Preschool Pyramid Model Practices Session 2

High-Quality, Supportive Environments

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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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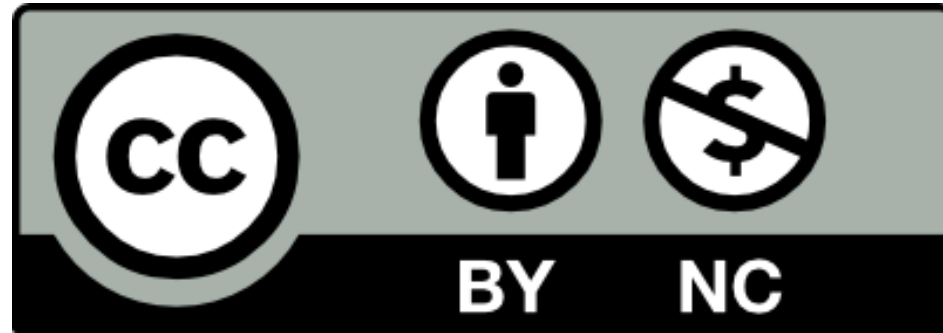
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Group Agreements

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

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Purpose of the Series

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

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Intended Outcomes

- Describe the critical features of a classroom schedule

- Practice building routines for activities in your classroom

- Describe ways to engage children throughout the day (e.g., transitions, large group, small group)

- Identify ways to develop, teach, promote, and acknowledge expectations and rules

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Agenda

1.0 Schedules and Routines

2.0 Transitions and Engagement

3.0 Rules and Expectations

4.0 Wrap Up and Next Steps

Activity 1

Let's Review!

- Take a moment to think about what was covered in the previous session related to Nurturing and Responsive Relationships

- In the next two minutes, write as much information as you can remember related to relationships with children, families, and staff; try to write continuously for the whole time

- When prompted, record some of the key words or phrases that you wrote into the chat

High Quality Supportive Environments

- Designed to meet the needs of each and every child

- Facilitate the independence of each and every child

- Each and every child knows what to expect and is engaged

Classroom environments should provide clarity, consistency, and predictability

Pyramid (bottom to top): Effective Workforce; Nurturing & Responsive Relationships; High Quality Supportive Environments; Targeted Social Emotional Supports; Intensive Intervention

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Activity 2

- Review the **High-Quality, Supportive Environments** section of the Pyramid Model Practices Implementation Checklist:

  - Schedules and Routines (pg. 6)

  - Modifying Curriculum and Transitions (pg. 7)

  - Providing Directions and Expectations Across Routines (pg. 8)

- 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!

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1.0 Schedules and Routines

Why are Schedules Important?

- Provide predictable structure to the day

- Teach children what is expected of them and what expect during the day

- Remind children what they should be doing

- Let children know what is coming next

- Increases engagement

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Developing Your Schedule

1. Minimize transitions

2. Balance teacher-directed and child-directed activities

3. Provide ample time for child-directed play

4. Balance large and small group instruction

5. Balance active and passive activities

The **Balancing the Daily Schedule** handout in your materials provides an example and a template to build your own

Effective Visual Schedules

- Include all major activities of the day

- Include visuals for each activity

- Are displayed at eye level that allows each child to manipulate the schedule

- Include visuals that can be used for noting changes to the schedule

- Include home languages

- Include pictures of children or activities that reflect each child's culture

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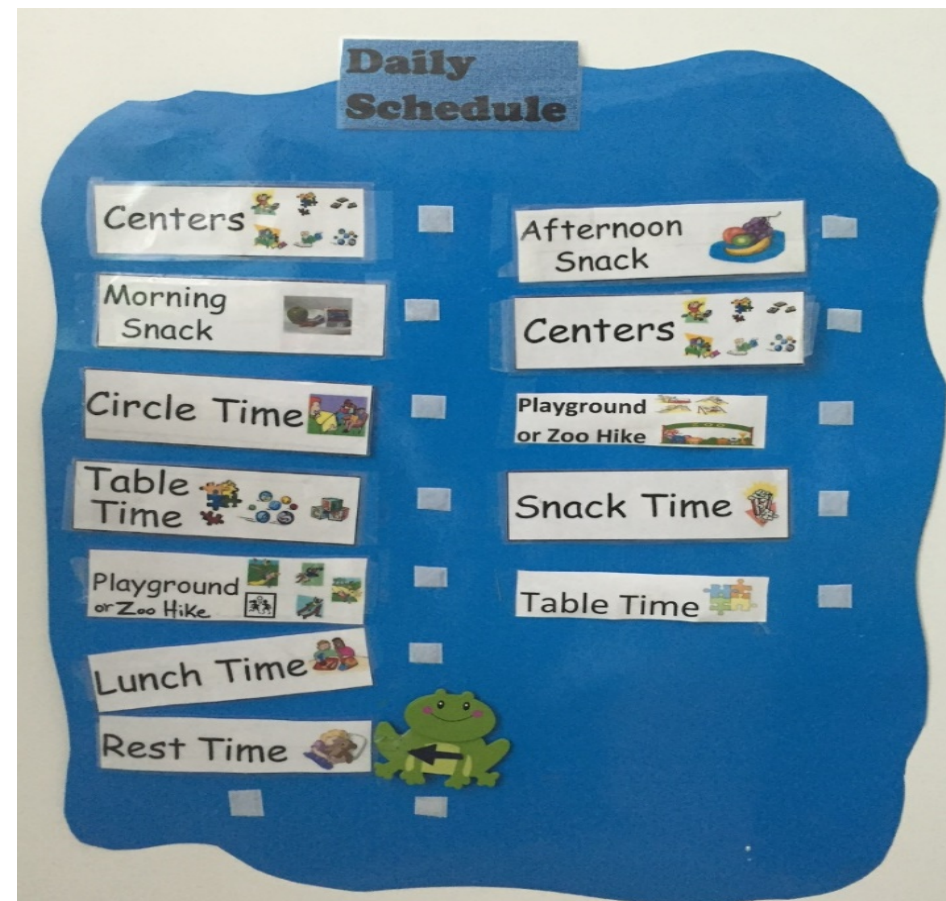
Teaching the Schedule

- Review **daily** with the whole class

- Show the visuals and label the activity

- Show the passage of time

- Introduce "first, next, then" language

  - "First, we'll have snack and then centers."

