Personas: Tools for Preparing Early Childhood Professionals to Support Each and Every Child and Family

Camille Catlett
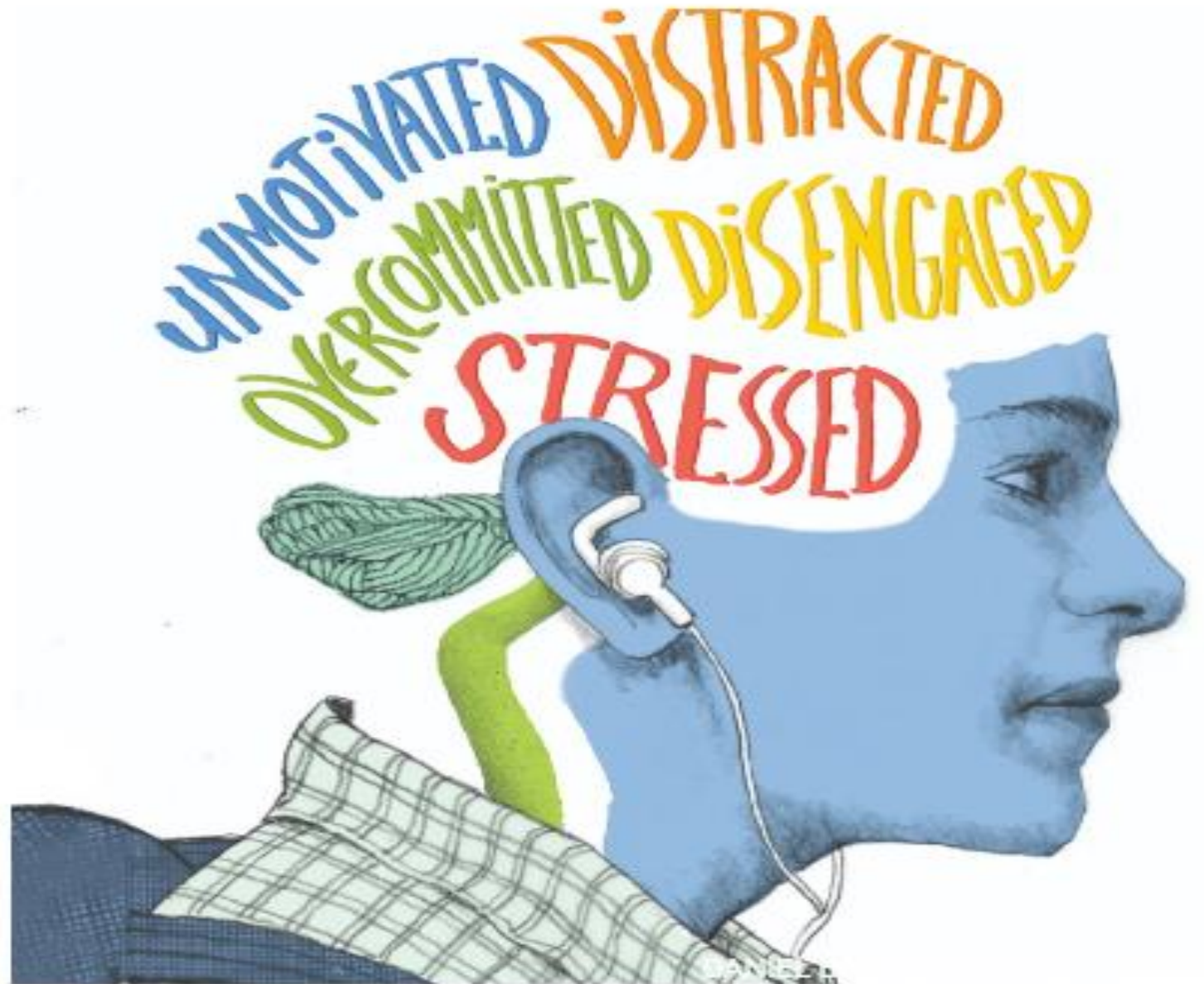
September 27, 2024

Spending time together today

- Key concepts
- Overview of personas
- Using personas to support your work

Are these your adult learners?
We'd like to help.

Take away what works for you

definitely adv. [Latin related to...

■ **Usage** See note at *definite*.

definite article *n.* the word (*the* in English) preceding a noun and implying a specific instance.

definition /ˌdefɪˈnɪʃ(ə)n/ *n.* **1 a** defini... **b** statement of the meaning of a w... etc. **2** distinctness in outline, esp. ... photographic image. [Latin: relate... DEFINE]
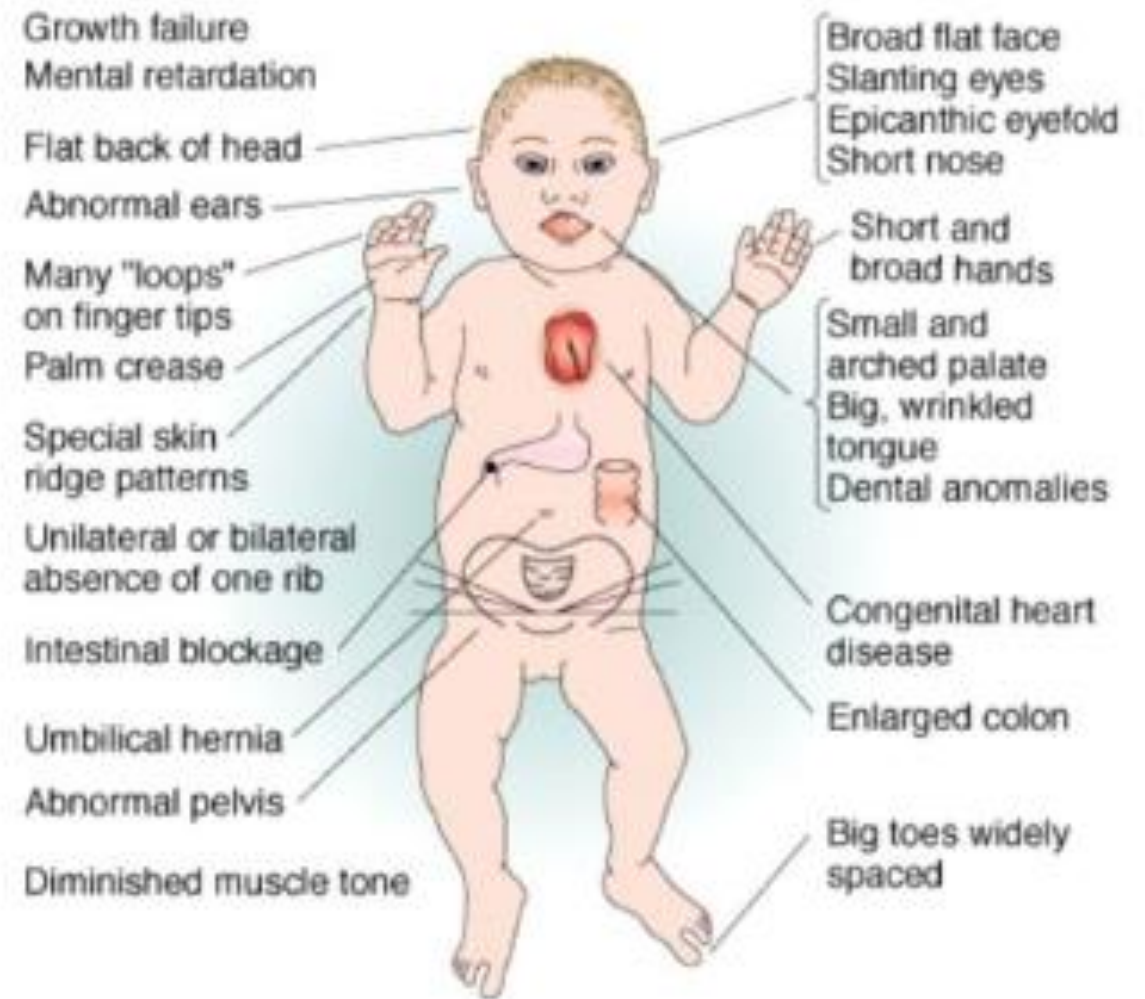
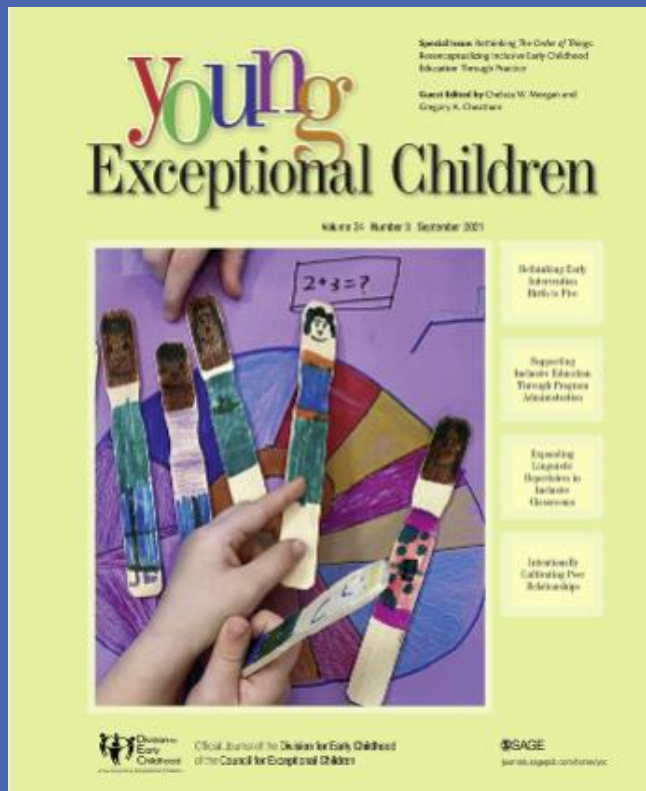**definitive** /dɪˈfɪnɪtɪv/ *adj.* **1** (of ... answer, verdict, etc.) decisive, u... ...tional, final. **2** (of a book etc.)...

