



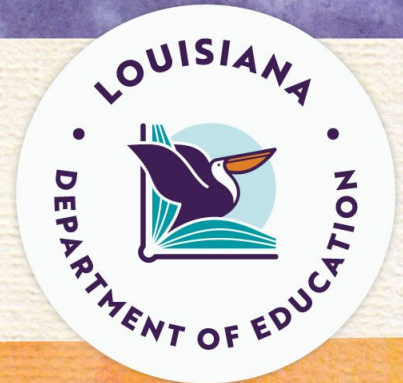
EARLY CHILDHOOD

**CONFERENCE 2024**

**SHAPING LOUISIANA'S FUTURE**



**Supporting Development and  
Learning From Birth Through  
Preschool**



# Purpose and Objectives

## **Purpose:**

This session will provide participants with an understanding of how high-quality interactions support child development from birth through preschool. By using everyday moments, teachers can provide opportunities for young children to develop mastery of skills and form positive relationships.

## **Objectives:**

During this session, participants will:

- Learn how to foster high-quality interactions and preparedness to be kindergarten ready
- Make connections between high-quality interactions and skill development
- Discuss the differences in interactions between age levels of children



# Agenda

- I. Session Purpose and Objectives
- II. Agenda
- III. Activity 1: Discussion
- IV. Fostering High-Quality Interactions
- V. Activity 2: Exploring Avocados
- VI. Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions
  - A. Infants and Toddlers
  - B. Activity 3: Calming the Child
  - C. Preschoolers
- VII. Activity 4: Discussion: How Do We Redirect?
- VIII. Session Conclusion



# Activity 1:



# Activity 1 - Fostering High-Quality Interactions



Think about a positive interaction that you have had recently with a child.

- What did it take for you to be able to make responsive interactions with the child?
- What learning took place during the interaction?



# **Fostering High-Quality Interactions**



# Fostering High-Quality Interactions

Research has demonstrated that high-quality interactions lead to positive outcomes for children, regardless of age. This is accomplished through everyday experiences that encourage children to enjoy the environment around them.

Effective interactions are planned activities between the teacher and child that support

- Intentional and purposeful activities
- Extension of the child's learning
- Conveys to the child, "I notice you, I am interested in you, and I want to know you better."

# Fostering High-Quality Interactions - Be Purposeful

Teachers can build high-quality interactions within the classroom by

- Being present
  - Teachers should be aware and open to the interesting and significant thing that children are doing
  - Be intentional about what you say and do in the interaction to be more effective as a teacher for the child





# Fostering High-Quality Interactions - Be Connected

Teachers can build high-quality interactions within the classroom by

- Being connected
  - Acknowledging and validating children lets them know that you see them, are interested in them, know who they are, and want to spend time with them
  - Connecting in this way develops trust and security between the teacher and child that fosters positive interactions where the child is more open to learning from the teacher

# Fostering High-Quality Interactions - Extend Learning

Teachers can build high-quality interactions within the classroom by

- Extend learning
  - Talk to children about the events of the day
  - Describe children's actions, interests, events, or feelings
  - Read to children frequently and provide opportunities for them to engage with appropriate books or printed materials
  - Be responsive to all communication attempts by children and build on what they are expressing



## **Activity 2: Exploring Avocados**



# High-Quality Interactions Support Thinking and Language Skills - Video

Let's watch Teacher Keesa provide high-quality interactions in a sensory activity with 3 young toddlers as they explore the shape, taste, and texture of avocados.

Consider how the teacher uses

- Children's curiosity and creativity
- Opportunities for children to think more deeply about the world around them

[Exploring Avocados](#)





# **Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Infants and Toddlers**



# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Infants and Toddlers

For infants and toddlers, moment-to-moment interactions influence how young children reach developmental milestones.

As children develop and grow, teachers should use high-quality interactions to focus on skill development, positive behaviors, and knowledge that is age appropriate and leads to enhanced learning and preparedness for kindergarten readiness.





# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Infants and Toddlers



From birth, infants' **senses** are ready to begin learning

- Infants spend about 20% of awake time exploring with their eyes
- As infants' attention and physical skills grow, they develop new ways to engage with people and objects in their environment through everything seen, heard, touched, smelled, and tasted

# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Infants and Toddlers



Teachers can encourage infant learning through

- Developing positive relationships and high-quality interactions
- Supporting infants to develop sensory and perceptual skills through various daily learning experiences
- Playing to encourage curiosity and creativity and promote self-regulation skills in infants



# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Infants and Toddlers

Teachers can encourage development for toddlers through high-quality interactions that include

- Language and literacy skill development
  - Talk together
    - Point out and name things you see. Ask what each item is, then wait a few seconds until the child answers. This gives children time to process, respond, and show you what they know.



# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Infants and Toddlers



Share books together.

Let the child hold the book. Point to pictures as you read together. You read stories that introduce ideas such as up/down or big/little, colors, and numbers that you can carry over into over activities during the day.