  - "First, we have morning meeting. Next we eat snack, and then have centers."

- Ask children questions about the schedule

  - "What are we doing now? What did we just do? What will we do next?"

  - "Do we go outside before or after lunch?"

Refer to the Schedule Throughout the Day

- Every time the whole class is together

- If the schedule is changing

- If children are unsure about what to do
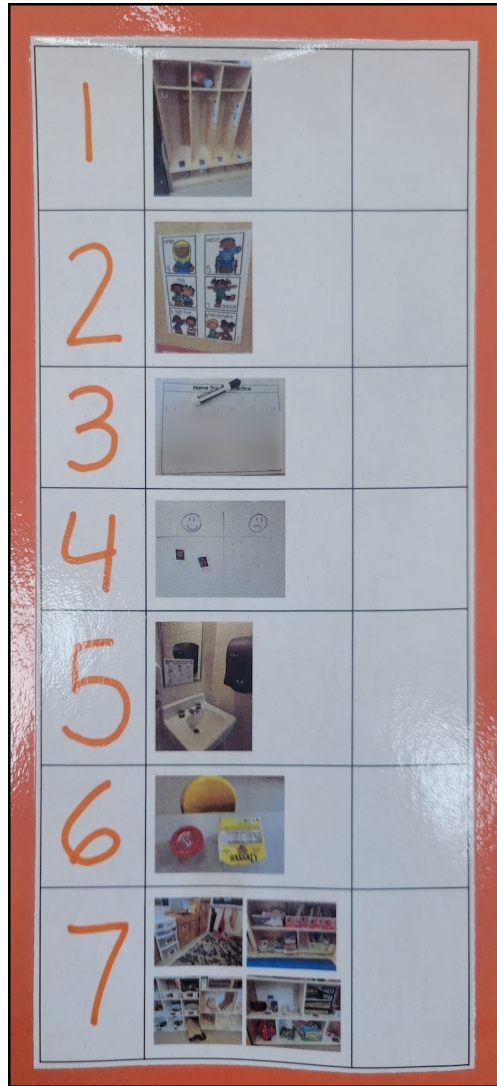
Mini Schedules and Individual Schedules
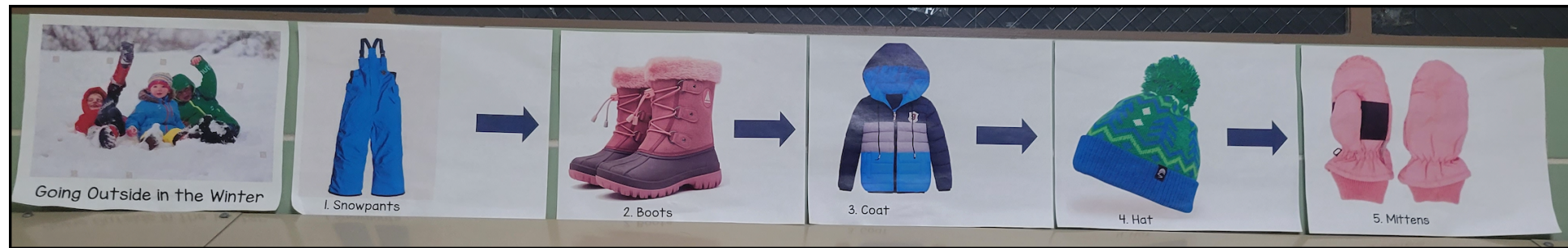
Resource: First-Then Boards

Visual Supports

- Daily schedule cards for families; can be adapted for classrooms

- First/Then boards

First	Then

Clean Up

Outdoor Play

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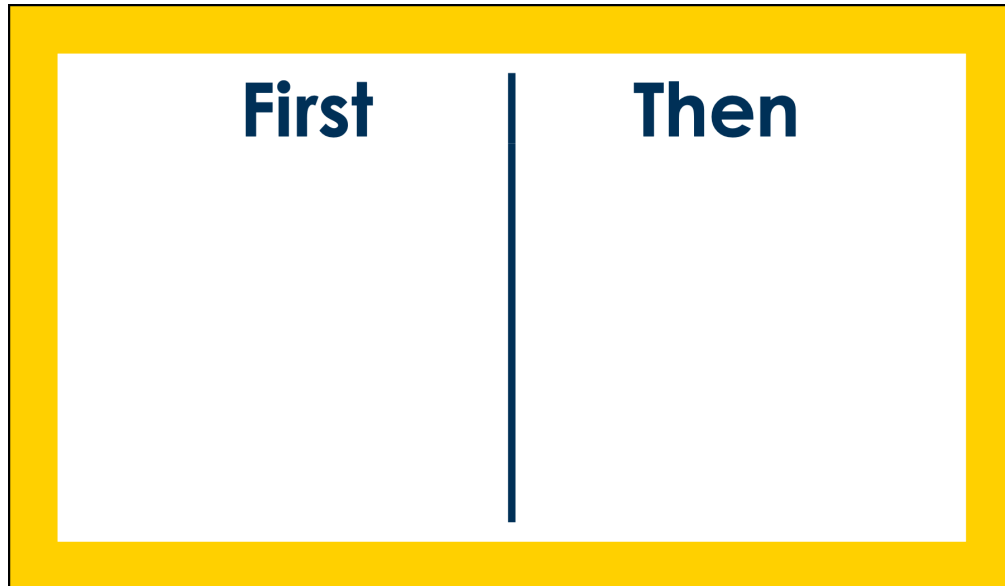
Activity 1.1

- Think about your current schedule in your own classroom

- With your small group, answer the following questions:

  - How are you already using visual schedules in your classrooms?

