

Supporting Social and Emotional Learning for Children with Disabilities

Jennifer Fung: Good afternoon, everybody. Welcome, and thank you so much for joining me today for our webinar. Individualizing Instruction to Support Social-Emotional Learning for Children with Disabilities and Suspected Delays. This is our third series – our third webinar in our inclusion series webinar for this year. And this is honestly one of my favorite topics to talk about. I thank you all for joining me again.

And today, we're going to talk about social-emotional learning for children with disabilities and suspected delays. And we'll start by talking about what do we know about social-emotional learning and social-emotional skills for children with disabilities, including outcomes and really the importance of why we want to individualize instruction for all children, but specifically for children with disabilities. And we'll spend most of our time together exploring powerful, effective teaching practices to really target those critical social-emotional skills.

We'll do a little bit of housekeeping. But before we even get into some of those details and logistics, I wanted to get us thinking about social-emotional learning, why is social-emotional learning – why is supporting the development of social-emotional skills so important for young children. And, in particular, why is this so important for young children with disabilities and suspected delays? If you want to share your thoughts, think about that, reflect on that for a moment, and share your thoughts in the Q&A which is the purple widget at the bottom of your screen.

Speaking of widgets, here we'll do a little bit of housekeeping, a little bit of logistics before we jump into our content, to our discussion for the day. Before we get started, I just want to provide a little bit of information regarding this webinar and the platform that we're using. For those of you regulars who join us often on our inclusion series or any of our DTL webinars, this will be familiar. But for those who are new, one, welcome.

And just to provide a little information about some of the features of our webinar platform that we'll be using to help us interact. At the bottom of the screen, you might notice these widgets. Actually, they may all be open. Sometimes that happens, in which case, you can minimize the widgets and just keep the boxes open that you'd like to use. Each of these widgets is resizable and can be moved around your screen to really customize your experience. Simply click on the widget and move it by dragging and dropping.

First, I wanted to point out that if you have any questions today or several times throughout the webinar, I will be asking for your thoughts and for your reflections. And what we'll want to use then is the purple question and answer or purple – I'll call it the Q&A widget. I'm joined today by Beckie and Vanesa, my wonderful colleagues who are in the Q&A here to support by answering some questions, responding to comments. And I'm also joined by my colleague Ryan, who can help address any technical issues that you might be having.

Please know that we will try to answer as many questions as possible during the webinar today and that we do capture all questions. If there are questions that we can't get to, if you leave and are reflecting or using your Viewer's Guide and have another question, we definitely encourage you to join us on the Disabilities and Inclusion MyPeers network.

The other thing, a couple of other widgets that I wanted to point out today are the resources widget. It's kind of that light blueish teal widget. A copy of today's slide deck and some additional resources are available in the resource widget. And then thinking about, as I mentioned, my colleague Ryan is here to help address some technical issues. But there are some answers to comment, technical questions that can be found in the yellow help widget. If you click on that, that yellow widget that's there on the end, we'll have some answers to common questions there. And then last, I wanted to point out that you can find closed captioning in both English and Spanish using the two kind of coral orangish closed captioning widgets.

All right. A quick introduction. My name is Jen Fung, and I am the inclusion lead for the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, or DTL as we call it. And like I said, I'm thrilled to be here to talk about one of my very favorite topics, highly individualized strategies and evidence-based practices to support social-emotional learning for young children with disabilities.

My background is in early intervention. I started in Birth to 3 – I love those infants and toddlers. Working with infants and toddlers and preschoolers with developmental disabilities and delays is where I got my start in the classroom. And I always think about how important these skills are and how important it is for us as the people supporting children and families to know about these effective practices to support these critical social-emotional skills. I'm thrilled to be here today and can't wait to get started with this conversation.

As you're likely noticing, I'm the only presenter here live today. We were – I've been working with Abby Taylor at Vanderbilt University. She was going to join us today as a guest expert, but she was unable to make it today. I did want to point out and thank Abby and her team at Vanderbilt very much for helping us get the content for this webinar together, including some really great videos, some nice video examples of some of the evidence-based practices that we'll talk about today. Thanks for all of your help, Abby.

Let's take a quick look at our learning objectives for today's webinar. As I mentioned at the very beginning, the first thing that we're going to do is explore what the research says about the importance of social-emotional learning for children with disabilities or suspected delays, including outcomes and key skills to target in the early years. And then, we're going to really dive deeply into a few effective highly individualized strategies to promote social-emotional development, learning, and positive behavior for young children with disabilities or suspected delays.

Before we get started, this is the last housekeeping slide, I just want to remind everybody that we have a Viewer's Guide for this webinar. That's available to download. To open to follow

along with the webinar, there is some more in-depth information about some of the concepts that we'll be talking about. And then also some space for reflection. Throughout the webinar, I'll be referring to the Viewer's Guide prompting some reflection. If you haven't downloaded that, definitely I encourage you to take a moment to do that. Again, that's available, this Viewer's Guide is available in the resources widget. And then there's also a resource list at the end of this Viewer's Guide if you're interested in learning more about and finding more resources about the strategies that we talk about today.

Now I mean it. Let's get started. Let's get started by talking about the importance of social-emotional learning for children with disabilities or suspected delays. I've seen some really great thoughts and some really great perspectives and ideas coming through the Q&A. Thank you, everybody, for sharing those. I'm seeing remarks on the importance of children being able to self-regulate so to regulate their emotions, the importance of children being able to interact with one another and be able to interact and solve problems that might arise with other children in their environments. Lots and lots of comments and thoughts about those two big areas. Emotional regulation in friendships and interactions. Also, seeing some comments about the importance of helping children recognize their own emotions and helping children form positive identity and self-confidence. Thank you all so much for those comments. Please keep them coming.