Characteristics of Down Syndrome

Desire to Learn

Sparkling Eyes

Ears to Hear
Words of Encouragement

Infectious Smile

A Heart Full of Love

Arms to Give Hugs

Feelings & Emotions

Helping Hand:

A Need to Belong

Unique Characteristics
Just Like Everyone Else

Feet to Take Him
as Far as
He Wants to Go

Legs for
Walking & Dancing

Credit: Lauren Talhelm and Hayden Talhelm

Definitions

Growth failure
Mental retardation

Flat back of head

Abnormal ears

Many "loops"
on finger tips
Palm crease

Special skin
ridge patterns

Unilateral or bilateral
absence of one rib

Intestinal blockage

Umbilical hernia

Abnormal pelvis

Diminished muscle tone

Broad flat face
Slanting eyes
Epicanthic eyefold
Short nose

Short and
broad hands

Small and
arched palate
Big, wrinkled
tongue
Dental anomalies

Congenital heart
disease

Enlarged colon

Big toes widely
spaced

"We recognize *inclusive education* as the process of (a) redistributing access to and participation in quality learning opportunities; (b) ==recognizing and valuing all child differences== in learning activities, materials, and interactions; and (c) creating ==opportunities for non-dominant and under-represented groups to share their narratives== and advance ==solutions for equity==, with particular attention given to the ==interplay of multiple and intersecting social identities (e.g., ability, race, language)== in learning contexts (e.g., home, school, and community settings)"

(YEC September 2021, page 115)

Alternative Learning Positions:

Supporting Children's Appropriate Motor Development

Close your eyes and imagine for a moment a traditional classroom. Probably the educational model you conjured up included chairs and desks. Possibly even lined up in rows facing a chalkboard. Try a Google Image search and you're likely to get similar results.

While sitting in a chair supports effective performance of academic tasks such as handwriting, compositional writing, or math, many educators now question whether it really is the optimal position for learning. In regards to early childhood environments, sitting for long periods in a chair may not only be ineffective for learning, it is also not developmentally appropriate.

What's the Best Way to Sit and Learn?

Focusing on the needs of children with disabilities has the potential to improve the educational experiences of all children. All children require some level of individualized support and accommodation, and while these needs may be more pronounced for children with disabilities, the skills that general education teachers develop to teach children with disabilities more effectively will ultimately benefit all children. (page 6-20)

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2024*). A new vision for high-quality preschool curriculum.* Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://nap.nationalacademies.org/catalog/27429/a-new-vision-for-high-quality-preschool-curriculum

Definition of Professional Development

*"Professional development is facilitated teaching and learning experiences that are transactional and designed to support the **acquisition** of professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions as well as the **application** of this knowledge in practice.....*

Source: National Professional Development Center on Inclusion (NPDCI)

Definition (continued)

The key components of professional development include:

- *characteristics and contexts of the learners (i.e., the "**who**");*
- *content (i.e., the "**what**" of professional development); and*
- *organization and facilitation of learning experiences (i.e., the "**how**").*

Considerations in each course and across a program

Learn

Practice

Apply

An example

Using a textbook observation tool, observe children ages 0 to 3 engaged in play activities. This can be done in an infant classroom, a toddler classroom, a 3-year-old classroom, a playground with a child ages 0-3, or any other location where there is a child 0-3 playing.

1: Conduct a 10-minute observation of a child 0-3 years old engaged in play.   Provide pictures or a detailed description of the setting in which you are doing your observation, the age of the child you are observing, and include pictures of the play area and play materials the child is engaged in.

2: Use the instrument from your text to collect data to guide your observation. Summarize what you learned.

Evidence-based practice is a decision-making process that integrates the best available research evidence with family and professional wisdom and values.

FPG Snapshot

Evidence-Based Practice Empowers Early Childhood Professionals and Families

#33 | September 2006

THE PHRASE "EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE" is becoming standard vocabulary in the early childhood field, yet there is no consensus on its definition. The authors of a new book, *Evidence-Based Practice in the Early Childhood Field*, propose a definition of the concept and discuss how it can help early educators, special educators, child care professionals, and others to transform the services provided to children and families. A companion article in the fall 2006 issue of *Young Exceptional Children* also outlines the foundation of this new movement.

What is evidence-based practice?

Evidence-based practice means something different to practitioners, families, researchers, and policymakers. Each group has its own agenda and interests. Practitioners and families may look to evidence-based practice to help them solve day-to-day dilemmas. Researchers may look to evidence-based practice to identify the most pressing questions from the field. And policymakers may look to evidence-based research to make informed decisions about how to allocate limited resources.

With so many diverse groups turning to evidence-based practice, it is imperative that each have the same understanding of what the term means. The authors define evidence-based practice as "a decision-making process that integrates the best available research evidence with family and professional wisdom and values"—in other words, a balance of scientific proof and professional and family experience and values.

This definition empowers those directly connected to the child, parents and professionals alike, to tap into various sources of knowledge to make informed decisions. Most importantly, knowledge is not limited to research, allowing each child's experiences to be considered independently.

What is the origin of evidence-based practice?

Evidence-based practice emerged as a result of the gap often seen between research and practice and gained momentum with the standards and accountability movement. Yet it originates in medicine. Healthcare professionals using evidence-based medicine determine a patient's treatment based on an assessment of evidence from the literature and current studies as well as clinical judgment and the patient's values.

Drawing from medicine, the authors recommend a five-step process for evidence-based practice decision-making for the early childhood field.

1. Pose the question.
2. Find the best available research evidence.
3. Appraise the evidence quality and relevance.
4. Integrate research with values and wisdom.
5. Evaluate.

Jennifer Koel, PhD • 10mo

ECE Professional Bookshelf

What is an ECE Professional Bookshelf?

ECE PROFESSIONAL BOOKSHELF

As you strive towards your goal of becoming a professional early childhood educator, you will be utilizing this bookshelf of early childhood documents in many of your ECE courses.

