WHO 2011) Most mothers in the US, however, are not exclusively breastfeeding at three months. Early Care and Education (ECE) providers play a key role in supporting breastfeeding mothers and children in their care. The Carolina Ten Steps to Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care was developed to support ECE providers. The positive results from a pilot study in one NC county warranted statewide scale-up.

STATEWIDE SCALE-UP APPROACH

We collaborated with state-level agencies and organizations associated with child care to develop a Training of Trainers curriculum.

The Training of Trainers (TOT) curriculum included two hours of online pre-training about breastfeeding, as well as about the training materials, and a three-hour in-person Training of Trainers.

Materials were updated for statewide applicability and vetted to align with NC child care licensing standards.

CHALLENGES

Breastfeeding was not part of many Trainers’ professional trainings / backgrounds or experiences. Even with training, some attitude gaps persisted.

There was persistent Trainer turn-over, and maintaining a Trainer pool was a challenge.

BFCC is not part of the Child Care Star Rated Licensing system. Coordination with NC BFCC Designation was hindered due to launch delay.

ECE directors and staff were not motivated to schedule or attend BFCC trainings.

RESULTS

- 77 active Trainers
- Preliminary data suggest improvements in Trainer knowledge of breastfeeding, including:
  - T/F? You always need to wear gloves when handling human milk.
  - T/F? If a mother’s diet is poor, she should not breastfeed.
  - T/F? It is better for mother and baby if baby is fed on a schedule.

- 99 NC ECE facilities received training

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LESSONS LEARNED

Schedule TOTs on a regular basis in different locations throughout the State to maintain a strong Trainer pool.

Support Trainers through a variety of modalities (e.g., timelines to complete trainings, webinars, new research, additional online training, regular follow-up contacts).

Need to create enthusiasm for and interest in the BFCC training by promoting the BFCC Designation program and focusing attention towards establishing BFCC in licensing requirements.

NEXT STEPS

- Targeted training and support opportunities for Trainers, including additional TOTs for new Trainers
- Active promotion of NC BFCC Designation program
- Focused attention on incorporating BFCC in Star Rated system