  - How often is it talked about during the day?

  - How are children involved?

  - How have you individualized the use of a schedule for specific children?

- Identify a reporter who will share one key idea when we come back together as a whole group

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Importance of Routines

- Establishing and maintaining consistent routines within the classroom is essential to the successful functioning of a classroom environment

- Consistent routines support children's:
  - Independence (because they know what's expected)
  - Participation and engagement (because they know what to do)
  - Learning (we can embed goals and promote learning at the next level)

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Building Routines

- Activity: Core things you do in the classroom daily

  - Components on the Daily Schedule (e.g., Arrival, Snack, Circle Time, Centers)

- Routines: Main things that happen during an activity

- Steps of Routine: Things that happen during the routine

Activity → Routines → Steps of Routine
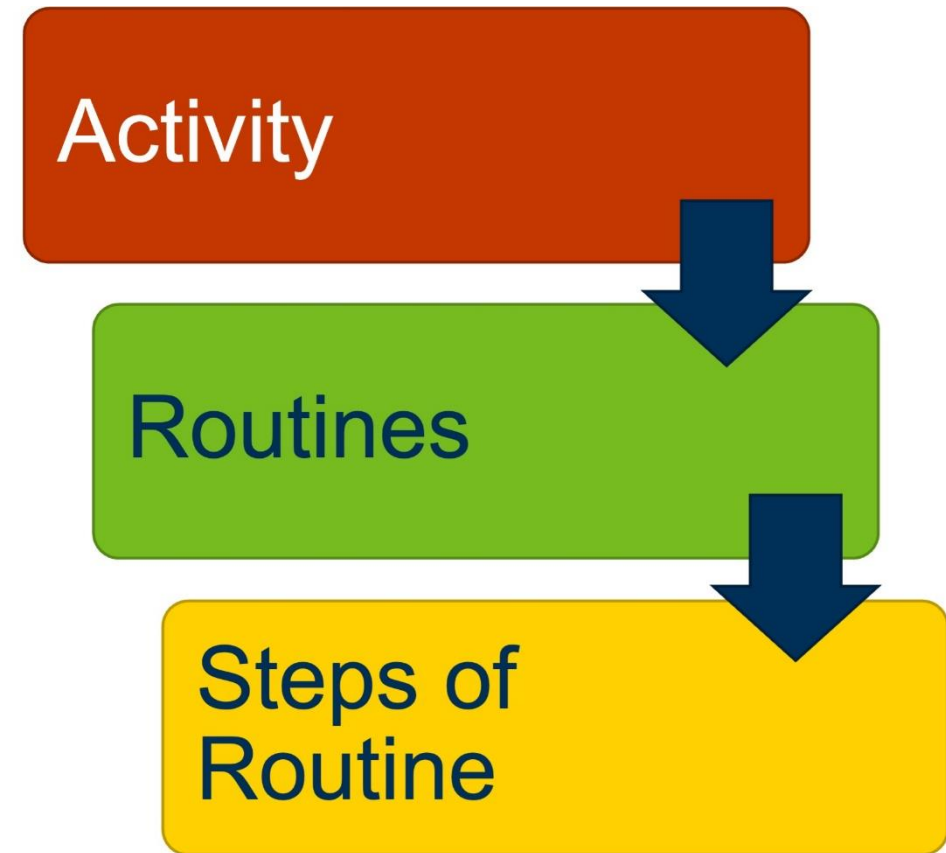
Identify Routines and the Steps of Each Routine

Activity: Arrival

Routines During Arrival:

- Unpack
- Wash hands
- **Sign in**
- Eat breakfast
- Table time activities

Steps of Sign-In Routine:

- Read question of the day
- Find picture
- Move picture to yes or no to answer the question of the day
- Get marker
- Find name on sign-in sheet
- Write/trace name
- Put marker away

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Activity 1.2

Let's Practice!

- Locate the **Building Routines** handout in your materials

- Think about the activities in your own classroom, and choose either Arrival or Circle Time as your Activity

- Write out all the Routines for that Activity; put each Routine in its own row

- Begin recording the Steps of the Routine for at least one or two Routines

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Routines: Teaching and Reinforcing

- **Teach** within the context of the routine
    - Tell children the steps of the routine and show them how to complete them
    - Role play by having children take turns acting out steps of the routine
- Incorporate **visual** supports
    - Create a visual for each step of the routine, and pair with verbal directions
    - Display the visuals where children can reference them during the routine
- Provide positive descriptive **feedback**
    - Notice and comment descriptively when children are following the steps of the routine
    - Connect feedback to rule/expectations when possible

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Promote Active Participation

- Choices within routines:
  - Activities
  - Order in which to complete activities
- Supporting routines with visuals

Structuring Routines

- Create clear steps so children know:
  - What they are doing
  - How they're making progress
  - When they're finished
  - What comes next
- Provide visuals to support all children to follow steps of the routine

Providing Feedback During Routines

Provide **positive, descriptive statements** about how children are appropriately engaging in routines or completing steps

"You did it all by yourself. When you finished snack, you threw away your trash and chose a book."

"Thank you for helping your friend get their coat and stand on a shape. That's being a team player."

"You signed in and came right over to wash your hands!"

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Activity 1.3

- Independently, write down brief answers to the following questions
  - Why are routines so important?

  - Why is it important to identify all the steps in classroom routines?

  - What is one thing you heard in this section that you will continue to do or do more of in the future?

- Be ready to share your responses

Supporting Families with Schedules and Routines

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

- [Help Us Have a Good Day!](#)

- [I Brush My Teeth Example](#)

- [Backpack Connections: How to Help Your Child Have a Successful Morning](#)

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2.0 Transitions and Engagement

What is a Transition?