Other excellent resources for you to visit frequently include:

- The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
  - NAEYC Professional

NAEYC: National Association for the Education of Young Children

NAEYC Website

naeyc.org

Home

NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct and Statement of Commitment Position Statement

naeyc
Code of Ethical Conduct
and Statement of Commitment

Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the Council for Exceptional Children

DEC Website

dec-sped.org

Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children

Early Childhood Inclusion- A Joint Position Statement of DEC and NAEYC

Early Childhood Inclusion

PDF

National Education Association

NEA

nea.org

Early Childhood Education | NEA

Wisconsin Early Childhood Resources

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS)

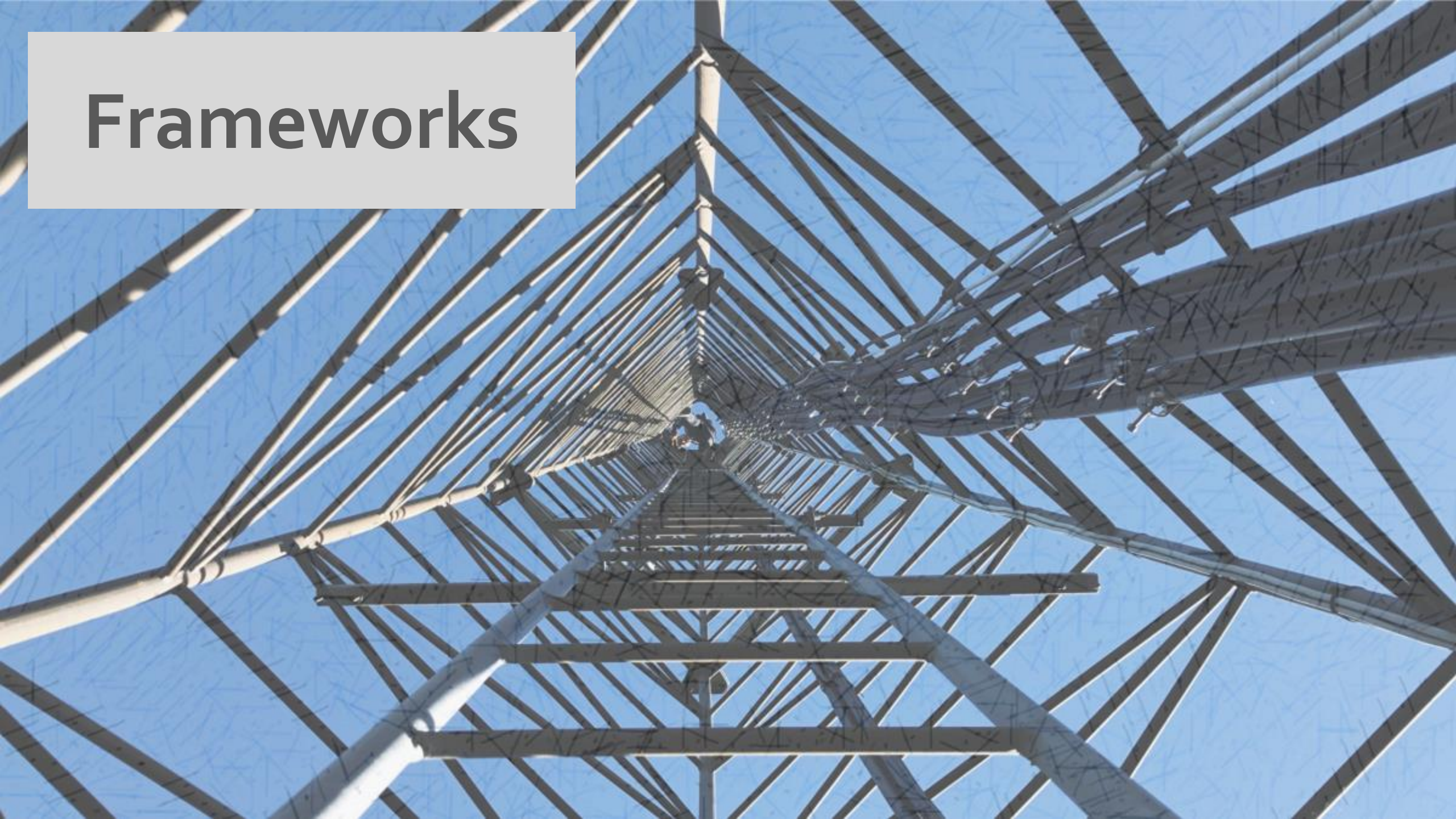Wisconsin Model
Early Learning
Standards

PDF

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS)

DCF Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers

WISCONSIN
ADMINISTRATIVE CODE

Frameworks

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

Core Considerations to Inform Decision-Making (pg. 6)

Developmentally appropriate practice requires early childhood educators to seek out and gain knowledge and understanding using three core considerations: **commonality** in children's development and learning, **individuality** reflecting each child's unique characteristics and experiences, and the **context** in which development and learning occur. These core considerations apply to all aspects of educators' decision-making in their work to foster each child's optimal development and learning.

Context
Everything discernible about the social and cultural contexts for each child, each educator, and the program as a whole

Individuality
The characteristics and experiences unique to each child, within the context of their family and community, that have implications for how best to support their development and learning

Commonality
Current research and understandings of process of child development and learning that apply to all children
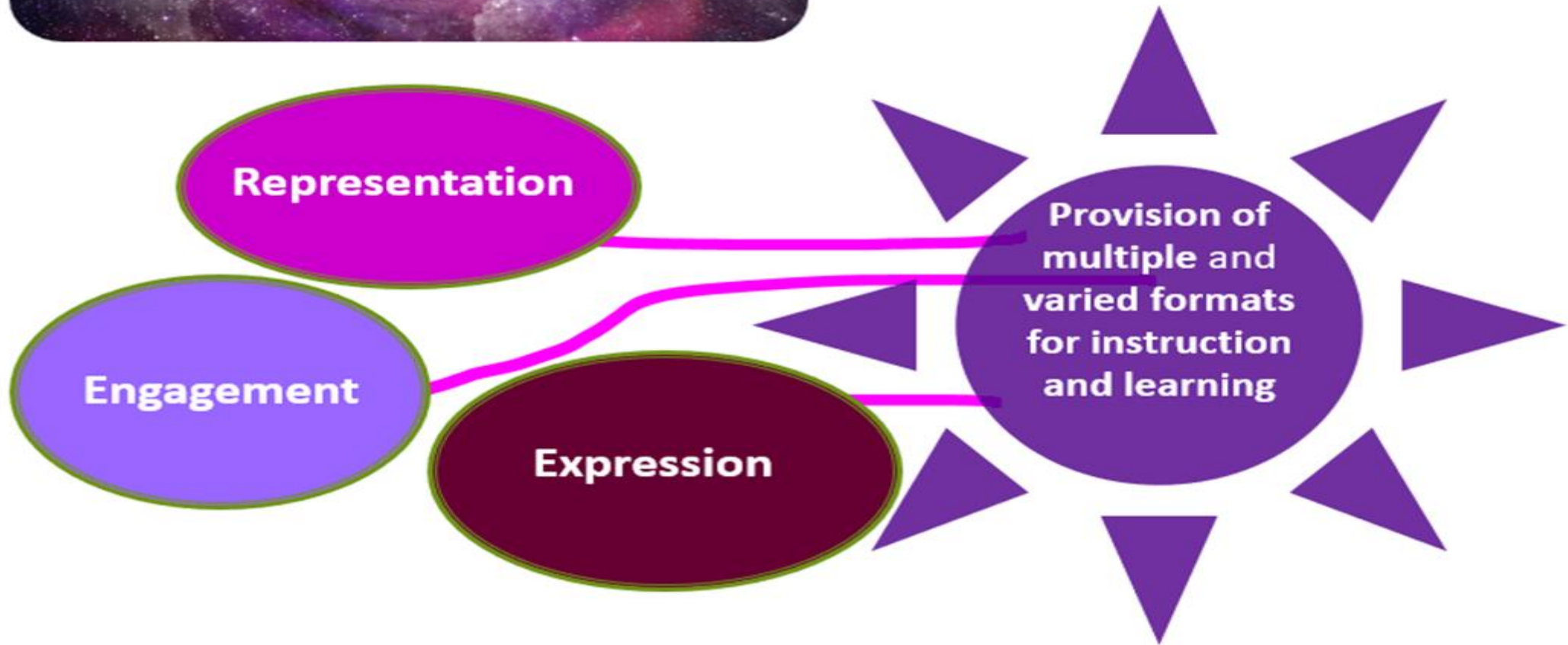
Universal Design for Learning

NAEYC Standards and Competencies (p. 17)	Early childhood educators (c) use a broad repertoire of developmentally appropriate and culturally and linguistically relevant, anti-bias, and evidence-based teaching approaches that reflect the principles of universal design for learning.
NAEYC DAP (p. 22)	Educators follow Universal Design for Learning principles by proactively providing multiple means of engagement, multiple means of representation, and multiple means of action and expression.
DEC Standards (p. 17)	Candidates adhere to universal design for learning principles by incorporating a variety of ways for children to gain access to the curriculum content, offer multiple methods to recruit children's active engagement, and include a range of formats for children to respond and demonstrate what they know and have learned.
DEC Recommended Practices (p. 8)	Practitioners consider Universal Design for Learning principles to create accessible environments.

