

A GUIDE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD SUPERVISORS
for the online module

WE CAN DO THIS

RIGHT WHERE WE ARE.



cycsuite.org



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INTRODUCTION

YOU AND YOUR STAFF MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN CHILDREN'S LIVES DAILY.

You welcome each unique child into your setting and support their individual early care and education needs. You work hard to create a setting that supports all children's growth and development. As children progress differently through developmental milestones, preparing and equipping staff to encourage the inclusion of all children to meaningfully participate and interact with toys, activities, peers, and learning opportunities takes thoughtful planning and ongoing direction.

Use this *Guide for Early Childhood Supervisors* with your staff to facilitate a deeper understanding and application of the training module, *We Can Do This Right Where We Are*. This guide supports the implementation of strategies and approaches learned in the training module to:

- build an inclusive environment,
- use evidence-based practices,
- identify practical strategies to use during daily routines,
- engage in effective communication with families, and
- connect to national, state, and local resources.

If you are interested in building upon inclusive practices within your program or setting to welcome ALL children, this guide can provide you with ideas and information to do just that!

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE



Tailor-made for supervisors and administrators, this guide provides step-by-step tips to support early childhood professionals who have completed the online training module, *We Can Do This, Right Where We Are*. The guide provides tools that empower your staff to immediately put into action what was learned!

Use this guide to determine areas of focus, follow the worksheets to plan and achieve goals. Here is what the guide provides:

The Supervisor's Checklist

Review a checklist of the topic areas covered in the online training module, chapter by chapter, so you can focus on supporting staff to improve inclusive practices. This allows flexibility to have staff collectively work together or take an individualized approach. Either way, you prepare your staff to make quality improvements.

Chapter Summaries

A brief summary of each training module chapter provides highlights and key points.

Action Plan Worksheets

These one-page worksheets are designed as collaborative tools to aid staff members in putting into practice what was learned. Use each worksheet to guide discussion about changing practices or select specific worksheets for staff to complete independently. These concise worksheets are intended to generate ideas and support logical application in everyday settings. Each worksheet includes the following sections:



- **Observe and Plan:** Prior to putting any new practice in place, there needs to be preparation! This section prompts staff to take time to observe their own practices. Then, staff move on to considering what they are inspired to change to ensure ALL children in their setting are able to grow, learn, and develop. Staff are encouraged to complete this sentence, "I am inspired to..." and describe what action they want to take.

Example: I am inspired to take a new approach to circle-time by setting up the environment in a different way that promotes consistency and participation of each child.



- **Try It Out:** Now it's time to try it out! A table of prompts organizes you and your staff to create an action plan to put a new practice, strategy, or change in place. Think about your end goal and why it is important. Complete the who, what, when, where, and how questions with staff to intentionally plan.

Example:

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	Ava, a new 4-year-old child in my program, is losing interest during circle time and having a hard time staying seated. Her frequent fidgeting and movement distracts children sitting around her. Her lack of attention to the activity disrupts her learning. She is distracted by the toy shelves near the area.
WHAT action steps are needed?	I need to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observe and notice the signals Ava’s behavior is sending • connect with her family to learn what keeps Ava’s interests at home • collaborate with team members to gather more information • modify the environment to increase Ava’s interest and attention during circle-time
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	I will alert Ava five minutes before circle time that she should prepare to move to the area and find her “spot’
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	I will conduct circle-time in an area with reduced distractions
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	I will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • arrange my circle-time space by placing a piece of fabric over the toy shelves just before gathering as a way to signal to Ava that it is time to transition • identify a preferred fidget toy that Ava can hold during circle time to keep her hands “quiet” and to herself • provide all children with a carpet square to sit on, so Ava knows her physical boundaries and understands her peers have their own “spot” too • review and revise my new circle-time approach based on results



• **Keep Data:** Growth and change are measured by keeping track of what the baseline is (what was happening before a new strategy or practice was put in place) and what occurs following the use of a new strategy or practice. This section provides questions for staff to consider how to gather data and monitor progress as an early childhood professional.



• **Reflect:** After making a change, it is important to pause and reflect. Guide staff to understand what they are doing, why they are doing it, and how it is working, using reflective questions. This allows you to focus on what works together.