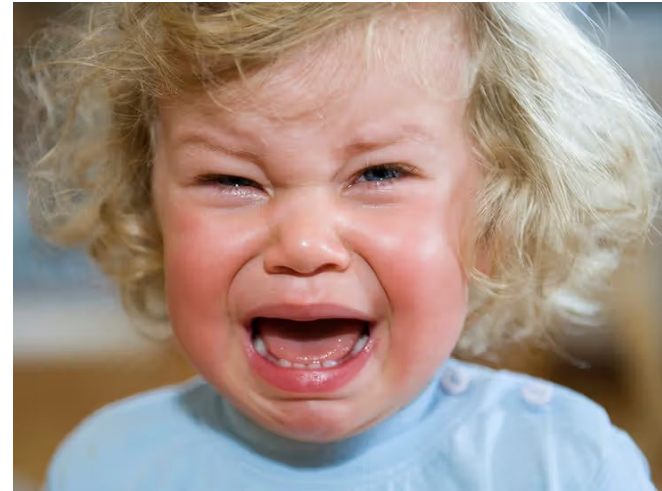
# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Infants and Toddlers

- Thinking skill development
  - Follow the child's lead
    - Allow the child's preferences to determine how you support their efforts to learn
  - One more time!
    - Toddlers like to repeat actions over and over again. This strengthens the connections in the brain that help children learn new skills.



# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Infants and Toddlers

- Self-Control Development
  - Label and validate children's feelings
    - Letting children know that their feelings are understood help them calm down and regain control.
      - Giving children choices also helps them feel in control -and helps them calm down.
        - Example: "It is time for a diaper change. Would you like to walk, or would you like me to carry you?"





# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Infants and Toddlers



- Self-Confidence Development
  - Let children be problem solvers
    - See yourself as a coach. Give toddlers guidance when addressing a negative behavior
      - Example: “Let’s try this one and see if it will fit there.”





## **Activity 3: Discussion Calming A Child**



# Activity 3: Discussion - Calming the Child

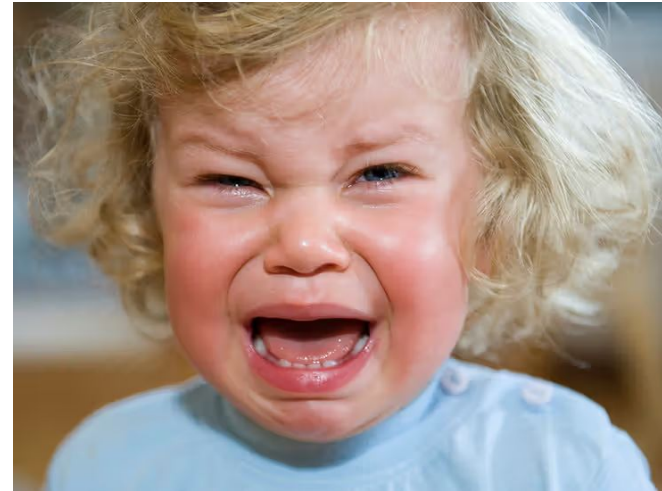
As a teacher, you have had to calm a young child down that was having a difficult time.

What are some effective strategies that you used in the classroom to assist a child regain self-control?

Examples:

“I see you are crying. You seem sad.”

“I feel disappointed too. We cannot go outside today because it is raining.”





**Encouraging Child Development  
Through Interactions -  
Preschoolers**



# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Preschoolers

At the preschool age, being prepared for “school readiness” is more complicated than a child being able to say their ABC’s, count, identify colors, or write their first name.

Teachers can provide high-quality interactions through responsive caregiving that builds strong relationships fostering children’s interest in learning and preparing children to be “school ready”.

Readiness is

- A child with a willing attitude and confidence in the process of learning: a health state of mind.
- A child who can interact in a group, such as following through when a task is difficult and listening to directions for a few minutes.

# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Preschoolers

Teachers can encourage development for preschoolers through

- Language and literacy skill development
  - Talk together
    - Talk about everything. The more you talk, the more words they will learn.
  - Share books together
    - Let children choose their own books.





# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Preschoolers

- Thinking skill development
  - Encourage imaginative play
    - Let children take the lead in playtime.
  - Make math part of the everyday classroom routine
    - Notice patterns around you like stripes on a child's shirt. See if children would like to sort toys, such as little and big cars.



# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Preschoolers

- Self-Control
  - Give choices
    - Present the child with options and then let them choose.
      - “Would you like a snack first or cleanup first?”
      - “It is naptime. Which book do you want to read before napping?”





# Encouraging Child Development Through Interactions - Preschoolers

- Self-Confidence
  - Give children responsibilities
    - Children feel a sense of accomplishment when they can show you that they completed a task.
      - Be specific about what you want them to do, such as “Please pick up your blocks”, instead of “Please clean up.”
  - Encourage children to ask for help
    - Let children know that you see them struggling and ask what help they want, such as “Getting shoes on can be so hard! Sometimes opening the laces can make it easier. Can I help you loosen them?”

# **Discussion - How Do We Redirect?**



# Discussion - How Do We Redirect?

As a teacher, you have had to deal with challenging behaviors in the classroom that can negatively impact interactions and learning.

- What are some effective strategies that you have used to redirect a child's behavior?
- How did it become a teaching moment?

Example: "When you hit, I can tell something is not right for you. Let me help you to calm down."





**Session Conclusion**



# Session Conclusion

- Teachers can provide high-quality interactions through responsive caregiving that builds strong relationships to **foster children's interest in learning**.
- Teachers should be look for opportunities throughout the day to have intentional interactions with children to **encourage skill development** and extended learning.
- Supporting infants and toddlers to **develop sensory and perceptual skills** through various daily learning experiences during play encourages curiosity, creativity and promotes self-regulation skills.
- Supporting preschoolers to **develop confidence in the process of learning** can encourage their preparedness to become school ready.

# References

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