



## EMERGENT WRITING

### OPTIONAL PRESENTER NOTES FOR HOME VISITORS



#### HV OPTIONAL SLIDE 1:

If participants are exclusively home visitors, replace the title slide with this slide.

#### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

- Begin the training by giving participants background information about yourself.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to introduce themselves.

#### ICEBREAKER

- Have participants write their full name with their dominant hand. Now have them switch hands and try to write their full name again. Ask the following questions:
  - What was it like writing your name with your non-dominant hand? What were your initial feelings?
  - What skills were involved in writing with your non-dominant hand?
    - Physical skills
    - Cognitive skills
    - Social-emotional skills
- Tell participants: These are some of the same feelings that children may feel when they begin writing. And it takes trying out some new skills when learning to write. Today we will explore early writing for children birth to age 5. We will discuss the stages of writing and how you can support children's writing development in each stage. We will also discuss how writing is connected to the Early Learning Outcomes Framework and school readiness.

## HSPPS Support Emergent Writing



### Subpart C - Education and Child Development Program Services

#### 1302.30 Purpose

All programs must provide high-quality early education and child development services, including for children with disabilities, that promote children's cognitive, social, and emotional growth for latter success in school....



### HV OPTIONAL SLIDE 2:

Children's success in writing depends on the materials and tools that they have access to and their ability to exercise this growing skill. It also depends on their fine motor coordination and cognitive understanding. They'll learn that in writing, one thing, such as a letter or a word, stands for something—it has meaning. It is important to provide a high-quality, print-rich environment with a variety of options to explore writing to help children grow. For infants and toddlers, this means providing materials they can use to make marks on paper—such as crayons and paint. For older toddlers and preschoolers, model writing, transcribe children's words, and encourage children to use invented spelling to foster emergent writing.



## HSPPS Support Emergent Writing



Subpart C - Education and Child Development Program Services

1302.35 Education in Home-Based Programs

(a) Purpose. A home-based program must provide home visits and group socialization activities that promote secure parent-child relationships and help parents provide high-quality early learning experiences in language, literacy, mathematics, social and emotional functioning, approaches to learning, science, physical skills, and creative arts. A program must implement a research-based curriculum...



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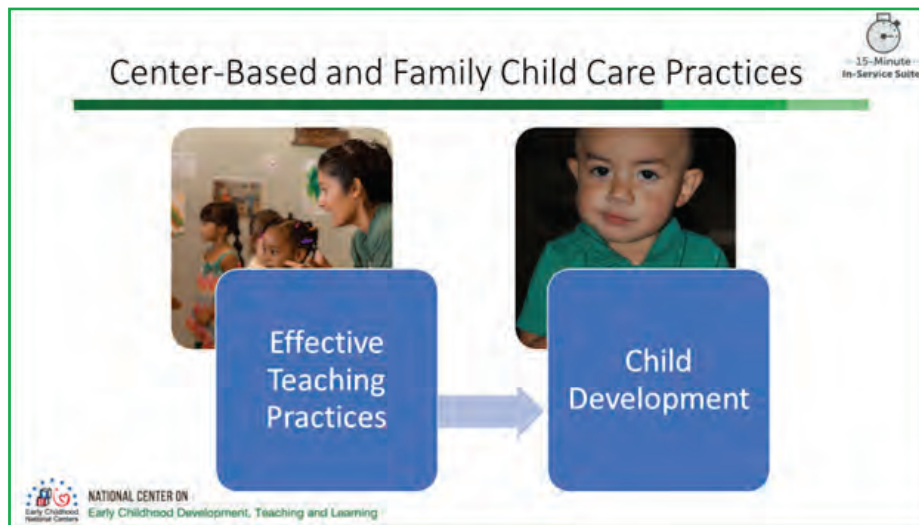
### HV OPTIONAL SLIDE 3

Home-based programs must also encourage parents as the child's first teacher and support parents as they provide high-quality early writing experiences that build on children's individual development and learning pattern.