• **Engage Families:** Valuing, respecting, and recognizing the vital role parents and family members play in building inclusive practices in your program is essential. This section provides a space to consider the ways information is shared with families. Effective communication by staff supports the whole child and shows families they matter!



• **Supervisor Follow-Up:** Commit to a time for reconnecting with your staff to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.

Seeking Resources

Links and resources included in this section provide practical information from recognized experts in the field on early childhood inclusion.

SUPERVISOR'S CHECKLIST

See something that sparks your interest? Use the checklist to prioritize areas of focus, then find the corresponding *Action Plan Worksheets* to guide you and your staff.

MODULE CHAPTERS	I HAVE AN INTEREST IN:	CHECK THE BOX	ACTION PLAN WORKSHEET
INCLUSION	Setting up the environment		1
	Increasing access to learning opportunities		2
	Engaging with your team		3
EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE	Increasing opportunities for effective interaction		4
	Planning with strategies that make learning fun		5
DATA COLLECTION, TEAMING, AND COLLABORATION	Improving your data gathering		6
	Selecting what evidence-based strategy to use		7
COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES	Trying new ways of sharing information with families		8
	Understanding a child and family's system of supports		9
	Seeking out additional national, state, and local resources		10



CHAPTER 1 SUMMARY

Inclusion In Early Care and Education

You welcome all children into your setting to support inclusive early care and education! You open your door to each child, breaking down the barriers to inclusion for children with developmental, emotional, or learning differences, and/or medical needs. You move toward supporting each child to engage, interact, and participate in every activity with their peers, allowing inclusion to truly happen. Inclusion builds a culture of belonging, actively inviting the contributions of ALL children. It offers learning experiences that respect diversity, removes barriers, and anticipates and considers a variety of learning needs and preferences. Planning your day with intention and purpose leads to access and participation for all children. When inclusion is done well, everyone in your setting benefits.

“The defining features of inclusion that can be used to identify high quality early childhood programs and services are access, participation, and supports.”

Joint statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

SETTING UP THE ENVIRONMENT



Observe and Plan

Setting up your environment is the first step in preparing to meet the needs of every child in your program. The learning environment influences each child's access to opportunities, materials, and experiences for learning and building relationships. Look around your space. Notice if all children have access to the materials, equipment, and toys so they can participate with peers. Are there physical obstacles? Are toys within reach to make easy choices? Are areas and staff organized and positioned so children know what to expect? Consider if additional resources will help you set up the environment to make it a fun, positive learning experience for ALL children.

I am inspired to make the following changes to how I organize the environment in my setting by:



Try It Out

After you've determined what change(s) you want to make, put your plan into action!

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	
WHAT action steps are needed?	
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	

WORKSHEET 1 – SETTING UP THE ENVIRONMENT *(continued)*



Keep Data

Ask yourself these questions for data tracking to enhance your skills as an early childhood professional:

- How often will I set up checkpoints to review and revise?
- What additional support (staff support, equipment, resources) will I need to reach my goal?
- How can I keep track of success in stages to the end goal (one step at a time)?



Reflect

Step back from your day and consider your thoughts and feelings about the experience. Take time to wonder with these questions:

- How do I know my changes have increased children's access to be able to engage with peers and participate in the routines of the day?
- How have the changes encouraged positive interaction?
- Are there other things I can do to continue enhancing the environment?



Engage Families

Share information with your families about the changes you've put into place, no matter how big or small. Explain how the changes promote participation and interaction among the children. Encourage families to think about where their child plays at home and in the community, and changes that might increase interaction and fun! Listening to families allows you to learn about changes they have made to their environment that increased access and participation for their child.



Supervisor Follow-up

I will reconnect with my staff member on _____ to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.

INCREASING ACCESS



Observe and Plan

Providing access includes thinking about the ways in which you provide learning opportunities. Making small changes like moving where an activity takes place, making the activity shorter, breaking an activity into smaller steps, or making it a social exchange are some things to consider. You can modify ways you share information with children by saying it, showing it, modeling it, or providing chances to experience it through the touch and feel of materials. Notice how challenging or easy tasks are for each child, and also how many children are readily able to participate in activities. By preparing and supporting in creative ways, you set the stage for each child's access to learning opportunities right where they are!