But let's start off by taking a look at a video on the importance of early friendships from somebody who's likely familiar to all of you, Dr. Gail Joseph, who's our host for the Teacher Time webinar series. Gail is going to share a little bit with us about what the research tells us about outcomes and benefits of early friendships for children with and without disabilities. As you're watching this video, I encourage you to think about what Dr. Joseph is sharing and think about the information. Is anything surprising to you? Does anything make you wonder? Is there anything that you'd like to learn more about? I invite you to reflect on those questions and anything else that comes to mind as you're watching this video. And really think about why is this important to your work.

Dr. Gail Joseph: That is developing friendships in the inclusive classroom. I want to say a little bit about what is beneficial about friendships which I think we all probably intuitively know. But let me tell you a little bit more about this, in particular, the benefits of friendships in inclusive early learning classrooms.

One is that we call them inter-ability friendships. They increase a child's acceptance of human differences which will be clearly an important skill for future success. Children have the chance to not only acquire and master skills but to also deepen their mastery as they share their knowledge with their friends, and this goes for children with and children without disabilities.

These inner-ability friendships in the classrooms have been found to correspond in a reduction in bullying and other negative behaviors, both in the early learning setting but also beyond. And inner-ability friendships really help children develop empathy and compassion as they recognize and respond the needs of others.

And one well-studied fact about these inner-ability friendships and inclusion is that children who are typically developing as well as children with disabilities really learn how to modify and adapt their language so that their friends can best understand them. And this ability to take someone's perspective and change your communications style really is a lifelong skill that is beneficial beyond the early learning years.

And finally, the inner-ability friendships really lead to heightened peer acceptance. And peer acceptance, especially in the early learning years, has been demonstrated to be an indicator, in fact, some people say the strongest predictor of the quality of life in the adult years. For all of these reasons, I think we would agree that early friendships are so important.

Jennifer: Oh, my gosh, you guys. This is becoming my signature move is muting myself for the video and then not unmuting myself. Thank you, everybody, for pointing it out. I see my colleagues pointing it out. I see it coming through the Q&A. I'm so sorry. I almost at the beginning of the webinar said, "Today, I am going to make it through without starting to talk when I'm muted." My apologies. Thank you for bringing it to my attention.

Luckily, I wasn't too far into my gushing about Dr. Gail Joseph and all of that great information that she shared with us. I was saying that I just love to hear the research on the importance and those really wonderful outcomes when it comes to supporting early friendships that oftentimes they – we know it instinctually and we know how important it is, and we know how important inclusion is. And, as Gail put it, supporting those inner-ability friendships. But hearing those really specific research outcomes and not only the immediate benefits but the long-term benefits of supporting that important social-emotional skill of early friendship.

I always just love to hear from Gail and love to hear about the research and what we know. As we've said, both muted and now off mute, Gail gave us some great information about early friendships in the early years. But let's talk a little bit more about what we know about social-emotional learning in general beyond those early friendship skills for children with disabilities or suspected delays.

We know strongly, it's well-documented that successful learning of social-emotional skills, including many of the skills that you've described in the chat or the Q&A and I've been sharing those emotional literacy skills, those self-regulation skills, those problem-solving skills, they set a strong foundation for learning many other important skills outside of the social-emotional learning delay – or I'm sorry – domain. And we know that delays or challenges in the social-emotional domain can interfere with learning across domains.

Gail also alluded to this, but we know that positive social-emotional development in learning is predictive of future success across a variety of different indicators and outcomes. And again, that's across different developmental domains and other indicators of positive quality of life. And we really know, as Gail mentioned, that having a friend offers both children, both partners the potential for enhanced cognitive and language development, as well as social-emotional benefits such as increased prosocial behavior, increased emotional regulation, and increased general well-being.

We also know that social-emotional skills are often a priority skill area for families of children with disabilities and suspected delays that we want them to – that they want to be targeted. We also know that while high-quality early learning settings and high-quality inclusive early learning settings themselves might provide benefits for children with disabilities and suspected delays in terms of learning. We also know that for some children with suspected delays or children with disabilities, just being in an inclusive setting or just being in a high-quality early learning environment might not be sufficient to help that child or those children address their individual learning needs to really make progress on those important social-emotional goals.

We know that for a variety of reasons, whether it might be attention skills, imitation skills, language or play skills that some children with disabilities or suspected delays might not readily learn or acquire the skills that are needed to really help them function optimally in terms of those social-emotional skills and those friendships. And we know that a really important, essential feature of high-quality inclusive settings is that intentional and systematic planning for and the use of effective teaching strategies to really support the learning of those important social-emotional skills, those friendship skills, strategies, and plans that help promote that peer acceptance that Gail was talking about, that planful and intentional use of those strategies for children with disabilities and suspected delays in inclusive environments is one of the features, it's one of the quality features of effective high-quality inclusive learning environments.

All that being said, what's most important to know is that we know that effective interventions do exist. There are effective teaching strategies that have been shown and have been used across many different settings and many different contexts to help support that important social-emotional learning for children with disabilities and suspected delays. And that's what we're here to talk about today.

Before we get started talking about a few specific evidence-based practices to support social-emotional learning, let's take a look at what we know about those key social-emotional competencies that are important for school readiness. You all could lead this webinar with me. You've all mentioned all of these different skills and competencies in the Q&A through your thoughts and your comments, and your remarks.

But I just wanted to summarize here that there are four areas that we know from research are critical in terms of social-emotional skills and behaviors and development that really help children interact and develop optimally when it comes to social-emotional skills and really helps promote that school readiness. These four areas are emotional literacy, which is really a child's ability to identify and describe emotions in themselves and also in others. It's really learning the language of feelings and emotions. And your Viewer's Guide has some more specific information about these skills. And what some different indicators or some behaviors or some specific skills within these different areas are.

As I mentioned for emotional literacy, being able to label your own feelings, your own emotions, or being able to label the emotion that you see a friend or another person in your environment demonstrating. That's one specific skill under this umbrella of emotional literacy. Another important skill area or competency is emotional regulation. Emotional regulation is a

child's ability to monitor and adjust their emotional activity and their emotional expression, how they're demonstrating, how they're outwardly demonstrating their emotions and what they're feeling. Specific skills and behaviors might include following rules, following routines, or following directions, recognizing and controlling anger or impulses, learning how to calm down. There are lots more specific skills and behaviors that fall under this umbrella category, definitely, I encourage you to look at your Viewer's Guide and think about other specific skills, specific behaviors that you would want to see or want to help children learn and develop under that umbrella category of emotional regulation.