Fabulous article

Circle Is for Everyone: Using UDL to Promote Inclusion During Circle Times

Table 1
Circle Time UDL Strategies

UDL principle and definition	Circle time strategies	Examples of implementation
Multiple Means of Representation: Offering a variety of ways for children to access the curriculum content (CAST, 2018)	Use tablet technology to explore digital storytelling (multiple apps are available for this purpose). Teachers can support children in creating and narrating digital stories that can be played during circle instead of reading a story.	Louise gathers small groups of children to use a digital storytelling app to create a story during free choice. Over the course of a few weeks, each child in the classroom has the chance to create a story that is shared at circle time.
	Provide children with puppets, figurines, or felt characters related to parts of a story or a song	Louise and Ben create props to accompany several popular songs: they laminate coloring sheets the class has decorated from Brown Bear, and pass them out at circle time. When an animal comes up on a page, they encourage the child with that page to hold it up and show the class. They also use spider rings for Itsy Bitsy Spider, and whale figurines when singing Baby Beluga.

DEC Recommended Practices

(see handout page 3)

What are the Recommended Practices? https://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices

The DEC Recommended Practices were developed to provide guidance to practitioners and families about the most effective ways to improve the learning outcomes and promote the development of young children, birth through age 5, who have or are at-risk for developmental delays or disabilities. The purpose is to help bridge the gap between research and practice by highlighting those practices that have been shown to result in better outcomes for young children with disabilities, their families, and the personnel who serve them. While the benefits to children with or at risk for disabilities are clear, these evidence-based practices also support the other young children in any setting. The topics around which Recommended Practices have been gathered are:

Leadership	Assessment	Environment	Family
Instruction	Interaction	Teaming and Collaboration	Transition

Resources at this website include:

* Recommended Practices in English and Spanish
* Glossary of terms
* Recommended Practices with embedded examples (illustrations of what each practice might look like in different home and early childhood settings)
* Recommended Practices with interactive glossary (key terms are highlighted and linked to definitions)

Practice Improvement Tools: Using the DEC Recommended Practices https://ectacenter.org/decrp/

The Practice Improvement Tools were developed to support implementation of the evidence-based practices. They are based on the DEC Recommended Practices. Tools and resources are organized around the eight topics of the DEC Recommended Practices and are designed to guide educators, practitioners, administrators, and families in supporting young children who have, or are at-risk for, developmental delays or disabilities across a variety of early childhood settings. They include **performance checklists**, **practice guides**, and **professional development** guidance materials.

DEC Recommended Practices with Examples

L3 — Leaders develop and implement policies, structures, and practices that promote shared decision making with practitioners and families.

Examples

- A preschool program director encourages practitioners to provide feedback on policies and practices that impact their work and takes constructive action based on this feedback.

- A Head Start director provides opportunities for active and meaningful participation of family members in advisory capacities and takes constructive action based on the advice of families.

- A chair of a local interagency coordinating council demonstrates that diverse perspectives are valued by encouraging each team member to share information during team meetings.

E6 — Practitioners create environments that provide opportunities for movement and regular physical activity to maintain or improve fitness, wellness, and development across domains.

Examples

- An early childhood teacher incorporates movement and physical activities into his preschool classroom's daily routines. For example, each day children choose a movement or stretch (e.g., hopping, marching, touching their toes) and the number of the month determines how many movements the children complete together during circle time.

- A physical therapist works with families and other adults to identify strategies in the environment to encourage children to walk, crawl, wiggle, scoot, reach, roll, kick, or move in any other way they can. For example, she shows family members how to place desired toys in sight but out-of-reach to encourage locomotion.

Using Personas

Jamil

Age of the child

Information about the family & context

Information about what delights Jamil

Jamil's individual learning needs

Key professional development priorities

Authenticity: community demographics

Jamil arrived a year ago with his mother, father, and older sister Sara from Syria. While Jamil is just four, he loves being involved in anything he can do with his six-year-old sister.

At home Jamil's family speaks Aramaic and Arabic but both parents are taking English classes. Based on concerns about Jamil's speech and language development, his pediatrician suggested that Jamil's language and social-emotional development would benefit greatly from a preschool program.

Jamil is now attending a local preschool program and is beginning to connect with other children and to communicate with his teacher and peers. He has developed a tremendous interest in blocks and builds tall and elaborate structures. Jamil's teacher has noticed that introducing and reinforcing concepts in a sequence (e.g., in a cooking activity) support both his receptive and expressive language.

To support carryover, Jamil's teacher has shared ideas about how to support his developing language skills at home. They've suggested games and routine activities that would be great ways to give him additional opportunities to practice his evolving language skills. His parents have expressed reluctance to do this as, they have shared, it is not customary in their family for adults to play with children.
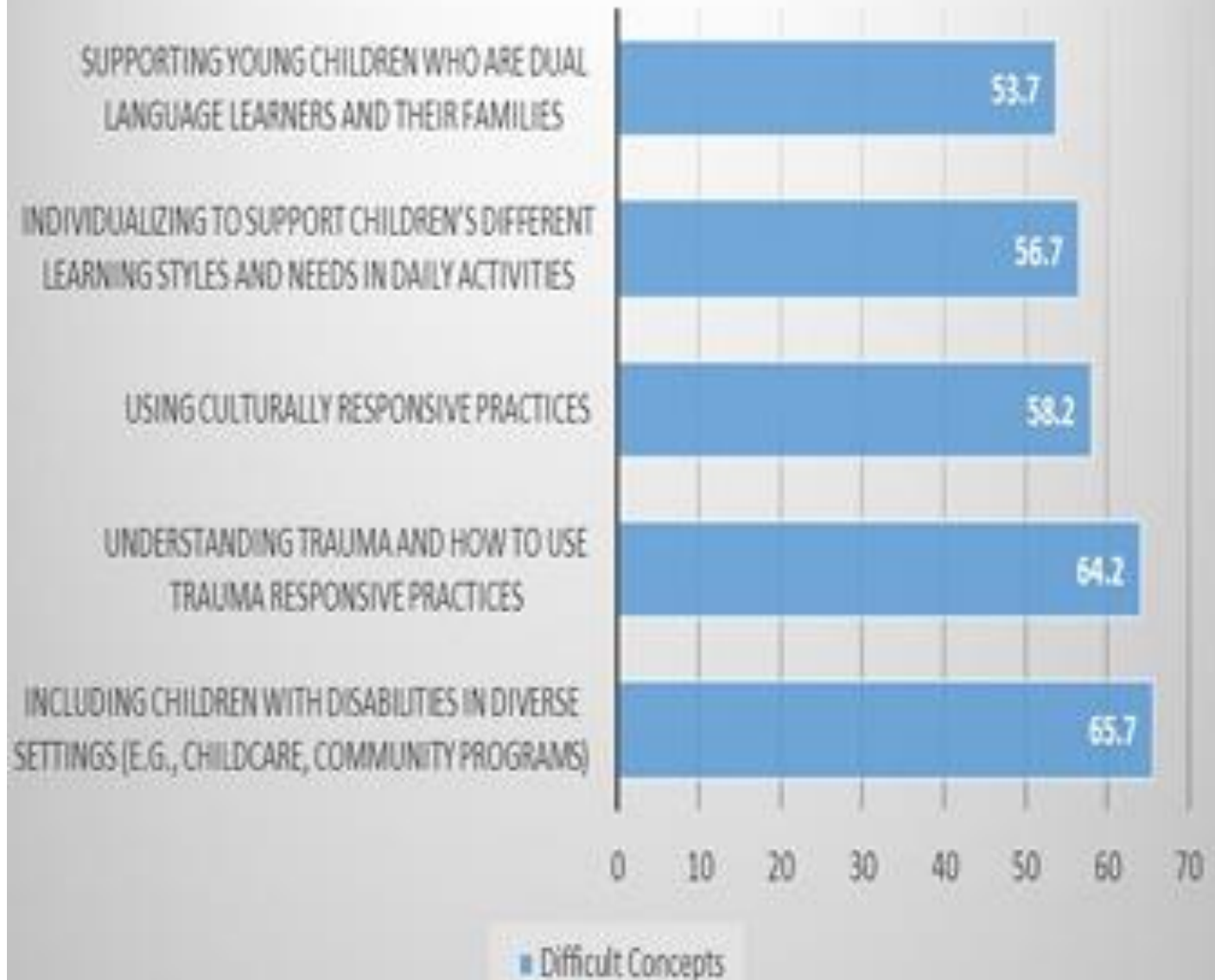
Why personas?

