



Preschool Pyramid Model Practices Session 1

Foundational Principles and Nurturing Responsive Relationships

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Acknowledgments

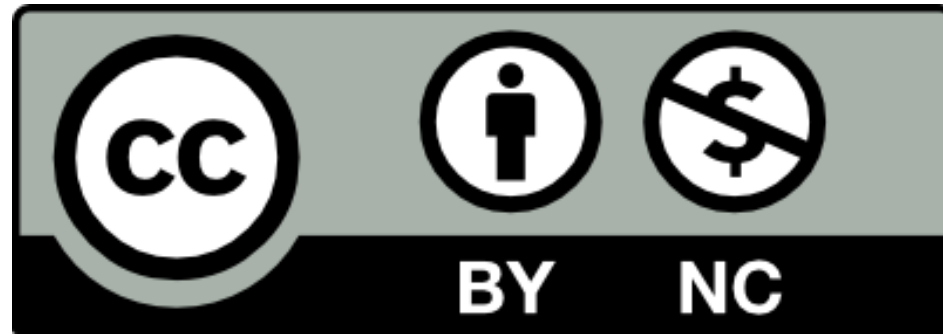
The content for this training day was adapted with permission from the preschool Pyramid Model practices training modules developed by the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)

Additional acknowledgments:

- Unpacking the Pyramid Model book
- Instructionally Enhanced Pyramid Model Classroom Implementation Guide

Thank you to all our Michigan preschools who contributed examples to the content!

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Group Agreements

We are Responsible

- Return on time from breaks
- Take care of our needs

We are Engaged

- Share “air time”
- Plan to participate in multiple ways
 - Chat, breakout rooms, polls, reactions, unmute
 - Ask questions

Training Effectiveness

- At the end of the session, you will be asked to provide feedback on today's training
- Results will be used to make improvements to professional learning and for reporting to TA Center stakeholders
- One of the feedback questions you will see is related to promoting and positively portraying diversity among educators and learners (e.g., focus on asset-based language, positive representation of multiple identities)

Purpose of the Series

The Pyramid Practices sessions are designed to equip teaching staff with the information they need to implement the Pyramid Practices with fidelity, leading to improved social and emotional outcomes for children.

Intended Outcomes for Today

- Explore the foundational principles of Early Childhood PBIS and the Pyramid Model
- Understand the role of the Classroom Coach in the implementation of Pyramid Practices
- Identify ways to establish responsive relationships with children, families, and coworkers

Agenda

- 1.0 Introduction to Early Childhood PBIS
- 2.0 Applying the Pyramid Model Philosophy
- 3.0 Nurturing and Responsive Relationships
- 4.0 Wrap Up and Next Steps

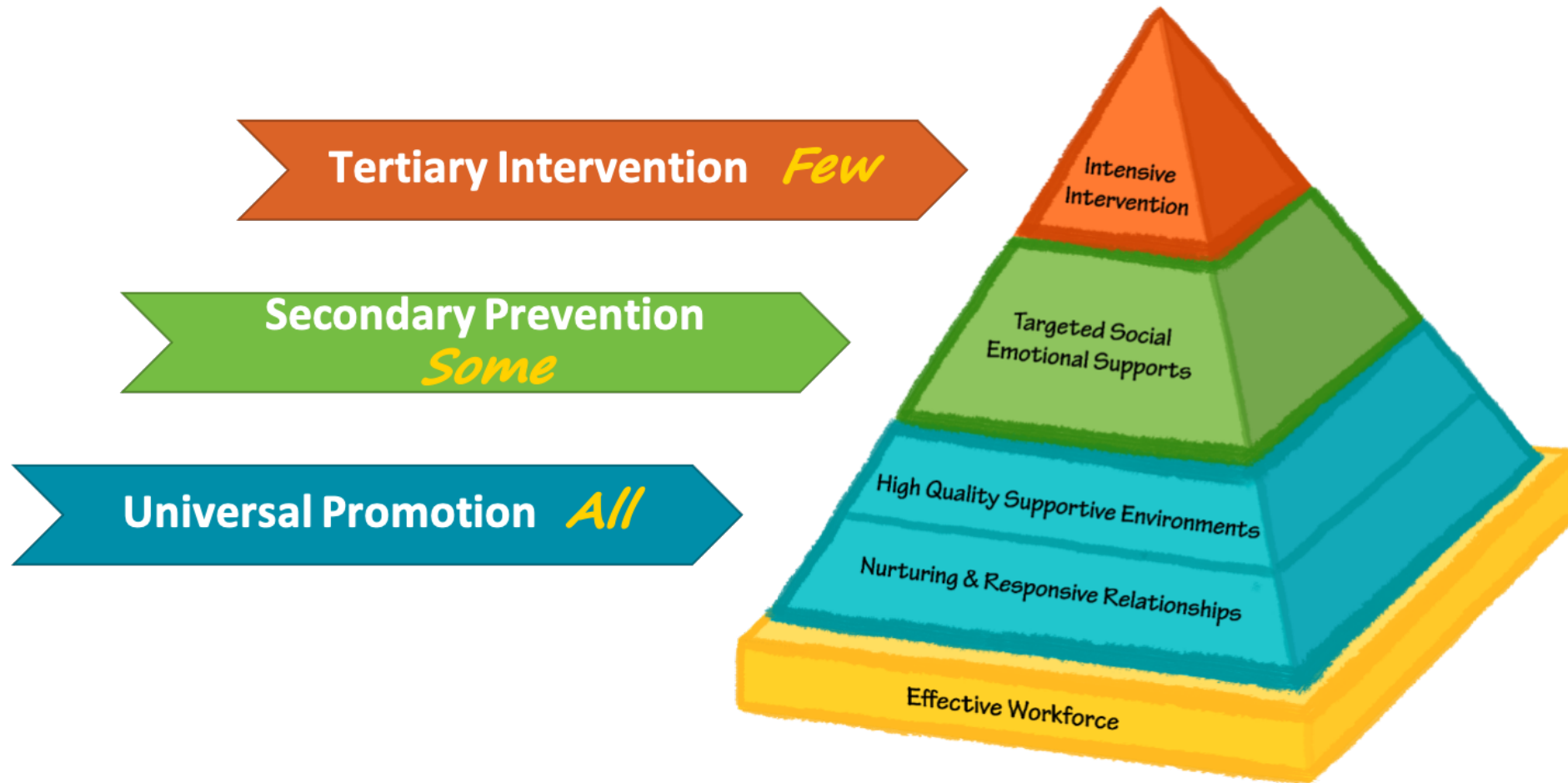
1.0 Introduction to Early Childhood PBIS

