

# Transition to virtual de-implementation of feeding practices in early care and education settings

Megan Gremillion, Julie M. Rutledge, PhD, Janna Martin, Daphne Gaulden, Peyton Percle, Taren Swindle, PhD

## Background

- In partnership with Early Childhood Educators (ECEs), we developed de-implementation strategies to reduce the use of detrimental feeding practices and replace them with evidence-based feeding practices.
- Transition from in-person to virtual evidence-based strategies was necessitated by COVID-19.

## Methods

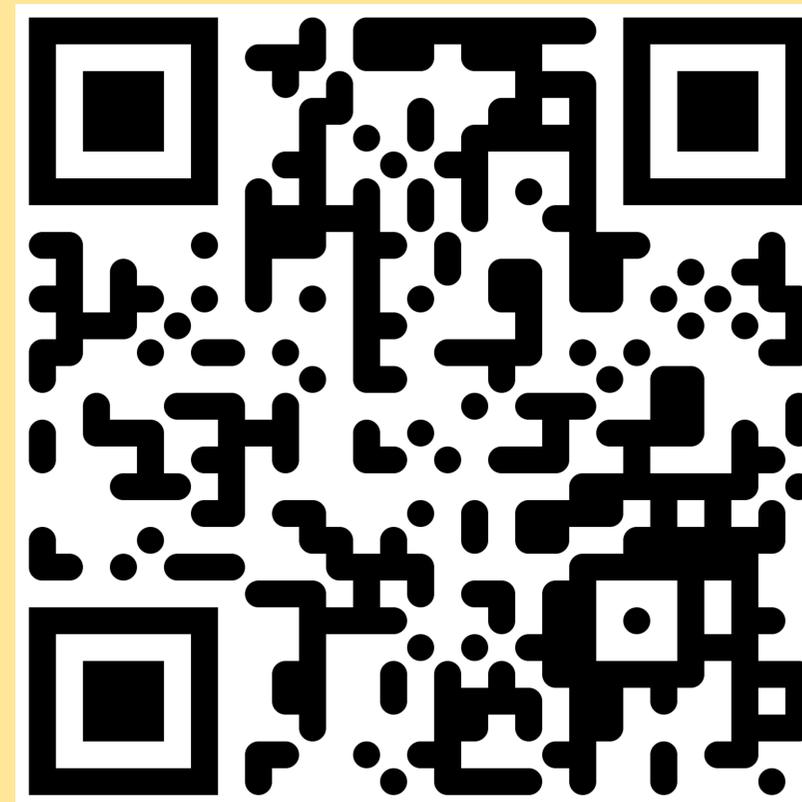
- Involved four distinct Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycles.
- 13 Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) participated.
- Effectiveness measured by percent of ECEs who completed target tasks and open-response surveys to assess feasibility and acceptability.
- Qualitative feedback through Evidence Based Quality Improvement Panels

## Findings

- 100% of ECEs registered and selected goals, 88.8% viewed prescribed resources, 23% engaged in peer learning collaborative, and 92% communicated with practice facilitator.
- Mean values of survey responses indicate positive user experience.
- Five salient themes were identified.

## Implications for D&I Research

- Involvement of ECE stakeholders in PDSA Cycles allowed for rapid transition to virtual de-implementation.



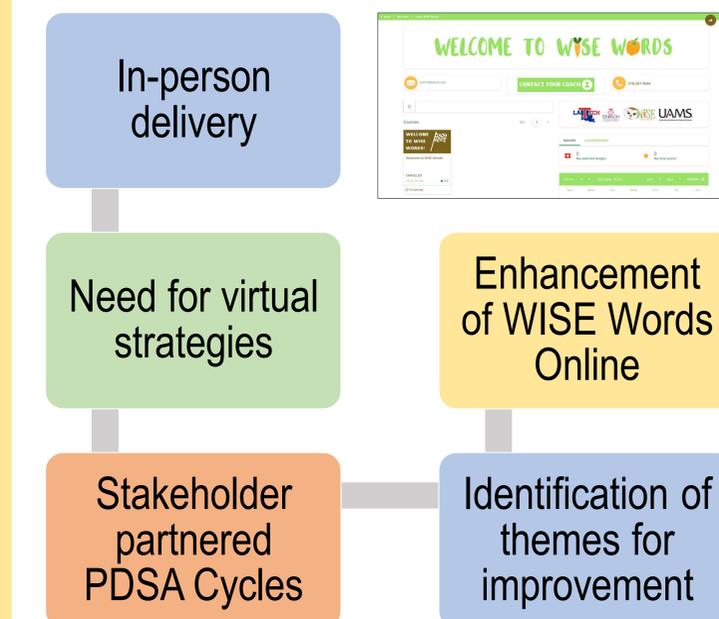
Involvement of stakeholders through PDSA cycles advanced a rapid transition to virtual de-implementation strategies.