COVID

ADDRESS PD PRIORITIES

SUPPORT REPRESENTATION

Highest priority for the development of personas: Including & individualizing for children with disabilities

Difficult Concepts

SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN WHO ARE DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS AND THEIR FAMILIES — 53.7

INDIVIDUALIZING TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES AND NEEDS IN DAILY ACTIVITIES — 56.7

USING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICES — 58.2

UNDERSTANDING TRAUMA AND HOW TO USE TRAUMA RESPONSIVE PRACTICES — 64.2

INCLUDING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN DIVERSE SETTINGS (E.G., CHILDCARE, COMMUNITY PROGRAMS) — 65.7

Difficult Concepts

What do we know about supporting adult learners?

Adult learners, including college students, are more successful in completing their programs when instructional content is connected to their lives.

What do we know about supporting young children?

When children's interests, cultural funds of knowledge, home language, and identities are affirmed by educators, caregivers, and other adults in their lives, they feel a sense of belonging and are motivated to become engaged learners.

What do we know about the availability of culturally responsive and sustaining instructional materials?

There is a lack of culturally responsive and sustaining instructional materials for preparing current and future early childhood educators (ECEs) that support applications to Native American, Black, and Hispanic/Latino children and families, particularly those living in rural communities.

Meet Jamil

Jamil

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You may want your students to . . .

- Understand the assets for children of being bilingual
- Understand the phases of second language acquisition for children who are sequential dual language learners
- Understand how to support children who are multilingual and their families

The Importance of Home Language Series

School readiness and school success for children who are dual language learners are tied directly to mastery of their home language. This series of handouts is designed to provide staff and families with basic information on topics related to children learning two or more languages. They emphasize the benefits of being bilingual, the importance of maintaining home language, and the value of becoming fully bilingual. These easy-to-read resources highlight important information that every adult living or working with young dual language learners should know.

English versions

- The Benefits of Being Bilingual 📄 [PDF, 379KB]
- The Gift of Language 📄 [PDF, 365KB]
- Language at Home and in the Community for Families 📄 [PDF, 1.0MB]
- Language at Home and in the Community for Teachers 📄 [PDF, 503KB]

Support Learning English

Strategies for Caregivers and Teachers: How Caregivers and Teachers Support

- Alphabet Knowledge and Early Writing 📄 [PDF, 1.0MB]
- Background Knowledge 📄 [PDF, 1.2MB]
- Book Knowledge and Print Concepts 📄 [PDF, 1.1MB]
- Oral Language and Vocabulary 📄 [PDF, 922KB]
- Phonological Awareness 📄 [PDF, 954KB]

Specific Strategies to Support DLLs When Adults Do Not Speak Their Language

Find tips classroom staff and home visitors can use when they do not speak the languages of the children in their care:

- Creating Environments that Include Children's Home Languages and Cultures 📄 [PDF, 439KB]
- What the Research Tells Us 📄 [PDF, 484KB]
- Including Children' Home Languages and Cultures 📄 [PDF, 422KB]
- Inviting and Supporting Cultural Guides and Home Language Models 📄 [PDF, 541KB]
- Language Modeling with Dual Language Learning Infants 📄 [PDF, 407KB]
- Language Modeling with Dual Language Learning Toddlers 📄 [PDF, 401KB]
- Planning and Organizing Thematic Instruction 📄 [PDF, 609KB]
- Supporting Dual Language Learners with Classroom Schedules and Transitions 📄 [PDF, 390KB]
- Supporting English Language Development When Children Have Little Experience with English 📄 [PDF, 670KB]
- Code Switching: Why It Matters and How to Respond
- How to Use Bilingual Books 📄 [PDF, 549KB] | Spanish (español) 📄 [PDF, 574KB]
- Selecting Culturally Appropriate Children's Books in Languages Other Than English 📄 [PDF, 1.0MB] | Spanish (español) 📄 [PDF, 950KB]
- Selecting and Using Culturally Responsive Children's Books 📄 [PDF, 3.0MB]

Stages and Strategies of Preschool Second Language Acquisition: The Soyul & Teacher Yvette Video Series ▶ PLAY ALL

Soyul & Teacher Yvette Video Series Preview
2:33
Teaching At The Beginning Vi...
699 views · 2 years ago

Video 1: Soyul & Teacher Yvette...Adventures in ...
20:55
Teaching At The Beginning Vi...
1.5K views · 2 years ago
CC

Video 2: Soyul & Teacher Yvette...The Stages of ...
17:29
Teaching At The Beginning Vi...
1K views · 2 years ago
CC

Video 3: Soyul & Teacher Yvette... Relationships, ...
21:10
Teaching At The Beginning Vi...
575 views · 2 years ago
CC

Meet Trey

Trey

Trey is 30 months old. He lives with his mother who has some intellectual challenges. She takes very good care of Trey, but she doesn't know much about how to support the development of a toddler. By report, Trey has never used crayons, held or read books, or spent time with other children. Trey's mom recently found a job, so Trey is now in a family childcare program each day.

Trey's teacher has shared things he really enjoys and things that seem hard for him. He loves to play with cars, trains, trucks – anything with wheels. He avoids doing fine motor activities. When he is asked to do fine motor activities like completing simple puzzles, he appears to get frustrated but doesn't seem to be able to explain how he feels or why he's unhappy.

Ask students to identify what might be expected in fine motor, social emotional, and language development from a toddler, using *state or national* milestones or trajectories. Consider how that compares to Trey's development.

Commonality

Individuality

Ask students to identify the strategies they would use to collaborate with Trey's mother to support his development.

Context

Ask students to propose ways to support Trey's language, fine motor, and social-emotional development in his childcare program routines.

In an Infant-Toddler Course

Piper

Fourteen-month old Piper is Daniel and Emily's first child. Emily became pregnant when she was a senior in high school. With help from both sets of grandparents, Daniel and Emily completed high school and have full time jobs. They both admit that they don't know much about early childhood, but are quickly learning how to support all aspects of Piper's development. They had never heard of Down syndrome before their doctor shared Piper's diagnosis with them.

Piper attends a neighborhood childcare program each day, where she receives her early intervention services. Her speech-language pathologist is working with her teacher and family to support early speech and language development.

Piper recently got glasses to correct her significant astigmatism, and everyone has commented on how much this development has supported her interest in puzzles, puppets, and motor games, like rolling a ball.

Read *Guide to Adaptations* to **learn** new concepts

Watch video and **practice** recognizing adaptations

Apply new concepts using a persona

A GUIDE TO ADAPTATIONS

At STEMIE, we use adaptations to ensure each and every child, including young children with disabilities can fully participate and engage in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) learning opportunities and experiences at home, in early childhood programs, and in the community.

Every child is different, and these are only suggested adaptations. Do what works best for the child or children you are working with. You might also work with children's speech pathologist or occupational therapist to develop additional adaptations or visual cues.

In this document, we define and describe an evidence-based inclusion framework and provide definitions and examples of adaptations that adults can use to ensure young children with disabilities can participate fully in STEM learning experiences.

Inclusion Framework
The inclusion framework is informed by evidence-based inclusive practices (e.g., Campbell & Milbourne, 2007; DEC, 2014) and focuses on the supports adults can implement to facilitate STEM learning for children with disabilities.

Hierarchy of adaptations
Within the hierarchy, adaptations to the environment and materials are aligned to the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices on environment while instructional adaptations are aligned to the Recommended Practices on instruction.