Early Childhood Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (EC PBIS)

- Bringing Pyramid Practices into your classroom is just one part of Early Childhood PBIS!
- EC PBIS is the implementation of the Pyramid program-wide
 - Guided by a Leadership Team who focuses on many critical features
 - Includes the infrastructure to support staff and the use of data for decision making



The What: Pyramid Model for Promoting Social and Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children



Goal of the Pyramid Model

Ensure each and every child has the support, experiences, relationships, opportunities, guidance, and instruction to thrive in their social-emotional development and learning



What We Know About Young Children

- Development is a highly interactive process, and life outcomes are not determined solely by genes
- Between 49% and 75% of children will experience a potentially traumatic event between birth and age 5
- Young children are being suspended and expelled from preschool at alarming rates, especially children with disabilities and Black preschoolers



More About What We Know

- Children who are dual language learners make up 33% of all children under age 9, and are disproportionately likely to face multiple risk factors
- Children with disabilities in inclusive settings demonstrate stronger social-emotional skills than children in separate classrooms



We Can Make a Difference

“...there is increasing evidence that strong social-emotional supports, such as high family resilience and connection and the provision of positive childhood relational experiences, are associated with children who are resilient and flourish despite their level of adversity”

American Academy of Pediatrics, 2021





Activity 1.1

- Take 30 seconds to think about why you are here today:
 - What student needs could be better supported in your program?
 - What enhancements are you hoping to see?
 - What is your “why?”
- Be ready to share

So, How Do We Support ALL Children?

- **Prevention Focused**

- Being ready to meet every child where they are and planning to support each child, family, and staff

- **A Caring Community**

- Building meaningful relationships; honoring, valuing, and embracing the cultural ways of being

- **Commitment to Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging**

- Adopting a program-wide philosophy that all children belong here and can be successful
- Developing policies that prevent the use of exclusionary discipline practices

More About How We Support All Children

- **Trauma-Informed**

- Staff understand how trauma might affect children and families and focus on resilience in interactions with children and families

- **Anti-Biased Practice**

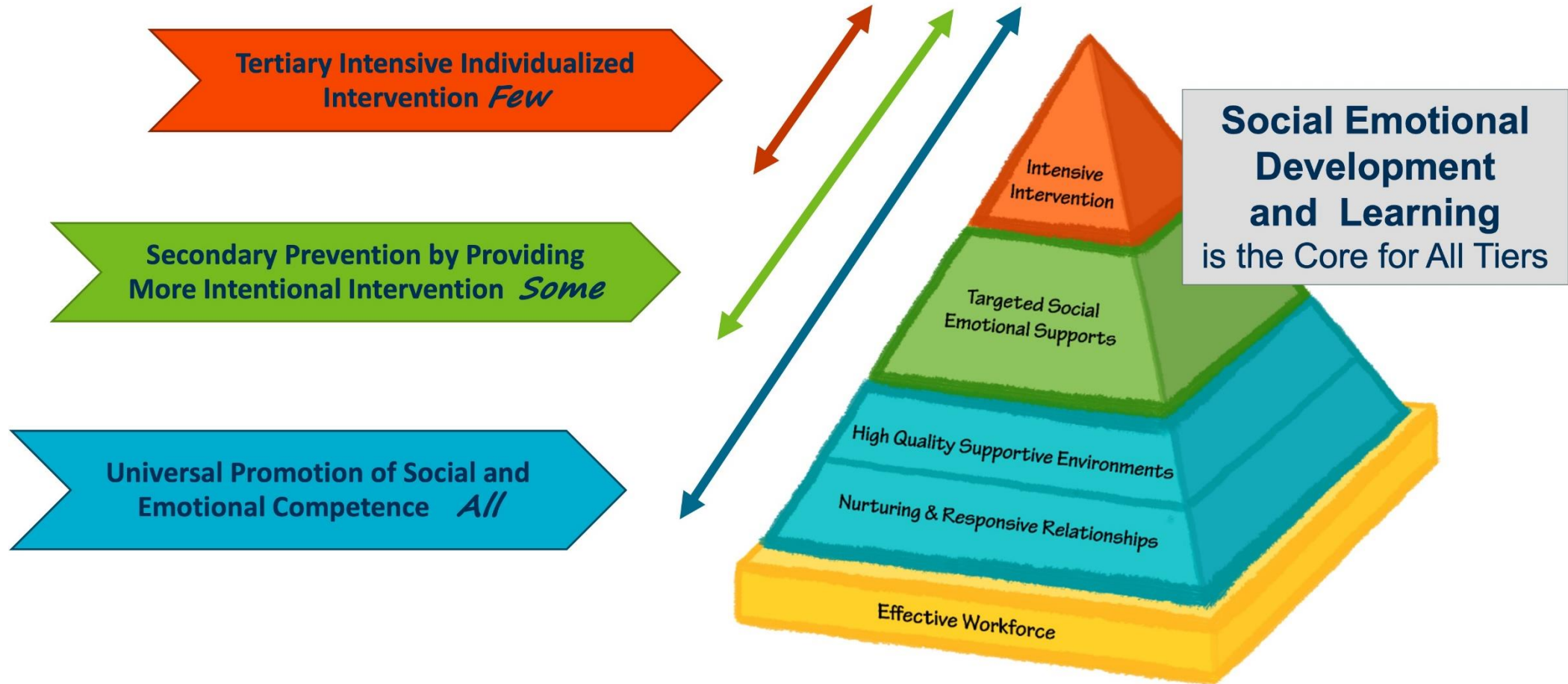
- Committing to advancing equity, ending all forms of bias and discrimination, and working with children and families to design our program

- **Data-Informed**

- Use data to make decisions about professional development, intervention planning, and monitoring equity in both implementation and outcomes

- **Ready for Every Child!**

Pyramid Model Practices



Behavior is Communication

- I am scared
- I need help
- I don't want to play that game
- This activity is boring
- I don't understand what you want me to do
- I don't know how to play with those children
- I am frustrated

When children feel those things, they might engage in behaviors that adults find challenging

Some Basic Assumptions

- Challenging behavior usually has a message
- Children often use challenging behavior when they don't have the social or communication skills they need
- Behavior that persists over time is usually working for the child

MANTRA:

Behavior continues because the behavior works!