Qualitative Data Collected	
Question	Mean of Responses
1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree	
Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:	
It was easy for me to log in to and set up my account	3.71
It did not take me an unreasonable amount of time to set up my account.	3.86
I feel like I know what WISE Words is.	3.77
I found the "Welcome to WISE Words!" course to be helpful.	4.31
I feel like I understand the Negative Feeding practices and Positive Feeding practices associated with WISE Words.	4
I welcome the use of this WISE Words Online.	4.31
I like WISE Words Online.	4.15
This WISE Words Online seems applicable.	4.23
This WISE Words Online seems like a good match.	4.23
This WISE Words Online seems implementable.	4.23
This WISE Words Online seems easy to use.	4.15
I understand the different ways we are going to be able to help support you.	4
1 = Not ready at all, 2= Not ready, 3 = Neither ready nor not ready, 4 = Ready, 5 = Very ready	
Do you feel like you are ready to choose one negative feeding practice to try to reduce or stop using and one positive feeding practice to begin using more frequently?	4

\*Data was collected after the completion of the "Welcome to WISE Words!" Course via Account Set Up and Introduction Surveys. The data set was collected in April of 2021 and analyzed in June of 2021.

## Themes Identified

- Ease of Use
- Preferred Features
- Resource Usage
- Technical Issues
- Need for Instruction Improvements



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**Background:** Feeding practices of Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) have a significant influence on the health habits of children. In partnership with ECEs, we developed evidence-based de-implementation strategies to reduce the use of detrimental feeding practices (e.g., pressure to eat) and replaced them with evidence-based ones (e.g., helping children to know when they are hungry or full). This presentation will document the process used to transition from in-person (August 2019-March 2020) to virtual (April 2021-Present) delivery of de-implementation support necessitated by COVID-19.

**Methods:** To transition from in-person to virtual delivery, we completed four distinct PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act) cycles, each with specific targets: (1) registration and selection of feeding practice goals for the peer learning collaborative, (2) delivery of educational resources associated with goals, (3) virtual engagement with peers in the learning collaborative, and (4) communication with the practice facilitator. In total, 13 ECEs participated in the PDSA cycles. The effectiveness of each cycle was measured by the percent (%) of ECEs who successfully completed each phase's target activities. Surveys assessed perceived usability and acceptability of the virtual platform (5-point scale, 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree"). Researchers invited qualitative input by open-response survey items and from Evidence-Based Quality Improvement meetings at the end of each PDSA cycle.

**Findings:** PDSA cycle analysis revealed 100% of ECEs (N=13) registered and selected reduction/replacement goals; 88.8% viewed prescribed resources; 23% engaged with peers in the learning collaborative; and 92% communicated with the practice facilitator. Mean values of survey items reflect a positive user experience with responses indicating ECEs "Agree" with statements, on average, regarding the platform's usability and feasibility (minimum M=3.71, maximum M=4.31). Qualitative coding identified 5 salient themes including Ease of Use, Preferred Features, Resource Usage, Technical Issues, and Need for Instruction Improvements. This feedback was used to improve the interactive training, streamline registration, and enhance technical assistance.

**Implications for D&I Research:** The study illustrates the application of stakeholder-partnered PDSA cycles for rapid transition of de-implementation strategies from in-person to virtual delivery. Replication of these processes could support the transition to virtual approaches for other implementation and de-implementation projects.



## The involvement of stakeholders in the rapid transition to virtual de-implementation strategies is an effective practice that can be replicated in future projects.

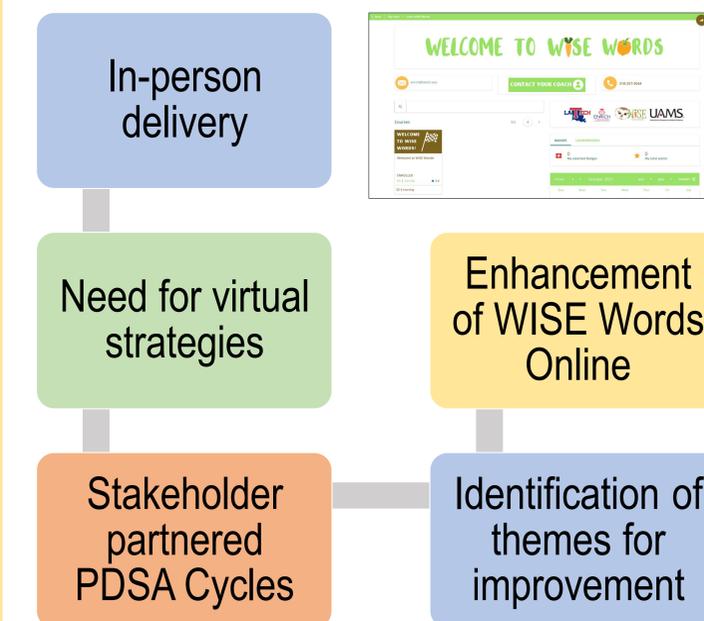
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