1. Environment – Environmental, activity, and/or routine adaptations are broad changes and/or accommodations in the setting and/or activity that support inclusive access to learning opportunities, embed interventions, and support full participation and independence for all children (e.g., room set-up, equipment, how an activity is done, length of time).
2. Materials – Materials adaptations are changes and/or accommodations to materials that support inclusive access to learning opportunities, embed

Adaptations to Routines & Activities Make STEM Happen for Infants & Toddlers

p) Campbell, PhD, OTR/L FAC
arradine, PhD

2021 Stemie Professional Development Webi
March 30, 2021

Teacher Time

Inclusive Learning Environments for Infants and Toddlers

Teacher Time Series

Teacher Time

Office of Head Start National Center
National Center on
Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning

March 9, 2021

Inclusive Learning Environments for Infants and Toddlers

Host
Treshawn Anderson, NCECDTL

Host
Gail Joseph, NCECDTL

Joseph

Not Joe, Joseph, he will tell you, as he is the third Joseph in his family, and using his full name is a tradition. With a younger sister coming behind him, he is continuing a family tradition of learning and education. Joseph's mother and father both completed advanced degrees and are eager to understand how they can support him in achieving his full potential.

Joseph's family can trace their roots back several generations to the era of slavery. They take pride in sharing the stories of both their roots and their aspirations. In fact, carrying the stories of the past forward is a commitment Joseph's family shares both at home and in their place of worship.

In his Kindergarten classroom, Joseph is quick to raise his hand when he knows the answer. He is fascinated with any aspect of science – animals, planets, dinosaurs, etc. But reading is not Joseph's favorite thing. When it's time to focus on reading, Joseph tunes out. When his family has asked him about this, his response has been that reading is "boring" and doesn't relate to him. Joseph's teacher is very concerned about his lack of interest in the reading curriculum.

Oral Storytelling Skills Impact Reading Differently for African American Boys and Girls

Date Published: 06/21/2017

The oral storytelling skills of African American preschoolers make a difference in how quickly their reading skills develop, according to a new study from the **Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute** (FPG) at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Researchers say the effect is much different for girls and boys.

"Knowing how to tell a clear and coherent story is an important skill for helping young children to develop strong reading skills, which, in turn, can help them to be successful across a number of different subjects in school," said FPG advanced research scientist **Nicole Gardner-Neblett**. "Prior research suggests that historical and cultural factors foster strong storytelling skills among African American children, which has implications for their development as readers."

Two years ago, Gardner-Neblett's own research was the first to demonstrate **the connection between African American preschoolers' storytelling abilities and their early reading skills in kindergarten**. That study found a link between storytelling and reading only for the African American children, from households across income levels, but not for any other demographic group.

Stark differences in reading achievement exist between Black and White elementary schoolchildren, as does a gender gap in reading outcomes, with girls outperforming boys. Because of both disparities in achievement, Gardner-Neblett and FPG advanced research scientist **John Sideris** wanted to better understand if and how gender plays a role in the link between African American children's storytelling skills and reading development.

- How might you use Joseph's interest in science to support his literacy development?

- What can you learn about evidence-based practices that support literacy in young black children?

- What might you like to ask Joseph's family about books and reading in their home?

- If you were the teacher in Joseph's classroom, what would your next steps be: 1) in terms of coordinating and collaborating with Joseph's family; 2) in terms of implementing practices within the program that support Joseph's needs? (and the needs of other children?)

- If you were to select children's books that might support Joseph's interest in language and literacy, what process/parameters would you use?

Possible assignment – create a new bookmark

STEM Storybook Reading for Infants, Toddlers, and Young Children

START HERE

STEMIE
INNOVATION FOR INCLUSION IN EARLY EDUCATION

Welcome to STEMIE's curated collection of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) storybooks for infants, toddlers, and young children. Explore this set of storybooks that - in addition to being adored and well-respected children's literature - offer an opportunity to expand on at least one accurate STEM idea. Suggested adaptations, question prompts, and activities are provided with each.

Ages 1-3	Science

Baby Loves Quarks!
By Ruth Spiro

👆 **Point to pictures**

🙂 **Be Expressive**

Model correct answers
"Smash. Say 'Smash.'"

WH questions
"What sticks together?" [quarks]

Do not rush

⏳ **Wait for a response after a comment or question**

Reading with babies and toddlers uses strategies such as:

- Pointing to pictures

- Using expressive facial features and voices

- Spending as much time as your child wants on pages, they are very curious about - do not rush

- Modeling the right answer to help your child learn new words. "Smash. Say 'smash'".

The Grouchy Ladybug
Eric Carle

Bookmark with Prompts
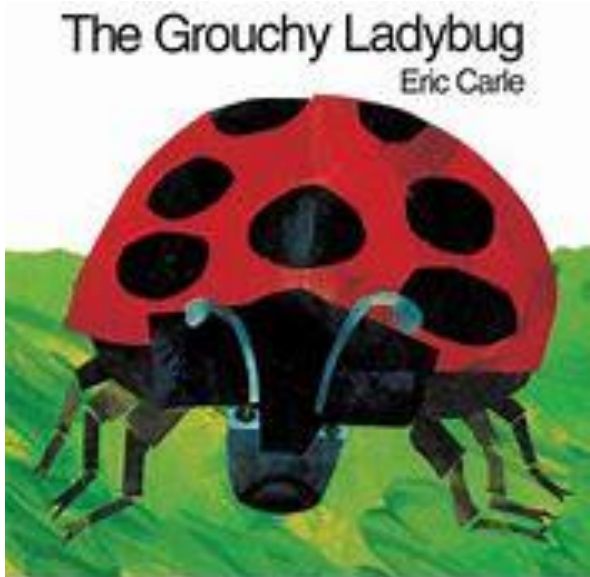
The Grouchy Ladybug is a book written and illustrated by Eric Carle.
As you follow the Grouchy Ladybug on her journey, you will learn the important concepts of time, size, and shape, as well as the benefits of friendship and good manners.
This author also wrote numerous other books with vivid pictures if you like this book.

Every child is different, and these are only suggested age ranges and activities. Do what works best for your child.
Print this page and cut around the edges.

Do not forget to PEER! Use additional Prompts if needed, Evaluate and Expand your child's answers, and Repeat the prompts.
If you do not have a paper copy of this book, go to https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jr3ha03MsK0 to watch a YouTube video of someone reading the book. If you prefer to read it to your child yourself, just mute the audio.
Check your local library to see if it allows you to borrow a digital version of this book to read on a laptop, tablet, or phone. Or find it online:
https://archive.org/details/grouchylady00carl
Look at STEMIE's tips for making adaptations to the storybook reading process
https://stemie.fpg.unc.edu/sites/stemie.fpg.unc.edu/files/Dialogic%20Reading_General%20Adaptations.pdf

If you print this page, you can download or view online by scanning the QR code.

Ages 2 – 4	Science

The Grouchy Ladybug
By Eric Carle

Complete a sentence

C "The yellow jacket showed the ladybug its _ _ _ _ _ _ _." (stinger)

Recall

R "Why did the ladybug not want to fight the lobster?"

Open-ended questions

O "Why do you think the skunk lifted its tail to the ladybug?"

WH questions

W "What sound does the hyena make?"

Distancing questions

D "What food do you like to eat at the end of the day?"

STEM Words & Ideas to Explore
• Living organisms (animals)
• Size (big, little)
• Time (morning, afternoon, night)
• Animal attributes (beak, legs, jaws, stinger, horn)

STEMIE
stemie.fpg.unc.edu

STEM Words & Ideas to Explore

• Living organisms (animals)
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STEMIE
INNOVATION FOR INCLUSION IN EARLY EDUCATION

The Grouchy Ladybug
Eric Carle
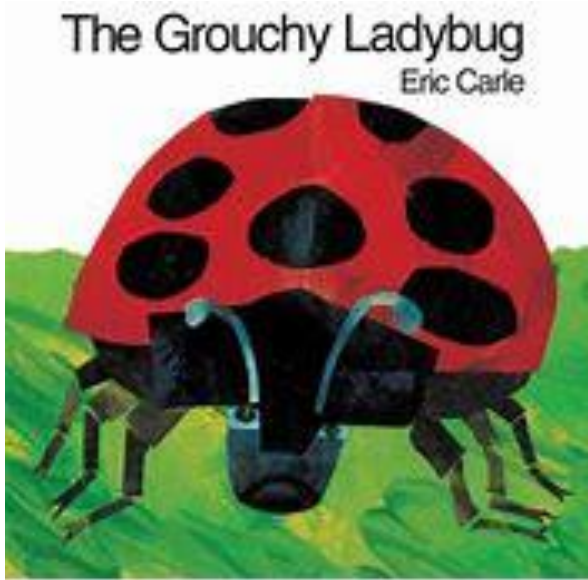
SUPPORT ALTERATIVE WAYS OF COMMUNICATION:

PICTURES, SYMBOLS, SIGNS, and/or ICONS

- Use corresponding picture cards of the characters or objects in book
- Add signs and icons to the story
- Use pictures along with a communication board to support STEM learning

Ladybug   Fly/Flew   Away

This adaptation can also...