The third category is friendship skills. Friendships, many folks mentioned this in the Q&A, we also heard Dr. Joseph talks specifically about friendship skills. But when we think about what are friendship skills. This involves a child having the skills and the behaviors that allow them to have positive and reciprocal interactions with other children. When we think about reciprocal interactions, that means that they're shared, and they're felt, and they're shown on both sides. That's really important, again, when we think about children with disabilities and suspected delays, and helping them learn the skills and the behaviors to engage in those reciprocal social interactions. This might be sharing toys or other materials, learning how to take turns, learning how to initiate or begin play appropriately.

And then the last category is problem-solving skills. This, again, many folks mentioned, but this is a child's ability to effectively, one, identify that there's a problem, know what a problem is, and be able to articulate that. And then act once they've identified that there's a problem. And the problem might be a social problem between children, or it might be a personal problem, right. Once you've identified that there's a problem, you need to be able to identify some potential solutions to address that problem, try out a solution, and persist until a solution that matches and meets the need of the particular problem is found.

Again, I encourage you to check out your Viewer's Guide for more information on these competencies and on these specific skills, and the specific behaviors that fall under these umbrella categories.

Let's get started talking about these effective evidence-based practices for teaching social-emotional skills for children with disabilities. I wanted to just quickly contextualize these practices. We're going to talk about three highly individualized practices today.

I wanted to contextualize those within a couple of familiar frameworks that you see here on the screen. The framework for effective practice and the pyramid model. Both of these frameworks represent what we call tiered instruction, right. At the foundation or the bottom, those represent strategies and practices and interactions that are the base of a high-quality educational learning environment or a program. I mean, all children need access to those. But we also know that for some children that might not be enough to help them really begin to access the environment, access those practices and interactions, and be able to learn and develop those social-emotional skills that we just discussed.

Some children will need more individualized or more intensive teaching practices that are really matched to the skill that they might need to learn and to their learning characteristics and behaviors, right. This might be that there might be more targeted goals to prevent further delay or to prevent challenging behavior. When we're talking about more intensive and more individualized practices, we're talking about embedding instruction throughout a child's day to really increase the opportunity that they have to learn and practice these skills. And then also using, intentionally selecting, and using planned instructional strategies, again, that are matched to that child's learning strengths, characteristics, and needs. That's individualized instruction and that's what we're going to talk about today.

All right. As we're planning for individualization and highly individualized instruction, there are a few things that we want to keep in mind. And these considerations and the strategies and supports that are chosen to use with a child are really based, again, on their individual learning characteristics, their strengths, and their areas of need. And when we're talking about and planning for individualization, this is important for all young children, infants, toddlers, preschool-age children, children who are dual language learners, children who, where we really want to match, again, the type and the amount of support and instruction to their individual learning characteristics and needs.

Another thing to think about is that these strategies and supports that we're planning for and the three particular evidence-based practices that we're going to talk about today, they can and they should be used across learning environments and settings and program options. And this includes working with families to understand their needs and their priorities at home as well as to provide support and resources to learn about these individualized strategies and use them across activities and routines. When we're thinking about individualization, we're thinking about, as I've said, the amount of support and the type of support, right. Some children are going to need you to provide more or less support than others.

We will talk about this when we talk about our different evidence-based practices today. But, for example, some children may be able to access and benefit from being shown visual support and having the adult who's with them point to the visual support in order to use the skill. Whereas for some children that might not be enough support and they might need an adult to model or provide the words that they might say during an interaction, right. That's what we're talking about with the amount and the type of support.

We also want to think about the type of feedback. When we're thinking about providing highly individualized instruction, we want to be able to intentionally provide feedback to a child that, again, on their use of these new target skills, these really important skills. We want to be able to provide intentional feedback on their use of these skills that might be new or unfamiliar to them. And we'll talk more about this feedback as one of the evidence-based practices that we'll talk about. But this should be really individualized and matched to the child's learning characteristics, to their temperament, to the skill that's being taught.

We also want to think about what specific skills we want to target. We just talked about these four big umbrella categories of competencies. And knowing that there are some really specific

target skills or behaviors within those important competencies, we want to think about for each child what are the priority skills to teach, right. What skills are going to help them participate as independently as possible, what's important to the family, where does the child spend time, what are the values and routines, and expectations of the learning environment. And then also think about where do we start for an individual child, what skills does the child already have, how did the skills in a scope and sequence of development, how do they build on one another, right. When we're thinking about, not only how to teach when we're planning for highly individualized instruction, that what to teach is just as important.

And then, of course, we want to partner with families always. But when we're talking about these priority social-emotional skills that we've just discussed, for many families are really important are one of the highest priorities. Partnering with families again to identify what are the most important skills that they want their child to be able to learn and use. Again, where does the child spend their time? What is really going to help the child participate and develop those friendships as independently as possible and so they can really participate as fully as possible.

All right. As we get started, thinking about evidence-based practices to teach social-emotional skills for children with disabilities. For those of you who have used different teaching strategies, different highly individualized strategies to support the social-emotional learning of children with disabilities or suspected delays, what's your favorite teaching practice? What teaching practices or evidence-based practices do you like to use or have you seen be effective as you support children with disabilities in their social-emotional learning? Share with us – share with me. I keep saying us because I expected Abby to be here. Share with me in the Q&A what teaching practices do you use.

I see somebody says they use peer modeling. . Great. Somebody is mentioning Second Step which is a curriculum to teach social-emotional skills. Modeling. Visual. I see lots of comments around visuals. Scripted stories. Great. Oh, I see somebody saying using puppets. Love it. A form of modeling. Great. Keep sharing your thoughts, the strategies that you like to use. And you'll see some of those strategies that you've mentioned, that I just shared as having seen in the Q&A, we're going to talk about a few of those today.