Behavior Doesn't Tell Us What to Do, Understanding the Meaning (Function) Does

I want or need something

- Toy, material, activity
- An adult to help me
- A friend to play with
- A hug
- To keep doing what I'm doing

I want to avoid something

- Playing with a group of children
- Going to an activity I don't know how to do or isn't interesting to me
- Stopping what I am doing
- Loud noises





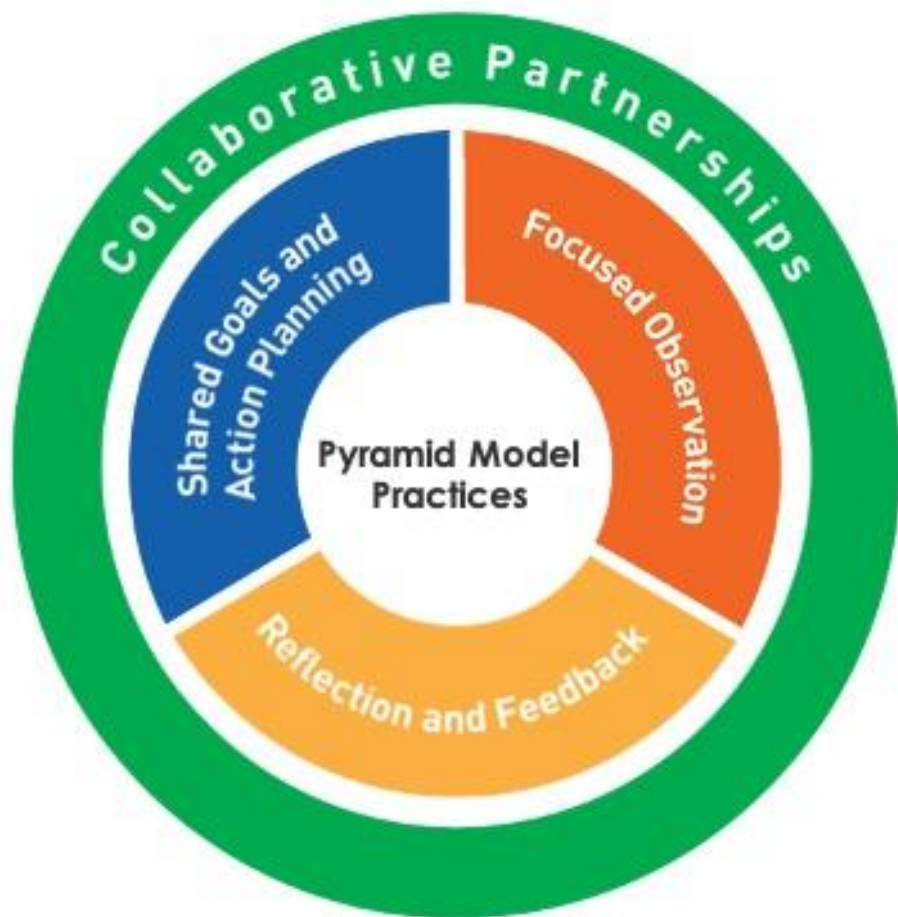
Activity 1.2

- Independently, read through one or two of the following scenarios, and for each one, think about:
 - Why might this be happening?
 - What could I do to prevent it?
- 1. Several children are rolling on the floor and talking to each other during morning meeting
- 2. Two children are not following the daily schedule
- 3. On an almost daily basis, one child sits and watches other children play and then does something to destroy it (e.g., blocks, art)



Remember, it all rests
on an effective
workforce!

Practice-Based Coaching Framework



- Set short-term implementation goals together
- Develop an action plan
- Focused observation (15-minutes) completed by the Classroom Coach
- Reflection and debrief session
- Goal is continued or new goal is created based on debrief

Coaching

Coaching Is:

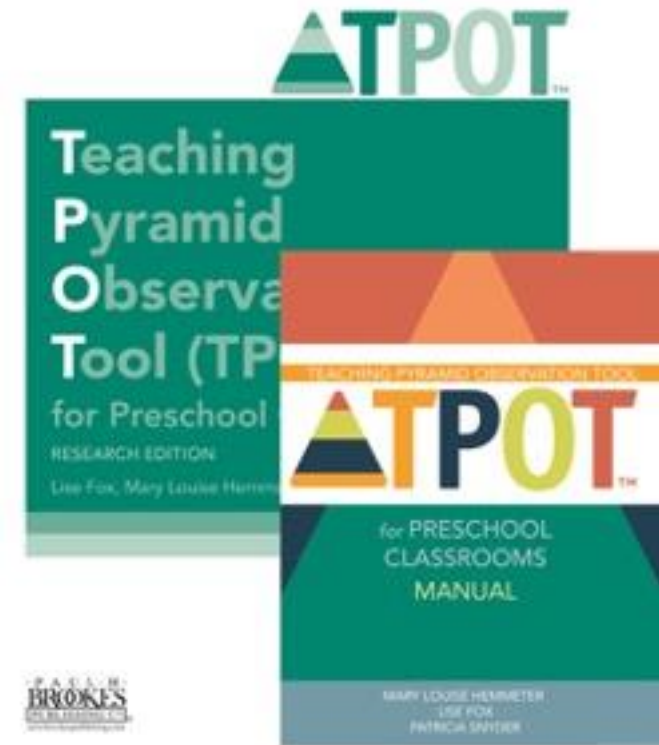
- Collaborative
- Interactive
- Focused on skill-building
- Reliant on observation and feedback
- Goal-directed
- Outcomes-driven

Coaching Is Not

- Just providing advice and tips
- Supervision
- Only modeling
- Training with classroom observation
- Consultation

Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT)

- Assessment used to measure Pyramid Practices in the classroom and identify areas of strength and areas for need for action plan goals
 - Two-hour observation
 - 20-minute interview
- Used annually to monitor progress on implementation of Pyramid Practices
- Administered by a trained Classroom Coach





Activity 1.3

- Take a moment to reflect on the structure of support that will be provided for implementation of the Pyramid Practices
 - How is this similar or different than the coaching that you have experienced in the past?
 - What questions do you have?
- Put your responses in the chat

2.0 Applying the Pyramid Model Philosophy



Activity 2.1

Based on what you know about the Pyramid Model so far, do these examples align with the Pyramid Model or not?