- Increase children's attention and engagement
- Support children' learning
- Support children who are deaf/with hearing impairment

STEM²E
INNOVATION FOR INCLUSION IN EARLY EDUCATION

It's Trey again

Trey

Trey is 30 months old. He lives with his mother who has some intellectual challenges. She takes very good care of Trey, but she doesn't know much about how to support the development of a toddler. By report, Trey has never used crayons, held or read books, or spent time with other children. Trey's mom recently found a job, so Trey is now in a family childcare program each day.

Trey's teacher has shared things he really enjoys and things that seem hard for him. He loves to play with cars, trains, trucks – anything with wheels. He avoids doing fine motor activities. When he is asked to do fine motor activities like completing simple puzzles, he appears to get frustrated but doesn't seem to be able to explain how he feels or why he's unhappy.

Mary Hall - Learning is everywhere

LEARNING IS everywhere

We're Learning in the Neighborhood!

Babies

Encourage your baby to explore different textures by providing them with items to feel, like bare feet in the grass or hands touching trees. Talk about what they are feeling and use words to describe the item (soft, rough, hard, smooth, etc.) Tell what they are feeling as it relates to their neighborhood. "This trees is in our backyard and gives us shade from the sun." If you cannot take your baby outside, bring the outside in. Put grass in a plastic container. Allow them to play with their fingers or toes. Pick up a blade of grass and tickle hands, arms, legs, feet, or face. Smell the grass and talk about the color. **Read more!**

Toddlers

Encourage your toddler to still (just for a second or two!) and listen to the noises around them. What do they hear? Help identify the noises they are hearing. Listen for birds singing, dogs barking or church bells ringing. Try a verbal and/or visual cue to stop and listen. You may need to guide the listening, "What is that? I hear a bird. Do you hear it? Where is it?" When you are out in the community, listen for those sounds you may not hear at home. (Traffic, church bells, horns, etc.) **Read more!**

Preschoolers

Compare large and small as your preschooler moves throughout their neighborhood. Help them decided if items are larger than they are (like a tree) or smaller (like a dandelion) by having them stand next to the item. Now it's your turn. Have them help you decide if items are larger or smaller than you. **Read more!**

Learning is Everywhere assignments

Garden Math Edition

NUMBER SENSE
Title: Counting Butterflies
Materials: Butterflies
Directions: Allow the child to collect the pretend butterflies and count them out loud together.

MEASUREMENT
Title: Flower Power
Merterials: Different sized flowers
Directions: Find different sizes of flowers in the garden and see how some flowers are long and some are shorter.

ALGEBRA AND FUNCTION
Title: Sorting Seeds
Materials: Different sized seeds & bowls
Directions: Fill one bowl with different sized seeds and work togehter to sort into bowls and talk about differences and why they go in a specific bowl.

GEOMETRY
Titile: Building Shapes
Materials: Different kind of leafs
Directions: Gather different leafs that you can find around the garden, Create different shapes using the leafs. Discuss the differences and the names of each shape.

MATHEMATICAL REASONING
Title: What if....?
Materials: Use different things found in the garden. (flowers, rochs, seeds, leafs, ect..)
Directions: Allow your child to problem solve with using different objects in the garden. For example, If I had 8 flowers and I gave 1 flower to 4 of my friends each, How many would i have left?

Adobe Express

MATH IS FUN AND YUMMY
like a chocolate chip banana bread!

INGREDIENTS
1/2 cup unsalted butter, (8TBsp), softened
2/3 cup gradulate sugar
2 large eggs, room temperature
3 bananas. (very ripe)
1/2 tsp vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
1 cup semisweet chocolate chips

1. NUMBER SENSE
Title: Counting bananas & eggs
Materials: Bananas & Eggs
Direction "How many banana (egg) do we need for this recipe?"
: Let your child count how many bananas and eggs we need to make the bread!

2. GEOMETRY
Title: Guessing the shapes
Materials
: differnt shapes of the cake pans
"what shape is this pan?"
Direction
: Let your child name the shape of the cake pans and what the child wants to use!

3. MEASUREMENT
Title: Measuring the ingreients
Materials "How do we measure the half of cup?"
: measuring cups and tea spoon, and ingredients for the recipe
Direction "How many cups do we need for the flour?"
: Let your child use the measuring cups and teaspoon to prepare the right amount of ingredients

4. ALGEBRA AND FUNTIONS
Title: Ripe or unripe?
Materials : unripe and very ripe banana
Direction
: Let your child sort ripe and unripe bananas. Ask your child which one is 'very ripe' and why the child thinks so!
"which one is very ripe? How did you know?"

5. MATHMETICAL REASONING
Title: Double happiness
Materials : Recipe and more ingredients
Direction
: Let your child problem solve with double the recipe for more people!
"How many bananas do we need to double the recipe?"

you can bake the bread with your kids while they're learning math at home!

Instructions
1. Preheat Oven to 350°F. Butter and flour a bread loaf pan (9.25"L x 5.25"W x 2.75"D)
2. In a mixing bowl using paddle attachment, cream together 1/2 cup softened butter and 2/3 cup sugar. Add 2 lightly beaten eggs.
3. Mash bananas with a fork until consistency of chunky applesauce and add them to the mixing bowl along with 1/2 tsp vanilla extract. Mix until blended.
4. In a separate bowl, whisk together dry ingredients: 1 1/2 cups flour, 1 tsp baking soda and 1/2 tsp salt. Add to mixing bowl and mix until incorporated.
5. Fold in 3/4 cup chocolate chips then transfer to prepared bread pan. Sprinkle remaining 1/4 cup chocolate over the top and bake at 350°F for 55-65 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let banana bread rest 10 min before transferring to a wire rack to cool.

This recipe is derived from Natasha's kitchen: https://natashaskitchen.com/chocolate-chip-banana-bread/

NUMBERS ARE EVERYWHERE TRADER JOE'S EDITION

Number Sense
Title: Counting Apples
Materials: Apples
Directions: Allow your child to collect apples that they prefer and count them out loud together.

Measurement
Title: Carrot Sizing
Materials: Various sized carrots
Directions: Find carrots at the store and see how some carrots are longer and some are shorter than others.

Algebra and Functions
Title: Bell Pepper Sorting
Materials: Different colored bell peppers, plastic bags
Directions: Work with your child to sort out the different colored bell peppers (yellow, orange, green, red) to discuss the differences and why different colored peppers go into different bags.

Geometry
Title: Package Comparing
Materials: PB & J Bar, Chocolate Chip Granola Bites
Directions: Find a PB & J box and a Granola Bites box. Discuss how the PB & J box is rectangular shaped and compare it to the Granola bites box that is square shaped.

Mathematical Reasoning
Title: What Happens if...
Materials: Different types of berries (i.e. raspberries, strawberries, blueberries)
Directions: Encourage your child to problem solve using the variety of berries.
For example, if I had 3 raspberries and Mommy gave me 1 strawberry, how many red berries would there be all together?

Learning is All Around Us!
grocery store edition for 2-3 year-olds

Social-Emotional
Title: Fruit name game
Materials: Different fruit
Directions: Ask your child to grab the fruit that you name by his/herself (i.e. apple, orange) and together say what that fruit is.
Foundation: Recognition of Ability- At around 36 months of age, children show an understanding of their own abilities and may refer to those abilities when describing themselves.

Motor Development
Title: Balancing Act
Materials: none, balancing arms
Directions: Attempt to walk along the lines down the aisle of the grocery store.
Foundation: Gross Motor- At around 36 months of age, children move with ease, coordinating movements and performing a variety of movements.

Cognitive
Title: Color Collection
Materials: Different colored fruits
Directions: Walk around and grab items that are red and some that are green. Talk about what they have in common and have them put fruit into groups by color.
Foundation: Classification- At around 36 months of age, children group objects into multiple piles based on one attribute at a time, put things that are similar but not identical into one group, and may label each grouping, even though sometimes these labels are overgeneralized.