There are many different teaching strategies, highly individualized teaching strategies that we know can be successful in supporting the social-emotional learning and development of children with disabilities or suspected delays. But today, we're going to talk about three in particular. We're going to talk about visual supports, response prompting, and descriptive feedback.

And as we talk about each of these three particular evidence-based practices, we're going to talk about the what, the why, and the how for each practice. We're going to see lots of video examples. And when we're talking about the how, we're going to talk about the really important or critical steps to using that evidence-based practice effectively and we're also going to be talking about how disability services coordinators or coaches or ed managers or those

who are in a role to help others learn about and use these highly individualized strategies, how they can support other adults to learn about and use these teaching practices.

As we talk about these and look at these and explore these practices, I encourage you to use your Viewer's Guide to think about the children that you're supporting and reflect on a child or children who could benefit from accessing highly individualized social-emotional strategies. As you're reflecting, I'm sure that probably at least a couple of children immediately came to mind but as you're reflecting on that child or those children, think about what specific social-emotional skills or behaviors does this child need to learn, what are good skills to target, what strategy, what teaching strategy might you use to target that skill. And then thinking about if the strategy – it might be one of the strategies that we've discussed today, if this strategy feels a little less familiar, what support do you need, what resources do you need to learn more about or use or support others to learn about and use that evidence-based practice effectively.

We're going to get started by talking about one evidence-based practice that can be used to support instruction on a variety of different social-emotional skills. And we'll see some instruction on many different social-emotional skills with a couple of video examples.

We will get started by talking about visual supports. When we think about the what of visual supports. Visual supports are concrete cues that are used to provide a key or the most important information about a social skill or an environment to a child. These cues are presented in a visual format. When we think about, again, individualizing, the information that we're providing might be about a routine, it might be about an activity, it might be about a behavioral expectation, it might be about a specific skill or a phrase that a child will use, right.

Again, there are many different skills that we can target using visual supports. And just what the visual support is supporting, it's going to be highly individualized to a child. It's also the visual supports can be highly individualized in the form or the format that we use, the format of the visual support depending on a child's needs and their learning characteristics, and their strengths. Visual supports can be an actual object. They can be photographs, they can be drawings, or they could be printed words, they could be words so that when we're talking about the different types of visual supports, we're talking about the form, right. And having the different form and carefully matching the form of the visual support to the individual child's developmental level, to their learning characteristics, to their strengths, that really helps us match the form of the support, the form of the visual to the child's learning characteristics to help them access and learn from that visual support as readily as possible. And the things that we might consider might be the child's age, their developmental level, and, again, their learning style.

When we think about why we use visual supports and why this is an effective teaching strategy for children with disabilities or suspected delays, we know that some children have difficulty processing verbal information. That might be that they might have a hard time processing directions that are being given, instructions. It might be that they have a hard time processing and responding to questions from adults or other children in their environment. This challenge in understanding and processing verbal information, some common challenges we see are

understanding what to do or what the expectations of an environment are, what happens next. And really when we think about within the context of peer interactions, of peer-to-peer play, solving problems, those can be abstract and a little less clear to children, what they're expected to do or what their role is within the context of an interaction.

We know that while the adults in children's environment might be using modeling, that they might be giving some really thoughtful suggestions or cues to children as part of the scaffolding. For many children, again, as part of that foundational practice in our tiered instructional practices, it might be sufficient. For some children, for whatever reason, some children who have more of a challenge understanding, processing those verbal cues, that may not be enough. It might not be supportive enough to really help them understand what's expected of them and really how to successfully participate in those interactions. But we know that visual supports provide information in a way that can help children really focus on key elements. It's static. That visual information isn't going anywhere, right. And again, when we think about using visual supports in a highly individualized way, we can really match the form and ensure that the form and the way that the visual information is presented to a child is developmentally appropriate and matches their learning style and their needs.

We know that visual supports can be used to effectively support learning and participation across a variety of different outcomes, including communication, behavior, play, cognitive, motor, adaptive, as well as social-emotional, which is what we're going to be talking about today. We also know that visual supports can be used across many different settings, center-based or classroom, home, and community settings, and can be used across a variety of routines and activities. I've mentioned this in a couple of different examples but we really know that visual supports can be used to support and to teach across many different social-emotional skills and across those competencies that we discussed at the beginning of the webinar. Whether that's friendship skills like play, problem-solving skills, friendship skills like supporting appropriate conversation, or regulation skills.

When we think about the how of visual supports, here are a few key things to keep in mind when we're using visual supports effectively to support social-emotional learning for children with disabilities and suspected delays.

One, we really want to consider again that individualizing, what the visual support looks like and what it communicates needs to be carefully matched to the skill that the child is learning, the skill that's being taught. And also again, to the child's developmental level, to their learning characteristics, and to their preferences.

Another really important thing that sometimes is forgotten or maybe overlooked is teaching the child and supporting the child how to use the visual support, right. We know that there are lots of visual information in learning environments, in early learning environments but when we're talking about this level of individualization and this level of intensity of instruction, we want to make sure that we're teaching the child what is this visual, what does it mean, how do I use it to successfully use the target skill or the target behavior, right.

And then, of course, we want to collect data, we want to collect information on how often we're using the visual support, and how the child is or isn't benefiting from the visual support, are they learning this skill that we're targeting, are they becoming more independent using it.

Let's take a look now a couple of video examples of visual supports being used to target different social-emotional skills. In this first example here, you're going to see a lot. You're going to see one teacher with one child and she's using a couple of different visuals, and a couple of different formats to teach emotions, so she's targeting emotional literacy, and she's targeting emotional regulation.

As you're watching this video, which is about two minutes long, reflect, share in Q&A what do you notice about how the teacher is using visual supports and how does she support the child to use and benefit from, to learn from those visual supports, and how does the child respond.