- Movement from one location to another

- Changing from one routine to another

- Changing from interacting with one person to another

- Switching from one activity to another

Why might children have difficulty with transitions?

Effective Transitions

- Keep children engaged

- Decrease the likelihood of challenging behavior

- Have strategies for supporting the whole class and strategies for supporting individual children

Planning for Transitions

- Prepare children ahead of the transition (i.e., transition warning)

- Make transitions engaging

- Help children move smoothly to the next activity

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Expectations for Transitions

Clearly state the steps and expectations of each transition

- "Before we go outside, stop at your cubby and get your coat and gloves."

- "We are going to centers. When I call your name, put your mat away, get your picture, and choose a center."

FIRST
Lunch

1. Get lunch box   2. Sit to eat   3. Clean-up

THEN

bathroom

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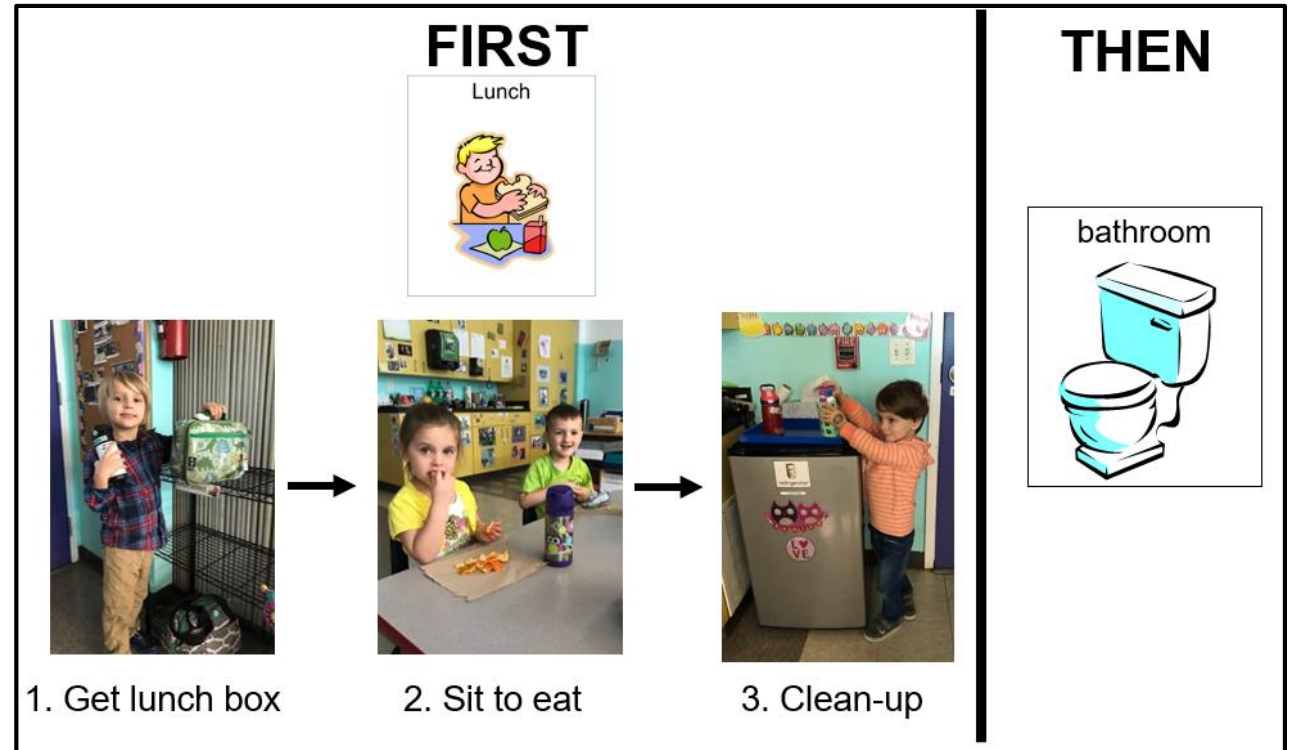
Structuring Transitions

- **Schedule**
  - Minimize the number of transitions across the day
  - Minimize the transitions that require all children to do the same thing at the same time
- **Adults**
  - Assign roles and responsibilities with the classroom team
  - Strategically place teachers during transitions
- **Children**
  - Think about which children might need additional support to transition successfully
  - Use visual cues or be ready to give additional prompts

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snack time

Clean-up helper

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Transition Choices

Train

Duck

Robot

Bee

Mouse

Butterfly

Airplane

Program-Wide
Positive Behavior Support

Transition Planning Matrix

Transition	Child Expectations	Lise	Louise
Centers to Morning Meeting	Clean up Help others near them Come to carpet	Give 5 min clean up warning Turn on clean up song On carpet starting Morning Meeting	Give 2 min clean up warning Assist children with clean up Sit with children during Morning Meeting

- There is a **Transition Planning Matrix template** provided in your materials
- How might this be helpful in your classroom?
- How might it help you think about individualizing?

Individualizing Support During Transitions

- Provide individual warning
- Give the child a transition job
- Allow child to transition first
- First-Then or other visual
- Provide transition item
- Embed preference
- Read a scripted story that includes the steps
- Use positive encouragement and feedback

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Supporting Families With Transitions

NCPMI provides a number of resources to guide families in the use of similar practices on the Family Engagement page of their website

- Helping Children Transition Between Activities

- Visual Supports for Routines, Schedules, and Transitions

- Backpack Connections: How to Give Clear Directions

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Promoting Child Engagement in the Classroom

- Engagement: When a child is actively attending to or participating in an activity

- Could include:
  - Following directions
  - Communicating to an adult or peer
  - Using materials
  - Playing with a peer
  - Listening to a story

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Promoting Engagement

- Active engagement leads to learning; the more engaged children are, the more likely they are to learn

- Engagement prevents challenging behavior

- We must implement effective practices to help each child interact and engage in the classroom and with their peers