I am inspired to try the following strategies to increase access to learning opportunities in my setting:



Try It Out

Pause and intentionally think about how each child accesses the learning opportunities in your setting. Try something new to increase each child's active participation! You may find you need the support of additional staff or resources to put your strategy into motion.

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	
WHAT action steps are needed?	
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	

WORKSHEET 2 – INCREASING ACCESS *(continued)*



Keep Data

Ask yourself these questions for data tracking to enhance your skills as an early childhood professional:

- How often will I set up checkpoints to review and revise?
- What additional support (staff support, equipment, resources) will I need to reach my goal?
- How can I keep track of success in stages to the end goal (one step at a time)?



Reflect

Step back from your day and consider your thoughts and feelings about the experience. Take time to wonder with these questions:

- How have my strategies encouraged children to more actively engage or participate in learning activities?
- What strategies used for one child led to increased access for other children too?
- What could I do differently to improve how I used the strategy?
- What additional guidance might help me in making any adjustments or adaptations?



Engage Families

Children learn best with familiar adults in the context of daily routines and activities. That is why sharing successful strategies you try in your setting can make a difference at home too! Explain that sometimes even the smallest change can make a big difference in the child's ability to engage and learn! Talking with families allows you to learn from them about the strategies being used at home that opened up new learning opportunities for their child.



Supervisor Follow-up

I will reconnect with my staff member on _____ to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.

ENGAGING WITH YOUR TEAM

Observe and Plan

As an early childhood professional, you don't have to do it alone! A key element to supporting ALL children is collaboration. You are part of a team! You might know exactly who your team is, or you might not. Take a little time to think about and talk with families and/or other professionals about important members of a child's team. It could be the child's pediatrician, a speech and language pathologist, the child's grandparent, or possibly a case manager involved with the child's family. Each child's family, system of support, and community can be part of the team. Your supervisor, co-workers, or professional associations are a source of support, so open yourself up to opportunities for collaboration to learn, share, and problem-solve together!

I am inspired to increase my collaboration with other team members by:

Try It Out

Each team member has so much to offer by sharing information, professional perspectives, observations, and support. Consider what steps you will take to learn from your team by connecting and collaborating.

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	
WHAT action steps are needed?	
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	

WORKSHEET 3 – ENGAGING WITH YOUR TEAM *(continued)*



Keep Data

Ask yourself these questions for data tracking to enhance your skills as an early childhood professional:

- How often will I set up checkpoints to review and revise?
- What additional support (staff support, equipment, resources) will I need to reach my goal?
- How can I keep track of success in stages to the end goal (one step at a time)?



Reflect

Step back from your day and consider your thoughts and feelings about the experience. Take time to wonder with these questions:

- How has seeking out the expertise and support from co-workers encouraged my success in working with children?
- What new connections helped me problem-solve a particular situation with a child?
- How has the time I've spent to become more informed about the available state, regional, and community resources and partners helped a specific child and family?
- How have my efforts to be a more attentive listener with families impacted my communication with them?



Engage Families

Parents know their child best! Be an active listener and attend to what families share with you. It will give you insight into who the support team is for each child and family. Build connections with your team members by working together to empower families which leads to additional opportunities for a child to learn and grow.



Supervisor Follow-up

I will reconnect with my staff member on _____ to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.



CHAPTER 2 SUMMARY

Evidence-based Practice

What is evidence-based practice? Not all strategies that we use with children are based on scientific evidence even if they are well known. Being evidence-based means the information and strategies are backed by the best available scientific research, supported by the expertise and knowledge of professionals, and have value for the child and family. The blend of these three elements (evidence, expertise, value) are where evidence-based practices can be found. Considering these three elements helps you choose strategies to use with children that are more likely to be effective in meeting the needs of children and families in your setting.

“Evidence-based practice in the field of early childhood is the process that pulls together the best available research, knowledge from professional experts, and data and input from children and their caregivers, to identify and provide services, evaluated and proven to achieve positive outcomes for children and families.”

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA)

INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES

Observe and Plan

We all have strategies that we use to address specific learning goals for the children we serve. Evidence-based strategies can be used right away, and right where you are to encourage engaging interactions. When you notice and use a **child's interests**, you observe. You then can plan to add variety for their exploration of objects, topics, or activities. By honoring the interests of the child, a connection is built. These connections lead to back-and-forth interactions, sometimes called **serve and return**. This allows you to share the focus of an activity or toy, provide support and encouragement, name things, and take turns. As a child decides to transition from one activity to another, you also practice endings and beginnings. And as you **wait with purpose**, you give a child time and space to figure out how to participate with independence.