[Video begins]

Teacher: Made you feel nervous when he said that. Oh, it made you feel frustrated. So – No, not that one?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Oh, it made you feel mad?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: This one is calm. This one is like you feel good, you feel calm. Did you feel sad when he said that?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: You felt a little sad?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: Yeah, so you can tell him, "I know that made me feel sad." Yeah, this is a solution kit, so if you're feeling upset, you can go to your solution kit. We can blow bubbles, or we can count to 10. We can squeeze a ball. You can hug something. You can smell a flower. Or you can do a drawing or a wall push-up. Which one do you think would make you feel better?

Child: Bubbles.

Teacher: You want to blow bubbles? OK. Hold it this way. Open it. OK, you can pull your mask down to blow a bubble. But aim your breath that way. OK, I'm gonna help you. OK, blow. Ah! Do you feel better? How do you feel now? You feel happy. Look. Which one is happy? Can you point to it?

Child: Happy.

Teacher: That's excited. Here's happy right here. You feel happy. Yay!

[Video ends]

Jennifer: I unmuted myself. That was a great video. I see lots of comments in the Q&A.

She's using a couple of different types of visuals that are within what she called the solution kit. And she was providing the child, she asked him how he felt, cued him to look at the visual around emotional regulation or around emotional literacy how he was feeling.

He pointed to the wrong emotion initially, he said he felt one way, he pointed to another. She helped give him some feedback to help him point to the correct emotion that he had expressed he was feeling. And then she helped him identify and try out some different solutions and she closed that loop after he tried out blowing bubbles. She said, "How do you feel now?" And he said, "Happy." And she closed that loop with that video – or sorry – with that visual saying, "Oh, now you feel happy. Where is happy?" Again, providing that additional support.

It wasn't enough for her just to say, "OK. Great. You feel happy." But to help him, he was working on those emotional literacy skills of being able to describe but also being able to identify on that feelings wheel so that he would be able to later use that feelings wheel, use that visual a little more independently, right.

She didn't just have that solutions kit out on the playground and tell him or prompt him to go use the solution kit, find a solution when she noticed that he was feeling dysregulated. She prompted him through that whole learning sequence. She'll fade out those supports so that he'll be able to use those visuals more independently. But right now, she's providing that instruction and that support to help him use those visuals to help his social-emotional learning.

Now, let's take a look at another video. And in this video, you'll see a teacher using some visual supports to help target friendship skills, to help a little one who's learning how to initiate play and ask a friend to play. Let's take a look at this video.

[Video begins]

Teacher: Who do you want to play with? That's Lusaka.

Child: Max.

Teacher: Alright, let's put him right there. Let's put him on our schedule. Now, let's look. Where is Max playing? He's over there. I see him by the sensory table. Come back. Let's find the sensory table. Nice work, you found the sensory table. Alright, let's put it on our schedule. We're gonna go find Max and we're gonna say, "Max, let's play..." Nice work. Let's go find them.

[Video ends]

Jennifer: Love that video example. The friendship skill that that little one is working on is initiating play, asking a friend to play. Max, let's play, sensory table. And because of her learning characteristics and her strengths in attending to visual information and pictures of her friends, her teachers, her team thought visual supports will be a great way to help her learn this skill and eventually be able to use this visual independently.

But again, that teacher is doing a lot of work to present that visual information but also to help that little girl understand how and when to use it. She didn't just say, "OK. Get your card and go find a friend." She, the little girl, picked a friend, put it on the card, and then the teacher knew that she needed that extra support to say, "OK. Where is he in the classroom?" I know you want to play with him, but will you be able to find him? Right. OK. And also, what do you want to play with? Great. Where is that video? I'm sorry. Where is that visual? Let's put that on your card. Great. OK. Use your visual. Now, what are you going to say when you approach him? Right. Again, there's that great visual information, it's matched and individualized specifically to her needs but the teacher isn't just giving it to her and expecting her to use it independently, she's supporting her to be able to use and benefit from that visual information as an effective teaching strategy.

When we think about how we as people who might be in a role to support others to use and learn about visual information, the couple of key things that we want to think in mind so whether you're a DSC or maybe you're a home visitor, helping families learn about this information.

But a couple of things that we want to keep in mind. One, how do we individualize visual supports of the child's need, right. Helping whoever you're supporting. Think about how they're going to create the visual, right. What skill is being taught? Is it an emotional literacy skill like identifying a feeling? Is it an emotional regulation skill like asking for a break, right? Because the visual for each of those different skills is going to look quite different from the other. And then also have support to think about the child's learning needs and characteristic and what form and type of visual they might need to use. Is it going to be a picture? Is it going to be an object, right?

And then, of course, supporting the adult who you're working with whether that's a DSC supporting an educator to use visual in a classroom or center-based setting, or supporting a home visitor to support a family to use visual support. Really thinking about, again, how are we going to present the visual to the child, what will we say, when will it be used, what additional support might the child need to be able to access, attend to, and use that visual in order to perform that target skill, right.

And then, of course, to think about how do you know if the visual is working, right, how is the child responding to you, are they learning the target skill, or do we need to revisit and maybe try different visual support or a different strategy.

All right. Let's take a look at our next powerful practice or evidence-based practice which is prompting. Prompting is a cue or support that's provided to a child to help them use a skill or

behavior correctly. There are many different types, or how we refer to it often is a form of a prompt, right. You see those here on the slide. A model, showing a child what you'd like them to do. A gesture, using some sort of body language to help cue the child as to where they might need to attend, or as you just saw on that video, the teacher used the gestural cue to help the child identify where Max was, the child that she said she wanted to ask to play.

There are also verbal prompts. Giving a child the actual language to use in social interaction or when using a social skill. And then another type or form of the prompt is a physical prompt. That's where we actually provide physical support to the child to help them use a skill, or use a behavior correctly. And this is really important to know because, again, when we're individualizing and using prompting as a highly individualized strategy to help support social-emotional learning, we want to really carefully consider and match the type or the form of the prompt that we use to, again, the child's learning characteristics, to their strengths, to their needs, to their developmental level.