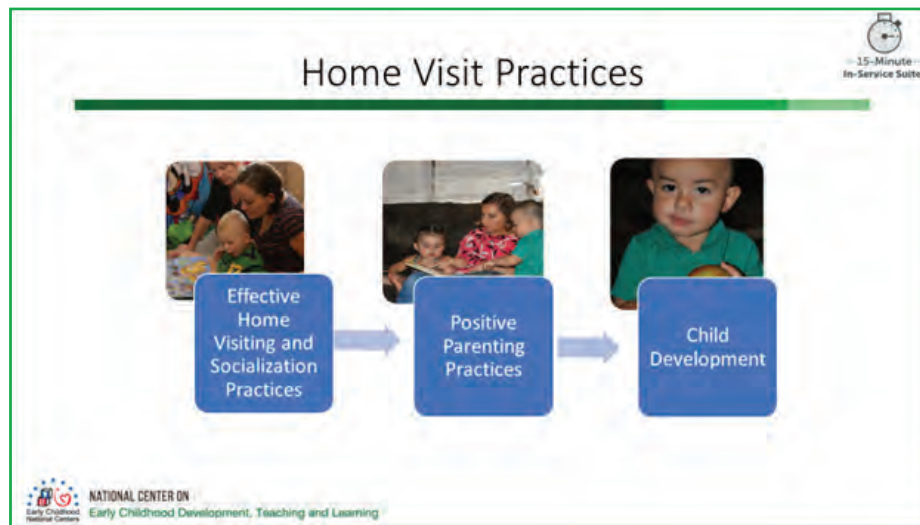
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#### HV OPTIONAL SLIDE 4

Here is an over-simplified representation of how to achieve positive child outcomes in center-based and family child care. The teacher is working directly with the child. The child is in the classroom 5 days a week and for around 6 hours or more each day. The teacher and child have approximately 30 hours together each week.



## HV OPTIONAL SLIDE 5

When we look at what is different in home-based programs, the most striking difference is that the home visitor works to promote positive parenting which in turn impacts the child's development.

First, the home visitor is in the home 90 minutes once a week. Home visits are planned jointly with home visitor and parent. Home visitors provide age and developmentally appropriate, structured, and child-focused learning experiences. However, they really work with the parent to provide strategies and activities that promote parent's ability to support the child's cognitive, social, emotional, language, literacy, and physical development. Home visitors encourage parents to promote the home as a learning environment that is safe, nurturing, responsive, and language- and communication-rich—emphasizing dual language learners and recognizing bilingualism and biliteracy as strengths.

Home visitors also offer socializations two times per month. Socializations are planned jointly with families and conducted with both parent and child participation. They can be held in any convenient location including classrooms, a community facility, in the home of a parent, or a field trip-like setting. Group socializations provide age-appropriate activities that are aligned with school readiness goals. They encourage parents to share their child development experiences with other parents to strengthen parent-child relationships and promote parents' understanding of child development.

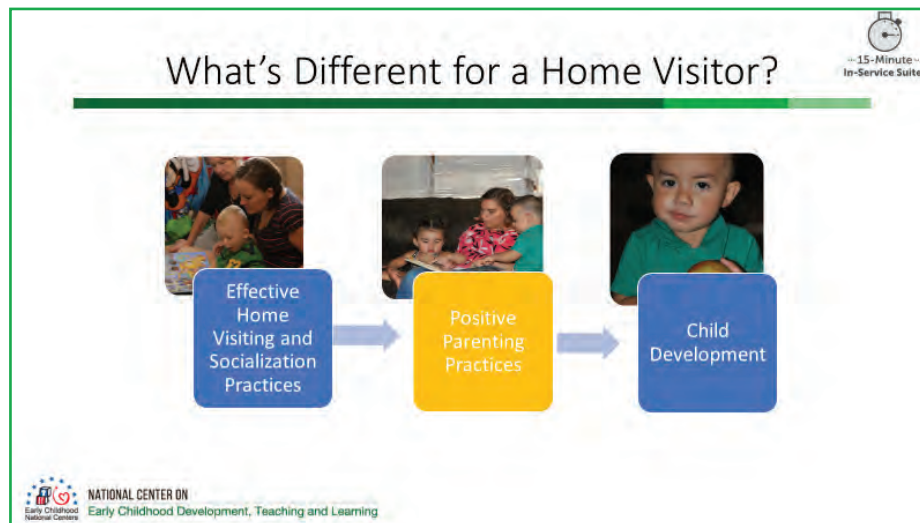
The goal of home-based programs is to provide home visits and group socializations that promote secure parent-child relationships and help parents provide high-quality early learning experiences.