I am inspired to try this evidence-based strategy to enhance the children's interactions:

Try It Out

After you have decided on an evidence-based strategy, take steps to see what impact it has.

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	
WHAT action steps are needed?	
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	

WORKSHEET 4 – INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES *(continued)*



Keep Data

Ask yourself these questions for data tracking to enhance your skills as an early childhood professional:

- How often will I set up checkpoints to review and revise?
- What additional support (staff support, equipment, resources) will I need to reach my goal?
- How can I keep track of success in stages to the end goal (one step at a time)?



Reflect

Step back from your day and consider your thoughts and feelings about the experience. Take time to wonder with these questions:

- How have the evidence-based strategies I've selected impacted the children's learning outcomes?
- What can I do differently to make the strategy more effective?
- In what ways can I be more intentional to embed strategies within the routines and activities of the day?
- In what ways can I share my strategies with families to impact the child's success at home?



Engage Families

Ask the family about their child's favorite toys, activities, and places. Convey to the family what their **child's interests** are in your setting. Share when a child begins to play and interact with others. Be curious about the **serve and return** interactions that happen at home. Explain the importance of **waiting** for the child to respond to build independence. Provide real-life examples of what is working in your setting.



Supervisor Follow-up

I will reconnect with my staff member on _____ to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.

PLANNING WITH STRATEGIES

Observe and Plan

Intentionally using evidence-based strategies enables you to find times to support a child’s learning during familiar routines. Focus on how to include evidence-based strategies in your daily activities in the natural environment. For example, a strategy to support a child learning a new skill is to break activities down into smaller parts or steps, which is **task analysis**. You identify the small parts of a task, guide the child as needed, and allow the child independence. Another example is the use of **shaping**. You recognize where the child is developing a skill and match your expectations, then foster progress by guiding and encouraging, as the child grows and develops. **Embedding** strategies into your day will make using them a natural part of your practices.

I am inspired to make the work of the day fun and intentional by embedding an evidence-based strategy into daily routines by:

Try It Out

Think about how incorporating evidence-based strategies will make activities fun and engaging to facilitate growth and development.

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	
WHAT action steps are needed?	
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	

WORKSHEET 5 – PLANNING WITH STRATEGIES *(continued)*



Keep Data

Ask yourself these questions for data tracking to enhance your skills as an early childhood professional:

- How often will I set up checkpoints to review and revise?
- What additional support (staff support, equipment, resources) will I need to reach my goal?
- How can I keep track of success in stages to the end goal (one step at a time)?



Reflect

Step back from your day and consider your thoughts and feelings about the experience. Take time to wonder with these questions:

- How did the strategy I used create an opportunity for a child to experience success?
- How were the activities and/or routines of the day impacted?
- What other times in my day can I use this strategy to help children learn?
- What new strategies can I try to increase fun and learning in my setting?



Engage Families

Share with families the positive outcomes their child has within the daily activities of your setting. Notice and talk with the family about tasks or activities that might be challenging or frustrating for the child.

Explain how a strategy can be used to guide and reinforce their child's progress toward learning. If families seek suggestions or guidance, provide resources and share ideas. Encourage and model strategies to make learning part of their everyday routines and activities.



Supervisor Follow-up

I will reconnect with my staff member on _____ to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.



CHAPTER 3 SUMMARY

Data Collection, Teaming, and Collaboration

As you start to consider what each child needs, it is important to collect information, known as data. Collecting data, whether formally or informally, helps you learn about each child's needs, understand what is happening in an activity, and determine whether strategies you put in place are making a difference. The data you collect is important information to share with your team, including the family. Effectively collaborating with team members opens the door to ongoing communication to discover what's working, and consider how each child participates and has access to learning opportunities in your setting.

"Connecting data from multiple sources to track progress on indicators and benchmarks related to outcomes for young children and their families. Data can be used to inform planning, policy, and practice decisions."