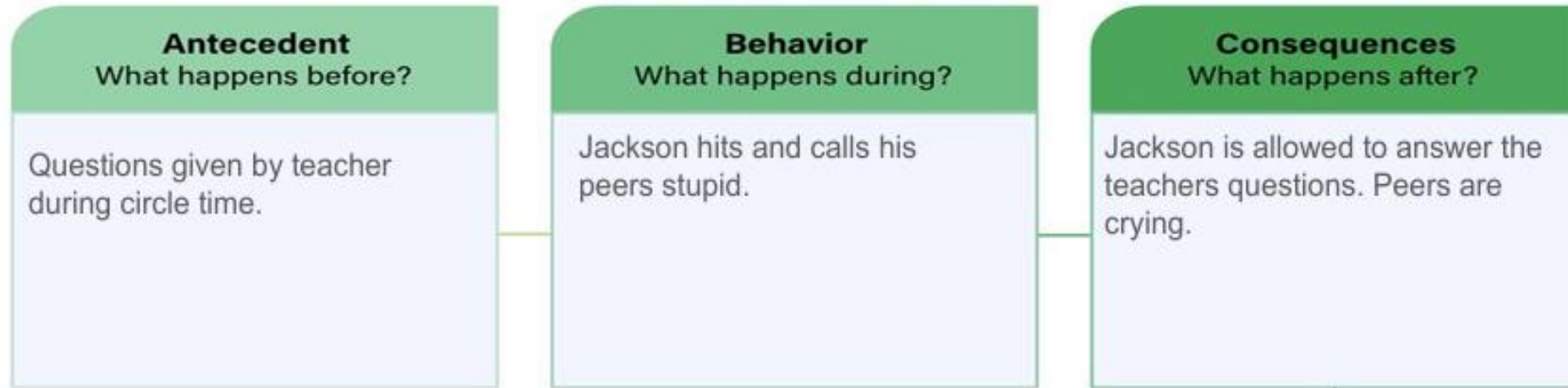How might you use a persona like Jackson in a Child Guidance course?

Jackson

Jackson's teacher says she never knows what to expect when he bounces through the door each day. He may have a million questions about animals or want to know more about the metric system, depending on what he saw on television the night before.

Jackson is a first child for his parents, each of whom is a high school graduate. His mother works at the local grocery story and his father is a delivery man. Jackson's pediatrician has done some preliminary testing and feels this 3-1/2 year old is significantly above average. His parents have expressed concern about how unprepared they feel to support such a gifted child.

In his preschool classroom, Jackson is usually the first to finish when the children have an art activity. In small group work he is the first to raise his hand, wanting to share the answer. When the teacher calls on someone else, he is crestfallen, and then if another child gives an answer that is not correct, he says "wrong!" His teacher has expressed concerns about how to individualize the curriculum to support Jackson's talents.

Student work from a real assignment

Behavior Support Plan

Antecedent
What happens before?

Questions given by teacher during circle time.

Behavior
What happens during?

Jackson hits and calls his peers stupid.

Consequences
What happens after?

Jackson is allowed to answer the teachers questions. Peers are crying.

Function

The function of jackson's behavior is, he wants to obtain validation of his answers from peers.

Prevent

-Jackson will be able to give a discussion in the beginning and or at the end of circle time.
-when jackson has something to share he sits on chair by teacher waiting his turn.
-visuals on wall

Teach New Skills

-Jackson will learn to take turns when sharing in class.
-He will sit on a close chair next to teacher quietly to let teacher know he has an answer.
-Teacher will also have visuals on wall to remind jackson to take deep breath when angry.

Respond

To challenging behavior:
I know it's hard not being first to answer the questions. Would you like to answer a question now or at the end of circle time.
To new skill:
I like the way you took turns with your peers. You also used the chair to wait your turn!

Guidance Strategy: Autonomy Supportive Measures

Self Efficacy - Jackson will perform a given task prioritize child-led activities over teacher-led. (Opening circle time for jackson in the morning and giving him more jobs to do within classroom)
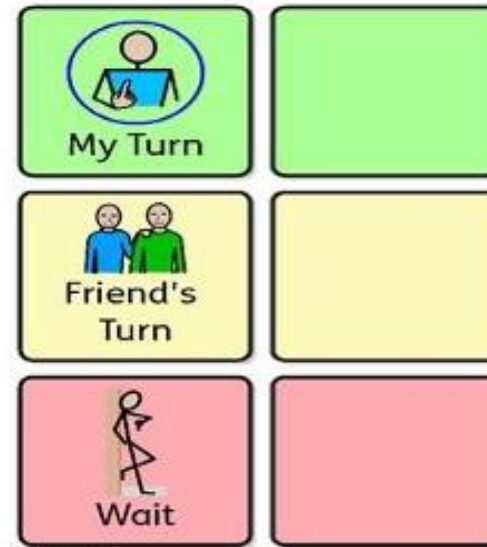
Self Regulation- Improve his awareness of self emotional state. Jackson will use the information to exercise choice about emotions are expressed.

How:

- Provide choice
- Provide child centered learning opportunities
- Listen to children
- Offer choices
- Prompt self-efficacy

Classroom Influences

- **Pass it on! Activity**-Pass an object around the circle. Each child has to make a comment about it, taking care not to copy what others have said (this also supports good listening!)
- **Routine-** Jackson will take on jobs in the classroom. His first job will be line leader and show his classroom how to get to point A to point B
- **Materials** - will use visuals, stories during circle time and Calming corner for all children to use.

Evidence

References

https://childspeechbedfordshire.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Activities-for-developing-Turn-Taking-skills.pdf

https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/browse?search=wait%20my%20turn%20visuals

https://biteable.com/templates/great-job-employee/

https://managementweekly.org/is-social-support-more-important-than-you-think/

https://www.martinpublicseating.com/blog/the-importance-of-a-school-library-for-students

https://www.centralpark.com/things-to-do/attractions/american-museum-of-natural-history/

In class Week 4, 5 slides

Textbook Chapters:

Chapter 2, Principles of behavior guidance by louise porter

Chapter 13, Supporting children self regulation

Chapter 12, Everyday guidance practices

Chapter 9 meeting children's needs for autonomy voice and choice

In a Curriculum Course, ask students to develop centers and lesson plans that support each and every learner

Use a current assignment, e.g., design a math or science learning center for a preschool classroom

BUT let your students know that Ramon, Jake, and Lainie are three of the children in that class. Their assignment will then be to design a learning center that will engage and support each child, including these three. You can also ask students to identify the evidence sources they drew their ideas from.

What do you think?

Evidence for the Use of Personas

Evidence for the use of personas

- From the chair of an ECE program: "*Personas give the students a story and they put more effort into assignments because they are not so abstract.*"

- From a field experience supervisor: "*The photo and details make the personas real to the students to they really want to figure out how to support the child and family.*"

- From an early childhood student: "*I really enjoyed the personas. I found them to be more realistic and current with the children and families we have within our state.*"

Student feedback

- "I felt that these were very helpful as someone who is not doing in person classes currently, does not work in an ECE setting, and has not have a field placement yet due to the pandemic. This helped bring a sense of "bringing our learning to life."

- "I think that using Michigan Personas is a very helpful and practical way for teachers to prepare for working with students from a wide range of backgrounds. They prompt conversation that encourages critical thinking about how to best meet the [children] that may be unlike the students that we have worked with in the past."

- "I think they were helpful for real life scenarios since this wasn't a lab class to be able to have real observations."

- "I really enjoyed the Personas. I found them to be more realistic and current with the children and families we have within our state."

Reflections (NC)

- I found using a persona very helpful in understanding how to create appropriate environments for children with exceptionalities. Working with Stella's parents helped understand fully what we had to do for Stella's education needs, as well as her personally to understand her personality. I will love to continue to work with "Stella" and my "own child persona".
  --Jozelyn

- I feel like being able to use Stella's persona as an example throughout these last few weeks has made it a lot easier to understand the material. We are not teachers ourselves so we don't have any experience working with actual children, so being able to use Stella as an example and putting a name to the person really helped make it feel more real. The same goes for using Stella's family as an example. There are many real life children who are like Stella and her family so it's awesome that we've been able to use these examples in order to help us out in real life situations in the future!   --Delaney

New evidence (CA)

Which assignment did you like most?

The assignment I liked the most was the Persona Project. I liked that I had a child in mind who needed my support. It felt like I was actually advocating for him, and I feel more confident in my abilities to advocate for future students. -A.H.

Resources that may support your work

BabyTalk listserv

Natural Resources listserv

Faculty Finds listserv

Hearts and minds are changed through stories.

Joanna Ho