- Read each scenario and determine whether it aligns with the Pyramid Model
- If it does not, think about how you might reframe the item to be more consistent with the Pyramid Model

Pyramid Model or Not?

- They know what to do; they just won't do it.
- They've had a hard time this week and seem to be getting upset so quickly. I am going to spend some 1:1 time with them and really connect.
- It won't work in our classroom. We've tried all those strategies.
- My kids are always telling on each other. I need to teach them other ways to solve problems.
- The parents never follow through with the suggestions we give them.
- She's hitting her friends when she wants to play with them. Maybe I should teach her how to get her friends' attention and offer play ideas.

Pyramid Model or Not? (Cont.)

- He's throwing himself on the floor every time we're about to do something different. I wonder if he's getting the transition cues he needs
- All my assistant ever does is clean up after children. He never just plays with the children, nor does he engage in other classroom activities. I don't think he likes being in my classroom
- We are teaching the children to use calm down strategies at school. Maybe we could collaborate with families to identify some calm down strategies that might work for their child at home.

What are some behaviors that push your buttons?



Activity 2.2

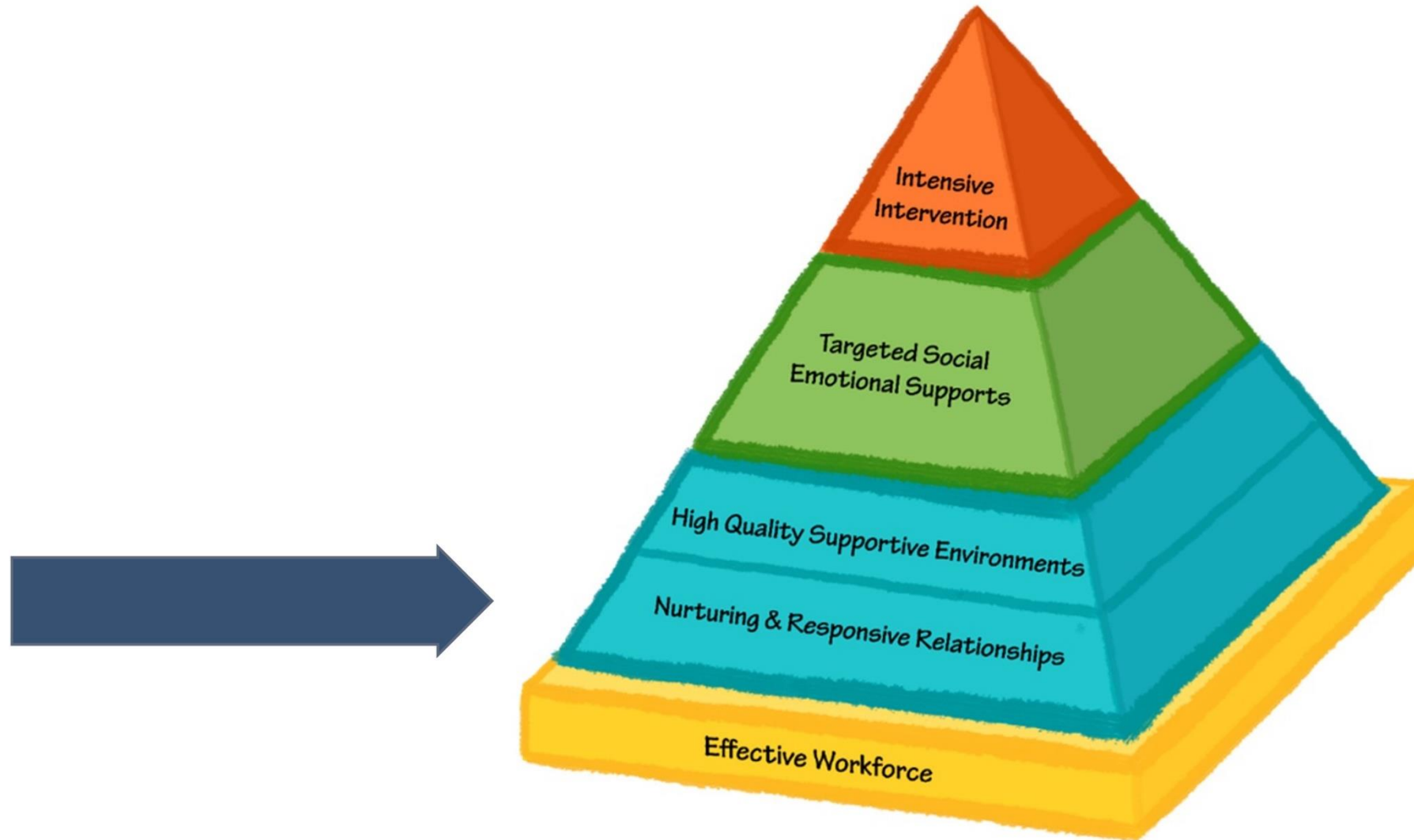
- Locate the **Hot Buttons** handout that is provided in your materials
- Record three child behaviors that tend to “push your buttons”
- Follow the instructions on the handout to record:
 - How the behaviors make you feel
 - The impact of these feelings and your response to behavior
 - The impact of the child’s behavior and your response on the relationship you have with the child
 - The impact of the child’s behavior and your response on the relationship you have with the family