Zero to Three

IMPROVING DATA GATHERING



Observe and Plan

Keep in mind that what is most important to a child's success is not how much data you collect or how much time you spend on data collection, but rather that you and your team know that what you are doing is helping children grow and learn. Data can tell you that. By collecting and tracking data, you get a picture of what might be happening in your setting. Data collection can be simple and useful to determine how to adjust an activity, modify an approach, or improve participation and interaction.

I am inspired to make changes to the way I collect and organize data to guide strategy selection in my setting by:



Try It Out

There are many ways data can be gathered and organized. Find a way that is practical, fits within the daily routine, and gives you the important information you need.

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	
WHAT action steps are needed?	
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	

WORKSHEET 6 – IMPROVING DATA GATHERING *(continued)*



Keep Data

Ask yourself these questions for data tracking to enhance your skills as an early childhood professional:

- How often will I set up checkpoints to review and revise?
- What additional support (staff support, equipment, resources) will I need to reach my goal?
- How can I keep track of success in stages to the end goal (one step at a time)?



Reflect

Step back from your day and consider your thoughts and feelings about the experience. Take time to wonder with these questions:

- Am I collecting the *right* data -- how is it informing my selection of strategies used and how success is measured?
- What ways can I improve the methods or times I collect data to be more efficient and productive?
- How has being a good collaborator with my team, including the family, made my data gathering and sharing effective and meaningful?



Engage Families

The data you collect and organize is a tool to engage and communicate with families. Share the data you collect to help families understand how it informs the strategies you use daily. By sharing this information, you bring the family into the decision-making process to select and put strategies in place. When you share the activities and routines supported by your data, in simple ways, you keep families informed and they can continue them at home.



Supervisor Follow-up

I will reconnect with my staff member on _____ to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.

SELECTING A STRATEGY

Observe and Plan

Ready to try out a new evidence-based strategy within your setting? Selecting evidence-based strategies requires thoughtful consideration. As you collaborate with your team, follow these four steps: **prepare, observe, pick a strategy,** and then **try it out.** Remember, children need lots of chances to learn and practice new things so give it some time. Reflect on how the strategy went and discuss with your team about the successes and challenges.

I am inspired to select the following evidence-based strategy using observations and collaborative planning with my team as a guide:

Try It Out

You've completed your preparations and observations, now it's time to select your strategy and act!

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	
WHAT action steps are needed?	
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	

WORKSHEET 7 – SELECTING A STRATEGY *(continued)*



Keep Data

Ask yourself these questions for data tracking to enhance your skills as an early childhood professional:

- How often will I set up checkpoints to review and revise?
- What additional support (staff support, equipment, resources) will I need to reach my goal?
- How can I keep track of success in stages to the end goal (one step at a time)?



Reflect

Step back from your day and consider your thoughts and feelings about the experience. Take time to wonder with these questions:

- What preparations and intentional observations gave me the information needed to thoughtfully select a strategy?
- How was my engagement with the team, including the family, beneficial in the selection process?
- How did the strategy positively impact children's access to opportunities and ability to participate and learn in my setting?
- What impacts are being noticed by team members, including the family, in other settings and routines?