Challenging Behavior
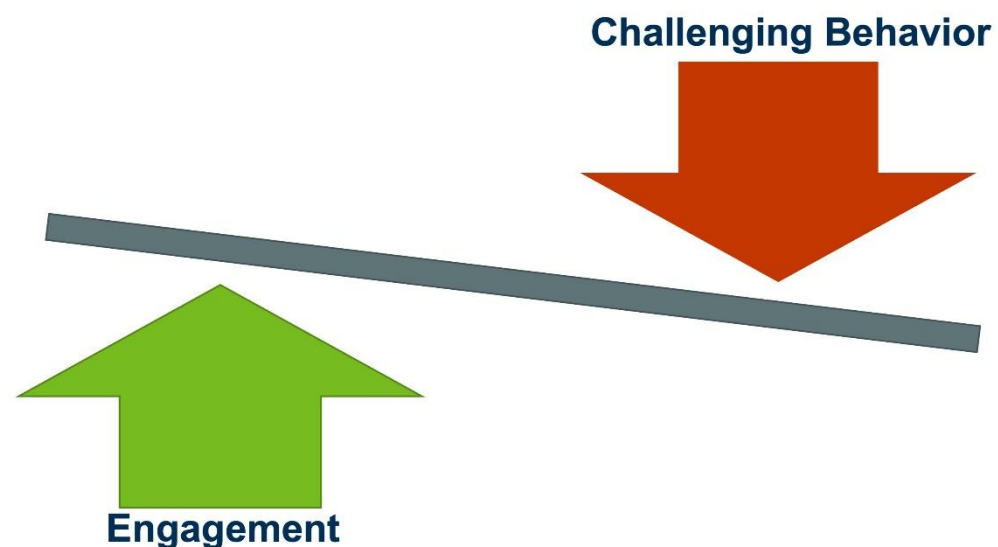
Engagement

Why might children not be engaged in an activity?

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Large Group Engagement Strategies

- Keep activities to 20 minutes or less

- Provide predictability

- Only continue with an activity if most children are engaged

- Offer choices

- Provide positive feedback

- Provide individual supports or modifications (e.g., visuals, modified expectations, fidgets)

Increasing Engagement: Choices

- Choice is a fundamental element of developmentally appropriate practice and is essential to maintaining engagement and supporting the active learning of young children

- Choice is a powerful prevention strategy that can result in decreases in challenging behavior
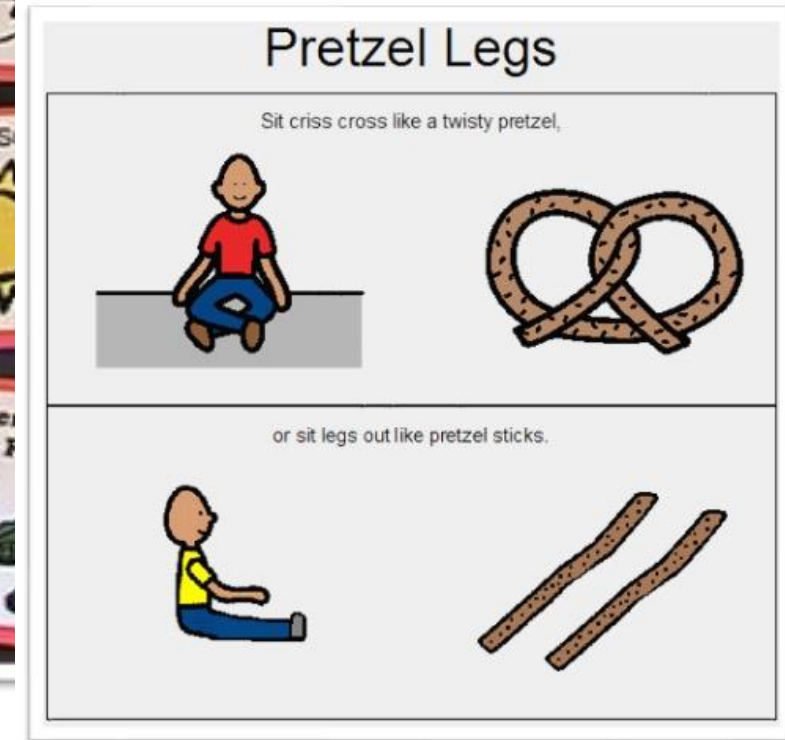
Activity 2.1

- Consider how you are already providing choices in your classroom

- Using the link provided, identify ways to provide choices during each of the following activities:

  - Large group

  - Small group

  - Centers

- Be sure to consider ways that you already provide choices and new ideas you'd like to incorporate into your classroom

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Increasing Engagement

Scaffolding

- Use visuals to help children understand the activity and sequence

- Change activity when children begin to lose interest

- Intersperse preference of the group or a child (e.g., favorite song, play interests) in an activity that is less familiar or more difficult

Feedback

- Throughout the day, focus on making positive comments about appropriate social behaviors, engaging in expectations, following rules, and participating in activities

- "John, it was fun to have you singing with us!"

- "Emelia, thank you for raising your hand quietly"

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Increasing Engagement: Modifications

- Environmental arrangement

- Materials modification

- Simplify the activity

- Special equipment

- Peer support

- Adult support

- Invisible support

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Activity 2.2

- Locate the **Promoting Engagement Activity** handout

- With your small group, choose either the large group, small group, or center scenario

- Read the scenario and determine how you would modify this activity to re-engage the child(ren)

- Use the **Curriculum Modification** handout as needed for ideas

- Designate one person in your group as the reporter; they will be sharing your group's response

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Positive Directions

- Keep directions simple, short, and specific

- Use a calm, neutral tone, and be near the child

- Tell the child what to do rather than what not to do

- Providing additional support to individual children as needed

- Acknowledge children when they follow directions

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Activity 2.3

- Read the following statements and decide how they can be changed in order to make them clearer and more efficient:

  - Can you please sit on the carpet right now?

  - Do not run in the hallway!

  - Will you please clean up all the blocks in the block area?