And also, to the skill that we're targeting or the behavior that we're trying to teach the child to use. This level of individualization makes prompting a practice, an evidence-based practice that's appropriate to use with children over a variety of ages, infants and toddlers, preschool-age children.

When we think about the why of prompting, children when we're talking about these social-emotional skills which can be abstract for many children, and again, we're talking about children who haven't necessarily benefited or learned readily from that foundational practice and need some more intensive and individualized support to help learn these social-emotional skills. Prompting helps cue the child. It provides support to the child to know what's expected of them, to know what skill looks like or a behavior looks like in the moment. Prompting provides a way to increase those correct responses to have the child use the target skill or behavior correctly when they're learning that new skill. And since we know as we talked about earlier that some children with disabilities or suspected delays might have a difficult time learning through observation or learning through imitation, prompting and providing some more targeted and explicit support on what that skill or behavior should look like can really be an effective way to help young children learn to use these skills effectively.

We also know that it can help prevent frustration. Some children if they're trying, if they're being given less supportive cues or suggestions, and they're not understanding those, they're not accessing those, that can be really frustrating for the child and can decrease motivation, right.

We know that prompts can be used again with children of varying ages and developmental levels, and also, across many different settings. When we think about the how of prompting, again, we really want to think about individualizing and matching the type of prompt that we use, what prompt and how we use a prompt to the child's individual learning needs and to the skill that's being taught.

Now, let's take a look at an example of prompting being used to teach a social skill, in this case, the skill that you'll see the teacher prompting is a friendship skill of initiating play, asking a friend to play. As we're watching the video, take notes and reflect, maybe in your Viewer's Guide or share with us in the Q&A what do you notice about this video, what prompt type does the teacher use, how does she use that prompt, and how does the child respond.

[Video begins]

Teacher: Say, "Can I come play?" Oh, my goodness, look. Amari is sharing with you. What can you say? "Thank you for sharing, Amari." I'll take a few. Thank you so much. Let's see. Can I move this over here?

Child: Yeah.

Teacher: All right. Cool. Let's see, do you want to build by yourself or with a friend? With a friend. Which friend would you like to build with? Amari. Say, "Amari, can we build together?"

Child: Can we build together?

Teacher: I wonder if, Amari, maybe you can come over closer so your friend can build with you? There's a chair over there already, you can just come on over.

Child: I'm sitting with Nova.

Teacher: You're gonna sit with Nova? Look at you guys being such good friends.

[Video ends]

Jennifer: In that example, you may have noticed that was a really supportive activity. That teacher was doing a really wonderful job of making sure that those children were near each other, in proximity, their activity was set up so that they could see each other and share the materials. She gave the little guys some suggestions about how he could respond when a friend gave him something. But for this little guy who needed that extra level of individualization and individualized support, when it came time to ask his friend to play, saying, "Can we build together?"

That scaffolding and that supportive activity wasn't enough for him to independently yet initiate play by asking his friend to build. In this example, what you saw was the teacher use a verbal prompt, she verbally gave him the behavior or the phrase that she wanted to use. She said, "You can say, 'Can we build together?'" And then he said it. He imitated her verbal prompt.

Let's take a look at another example of prompting being used to teach a social skill. Or a couple of different social skills actually. This is a longer example. What you'll see in this example is a teacher using different types of prompts to prompt the friendship skills of waiting for a turn and giving a turn for two little guys.

Again, as you're watching this video, reflect in your Viewer's Guide, share with me in the Q&A what do you notice, what prompt types does the teacher use, how does she use them, and again, how do the children respond to her prompts.

[Video begins]

Teacher: I heard some shouting over here. What's the problem?

Child: [Speaking indistinctly]

Teacher: With what? Tell me. Tell me more.

Child: I wanted a turn.

Teacher: Want your turn for what? Show me.

Child: I wanted a turn.

Teacher: For? This or this? Or this? Which one?

Child: This.

Teacher: For this. OK. Can you find a way and take a turn for me? OK. This one.

Child: Yes.

Teacher: Mikai, can you wait and take your turn for this one? Will that work? OK. So, Trace, will you tell Mikai when it's his turn and you can use the words, "Mikai, it's your turn."

Child: Mikai, it's your turn.

Teacher: When it's his turn. You take a turn, he takes a turn. Let me see. Can you hand him one and see?

Child: You can get a turn.

Teacher: Look at him when he's talking. Look, Mikai. We stay, we play, and we talk. So, look in his face and say, "OK. Trace."

Child: OK.

Teacher: Use his name.

Child: OK.

Teacher: Trace.

Child: Trace.

Teacher: Good talking, Mikai, love it. Good talking. Oh, today you have a light helper. Good job. All right. Are you waiting and taking your turn? All right. Do you think it's his turn now, Trace? All right. Can you hand in something and show him? Oho. Whoa-oh.

Child: It's OK.

Teacher: It's OK. Thank you for going with the flow. I love that you're so calm. OK. Can you hand Mikai something and tell him it's his turn? Give him something. Give him something. Whoa. Can you hand him a red one? Oh, good. Oh, good sharing. Say, "Thank you." Good talking, Mikai. Good job.

[Video ends]

Jennifer: Again, we saw a lot going on in that video, a really supportive activity for both of those little guys who were playing. The classroom staff had set it up so that there were enough materials for both of them to play, it was an interesting activity for both of them so they were motivated to play with the activity and stay with the activity even when things were a little bit difficult. Taking turns was obviously a skill that both of these little guys were working on.

And again, even with that supportive activity and the teacher providing some scaffolding and some suggestions and asking, "OK. Which one do you want to play with?" And she was really trying to figure out what was going on in that situation, you could see that both of those little guys when it came to sharing, and there are a lot of different discrete skills that are involved in sharing, asking for a turn when you want something, waiting for somebody to give you a turn with the thing that you want. But also, on the other side of it, responding when your friend asks you for a turn and giving a turn in a way that the other child can understand. Here it is, it's your turn.