Engage Families

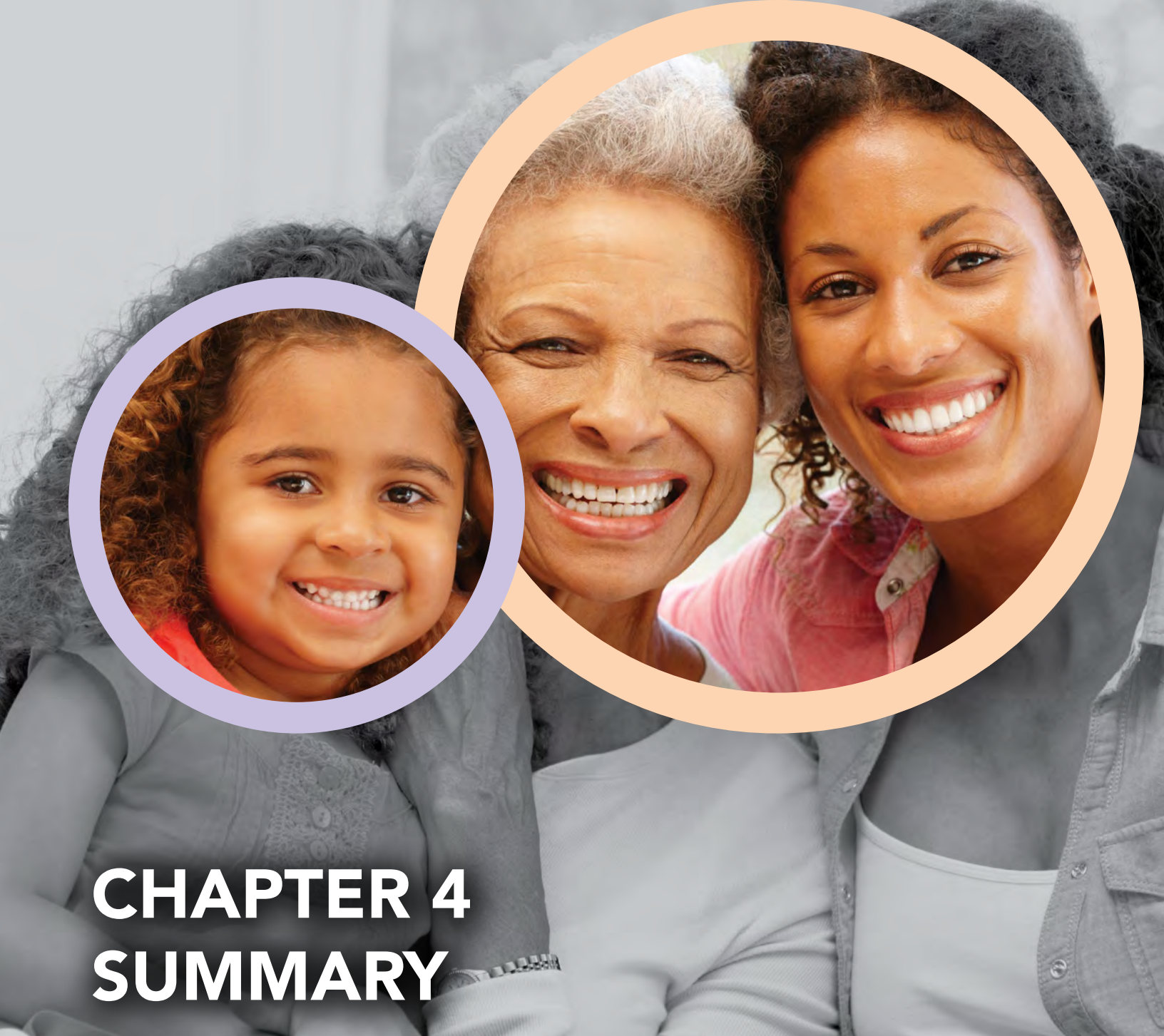
Keeping parents informed of strategies used during your day helps them support and practice at home.

This will increase the opportunities for interaction and participation experiences all day long! Share your strategies with families and listen as they share what works for them. Be curious about what they notice in different activities, settings, and routines. This information is valuable and a key part in the selection of any strategy. Together you can change and ensure outcomes are achieved across settings.



Supervisor Follow-up

I will reconnect with my staff member on _____ to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.



CHAPTER 4 SUMMARY

Communicating with Families

Every child and family has a story. As an early care and education professional, you are a piece of that story. Working together to include each child right where they are starts with a recognition that engaging with the family is essential. Communicating with them consistently and regularly supports their child's growth, learning, and participation. Listen and consider the family's experiences and information they share. Be flexible and patient with families, no two families are alike, and each comes to you with a unique perspective and own circle of support. Get to know available sources of services and support for children and families and reach out if you need to get additional information or resources to assist.

"Families are children's first, longest lasting, and most important teachers, advocates, and nurturers. Positive parenting and strong family engagement is central – not supplemental – to promoting children's healthy development and wellness."

*Office of Early Childhood Development,
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services*

SHARING INFORMATION

Observe and Plan

Routinely connecting with a parent about their child’s day leads to increased parent engagement. This builds relationships and recognition in you, the early childhood professional, as a trusted partner for information and support. Challenge yourself to be mindful about the ways you communicate with families in writing, over the phone, through a conversation, or via technology. Keep in mind that your own experiences, preferences, education, and upbringing contribute to who you are and how you interact with families. Because we’re all shaped by our own experiences, there are aspects of other families’ lives we may be unaware of or unable to easily understand, which can impact our communication with them. It’s human nature that we all have these blindspots. Recognize your blindspots and together with the family, find ways to communicate that are easy, fun, simple, meaningful, and most importantly, reflect the family’s preferences and needs.