Reflecting on Behaviors That Challenge Us

- The impact of both the behavior and adult's response plays a role in the relationships of teachers, children, families, and peers
- Our own life experiences, temperament, personality, and culture all play into our response to behavior that pushes our buttons
- It can be difficult to see beyond the challenging behavior to be present and supportive of ALL children in order to develop and maintain relationships
- Relationships are critically important, especially when we consider:
 - Children who have been impacted by trauma
 - Children who have identity markers that are different than the teaching staff

3.0 Nurturing and Responsive Relationships

The Foundation: Nurturing and Responsive Relationships

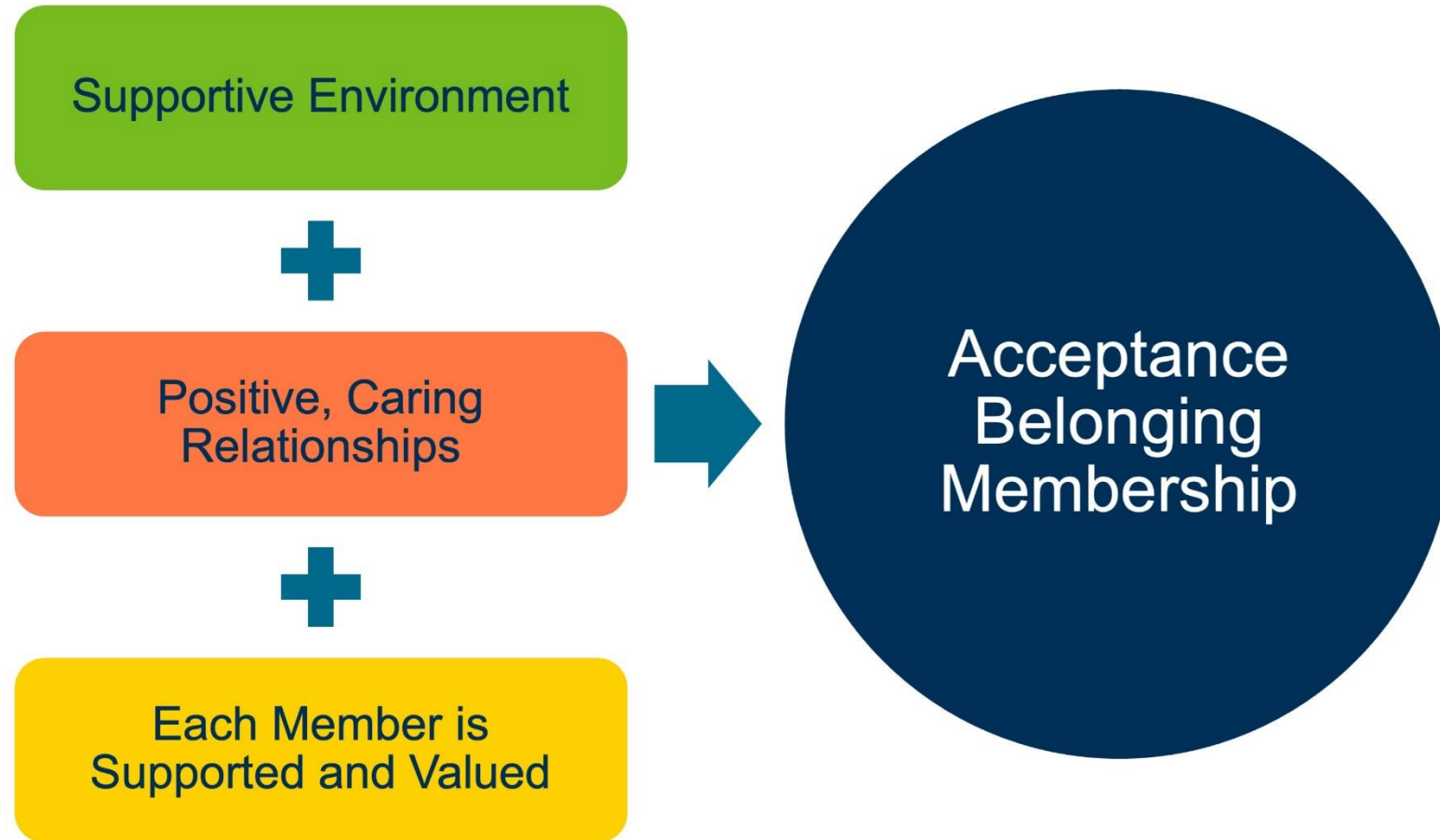




Activity 3.1

- Review the **Nurturing and Responsive Relationships** section of the Pyramid Model Practices Implementation Checklist:
 - Caring Classroom Community, Relationship with Children, and Positive Attention (pg. 1-2)
 - Supportive Conversations and Relationships Among Children (pg. 3)
 - Relationships with Families and Colleagues (pg. 4-5)
 - Place checkmarks next to the items that you do consistently well
 - Star the items you want to learn more about or possibly get support from your Classroom Coach
 - You'll be using this checklist during your coaching sessions!
-

What is a Caring Community?



NAEYC. (2020). *Developmentally appropriate practice* [Position statement].

Elements of a Caring Classroom Community



1. Group identity and shared ownership
2. Group members see themselves in the environment
3. Reflects a culture of kindness



1. Group Identity and Shared Ownership

- Develop a group identity to build a sense of community
- Involve children in decision-making and caring for the classroom
- Everyone helps to make the classroom a positive, helpful, place



Classroom Helpers

- The goal of classroom helpers is for children to feel valued as helpers in the classroom community
- Classroom helper tasks should be meaningful to the classroom rather than arbitrary tasks
 - Classroom Greeter
 - Solution Helper
 - New Friend Helper
 - Circle or Small Group Helper
 - Snack or Meal Helper