Usually, the giving with some sort of communication along with it. In that example, we saw the teacher supporting and providing prompting for both of those little guys to use different behaviors involved with taking turns and sharing. The first little guy, when he was working on waiting, she used a visual prompt with him, so she showed him, "OK, when you want a turn, you need to wait." And she showed him that visual turn, and he was being supported to wait. And then the other little guy, he was being supported to give a turn when his friend wanted the turn. She was using a verbal prompt with him; she was saying, "OK. When it's your friend's turn, you can say, 'Here, Mikai.'"

She gave him that language. She gave him the verbal prompt of the language that she wanted him to use when he gave a turn. And then she stayed throughout that activity to continue to provide that support, that individualized support to both of those children so that they could successfully use those target behaviors for each of them respectively where they were in that partnership and in that turn-taking interaction so that each of them one could wait and then the other could give the turn, right.

Wrapping up our section on prompting, when we think about how DSC or somebody else who's in a supportive role might support education staff to learn about and use prompting. Again, just like we talked about with visual supports, we really want to think about individualizing. Support to individualize the use of the prompt. Support to choose the prompt, to really individualize for the child.

And again, that will depend on what type of prompt we use, it will depend on the skill that's being taught. Is it like we just saw in the video example a friendship skill of asking for a turn, and waiting, or giving a turn, or is it a problem-solving skill like identifying a solution and trying it out. Because the type of prompt that we use and what we say, what we do, how the prompt is presented to the child will depend on the skill that's being taught. But then it also depends on the child's learning needs and the child's learning characteristics.

For this child, for their age, for their developmental level, for their language level, what type of prompt will help them correctly use the behavior or the skill. Thinking about the type of support that education staff might need to use prompting effectively. We really want to think about choosing that prompt, support to choose that prompt, that's really individualized to the skill and the child's needs.

And then, of course, support to use the prompt. Again, depending on the staff, depending on the program option, what this support looks like to use the prompt will be different, right. It might be supporting a teacher to use a prompting strategy in a classroom or center-based, or home-based setting, or it might be supporting a home visitor to support a family to learn about and use prompting at home with their child.

Again, what we want to think about is supporting whoever it might be, whether it's the classroom staff or the home visitor, but to really focus on how the prompt will be used to cue or support the child. When will you provide the prompt, what should the prompt look like or sound like? And then, of course, how will we know if the prompting strategy, the prompting type that we've selected, and that we're using is effective. Support to know if it's working.

Now, let's take a look at our last powerful practice or evidence-based practice for today. And that is descriptive feedback. Let's take a look at the what, the why, and the how of descriptive feedback using this highly individualized strategy to teach social-emotional skills.

What is descriptive feedback? Descriptive feedback is feedback, a cue, input that's given to the child that provides them with information on the skill or the behavior that they used. And specifically, to let them know that the skill or the behavior that they just used in a particular situation was effective, what the outcome was. It really helps make that connection between the social skill that's being used and the impact on the child's environment or the interaction. When we're thinking about children who have a learning characteristic, maybe they're still learning cause and effect or maybe they're still working on learning about the power that their communication and their behavior has in their environment and during their interactions. Descriptive feedback can be a really powerful and effective practice to help children learn,

again, about the impact of their behavior and their communication on their environment and really help them learn to use skills more readily and more independently.

For example, it helps make – like I said, it helps make that connection between the behavior or the skill and the outcome. We might tell a child when we're using descriptive feedback, "When you said turn, please, your friend gave you a turn with a car." Right. That feedback on the skill. You said turn, please, and what happened? Your friend gave you a turn. OK. And when we think about why we use descriptive feedback and why this is an effective strategy for young children with disabilities and suspected delays, again, it really helps make that explicit connection between the child's use of a skill and the outcome. But it also helps make the connection between the child's use of a skill and maybe some of the language that we might be using to cue some of the skills and behaviors that children are using.

We might tell a child ask for a turn, right. But when it comes to asking for a turn, there is an explicit behavior that the child needs to use, they either say, "Turn, please," or maybe they say, "Can I have a turn?", or maybe they hold out their hand and use a simple gesture, a simple sign, turn, right. But we're using this language "ask for a turn" to help cue them. And when we say "ask for a turn," maybe provide a prompt to help them use whatever the behavior is and then say, "Oh, you asked for a turn." And that resulted in this outcome.

That helps make that connection between the language that we're using to cue or support a child to use a specific skill or behavior and actually what that explicit behavior or skill is. We also know from lots of research and experience using descriptive feedback that it can – when it's used effectively, descriptive feedback supports learning by increasing the likelihood that the child will use that skill again and really thinking about by making those explicit connections providing that feedback, that positive feedback, it really – if we're using it effectively, if we're using descriptive feedback effectively should increase the likelihood that the child will use that skill more independently in the future.

And again, like the other practices that we've talked about today because we're able to really carefully match and individualize descriptive feedback whether that's the language we use, what we say, our affect, or our tone when we're delivering the descriptive feedback to the child, we can really match our behavior and our use of this practice of descriptive feedback with the child's learning characteristics, their strengths, their needs, their developmental level. And that makes this practice effective and appropriate to use with children of all ages, infants and toddlers, preschool-aged children. And we know that it can be effectively used in many different settings so classroom, home-based, community-based settings, and again, across activities and routines depending on the skill that we're targeting and where it's being taught.

When we think about how we use descriptive feedback. There are a few really important steps to using descriptive feedback effectively and that are really important to how we individualize and use descriptive feedback.

One is to really carefully match our language level and how and what we're saying with our descriptive feedback to the child's developmental level and their learning characteristics. What

do we say? The phrase length, the language. Also, we want to match our use of descriptive feedback to the child's temperament, so what is our affect, what is our facial expression, what other social feedback like high-fives or clapping might we pair with our use of descriptive feedback and how does that match to the child's temperament. And also, to the child's own learning characteristics when it comes to motivation. For example, some children want feedback on an individual level but they don't want the whole class to hear that descriptive feedback or that positive feedback. It might be embarrassing to them. Having that attention called to them might actually not serve to be reinforcing or motivating to the child.