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## HSPPS: §1302.35 EDUCATION IN HOME-BASED PROGRAMS.

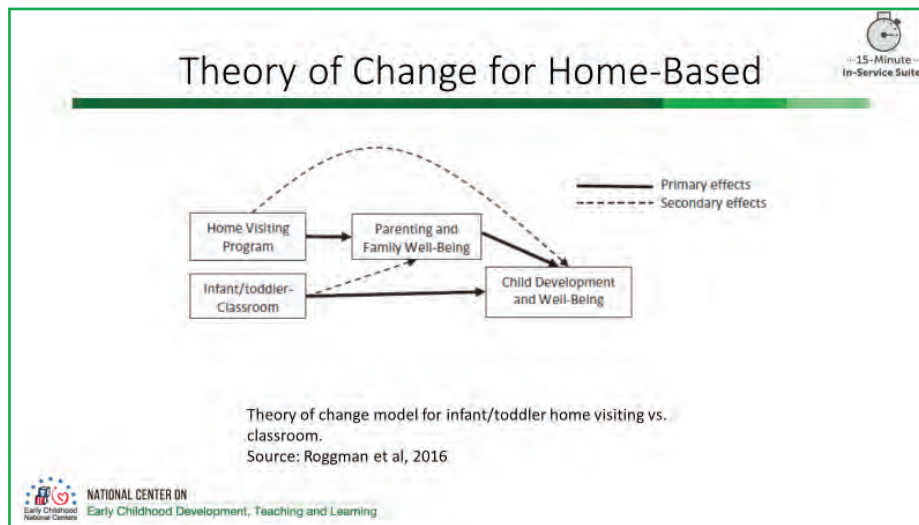
- a. *Purpose.* A home-based program must provide home visits and group socialization activities that promote secure parent-child relationships and help parents provide high-quality early learning experiences in language, literacy, mathematics, social and emotional functioning, approaches to learning, science, physical skills, and creative arts.
- c. *Home visit experiences.* A program that operates the home-based option must ensure all home visits focus on promoting high-quality early learning experiences in the home and growth towards the goals described in the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five* and must use such goals and the curriculum to plan home visit activities that implement:
- (1) Age and developmentally appropriate, structured child-focused learning experiences;
  - (2) Strategies and activities that promote parents' ability to support the child's cognitive, social, emotional, language, literacy, and physical development;
  - (3) Strategies and activities that promote the home as a learning environment that is safe, nurturing, responsive, and language- and communication- rich;
  - (4) Research-based strategies and activities for children who are dual language learners that recognize bilingualism and biliteracy as strengths, and:
    - (i) For infants and toddlers, focus on the development of the home language, while providing experiences that expose both parents and children to English; and,
    - (ii) For preschoolers, focus on both English language acquisition and the continued development of the home language; and,
- d. *Home-based curriculum.* A program that operates the home-based option must:
- (1) Ensure home-visiting and group socializations implement a developmentally appropriate research-based early childhood home-based curriculum that:
    - (ii) Aligns with the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five* and, as appropriate, state early learning standards, and, is sufficiently content-rich within the Framework to promote measurable progress toward goals outlined in the Framework; and,
- e. *Group socialization.*
- (2) Group socializations must be structured to:
    - (ii) Encourage parents to share experiences related to their children's development with other parents in order to strengthen parent-child relationships and to help promote parents understanding of child development;





## HV OPTIONAL SLIDE 6

When we look at what is different for a home visitor, the most striking difference is that the home visitor works directly with parents to promote positive parenting. To be effective, home visitors in home-based programs must know adult learning principles and have the skills to work with parents to strengthen their parenting practices so they can support their child's healthy growth and development throughout the week, not just when the home visitor is present.