Activity 3.2

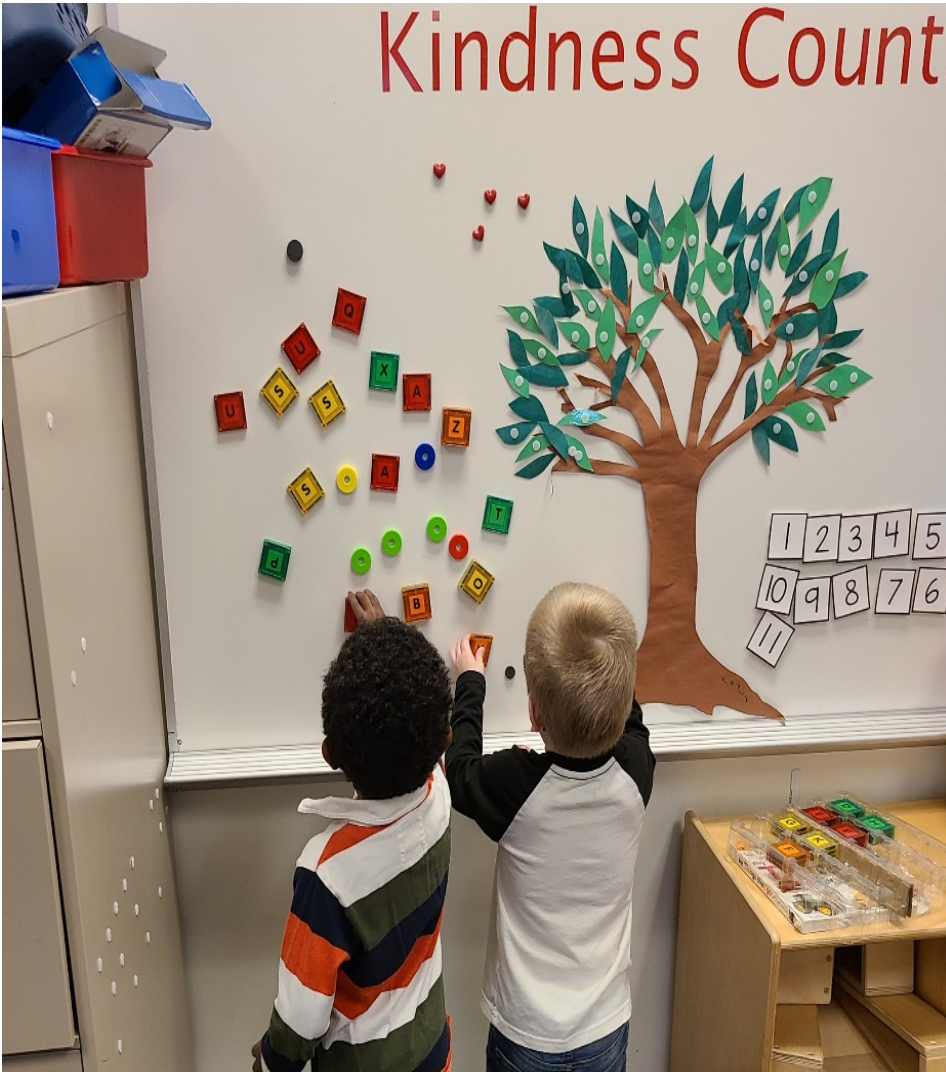
- Consider what traditional jobs you have used in your classroom
- Let's brainstorm ways to reframe those classroom jobs into classroom helpers!
- Follow the link in the chat or the QR code to provide your ideas for Classroom Helpers

2. Group Members See Themselves in the Environment

- Design the classroom to include representation of children, families, and community
- Ensure all children have work displayed in the classroom
- Include all families in the classroom
- Promote positive identities by including materials where children can see themselves



3. Creating a Culture of Kindness



- Structure the environment to support being helpful and kind
- Teach the language of kindness & recognize acts of kindness for every child
- Involve families and other adults
- Display kindness in the classroom



Activity 3.3

- Locate the handout **Caring Community Planning Sheet** in your materials; take some time to reflect on the information we have covered:
 1. Group Identity and Shared Ownership
 2. Group Members See Themselves in the Environment
 3. Creating a Culture of Kindness
- Independently write ideas that resonate with you, and that you would like to try in your classroom
- Be ready to share these ideas with your small group

Relationships Matter!

“The importance of a child’s close relationship with a caregiver cannot be overestimated. Through relationships with important attachment figures, children learn to trust others, regulate their emotions, and interact with the world; they develop a sense of the world as safe or unsafe, and come to understand their own value as individuals.”



The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

Relationships with Children

- Support social-emotional competence, trust and safety, an openness to learning new things, and building resilience
- Need to be built with **every** child in the classroom, even when it is difficult to make that connection
- Sometimes, challenging behaviors can make it difficult to develop relationships with children
- Intentional, planful interactions help to build connections with children

Responsive Relationship Practices

1. Turn toward children's bids for connection
2. Follow the child's lead
3. Have supportive conversations
4. Provide positive attention and descriptive feedback



1. Turn Toward Children's Bids for Connection

- Bids are attempts to reach out for connections
- Turn toward the bid
- Be responsive to the diverse ways that children make bids
- Be intentional and mindful in responding to children's bids to support connections and relationship growth



Factors That Could Impact Children's Bids for Connection

- The child may not be able to verbally communicate
- Cultural expectations or norms
- Children who are dual language learners may not know the English words to use
- The adult may be busy and doesn't notice the bid
- Bids may occur at a time when the teacher cannot respond
- The adult may perceive the child's bid for connection as challenging behavior

2. Follow the Child's Lead

- Be flexible and allow children to have a voice in the classroom
- Build on children's interests and incorporate their ideas into activities
- Encourage children to express their ideas
- Provide children with choices, including culturally relevant materials and activities



3. Have Supportive Conversations

- Occur with all children throughout the day in the context of play and other activities
- Are extended with multiple exchanges
- Include topics that interest the child
- Support children's conversations with other children



4. Provide Positive Attention and Descriptive Feedback

Principles of positive descriptive feedback:

- Focus on positive/appropriate behavior
- Acknowledge effort
- Descriptive: Say what you see
- Convey with enthusiasm
- Resource: [Recommendations and Considerations for Positive Descriptive Feedback](#)

“Layla, you put the toys in the bin!
You are being such a helper!”

“Wow! Diego shared his cars with Logan! He is being a kind friend!”