I am inspired to try a new way of sharing information with families by:

Try It Out

There are many ways to connect and communicate with families. Be innovative to find a way that is simple, a good fit for families, and shares meaningful information.

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	
WHAT action steps are needed?	
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	

WORKSHEET 8 – SHARING INFORMATION *(continued)*



Keep Data

Ask yourself these questions for data tracking to enhance your skills as an early childhood professional:

- How often will I set up checkpoints to review and revise?
- What additional support (staff support, equipment, resources) will I need to reach my goal?
- How can I keep track of success in stages to the end goal (one step at a time)?



Reflect

Step back from your day and consider your thoughts and feelings about the experience. Take time to wonder with these questions:

- How have I communicated with families that I value their input and participation?
- What have I done to intentionally consider families' strengths and challenges, including any cultural or language barriers so the information I share is meaningful and understandable?
- How has my new approach made a difference in the way families are engaged with me and the level of confidence they have in carrying out strategies at home?
- How will I make communicating with families consistent and routine?



Engage Families

Parents know their children best. Pause, take a step back, and actively listen and learn what they communicate about their child. Make eye contact, notice your own and the parents' body language, and give families time to express what's on their mind. Watch and listen for cues about how the parent is feeling. Sharing information develops and deepens the relationship you have with families, paving the way for engagement and communication.



Supervisor Follow-up

I will reconnect with my staff member on _____ to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.

SYSTEM OF SUPPORT

Observe and Plan

There might be many different professionals and systems supporting a child and family. You may recognize specialists, medical providers, or other visitors that come to your setting and find yourself adjusting and adapting to collaborate. These professionals are important members of your team supporting a child. Make an effort to open up channels of communication with them and create valuable opportunities to share information, problem-solve, and set goals together.

I am inspired to understand and be a part of a child’s system of support by:

Try It Out

Each child comes to you with a unique system of support. You are part of that system, so take every opportunity to understand, engage, and communicate with others that support and surround each child and family.

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	
WHAT action steps are needed?	
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	

WORKSHEET 9 – SYSTEM OF SUPPORT *(continued)*



Keep Data

Ask yourself these questions for data tracking to enhance your skills as an early childhood professional:

- How often will I set up checkpoints to review and revise?
- What additional support (staff support, equipment, resources) will I need to reach my goal?
- How can I keep track of success in stages to the end goal (one step at a time)?



Reflect

Step back from your day and consider your thoughts and feelings about the experience. Take time to wonder with these questions:

- What have I done to identify the various systems of support for the children I serve?
- What contacts and resources have helped me better understand the children in my setting?
- What are the right questions to ask to get the relevant information I need from the others in the support system?
- How open am I to learning new strategies suggested by others in the system of support to put into play in my setting?



Engage Families

Your relationships with families matter. Actively communicating with them strengthens the support of their child's learning and participation in your setting. Understand and learn about their system of support.

Knowing what people in the child's life are a resource allows you to understand and plan for the child. Consult with the family and agree about who should be included. Remember, collaboration with other professionals requires family consent and maintaining confidentiality about the child. Respect and uphold the family's privacy, honor their input, and include them as a valued member of your team.



Supervisor Follow-up

I will reconnect with my staff member on _____ to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.

SEEKING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Observe and Plan

Each moment of every day, you take steps to welcome ALL children into your space. Providing inclusive care and education is possible with intentional planning, collaboration, and communication. Sometimes, though, you may find that you need to identify additional resources to help you provide a positive experience for every child. Perhaps you notice the child struggles to hear what you are saying, appears hungry upon arrival in the morning, or has meltdowns that seem out of the ordinary. When your observations tell you that something might be up, you can act! Familiarize yourself with the many resources available to children and families that offer services and support for your setting or at home.

I am inspired to seek out additional resources available to the children and families I serve by:

Try It Out

Many national, state, and local resources are available as support for you, and the children and families you serve. Discover the possibilities they offer!