- Be ready to share your responses

3.0 Rules and Expectations

Video: Why Teach Expectations and Rules?
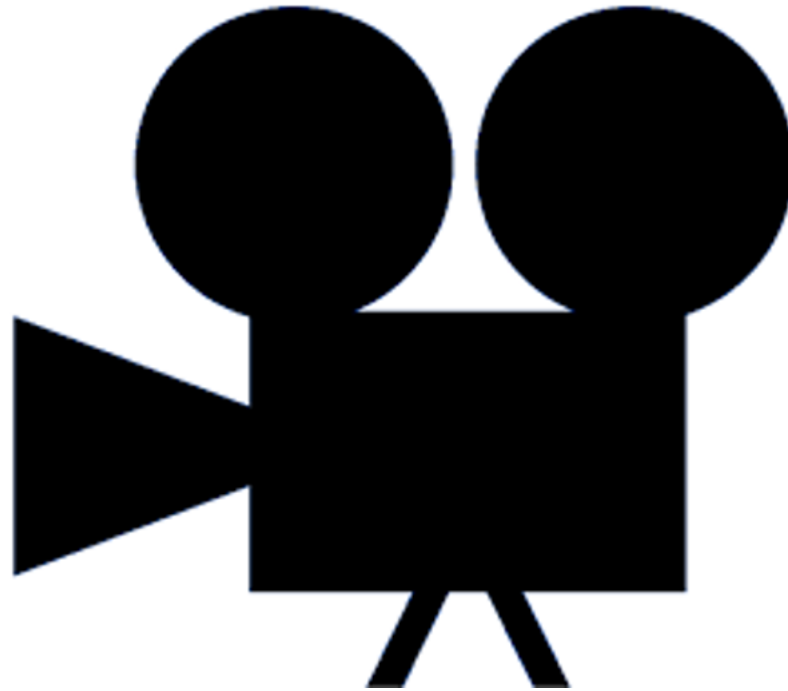
Expectations, Rules, and Challenging Behavior

Expectations help children learn how to interact with peers and the environment

Rules help children understand the **behaviors** that are expected in **different activities**

When expectations and rules are taught, children are more likely to develop social-emotional skills

Children are less likely to engage in challenging behavior

Expectations and Rules are Different

Expectations:

Give children the WHY

Rules:

Tell children WHAT to do

Defining Expectations

- Apply to staff and children
- Create a shared focus and continuity across the school or program
- Provide a consistent language for staff, children, and families
- Communicate positively what is desired for all staff and children and shows children how they can be successful
- Articulates the values and behavioral concepts important in a program and its community

Expectations Examples

Common Options:

- Respect Each Other

- Stay Safe

- We are Team Players

- We are Peaceful

- Show Kindness

- We are Responsible

- We are Honest

- We are Friendly
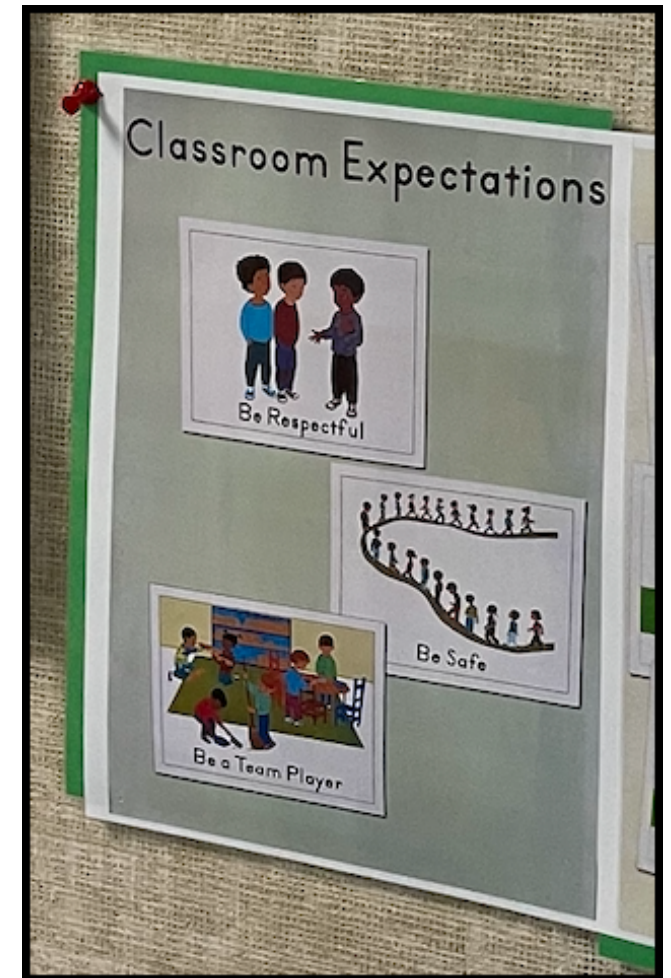
Activity 3.1

Time to Share!

- Consider if expectations might already exist for your program in some way:
  - In your curriculum?
  - In the elementary school in which your program is housed (e.g., if the elementary school is implementing school-wide PBIS)?
  - Being developed by a Leadership Team with staff and family input?
- If so, do the current expectations align with the context and developmental level of the children in your program?

Defining Rules

Rules help clarify expectations for specific settings; they may only apply in certain settings

Example: Circle Time Rules

- Be ready to listen

- Find a spot just for you

- Face toward the teacher

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Developing Expectations and Rules

- Positively stated

- Limited in number (5 or fewer)

- Include a visual representation

- Consider the skills that children need to be successful

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Considerations: Developing Expectations and Rules

- [Families: Let's Talk Expectations](#)

- Get families' input when developing expectations

  - Home visits and family nights

  - Surveys

- Involve children when developing rules

  - "What does it mean to be a good friend?"