Relationships with Children Whose Behavior is Challenging

- Spending positive time with children has been shown to prevent and reduce challenging behavior
- Banking Time
 - Focuses on building teacher-child relationships through intentional supportive interactions
 - Set aside time for a one-on-one interaction with the child 2-3 times per week for 10-15 minutes
 - Intentionally plan banking time strategies for individual children, and monitor results

Resources for implementing Banking Time: <https://eceresourcehub.org/ece-resource-hub/strategy-library/banking-time/>



Activity 3.4

- Locate the handout **Responsive Relationship Strategies Handout** in your materials and review the strategies provided so far:
 1. Turn toward children's bids for connection
 2. Follow the child's lead
 3. Have supportive conversations
 4. Provide positive attention and descriptive feedback
 - Reflect on whether these strategies are used with ALL children in your classroom
 - Independently, record some next steps to strengthen your use of responsive relationship strategies
-

Relationships Among Children

Children reported to have better social skills such as sharing, cooperating, and helping other children in Kindergarten are:

- More likely to graduate from high school on time
- More likely to get a college degree and have a full-time job
- Less likely to be arrested, engage in substance abuse, or be on a waiting list for public housing



Planning to Promote Peer Relationships

- Set up materials that encourage children to take turns, work together, or interact with each other
- Build daily routines where children can have opportunities to practice positive interactions with each other
- Plan activities and materials designed for peer play to encourage children to play together
- Encourage children to have conversations with one another at different times of the day
- Scaffold peer interactions for children who need additional help

Benefits of Relationships with Families

When there is a focus on **safety, caring, respect, encouragement, and trust**, we...

- Focus on the family's capacity to support their children
- Support children's social-emotional growth and development
- Create a partnership that provides a context for addressing challenges that might arise
- Build a foundation for families to have positive experiences with school



National Center on Parent, Family, and Communication Engagement

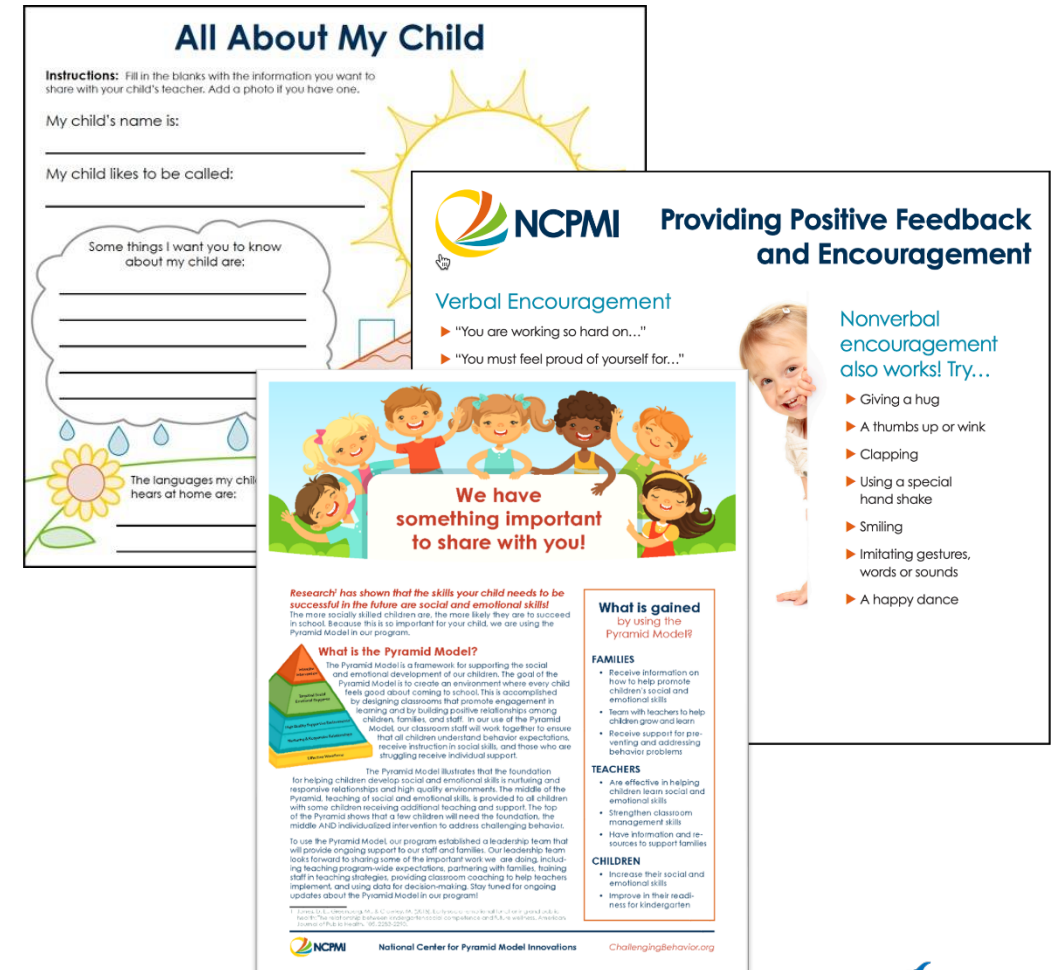
Making Connections with All Families

- Acknowledge the strengths of families and approach them as equal, reciprocal partners
- Create a welcoming and supportive environment where all families are represented in the classroom
- Offer informal and formal opportunities to participate in the classroom
- Establish and maintain frequent, **two-way communication** with families, using their preferred mode of contact
- Provide opportunities for families to share short and long-term goals for their child

Connecting Pyramid Model Practices at School and Home

NCPMI provides several resources to guide families in the use of similar practices on the [Family Engagement page](#) of their website

- [Family Introduction to the Pyramid Model](#)
- [Providing Positive Feedback and Encouragement](#)
- [All About My Child](#)





Activity 3.5

- Locate the document **Communicating with Families: Helpful Suggestions** and review the examples for ideas to connect with families
- Think of two new ways to make connections with families
- Make sure one idea involves bidirectional communication
- When prompted, share ideas in chat

Relationships with Colleagues

- Shared purpose
- Personal responsibility
- Intentional relationship building
- Effective, respectful communication
- Trust is earned and becomes a foundation for how the team operates




Develop Meaningful, Collaborative Relationships

- Create a caring community
- Clearly define roles, responsibilities, expectations, and procedures
- Develop child guidance for preventing and responding to challenging behavior
- Understand how each person works collaboratively
- Resources:

- [Getting to Know You](#)

- [Classroom Collaborative Workstyle Guide](#)




The purpose of this tool is for practitioners working in a classroom to be able to work as a collaborative team. Honesty in the responses provide an opportunity to communicate and identify the best classroom practices are implemented effectively and reliably (If identify other areas in which practitioners might have different).