### HV OPTIONAL SLIDE 7

Here's another graphic to describe home-based programs. This one is a theory of change in an article by Lori Roggman and colleagues in a 2016 issue of *Early Childhood Teacher Education*. I imagine most of you are familiar with the term "theory of change." It's simply a series of clear statements or a diagram, as we see on this slide, that portrays the changes a program is trying to make. So we see from the solid lines that home visiting programs primarily and directly effect parenting and family well-being, which then leads to child development and well-being. This model shows us that through working with families we see change in child development and well-being. Keep this theory of change in mind as we talk about promoting writing for children in home-based programs.

Source: Roggman, Lori, Carla A. Peterson, Rachel Chazan-Cohen, Jean Ispa, Kallie B. Decker, Kere Hughes-Belding, Gina A. Cook, and Claire D. Vallotton. 2016. "Preparing Home Visitors to Partner with Families of Infants and Toddlers." *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 37 (4): 301-313.



## Parents Can Support Early Writing



- Help parents foster their child's pre-drawing, early drawing, and scribbling. Have them:

- Provide writing materials for children and encourage their use
- Ask their child to talk about their drawing (when possible)
- Revisit children's drawings between home visits and explain what it is or says



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### HV OPTIONAL SLIDE 8

- The tips on this slide are particularly useful for parents when supporting children that are just starting to write. This may include infants and young toddlers, children who have or are suspected of having a delay or disability, or children who are dual language learners.
- To support parents as they foster their child's pre-drawing, early drawing, and scribbling, have them:
  - Provide writing materials and encourage children to use them. This can include paper, crayons, markers, etc. (Parents know their child the best. Help them determine which materials are appropriate to use for their children's ages and fine motor skills.) Let parents know that it is okay to let their children take the lead—making random marks and scribbles as they please.
    - Remember—there's a difference between drawing to convey meaning and drawing as an art activity. Parents don't need to take over to make sure their children's drawings are perfect, if children are drawing to convey a message. Here, we encourage parents to let their children “write” as they please!
  - Have conversations with children about their drawing or scribbles.
    - If children tell parents about their drawing or scribbles, the parents can even write below or on the back of their work to capture the message. This can be as simple as a label for their drawing (e.g., “dog”) or a longer message (e.g., “The dog is big”). Just make sure that parents' conventional writing doesn't take over and become the focus of the activity at this stage.
    - Drawings can serve as an important scaffold for later writing (Thompson, 2005, 21). For example, if children scribble on their page, have parents encourage them to also draw a picture that will help them remember their written message.
  - Encourage parents to revisit children's drawing during the week between home visits and have children again tell what it is or says.
    - For toddlers or older children, parents can even revisit their children's drawings or scribbles later. Having children draw a picture to accompany their scribbles (or any writing, even a more advanced stages) can help children to re-read their writing later.
    - Having children revisit or re-read their writing helps instill the idea that writing is read the same way each time it's read; it doesn't change meaning each time they read it (unless it's been edited, of course).



## Parents Can Support Later Writing



### Support parents in:

- Starting with name writing with their child
- Modeling writing throughout the day and in different contexts
- Engaging in shared and independent writing with children
- Including authentic opportunities for writing throughout the day
- Finding opportunities to practice writing with peers

## HV OPTIONAL SLIDE 9

You can use similar strategies to support the middle and later stages of emergent writing (and some with children in the early stages of emergent writing).

