



PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES TO RESPOND TO CHILDREN'S INTERESTS

LEARN WITH FAMILIES ABOUT CHILDREN'S INTERESTS

- Talk with families about their observations of their children's interests.
- Use data that you and families gather from observations to identify themes:
 - What objects and materials does the child enjoy exploring?
 - What ideas or topics do they enjoy talking about?
 - In what activities do they engage for sustained periods of time?
- Identify any recent situations, events, or ideas that have captured the child's attention (e.g., a construction site, family event).
- Talk with families about the knowledge, skills, and concepts their child has that sustain their interests.



REVIEW YOUR CURRICULUM'S RESOURCES

- Explore guidance on how to use the home as a learning environment.
 - What toys or household objects might the family have that reflect the child's interests?
 - Identify resources that build on children's interests.
- Identify some suggested activities that can be implemented in ways that respond to children's interests.
 - How does this learning experience build on the child's interests to promote sustained engagement?

HELPFUL HINT: LOOK, LISTEN, LEARN, AND TALK THROUGHOUT THE DAY

Communication during routines can help you learn about your child's interests.

LOOK: What does your child look at, reach for, point to or play with? What makes him smile?

LISTEN: What makes your child laugh or squeal with delight? What does he like to talk about?

LEARN: Even though young children cannot use their words to tell you about their interests, they communicate with you in different ways. When you look and listen carefully, you can learn about your child's interests.

TALK: Talk to you child about what interests him! Children are more likely to be motivated and engaged in conversation when they are interested.

USE YOUR CURRICULUM RESPONSIVELY WITH THIS FAMILY AND CHILD

- Guide parents as they build on children's interests and play with their child.
 - How might the interaction be adjusted to focus on the child's interests?
 - How can you communicate with families about using open-ended, thought-provoking questions to extend children's explorations and engagement?
- Encourage families to notice situational interests that emerge during daily life and activities.
- Repeat this process, as the child's interests may vary over time. As the child develops new skills, knowledge and concepts and they are exposed to new ideas and topics, they may develop new interests.