Directions: The statements should be reviewed and discussed separately or together and may or may not include the classroom statements, indicates whether they Agree or Disagree with each and differences in the way they like to work.

Item	Content
1.	I like to get things done early before children arrive.
2.	I like to get things done after children leave.
3.	I am okay with "winging it" if there are no plans in place.
4.	I like to discuss problems openly.
5.	I like having a written plan to follow each day.
6.	I like to review and discuss activities that were successful.
7.	I give frequent positive feedback to adults working in the classroom.
8.	I appreciate frequent positive feedback from adults.
9.	I think planning and teaching should be detailed.
10.	I believe following the written plan exactly is important.
11.	I work best when directions for the way tasks are completed are given.
12.	I think it is important for classroom staff to think about the next task.
13.	I am comfortable receiving feedback about my work.
14.	I believe that all adults working in the classroom should be given feedback.
15.	I like working with someone willing to take on new challenges.
16.	I like staff in the classroom to work independently.
17.	I keep my voice slow and soft because it influences the classroom.
18.	I get a little loud when I get excited.
19.	I like to review and discuss activities that did not go as planned.
20.	I think it is the teacher's responsibility to include all children in the daily plan.
21.	I think all classroom staff should be part of the planning process.
22.	I think close supervision of classroom staff is the best way to ensure effective implementation.

French, N.K. (2002). Managing paraeducators in your school: How to do it. Corwin Press.



**Classroom Collaboration
Workstyle Discussion Guide**



Getting to Know You



Help your colleagues learn a bit about your likes and dislikes by completing this questionnaire. Collect and keep team forms in a shared place (e.g., binder, pictures on group text).

- What are your favorite snack foods?
- What is your favorite color?
- What is your favorite hot beverage?
- What is your favorite cold beverage?
- What is your favorite scent?
- What is your favorite flower?
- What is your favorite thing to do in your free time?
- What can you never have too much of?
- What is something people think you like . . . but you don't?
- Where do you like to go out to eat?
- What do you collect?
- What is your favorite television show (or type of television show)?
- What is your favorite kind of music?
- How do you relax?
- What is your favorite dessert?
- What are your hobbies?

Lightning round! Would you rather have . . .
(neither or both is also an option)

• Hot dogs or tacos?	• Dine in or delivery?
• Chinese food or Mexican food?	• Motorcycle or bicycle?
• Cake or pie?	• Book or e-reader?
• Train or plane?	• Antique or brand new?
• Soup or sandwich?	• TV or movies?
• Beer or wine?	• Forest or beach?
• Card game or board game?	• City or county?

Unpacking the Pyramid Model: A Practical Guide for Preschool Teachers edited by Mary Louise Hemmeter, Ph.D., Michaelene M. Ostrosky, Ph.D., and Lisa Fox, Ph.D. with invited contributors. Copyright © 2021 by Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., Inc. All rights reserved.





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4.0 Wrap Up and Next Steps



Activity 4.1

Let's Review!

- Look one more time at the **Nurturing and Responsive Relationships** section of the Pyramid Model Practices Implementation Checklist:
 - Caring Classroom Community, Relationship with Children, and Positive Attention (pg. 1-2)
 - Supportive Conversations and Relationships Among Children (pg. 3)
 - Relationships with Families and Colleagues (pg. 4-5)
- Make any notes based on what we talked about today; what practices might you want to learn more about and strengthen?

What's Next?

- **Session 2:** High Quality Supportive Environments
- Please bring all of your materials from today's session

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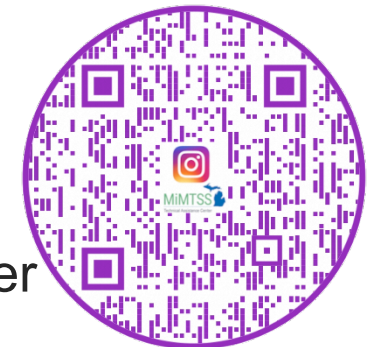
Videos & Playlists



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- National Center on Parent, family, and community engagement (NCPFCE). ECLKC. (2022, June 8). <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/about-us/article/national-center-parent-family-community-engagement-ncpfce>

URLs Used in Today's Session

[Pyramid Model Practices Implementation Checklist](https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Pyramid-Practices-Checklist.pdf) (https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Pyramid-Practices-Checklist.pdf)

[Recommendations and Considerations for Positive Descriptive Feedback](https://challengingbehavior.org/document/recommendations-and-considerations-for-positive-descriptive-feedback/)
(https://challengingbehavior.org/document/recommendations-and-considerations-for-positive-descriptive-feedback/)

[Family Engagement page](https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Implementation/family.html) (https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Implementation/family.html)

[Family Introduction to the Pyramid Model](https://challengingbehavior.org/document/information-sheet-for-families-announcing-pyramid-model/) (https://challengingbehavior.org/document/information-sheet-for-families-announcing-pyramid-model/)

[Positive Feedback and Encouragement poster](https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/ToolsBuildingRelationships_starters-for-giving-positive-feedback_Home.pdf)
(https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/ToolsBuildingRelationships_starters-for-giving-positive-feedback_Home.pdf)

[All About My Child](https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/All-About-my-Child.pdf) (https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/All-About-my-Child.pdf)

URLs Used in Today's Session, Cont.

[Getting to Know You](https://challengingbehavior.org/document/getting-to-know-you/) (<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/getting-to-know-you/>)

[Classroom Collaborative Workstyle Guide](https://challengingbehavior.org/document/classroom-collaboration-workstyle-discussion-guide/) (<https://challengingbehavior.org/document/classroom-collaboration-workstyle-discussion-guide/>)