- Start by writing the child's name.
  - For most children, their first experiences writing letters, spelling, and using uppercase and lowercase is while writing their names (Both-de Vries & Bus, 2008). This early writing experience helps children to learn that string of letters (words) and writing in general has a purpose.
  - “Name writing proficiency provides a foundation for other literacy knowledge and skills; it is associated with alphabet knowledge, letter writing, print concepts, and spelling (Cabell et al., 2009; Drouin & Harmon, 2009; Puranik & Lonigan, 2012)” (see Byington & Kim, 2017).
  - Ways to incorporate writing the child's name.
    - Use sign-in sheets at socialization events. Keep in mind that as kids move through stages of writing, they also move through stages writing their name. At first, they may write their name in wavy scribbles, then include more letter-like forms and some letters. They may start writing just the first letter of their name, before moving into writing their entire name (still, some letters may be backwards at first). Remember that most children will begin their writing (including their name writing) using all uppercase letters. Eventually (after they learn the letters), they will learn to use uppercase and lowercase letters.
    - Brainstorm with parents to find ways they can provide meaningful opportunities for their child to write their names. Don't just have children write their name for no reason, have them use it to sign in and out at the doctor's office, label their work or belongings, or write their names on the top of their own grocery lists!
  - Support parents as they model writing throughout the day and in different contexts.
    - It is important for children to see adults model the writing process correctly.
    - When modeling writing at home, don't be afraid to use self-talk to talk out loud while you're writing. For example, if parents are writing out their plans for the day, have them model their thought process while planning what to write. For example: “Let's see. I want to write about what we're going to do today. We're going to go to the post office to mail Abuela's birthday card, so I'll write 'Go to the post office' on my list.” Parents can write and re-read their message. Importantly, parents should also re-read their message later in the day, perhaps after they've gone to the post office.

- As parents model, encourage them to point out some mechanics of writing, or practice sounding out or spelling a word. Try not to focus on too many concepts at one time. Choose 1 or 2 quick things to focus on. Also, be sure you're focusing on what the child is currently learning. For example, if the child is at the scribbling stage, parents wouldn't want to focus on conventional spelling and punctuation!
- Encourage parents to model writing in different content areas (e.g., writing down science observations when playing outside). Don't delegate writing to one specific type of activity or content area.
- Have parents use shared and independent writing with children.
  - For example, when children are describing their drawing to their parent, the parent can dictate their message and write for them. Parents should also encourage their child to write independently throughout the day.
- Encourage parents to include authentic writing opportunities throughout the day.
  - Write for a purpose and set up the environment so children do the same. One great way to do this is to have a variety of writing materials available around the house with writing prompts such as an envelope and paper or blank paper and crayons for drawing. The NAEYC article *Promoting Preschoolers' Emergent Writing* includes a table with some great ideas for classroom centers that parents can use at home (Byington & Kim, 2017).
- Use peer scaffolding.
  - During a socialization event, parents can encourage children to work together in their writing. This can mean writing a story together or checking in with a friend if they're not sure which letter to use. This not only supports both children's language and literacy skills, but also fosters social and emotional skills and a strong sense of community. Older siblings, cousins, or neighborhood friends could also serve this role of peer scaffolding.
- Finally, it is important for parents to remember that they support a process, not an outcome. While children may start learning to write during their time, this process will not be complete or perfected by the time they leave the home visiting program. Writing skills develop across the school years and beyond! Your job is to help parents support children's growth in the process and learn to enjoy writing.

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## REFERENCES:

Byington, T. A., & Y. Kim. 2017. "Promoting Preschoolers' Emergent Writing." *Young Children*, 72(5).  
[www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/nov2017/emergent-writing](http://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/nov2017/emergent-writing).

## Learning Activity: Writing in Your Setting



- Have parents select samples of their child's writing or drawing, and review with them.
- Work with parents to identify which stage(s) of emergent writing their child is in.
  - Do the sample show children's parent-supported or independent writing?
- How can you support this parent during writing activities with their child?
- What activities can you offer parents to provide additional opportunities to practice writing?



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### HV OPTIONAL SLIDE 10

See Learning Activity for Home Visitors: Studying Emergent Writing



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