Effective action planning challenges you to ask yourself important questions. Think about your end goal and why it is important!	
WHO is the focus of my plan?	
WHAT action steps are needed?	
WHEN is the ideal time to act?	
WHERE should the action occur for best results?	
HOW will I put the action plan in place?	

WORKSHEET 10 – SEEKING ADDITIONAL RESOURCES *(continued)*



Keep Data

Ask yourself these questions for data tracking to enhance your skills as an early childhood professional:

- How often will I set up checkpoints to review and revise?
- What additional support (staff support, equipment, resources) will I need to reach my goal?
- How can I keep track of success in stages to the end goal (one step at a time)?



Reflect

Step back from your day and consider your thoughts and feelings about the experience. Take time to wonder with these questions:

- What steps have I taken to explore state and local resources to become more knowledgeable about services and supports that might assist children and families in my setting?
- In my communication efforts with parents, what additional resources have been identified as needed for further exploration?
- How has what I've learned about additional resources made a difference in my daily practice and approach?
- What impact have these resources made in my setting and for families in order to increase access and participation for ALL children?



Engage Families

Parents are a vital part of the team. They can share valuable information about the child and the family's circumstances that may influence the child's day. This information can guide decisions about additional support and resources that might be helpful. Involving parents early increases the likelihood of continued family engagement throughout a child's educational experience. So, start now! Build a climate that welcomes, respects, and values the input of families.



Supervisor Follow-up

I will reconnect with my staff member on _____ to provide an opportunity for reflection and ongoing communication.

SEEKING RESOURCES

In preparing your staff to be knowledgeable and equipped to welcome ALL children into your setting, it is important to know some of the recognized experts and sites you can visit to find additional information about inclusive practices in early childhood settings.

You can use the following resources as a starting point in your quest to learn more about:



Building Inclusive Environments

- **Head Start Center for Inclusion Web Resources**
<https://headstartinclusion.org/about/>
- **Universal Design for Learning: A Checklist for Early Childhood Environments**
https://www.ctdinstitute.org/sites/default/files/file_attachments/UDL-Checklist-EC.pdf
- **Preparing the ECE Program for Inclusion: Serving the Child with Special Needs Online**
https://registry.occrra.org/cart/view_training/10083643
- **Designing Environments** (video)
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/designing-environments>



Using Evidence-based Practices and Strategies in Daily Routines

- **Why Educators Should Use Evidence-based Practices**
https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/ebp_01/cresource/q1/p02/
- **Serve and Return Interaction Shapes Brain Circuitry** (video)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_5u8-QSh6A
- **10 Effective Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) Strategies** (PDF)
https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/topics/inforgraphic_DAP_2%202.pdf



Engaging in Effective Communication with Families

- **Parent Involvement and Family Engagement for Early Childhood Professionals** (PDF)
https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/parent_involvement_and_family_engagement_final_508_1.pdf
- **How to Communicate with Parents**
<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/92-how-to-communicate-with-parents>
- **Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices: Share the Knowledge with Families** (video)
<https://youtu.be/vl435YLMl0k>
- **Official DEC 2014: Recommended Practices** (PDF)
<https://divisionearlychildhood.egnyte.com/dl/7urlPWCt5U/>

SEEKING RESOURCES *(continued)*



National Resources

[ACT Early - Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

[DEC \(Division of Early Childhood Council for Exceptional Children\)](#)

[ECTA \(Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center\)](#)

[NAEYC \(National Association for the Education of Young Children\)](#)

[National Head Start Association](#)

[Zero to Three](#)



State Resources

[BOLD Beginning!](#)

[Help Me Grow](#)

[Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association](#)

[Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities](#)

[Ohio Department of Education](#)

[Ohio Department of Health](#)

[Ohio Department of Job and Family Services](#)

[Ohio Department of Medicaid](#)

[Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services](#)

[Ohio Early Intervention](#)



Local Resources

[Community Faith-based Organizations](#)

[County Boards of Developmental Disabilities](#)

[Early Childhood Mental Health Supports](#)

[Family and Children First Council](#)

[Head Start and Early Head Start Programs](#)

[Help Me Grow Home Visiting](#)

[Libraries](#)

[Local Schools](#)

[Medical Providers](#)

[Recreational Centers](#)

[Volunteer Agencies](#)

Looking for More?

Contact OCALI's Center for the Young Child at cyc@ocali.org.

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Center for the
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cycsuite.org