Those are some things that we want to consider when we're thinking about individualizing what, how, and when we provide feedback. And then another really important step or consideration when we're thinking about using descriptive feedback effectively is that it's specific, so it's very specific to the skill that we're targeting and that we're trying to teach the child and the skill or behavior that the child has used, it should be contingent on the child's use of that skill.

As soon as we see the child use the skill or behavior that we're targeting, we want to provide that descriptive and specific feedback on the use of that skill. And it should be as immediate as possible. It should be as close to the child's use of the skill or behavior as possible. We know from research that descriptive feedback is most effective when it's given to a child or when it's provided to a child within one to three seconds after the child has used the behavior, again, to really make that explicit connection for children who need this level of support between what they did and what happened, that cause and effect.

Let's see a couple examples of descriptive feedback in action being used to teach social-emotional skills. This first video is a teacher using descriptive feedback for a little guy who's learning a friendship skill. I'm not going to tell you what friendship skill it is. Let's see as you're watching the video, watch for the teacher's use of descriptive feedback. Note what she says and what behavior, what skill is she providing feedback on.

[Video begins]

Teacher: OK, Taylor, Edwin doesn't have a cup. Can you give him this one?

Teacher #2: Alright, ready? One, two, three.

Teacher: Thanks, buddy. That was nice of you, Taylor.

Jennifer: In that example, she was prompting the child to give a turn. She was supporting him to give a turn. And then the feedback that she gave him was on giving that turn. She said, "Oh, that was nice, buddy." She was using feedback on the friendship behavior of giving a turn. Right. She was providing that connection between giving your friend a turn and then what the action was actually physically handing another child a toy.

Let's take another look – or I'm sorry. Let's take a look at another example of descriptive feedback being used to teach another social-emotional skill. Let's have you, again, as you're watching the video reflect, share with us in the Q&A how does the teacher use descriptive feedback. Again, what does she say? And what skill or behavior is she providing feedback on?

Teacher: Hands up. Voices off. Oh, I love it. Thank you so much for listening for directions. I just wanted to tell all of my friends that I've seen some really good solutions being used today. Aria and Zeke were going with the flow with their magnets. I've seen Naomi and Gwendoline sharing and taking turns in home living and aid and sharing. While Li is inviting Kala to play. And Ben is including Nathan. Let's give them a rollercoaster cheer.

All: [Cheer]

Teacher: Thank you, friends.

[Video ends]

Jennifer: I love that example. That was a trick question. She wasn't just using descriptive feedback to provide feedback on one social skill. She was using descriptive feedback to provide feedback on a variety of skills to many different children. The first thing you saw is that she gave a cue for the children to stop and listen. And she gave very descriptive and immediate feedback on listening. But then she also gave feedback to different children who were working on different behaviors, different social behaviors. She gave feedback to a child who was going with the flow so being flexible was a social skill they were working on. She gave feedback to a child who was inviting other children to play. And she gave feedback on a couple of other different skills.

You saw that she was using that feedback, again, very descriptive. She was providing feedback on exactly what the behaviors were that she wanted children to use more often, that she wanted children to learn and use. And then she was using it in a kind of that more public. Again, it was for individual children, but it was in front of the class. You could see that she had considered the children's learning characteristics, their motivation style. She gave, not only the feedback but the class-wide the rollercoaster cheer so some high affect on that because she had considered who are the children that were teaching these social skills to, who are children in the class, and how are they motivated and what are they motivated by. Not just that descriptive feedback but that fun class-wide cheer.

Quickly wrapping up descriptive feedback by thinking about how a DSC or somebody else in a supportive role can support education staff to learn about and use descriptive feedback. Just like with visual supports and just like with prompting, the first thing that we really want to think about when we are planning our support to education staff is thinking about support to choose the descriptive feedback. And I apologize, this says visual support on here, but it should be descriptive feedback.

When we're thinking about choosing descriptive feedback and really to individualize and match to the child's learning needs and characteristics, again, we want to think about what's the skill that's being taught because that will influence what we say and when we're providing the descriptive feedback but also, of course, thinking about the child's learning needs, developmental level, their learning characteristics, and preferences.

Again, what will we say, how will we say it, what's the language level? What will our affect be like? Will it be provided individually? Is it OK to provide it in a group? Is there some other sort of social feedback that we want to provide along with the descriptive praise or descriptive feedback? And then, of course, thinking about support for education staff, again, whether that's staff, teachers who are working in a program, in a center-based program, or a classroom, or a home-based program, or support to maybe home visitors, again, to help families learn about and use descriptive feedback as a practice.

But thinking about how will we introduce, how will we use, what will it look like and sound like when we're using descriptive feedback with an individual child. And how will we support the staff to use feedback that's immediate, positive, and descriptive? What will we say, what else do we need to know and do? And then, of course, support to know if our descriptive feedback is working, if it's effective in increasing the child's use of the target skill or behavior.

We are over time. There's been so much to talk about. I've seen some really great interactions, and lots of questions in the Q&A. Our Q&A support folks, a great, great team has been in the Q&A responding to questions. Again, if we didn't get to your questions today, please join us on the Head Start Disabilities and Inclusion MyPeers page to check in with your colleagues and also follow up with our community facilitators on any of the remaining questions that you might have that, like I said, that we didn't get to today or maybe questions that came up as you were re-watching or questions that as you were reflecting in your Viewer's Guide might come up.

And then before we say goodbye, a quick thank you to everybody for being here today, for all your great questions, for all your great reflections and comments. Thank you to our Q&A support team for being here with us today and answering all these great questions and responding to all of these great reflections. Our Q&A has been really active today and I love to see that. And please save the date and join us for our next episode in the inclusion webinar series which will be in August on Tuesday, August 23rd, from 3 to 4 p.m. eastern. Thank you again and we'll see you next time.