



SUPPORTING POSITIVE INTERACTIONS

INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

“By responding positively to children’s cues and engaging in reciprocal interactions with them, educators support the development of secure relationships.”
(HDLH p. 24)

Educators who adopt a “caring dialogue” with children and families are well positioned to support children in their ability to self-regulate and anticipate and respond to challenges and conflicts. (Blaxall, 2015)

HOW CAN WE USE POSITIVE INTERACTIONS TO SUPPORT CHILDREN’S HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT?



✔ **Be a play partner.** Children learn to play and interact positively through experience. By being on their level and becoming a play partner, you will be able to scaffold their learning and interactions more effectively. It will also become easier to support them through challenges as they arise.



✔ **Label and validate children’s emotions.** “You worked so hard to build that tower, and it got knocked down. That must be so disappointing!”. A statement like this helps build children’s understanding of emotions and provides them with the words for how they are feeling.



✔ **Give children short and specific instructions** instead of comparing them to others to motivate them to complete a task, for example, “Jacob, pick up the small foam blocks”. “I like the way Shauna is picking up toys”, can feel like criticism which can negatively impact self-esteem and relationships.



“At the end of each day, ask yourself, “How much time did I spend Connecting (direct and meaningful interactions)? Directing (telling children what to do)? Correcting (telling children what not to do)?” What is your C:D:C ratio? (HDLH Pg. 45)”
Watch the video to explain this more here.



Describe a child’s specific positive actions.

“You worked really hard on that puzzle” – This brings attention to Growth Mindset, and encourages the effort instead of the result. Here are 10 "Good Job" Alternatives.

Reframe your thinking from “The child is GIVING me a hard time” to “The child is HAVING a hard time”– Understanding Stress Behavior and reframing the challenge allows educators to switch into a problem-solving mindset and create goals and strategies to support the child, instead of seeing them as misbehaving.

Be patient. Learning play skills and social skills takes time. Encouraging and facilitating positive social interactions consistently will help build these important life skills.

Be mindful and reflective. Ask yourself, “What is the goal that I am trying to achieve with this interaction?”. This will help to stay in tune with your own emotions and intentions and stay focused on the goal at hand.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Standards in Practice – Caring and Responsive Relationships

Supporting Positive Interactions with Children

Video: Impact of Positive, Quality Interactions with Children

Video: Impact of our view of the Child



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