- Review current behavior data

Expectation/Rules Matrix

Expectations	Classroom	Playground	Hallway
Show Respect	Soft touch	Take turns	Inside voice
Stay Safe	Walking feet	Sit on bikes, slide, and swings	Walking feet
We are Team Players	Help a friend	Help a friend	Stay together

Teaching Expectations and Rules

- **Teach and Re-Teach:** Use examples and non-examples; define keywords; check for understanding

- **Practice:** Provide opportunities to practice the rules

- **Review:** Refer to rules throughout the ay; redirect children to the expectations

- **Positive Feedback:** Give children positive feedback when they follow the rules and expectations

- **Discuss:** Talk about how the rules link to the expectations (e.g., "We are safe when we move slowly in the classroom")

Teaching Strategies:
How Do You Teach the Rules?

- Priming
- Feedback
- Incidental Teaching
- Games
- Children's Literature
- Social Stories

- Adult Modeling
- Modeling with Puppets
- Songs
- Fingerplays
- Flannel Board Activities
- Role Play

What is your favorite way to teach rules in your classroom?

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Teaching Once is Not Enough!

Promoting Expectations

- Bulletin board
- T-shirts
- Photo displays
- Classroom books
- Plays
- Songs
- Share with administration

- Classroom celebration
- Family lesson plans
- Playground party
- Video production
- Family newsletter

Acknowledging Expectations

Considerations for Acknowledgement

- Provide reinforcement for demonstration of program-wide expectations that are culturally responsive

- Acknowledgement is for every child, and children are always eligible to receive acknowledgement

- Developmentally appropriate

- Used by all program staff, including administrative and support staff (e.g., clerical, bus, kitchen staff)

- Schools proportionately acknowledge appropriate behavior

Acknowledgement Examples
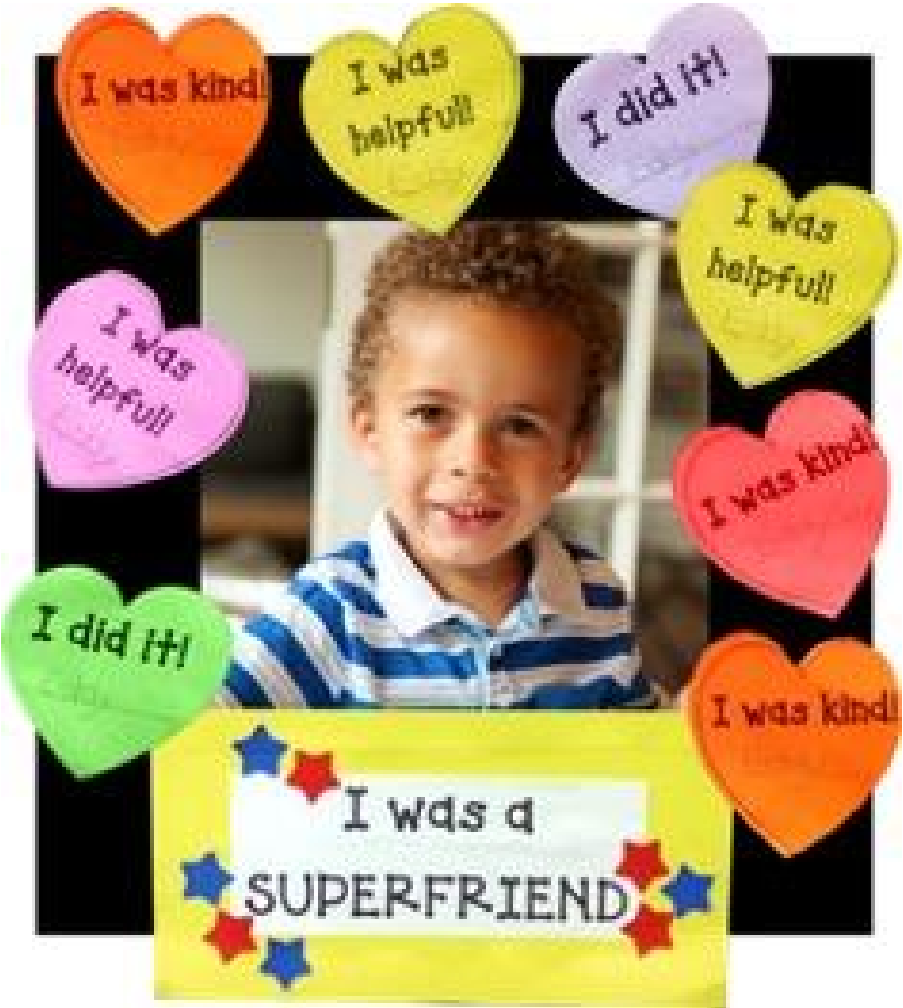
Activity 3.2

- Consider everything we've talked about related to expectations and rules

- Independently, answer the following questions:

  - What is one thing that you already knew that was reinforced?

  - What is one way you can enhance something you're already doing?

  - What is one next step you will take in your own classroom?

- Be ready to put your responses in chat

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Powering It Up With Families

- Encourage families to create rules for home that teach children what TO DO

- Provide strategies to use for teaching and reinforcing the rules

  - [Going to School](#)

  - [Teaching Rules at Home](#)

 - [Backpack Connections: How to Use Social Stories to Teach Your Child New Skills and Expectations](#)

4.0 Wrap-Up and Next Steps

Make Sure the Base is in Place

Promote social-emotional skills and prevent challenging behavior by:

- Balanced schedules

- Clear classroom routines

- Efficient transitions

- Strategies that promote engagement

- Behavior expectations and rules
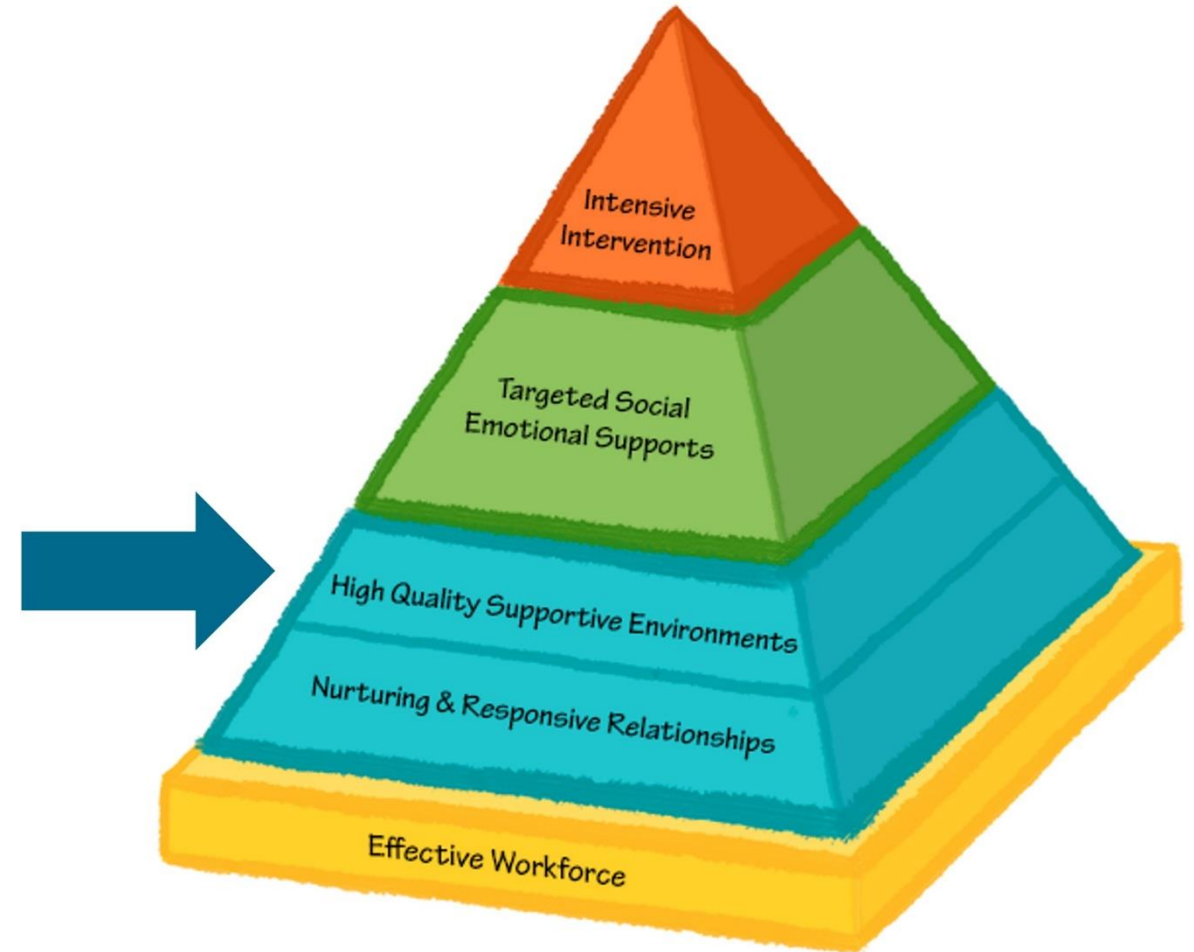
Activity 4.1

Let's Review!

- Look one more time at the **High-Quality, Supportive Environments** section of the Pyramid Model Practices Implementation Checklist:

  - Schedules and Routines (pg. 6)

  - Modifying Curriculum and Transitions (pg. 7)

  - Providing Directions and Expectations Across Routines (pg. 8)

- Make any notes based on what we talked about today; what practices might you want to learn more about and strengthen?

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Resource: Classroom Essentials

Preparing for the Pyramid

- Six classroom components essential for successful Pyramid implementation

- Materials and environmental considerations pivotal for child success

- Helps teaching team be ready for coaching on the Pyramid to begin

- Classroom teaching teams should work on implementing these PRIOR to coaching starting

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Behavior Systems: Is This One Positive?

- Does not include punitive measures

- Any acknowledgement earned is not lost

- Any parental communication about the system focus on what has gone well

- All children are eligible to earn acknowledgement throughout the day

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Activity 4.2

- Locate the document **Preparing for the Pyramid: Classroom Essentials** document in your materials

- As you read through each item on the checklist, think about why it might be considered a Classroom Essential

- Record any questions in the chat

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Next Steps with the Classroom Essentials

- If you're looking for a place to start, you can get started on these items right away!

- Your **Classroom Coach** will support the development of a plan as to when and how the Classroom Essentials will be completed

- The document can be incorporated during the Classroom Coach's first observation

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What's Next?

- **Session 3:** Teaching Social Emotional Skills
  - Friendship skills
  - Emotional literacy
  - Self-regulation and anger-management
  - Problem solving
- Please bring your materials from today's session

URLs Used in Today's Session

Visual Supports (https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/Routine_cards_home.pdf)

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

Help Us Have a Good Day! (https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Family-Strategies_Infographic.pdf)

I Brush My Teeth Example
(https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/ScriptedStory_BrushTeeth_Tips.pdf)

Backpack Connections: How to Help Your Child Have a Successful Morning
(https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_routines_morning.pdf)

Helping Children Transition Between Activities (https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Helping-Children-Transition.pdf)

Visual Supports for Routines, Schedules, and Transitions
(https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Routine_cards_home.pdf)

Backpack Connections: How to Give Clear Directions
(https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_behavior_directions.pdf)

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URLs Used in Today's Session, Cont.

Families: Let's Talk Expectations (https://challengingbehavior.org/docs/Developing-Expectations_Home.pdf)

Going to School (https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Going-to-School_Expectations_Story.pdf)

Teaching Rules at Home (https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Rules_Tipsheet_Home.pdf)

Backpack Connections: How to Use Social Stories to Teach Your Child New Skills and Expectations (https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_behavior_stories.pdf)

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